

Volume 14 Issue 2 February 2020







PRESENTED TO

THE SERVANTS OF MARY



IN APPRECIATION FOR THEIR YEARS
OF DEDICATED LEADERSHIP AND
SERVICE TO SJS AND
CATHOLIC EDUCATION.

**NOVEMBER 23, 2019** 





St. James Students pose in front of the Servants of Mary Specials Wing. Photo credit Tiffany Howard

### **A Letter from the Prioress**

Dear Friends,

As the month of February draws to a close, we find ourselves entering into the first few days of Lent. We pray that during this Lenten Season each of us may be open to the opportunities to give and receive compassion, to the invitations to positive change and to the call for prayerful support for the fragility of our world.

On Saturday, November 23, 2019 at their annual SOAR Dinner, St. James/Seton School in Omaha honored the Servants of Mary with their Spirit of St. James/Seton Catholic School Award. Along with this award, the School has dedicated a wing of the building to the Servants of Mary, naming it "The Servants of Mary Specials Wing." The evening was a wonderful tribute to the Servants of Mary and a heart-warming trip down memory lane for the many sisters who attended. It was great to see so many familiar faces of those with whom we have partnered in ministry since 1965 and have remained our friends. Over thirty Servants of Mary have served at St. James/Seton School and/or St. James Parish. As we begin the year of 2020, we applaud St. James/Seton School and Parish staff and volunteers for their dedication to the values of faith, family and academic excellence. We are grateful that our charism of compassion lives on through them.

Since July the US/Jamaica Community has had the pleasure of sharing life with Sr. Constance Musese and Sr. Monique Musondoli, two of our Sisters from the Democratic Republic of Congo. This has been a wonderful experience for everyone.

Sr. Constance returned to Butembo, DRC on December 3 to begin her medical internship. We are grateful that Sr. Monique will remain in the US for several more months to continue her ESL classes, live with us in community and volunteer at Holy Name Grade School in Omaha.

I look forward to sharing more about our Sisters, Associates and our ministries as the year unfolds.

May you be blessed during this season of Lent as you embrace Jesus in his living, dying and rising.

On behalf of the Community Council,

Sr. Jackie Ryan, OSM

Sr. Fackie

US/Jamaica Community Prioress



### We Remember...



Sr. Mary Alice Haley, OSM May 25, 1925 – February 8, 2020

Mary Alice (Sr. M. Donata) Haley was born on May 25, 1925 in Ogdensburg, NY. Sister entered the Servants of Mary on August 15, 1942. She made her first profession of vows in 1944 and final vows in 1949. Sister Mary Alice graduated with a Bachelor's Degree from Creighton University, and Master's and Doctorate in Philosophy from St. Louis University.

Sister began her teaching career in 1944 at Holy Ghost in Omaha, NE and then Servite High in Detroit, MI. She was a Professor of Philosophy at St. Louis University & Creighton University where she later became Chair of the Philosophy Department.

In 1981 Sister was elected as the Prioress General of the Servants of Mary of London/Cuves Congregation. She served two consecutive terms.

Her later years were filled with many friends and prayer/faith sharing groups. Sr. Mary Alice was known to say, "I think I will always be a philosopher at heart." Indeed, she was.



Sr. Mary Louise Genest, OSM May 31, 1928 - January 6, 2020

Mary Rita Genest was born on May 31, 1928

in Rodman, NY. Sr. Louise entered the Servants of Mary on August 15, 1945. She made her first profession of vows in 1947 and final vows in 1952. She graduated with a Bachelor's Degree from Duchesne College in Omaha, NE and later earned a Master's Degree from Siena Heights in Adrian, MI.

She loved teaching and serving as a principal. Sr. Louise taught at St. Juliana's in Detroit, MI and Holy Ghost in Omaha, NE. She was one of the founding sisters of Christ the King School in Omaha, ministering as both a teacher and principal from 1954-1971.

She returned home to minister in Massena, New York at Sacred Heart and Trinity Schools, serving both as a teacher and principal for nearly forty years. Sr. Louise also ministered at the Servants of Mary Generalate in Rome, Italy from 1981-1983. Sr. Louise said this about her life, "Joy and peace. That's the way I've tried to live my life. It has been a joy and has brought me peace."



