



# Network

Winter 2014

One Heart, One Hope, One Mission

## House of Champions

A Loving Home  
That Allows Children  
to Be Children

Also inside:

Renee Jones

Empowerment Center

Nicaragua Pilgrimage Update

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Announces Retirement

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Send correspondence to:

**Network**

Sisters of Notre Dame  
13000 Auburn Road  
Chardon, OH 44024  
[www.sndchardon.org](http://www.sndchardon.org)  
440.286.7101

*Cover photo: Emily at House of Champions*



## A LETTER FROM THE PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR

Dear Friends,

As the snow begins to melt after an especially cold winter, we look forward to springtime. Spring is the annual miracle of renewal. As we enter the spiritual springtime of Lent, let us be renewed in God's goodness, renewed in hope and renewed in the life and beauty that surrounds us.

This issue of Network includes articles on several of the ministries of the Sisters of Notre Dame that directly relate to the renewal of life in our community and abroad. You will read about the House of Champions, a place where children can be children; the Renee Jones Empowerment Center for trafficked women and children – a place that seeks to offer refuge for the victims and survivors. You will enjoy an article on the Sisters who express their beliefs and spirituality through writing – a ministry that encourages education and thoughtful exchange between young and old alike. You will also catch a glimpse of the life of our missionaries in Nicaragua, where a group of Sisters and associates

journeyed in pilgrimage to share their gifts and friendship with our Nicaraguan brothers and sisters.

I hope you will enjoy this profile of ministries which express our vision for a world shaped by the Gospel, a world where all persons can flourish in their human dignity. May we all embrace the spirit of renewal as we live our faith in new ways in an ever-changing world.

You and your family are continually in our prayers, especially during the Easter season. Thank you for your example of dedication and for your gifts of time, talent and treasure to the Sisters of Notre Dame. We value your partnership and look forward to another year of shared commitment to service.

Sincerely,

Sr. Margaret M. Gorman, SND  
Provincial Superior  
Sisters of Notre Dame, Chardon

*Sr. Nan and Sr. Karen play with the children outside of the House of Champions.*

# House of Champions

**A Loving Home That Allows Children To Be Children**

Outside a snowball fight rages between a handful of children and Sisters Nanette Zeimet, SND, and Karen Bohan, O.S.U., as the sun slowly dips behind a modest pink home in Cleveland. Inside, two boys laugh as they play Connect Four, while other children set the table for dinner under the watchful guidance of Sr. Mary Kay Conkey, O.S.U. In some respects, it looks like any loving home – children winding down for the evening after homework has been tackled, ready to have some fun. That’s the goal of House of Champions.



*“Too often, children come from dysfunctional homes where there is abuse, poverty, addictions, and crime.”*

*- Sr. Nan Zeimet, SND*

House of Champions, located at 2066 West 47th Street, is a realized dream of Sr. Nan Zeimet, SND and Sr. Mary Kay Conkey, OSU following a “Women with Spirit” conference in 2012. The religious congregations of Sisters of Notre Dame, Ursuline Sisters, and Sisters of the Most Holy Trinity gathered at this meeting to explore opportunities where they might collaborate.

“We were asked to share our dreams, and my dream was that children can be children,” recalls Sr. Nan, who will profess her final vows with the Sisters of Notre Dame in August. “Too often, children come from dysfunctional homes where there is abuse, poverty, addictions, and crime. They may also come from homes of violence and neglect and never have the opportunity to simply be children – to play, laugh, relax, or even get together with friends.”