Sr. Ann Moran, OSM February 22, 1944 - January 18, 2020

Dorothy Ann Moran was born on February 22, 1944 in Omaha, NE. Sr. Ann entered the Servants of Mary on September 8, 1962. She made her first profession of vows in 1964 and final vows in 1969. Sr. Ann graduated with a Bachelor's Degree from Duchesne College in Omaha, NE and later earned a Master's Degree from the University of Nebraska.

Sr. Ann's teaching career was based in Omaha, NE, ministering at St. Pius X/St. Leo and St. James Seton Schools. She was one of the founding teachers of St. Wenceslaus School in 1981 and continued to teach there until her retirement in January, 2019.

Sr. Ann was honored in 2003 as an Archdiocesan Teacher of the Year. In accepting this award, Ann said, "For me the search is for the hidden treasures in each student." In her teaching, Ann never wavered from this belief.



Rosemary Holeman, Associate March 27, 1939 - January 3, 2020

Rosemary Holeman was born March 27, 1939 in Chicago, IL. She became a Servant of Mary Associate on August 15, 1997. Rosemary first came to know the Servants of Mary as a student at Holy Name, Omaha, NE. She received her Bachelor's Degree from Duchesne College and later earned her MA at Loyola University, New Orleans.

Rosemary had a special love for children, especially those with special needs, refugees, and families in poverty. She worked endlessly providing support to these families through Holy Name School and Parish.

She volunteered for the Red Cross for a total of 60 years of service. She also volunteered for Camp Fire and Cub Scouts, Madonna School, Holy Name Parish, and St. Vincent de Paul Society.

She received the Presidential Citation in 2014 from the American Red Cross Overseas Association (ARCOA).



Jan Saintmichael,
Associate
April 17, 1945 - October 13, 2019

Jan Saintmichael was born April 17, 1945 just outside of Klamath Falls, OR. Jan majored in Art at U of O, Eugene, OR. She became a Servant of Mary Associate November 16, 1991. Jan first met the Servants of Mary at the Shrine of Our Sorrowful Mother/The Grotto in Portland, OR.

Jan was best defined by how she lived rather than the jobs she held. Holding many positions, some in manual labor, she came to realize that she could live out her call to compassionate presence as a witness and support to her fellow employees.

Through work, Jan met a Cuban refugee, Modesto, whom Jan mentored and became close friends. Later she was proud to play the role of grandmother to his children.

Jan's life was filled with fine arts. She loved many genres of music and was an artist in several mediums.



## **Communication is Key**

Have you ever been in a situation where the outcome could have been a lot different if communication was better? Or reacted to a situation based on incomplete communication and found out your reaction was inaccurate? Or maybe you just missed out on an opportunity to be involved with something due to a lack of communication? These scenarios highlight how important communication is to all of us every day. We make decisions based on information that is communicated to us. What if you don't have an effective means of communicating? On this two-way street, you may miss out on relaying information or receiving information.

In our recent Annual Appeal Letter, we highlighted the importance of upgrading our methods of communication as we take lead in this expansion of communication throughout the International Congregation. The Sisters in the U.S./Jamaica Community have embraced the role of being leaders in this endeavor. The Sisters have live streamed a couple of meetings and were able to have "in attendance" Sisters and Associates from across the U.S., England and Jamaica. Everyone who remotely attended spoke very highly of the experience and truly appreciated this new way to be involved with the meetings.

"What a wonderful experience this has been to listen to the speakers and to try to absorb each one's message. Thank for streaming the program. I so much enjoyed seeing so many dear friends." Elsie Scruggs, Associate, Massena NY

As we move forward, with the success of the Annual Appeal Letter, we will be able to purchase the equipment we need to continue and expand our live streaming and recording capabilities. This will allow us to continue to include Sisters and Associates from around the world in meetings and special events that they would otherwise not be able to attend. This method of communication is more and more important for us to utilize. It will allow us to be

inclusive to any and all Sisters and Associates who would like to "attend" while also being stewards of your generous donations and not incurring a lot of travel related expenses. It will allow us to form tighter bonds with friends and family who will now be able to be a part of special events or Masses, such as our Jubilee Mass, wake services or funeral Masses.

"Journalism students from Marian have been asked to help record sessions in the Servite Center for a few years now. If the Servites had access to a tripod and good video camera, they could embark on this without feeling like they were imposing on student time. It is good for the high school students to have a real audience and be part of the learning experience, but it makes sense to have some better equipment available so that the Servites could share their message globally with their community." Marsha Kalkowski, Journalism Adviser, Marian High School

Thank you so much for all you do for the Servants of Mary. Time after time, you receive our communications with open minds and open hearts, and time after time, you answer our call with generosity. Your response to our Annual Appeal will put us on the path to more open and inclusive communication with our Sisters and Associates around the world. Allowing Sisters, Associates, friends and family to participate in special events from wherever they may be, will be a new way for us to continued doing God's work and serve those in need of our assistance with compassion and love.

-Tom Marasco, Director of Development

### Ollie the Trolley

On a chilly December evening, I embarked on my third and final Ollie the Trolley Christmas light tour with the Servants of Mary. I had spent most of the week looking forward to the night because I love spending time talking and laughing with the Sisters and my peers in Servite Connections Club. As soon as I walked through the door into the convent where we gathered before getting onto the trolley, I felt the tension and stress I had been holding onto throughout the week quickly melt away as Sr. Carolyn Foley warmly said hello and Sr. Helen Rau immediately wrapped me in a hug.

Once everyone was settled in their seats aboard Ollie the Trolley, Sr. Lisa Sheridan and I had the chance to catch up with one another. As we wound our way through neighborhood streets, admiring the elaborate light displays and holiday decorations, our conversation began to drift off and I sat in comfortable silence. Simply being in the presence of the Servants of Mary -- the women who lovingly pray for myself and my classmates day in and day out and who maintain the legacy of Marian, my home away from home -- gave me a sense of peace and calm. My stress and overwhelming to-do list faded from the forefront of my mind as I began to relax and focus on the present moment.

After stepping off of the trolley with a peaceful heart, my favorite part of the evening began. Offering hugs and hot chocolate, all of us gathered in the dining room of the convent to chat over Christmas cookies and cocoa. I loved getting to talk about school, family and the upcoming holiday season with the Sisters and hearing about their time as Marian students and teachers and why they chose their vocation. Sharing stories and laughter with my friends and the Sisters was just what I needed to find the holiday spirit I had been missing in the whirlwind of studying and stress.

-Chole Herbert



Chloe is a Senior at Marian High School and an active member of the Servite Connection Club: a club established for students to link more closely to the Servants of Mary



# Servite Center of Compassion - Movies & Meaning

"Welcoming all with hope and compassion" is a phrase from the Mission Statement of the Servite Center of Compassion. One of the primary focuses at the Center is "healing and wellness." When participants are welcomed and offered compassion and hope, this can be an experience of healing for individuals.

But we also wish to affect societal healing. One of the meaningful ways we do this is by regularly using movies, most often documentaries, to explore issues of justice. Movies draw viewers into the lives of those affected by injustice resulting in deeper empathy. When movies reveal the reasons and stories behind injustices, they increase understanding and therefore more effective response.

Over the years we have shown about 60 films on such varied topics as: refugees, human trafficking, sexism, climate crisis, racism, poverty, and stories of significant and inspiring leaders. The discussions that follow the viewings are always remarkable. Participants are knowledgeable, passionate, and caring.

A most recent film "Human Flow" is about the current global refugee crisis due to famine, poverty, violence, or natural disasters. This greatest human displacement since World War II, is captured by Director Ai Wei in a detailed and heartbreaking exploration. Movies truly are an available and meaningful way that we can become global citizens, caring about all our brothers and sisters who share this planet with us.

-Sr. Margaret Stratman, OSM Director of the Servite Center

# Servants of Mary and Socially Responsible Investing

As a member of the Servants of Mary, US/Jamaica Community Financial Investment Committee, I've been asked to share some highlights with you, related to our commitment to socially responsible investing.