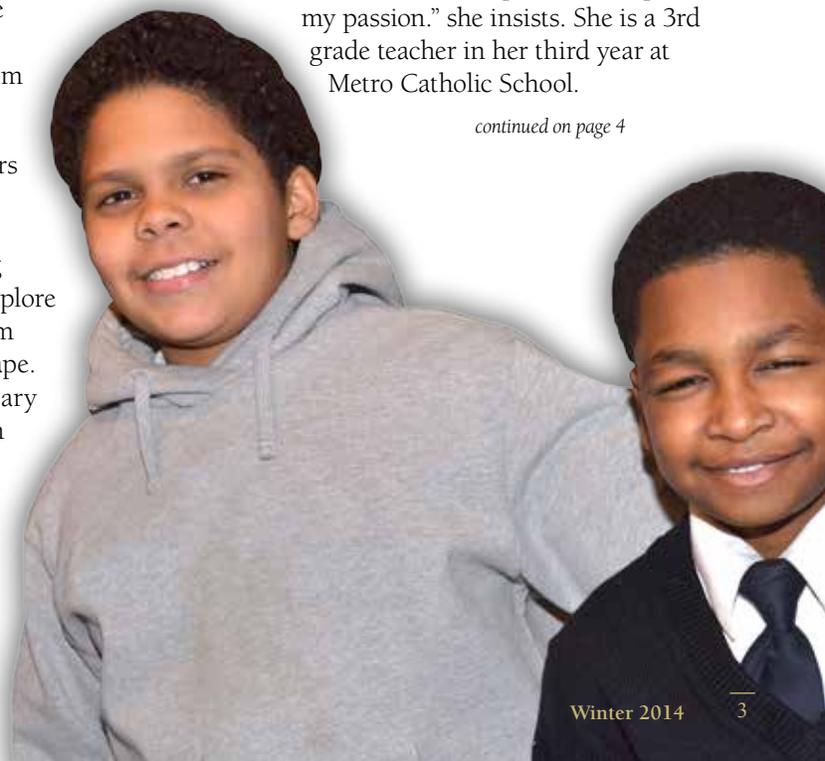
After sharing her dream, Sr. Mary Kay approached her at the conference and said, “I think we share the same dream.” From there, the dream blossomed.

In all, six sisters from various congregations began meeting regularly to explore how this dream might take shape. Sisters Nan, Mary Kay and Karen visited such ministries as Blessing

House, in Lorain, Ohio, and Boys Hope Girls Hope, in Cleveland, where both ministries reach out to children in need to help them reach their full potential through a loving, value-based, safe home environment.

“We first considered a residential ministry, but it was suggested we start smaller,” Sr. Nan recalls. Originally from Overland Park, Kansas, Sr. Nan moved to Chardon, Ohio in 2005 after reading an ad in Vision magazine on the Sisters of Notre Dame. Sr. Nan has an associate degree in Nursing, bachelor’s degree in Management of Human Resources, and a master’s degree in Liberal Arts. Prior to her decision to enter the order, she worked for 10 years as a registered nurse, nine of those years in a hospital and one year as school nurse. She also has worked as a professional clown (Funzo the Clown) for 11 years. While in formation, Sr. Nan was recently able to return to school for her licensure in Education from Notre Dame College. “Teaching is my passion,” she insists. She is a 3rd grade teacher in her third year at Metro Catholic School.

*continued on page 4*





“... these children receive help with their homework and are given the opportunity to play games, read books, work on a computer, eat dinner together “family style” and simply share their concerns with a loving adult.”

*- Sr. Karen, one of the principals at Metro Catholic School*



Sr. Mary Kay serves as Guidance Counselor at Urban Community School. This school provides primarily low-income children from Cleveland’s near west side with an individualized, innovative, and challenging education. Prior to being a counselor, Sister Mary Kay as a classroom teacher wanted to see firsthand where her students came from, making personal home visits to each of her students. “I want to see the home, neighborhood environment in order to connect with them in the classroom” she explained. Sister then went on to discuss the House of Champions saying, “Our dream for a safe, loving environment for children slowly began to take shape throughout 2013. God was good. We did little things, one day at a time, beginning with choosing a name.” One huge obstacle still remained; “how would we raise the money.” Sister Mary Kay currently serves as Executive Director of House of Champions.

The Sisters sponsored a fundraiser, “Opening Windows,” at St. Ignatius in August of 2013. This pasta dinner/ raffle/silent auction, along with other donations, raised \$25,000. Next, grants were submitted and awarded from the Sisters of Notre Dame, Ursuline Sisters of Cleveland, and St. Mary Seminary. Financial gifts were sought and received from the Carfagna Family Foundation, Catanzarite Family Foundation III, and Dr. Frank Vecchio and Helen W. Vecchio Foundation. Yes, God is good!

“At St. Monica’s, the convent was closing, and we were invited to take any furniture we would like for our ‘dream home’. We took a dining room table for eight that would allow everyone to eat together as a family in addition to desks, chairs and shelves,” describes Sr. Mary Kay.

Urban Community School purchased land and offered a modest, pink home on West 47th Street to the Sisters at a rental price of \$1 a month. Utilities, repairs, home improvements and the rest would be added expenses.

The Sisters were delighted. They had their home.

Today, House of Champions welcomes seven boys and girls after school, on weekdays, from Metro Catholic, St. Rocco's, and Urban Community School. From 3:00 p.m. to 8 p.m., these children receive help with their homework and are given the opportunity to play games, read books, work on a computer, eat dinner together "family style" and simply share their concerns with a loving adult. Volunteers come to the home and assist by tutoring the children, playing with them, helping prepare meals, and pitching in to teach the boys and girls good social skills. "Most importantly, the children see they are loved!" exclaims Sr. Karen, one of the principals at Metro Catholic School in Cleveland.