Our Community has a long-standing Socially Responsible Investment Policy that follows socially responsible investment guidelines and principles developed by the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility. Following these guidelines and principles supports our desire to address root causes of injustice, uphold the dignity and rights of the human person, and protect the environment.

The Financial Investment Committee, composed of sisters and lay professionals, oversees our investments to ensure that we

support companies trying to positively impact people and the planet, while at the same time maintaining a secure financial base. Currently, about 10% of our investments are allocated specifically to initiatives on women investing in women, renewable energy and education.

We are committed to ongoing monitoring of our financial involvements to minimize exposure in areas that may threaten the stability of our world. This is a practical method of investment management for relatively small investors, such as the Servants of Mary, and will give us the opportunity to adjust and change investments as needed, in order to be fiscally responsible and to respond to the justice needs of our time.

-Sr. Val Lewandoski, OSM US/Jamaica Community Councilor



## Still Making a Difference

We are at this place in history because women religious stuck their necks out. Today, we celebrate the lives of Sr. Mary Hogan and Sr. Evangeline Wilkinson as they celebrate 70 years of religious life as Servants of Mary.

Sr. Mary began her ministry as a teacher. And like so many before her, spent hours preparing her lesson plans only to realize the plan took only 30 minutes to teach. In time, she mastered teaching and went on in later years to work in the area of spiritual direction, and social justice. Mary would not call herself brave but that is the only word that comes to mind when she recounts marching in Selma in 1965.

Today Sr. Mary remains committed to a ministry of prayer. She says, "It may not sound exciting, but it is quiet, real and forceful. It is a personal relationship with God."





Sr. Evangeline loved teaching and quickly excelled at it. In addition to being a Master teacher, she too recognized a need in our Church and society. She began two organizations that today we just expect to exist. The first was to establish and direct a Head Start Program here in the Omaha area. The second was the creation of a Family Life Office in various dioceses. These organizations are now integral to our Church, society and educational system.

Today Sr. Evangeline is also committed to a life of prayer. She states that her prayer, "is the most important thing in her life. It is all about supporting people."

Sr. Sarah Deeby, OSM Assistant US/Jamaica Community Prioress

### **February Feelings**

The holidays are behind us, resolutions for new beginnings have been made and, for many, they have already been forgotten or pushed aside. January has given way to February, a month that so many don't like. What is there to be excited about in February? It's cold, it's grey, and the landscape is barren. Some would say this month has no soul. It can be the month where grief rears its ugly head in full force. Grief can be an uncomfortable companion. Coping with our grief can be hard during the long winter months, even if you live in a warmer climate. What happens when our loss gets in the way and the promised fresh start of spring seems so far away?

We don't "get over" grief, we assimilate our loss into our lives by acknowledging and sharing our feelings about our loss, remembering the one we love, reflecting on our past and designing a plan for our new life. Winter offers us opportunity to sit and be quiet. To listen to our hearts. To become one with our feelings and emotions. Below are some "thought starters" for you to use as you reflect on your loss and/or on your goals. You may interpret them any way you want, focusing on any emotion that comes forth.

- \*My friends are...
- \*My family is...
- \*My happiest memory is...
- \*My funniest memory is...
- \*I feel lucky to have...
- \*It surprises me that...
- \*I will always remember that...
- \*A lesson I've learned about life is...
- \*One thing I want out of life is...

February is a month of feeling, a time for reflection, a time to appreciate what we had and to look forward to the promises of a new beginning.

-Maria Farrell, Director of Griefwork

## **Congregational Corner**

Many of you are aware that the Servants of Mary are an International Congregation with Sisters in eight countries. The other bit of old news is that women religious have always tried to address the pressing issues of the day whether it be health care, education or social work. That's the old news and now for the good news. The International Congregation of the Servants of Mary is renewing and redoubling its efforts of strengthening internationality in a world mired in separateness, division and individualism. One of the calls to women religious is to foster the return to openness, to sharing of our gifts and talents across the miles, and of course to do it as frugally as possible.