"I like coming to House of Champions," declares the outgoing Anthony, 10, a fourth-grader at St. Rocco's. "They help me with my homework, and I get to meet friends here." Janelle, a third grade student at Metro Catholic School also enjoys coming to House of Champions. Another student from Metro Catholic School, Michael, just joined the other children at House of Champions.

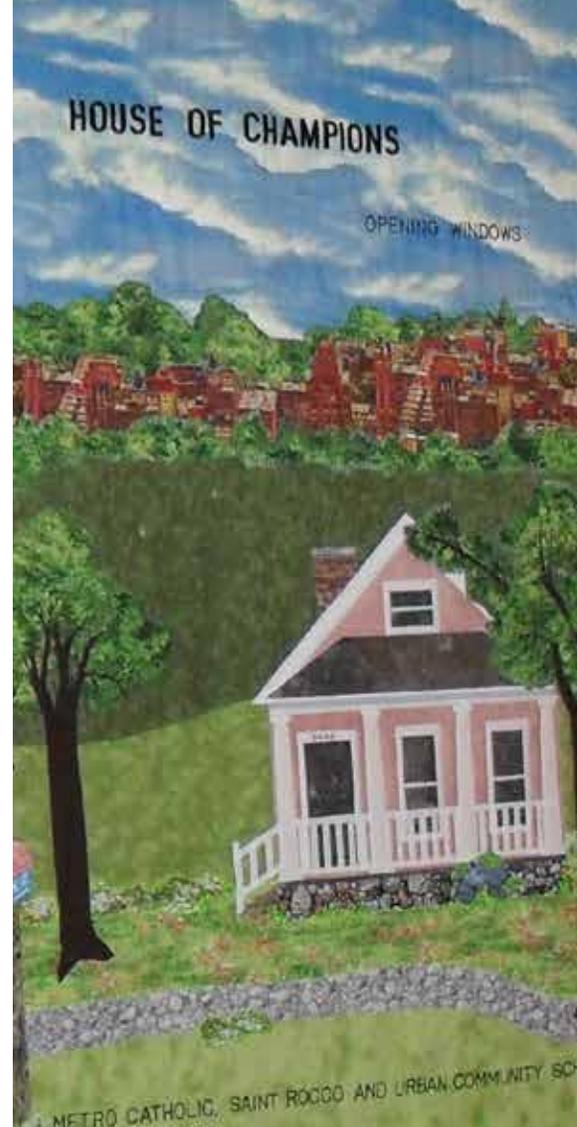
Chloe, 12, a seventh-grader at Urban Community School, comes

to House of Champions each day with her sisters Faith, 7 and Emily who is in 4th grade. "It's really nice here," she describes softly, with a smile, while reading in the spacious living room.

"I like playing games here," adds Kweli, 8, from St. Rocco's. "My favorite game is Battleship."

The fun, light-hearted Sr. Karen, the treasurer for the House of Champions, concludes, as she helps wiggle tiny pink gloves onto Faith's hands so they can play in the snow, "The hope is to use our time at House of Champions to instill positive habits in the children, promote education, and show these young folks we love them. Our young children learn social and other life skills, eat together as a family, and receive help with their homework. We all have a great time playing together, too." All three Sisters do this exhausting work in addition to full-time ministry.

*For more information about volunteering or support of House of Champions, contact Sr. Nanette Zeimet at [nzeimet@ndec.org](mailto:nzeimet@ndec.org) or Sr. Mary Kay at [nun4kids@yahoo.com](mailto:nun4kids@yahoo.com). The House of Champions is a 501 (c) 3. They will be pleased to provide a receipt for tax records. †*







# Renee Jones Empowerment Center

## Offering Hope to Victims of Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is a dire global reality occurring not only in countries like Brazil, Costa Rica, United Arab Emirates, Thailand or the Netherlands, but also throughout Northeast Ohio, enslaving thousands of children, women, and men annually.

Human trafficking refers to the illegal and immoral buying and selling of human beings as commodities for commercial sexual slavery or forced labor. It is one of the most flourishing and profitable criminal industries of the world, with direct or indirect ties to the illicit drug-trade industries. While forced labor constitutes the majority of demand, commercial sexual exploitation is extensive and wide spread.

Tragically, women and children form the most significant share of human sex-trafficking victims. Often, these victims were traumatized as children, and abuse serves as the foundation for the rest of their lives. Runaways get tracked and recruited. Many of the women end up having children of their own.