The US/Jamaica Annual Appeal of December highlighted these efforts by asking you to partner in our efforts to host our international Sisters and develop our live stream capabilities in order to share the richness as well as the struggles and concerns facing the different countries. The Congregational Leadership wishes to thank you personally for enabling us to build bridges, internet highways and pathways so that all of our Sisters remain connected and involved despite age, distance and language.

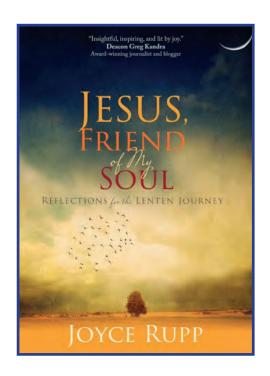
-Sr. Barbara Kennedy, OSM Assistant Congregational Prioress

## **Spirtual Reflection**

Have you ever heard someone express that they like Advent better than Lent? For many Advent seems never to last long enough and Lent seems to last forever. I admit that I have been one of those people. Advent seems to offer hope, joy and promise – "God with us." Lenten reflections, on the other hand, emphasize sacrifice, and the cost of discipleship, of self-gift – "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me" - Luke 9:23. Of course, in living the Paschal Mystery we also recognize the hope, joy and promise of new life offered through the resurrection. For sure the paths converge, but one path seems to provide an easier journey than the other.

Two recent publications: *The Universal Christ*, by Richard Rohr, and *Jesus, Friend of My Soul*, by Joyce Rupp, have inspired me to look at Lent in a whole new way. What if I anticipated the Lenten season as an opportunity to focus exclusively on my relationship with Jesus Christ? Richard Rohr exspands, deepens, and challenges my knowledge of Jesus. Joyce Rupp provides a day by day reflection, based on a passage from scripture, on how to live life patterned on the life Jesus lived. Joyce states, "His life bore fruit because he continuously gave open-heartedly of himself." I am asking myself if I can "open- heartedly" give of myself and become more like him. If I take it seriously, six weeks won't be long enough.

-Sr. Nancy Marsh, OSM



Jesus, Friend of My Soul is available for purchase at the Servite Gift-Store or our website.

# St. Peregrine, Patron for Cancer Sufferers

Please mark your calendars for May 16, 2020. That is the date we will have our St. Peregrine May Event. That day, at 9:45 AM we will have a talk, followed by 11:00 Mass that includes the Anointing of the Sick. A lunch will be provided afterwards. Sr. Mary Gehringer, OSM, will be our speaker for the morning. She will share with us her journey on how she and her family walked with various family members through cancer.

I found this prayer and wanted to share it with you:

Jesus, the Healer, you are the source of blessing and love. We praise you for the gifs of care and comfort that you share with us. When we are overcome with disappointment and despair, help us remember that your love spills over into our darkness and emptiness. May we focus on the way that we can help others to find the good all around us. May St. Peregrine's love be a healing comfort for us. Amen.

-Sr. Linda Hess, OSM Director St. Peregrine Program



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#### We gratefully acknowledge the following honorariums received from October 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019

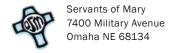
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### Social Media Corner

We Want Your "Likes" and "Shares"!

Please check our social media sites regularly for updates, photos and general information on what the Sisters are involved in currently. Our website, facebook and twitter pages are updated regularly with photos of the Sisters and other happenings around the Motherhouse.

Our social media sites continue to gain in popularity each quarter. Our numbers are up on both Facebook and Twitter. We are now up to 972 followers on our Facebook page. Like our page and invite others you think would enjoy it, and help us get to our next goal of 1,000 followers. We are at 200 followers on Twitter. Please help us spread the word by liking our pages and YouTube -www.youtube.com/theservantsofmary sharing our posts with your own social networks. With your help, the Sisters can connect with more friends and spread the word about our ministries.

If you are a graduate of a Catholic school in the Detroit, MI area, I invite you to check out www.bishopgallagher.org and the FaceBook group "I Went to Catholic School in Metro Detroit" (search for this group from your FaceBook page). There is a lot of history and great interaction from people you may know.



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-Tom Marasco, Director of Development

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