Human trafficking denies victims the right to live a normal, healthy, respectable life. Consider these disturbing statistics:

- The human trafficking industry ranks among the top-three, highest-grossing, illegal criminal industries along with illegal drugs and arms.
- Human trafficking generates more than \$32 billion in annual profits globally.
- The number of children trafficked each year for forced labor and sexual slavery has been quoted as high as 1.2 million; UNICEF puts that number at 6 million.
- Most of the time, the trafficker is familiar with the victim; either a family friend, neighbor or relative.
- More than 700,000 women and children (both girls and boys) have been trafficked into the United States from the year 2000.
- In Ohio more than 1,000 children are trafficked for commercial sex each year and more than 3,000 are at risk.

Thankfully, there is one local center where victims of human trafficking can go for help.

The Renee Jones Empowerment Center, located at 1340 West 65th Street in Cleveland, is the only Northeast Ohio agency committed to providing life coaching and aftercare services to those with the courage and opportunity to break from the human trafficking system.

The Center is named after Renee Jones who initially founded a weekly empowerment program at the Bishop Cosgrove Center in 1998. This program was designed to get homeless individuals off the street, off public assistance, and into a program of self-respect and self-sufficiency. In 1999, a black-tie gala recognized 78 people who moved from homelessness to self-sufficiency. "I felt, if investing one day a week could produce these great results, imagine the impact that could be made if there was a center that tailored programs to meet the needs of human trafficking victims," recalls Renee Jones, who works full-time in Human Resources at the Great Lakes Science Center but finds time to volunteer most weekday nights and on weekends to eradicate human trafficking on Cleveland streets.

Renee says she envisioned a community center where people could receive skills, information, and assistance to achieve a better quality of life. With the help of five vision partners who provided the funding and many dedicated volunteers, her dream became a reality in October of 2002 with the opening of the Renee Jones Empowerment Center.

Today, the Renee Jones Empowerment Center serves people of all diversities, faiths and ages in the greater Cleveland area who have fallen victim to human trafficking. The Center offers programs that benefit the whole community – providing educational talks on human trafficking, counseling, advocating for victims in the courts, coordinating services with other social service agencies as a site for the Ohio Benefits Bank, and even helping women dress for job interviews.

Assisting her at the Center is Sr. Cecilia Liberatore, SND, former Provincial Superior of the Chardon Province. Sr. Cecilia reminds us what Jewish Rabbis quoted from the Talmud to thank Oscar Schindler, 'Whoever saves one life saves the entire world.' Schindler rose to the highest level of humanity as he

*continued on page 8*



(l-r) Sr. Cecilia Liberatore, SND, and Renee Jones stand outside the Renee Jones Empowerment Center on a Friday evening.

## Renee Jones Empowerment Center Offering Hope to Victims of Human Trafficking

*continued from page 7*

continually risked his life to save Jews during the Holocaust. Renee and Sr. Cecilia are walking the streets of Cleveland and entering strip clubs, to talk with women and girls of all ages who are victims of human sex-trafficking.

“I just love Sr. Cecilia,” exclaims Renee with a broad smile and knowing chuckle. “I knew if the Sisters of Notre Dame got involved in this with me, something was going to get done. I’ve known Sr. Cecilia for two years now. It was a divine connection.”

Sr. Cecilia says she first became interested in human trafficking when she attended a chapter of the Sisters of Notre Dame in Rome in 2004. “One of the Sisters there gave a presentation on global human trafficking. It made a deep impression on me. I came home and began studying its existence in the United States and northeast Ohio,” recalls Sr. Cecilia.

The tireless Sister of Notre Dame joined the Collaborative to End Human Trafficking. “We Sisters of Notre Dame had taken a corporate stance against human trafficking in 2009. As part of the Collaborative we both educate and advocate.”

Sr. Cecilia heard about the Renee Jones Empowerment Center and called Renee to ask how she and the Sisters of Notre Dame could help. In addition to meeting one-on-one with prostitutes, drug addicts, homeless and other

victims of human trafficking, Sr. Cecilia speaks on human trafficking at least two times a month. “I speak at a variety of churches of all denominations; at public, private and Catholic schools, neighborhood groups, district police stations, foster-care parent groups, etc. to help people become aware of the monstrosities occurring against other humans through the sex trade and human trafficking,” Sr. Cecilia describes. “People need to know about human trafficking so that more can be done to help its victims and survivors.”

Sr. Cecilia goes on to say, “but I also have a long-time passion to live the Gospel directly in our neighborhoods and on our streets, being with and supporting persons who I know God embraces with goodness and care. I want to respond to the call of God, with the support of my religious community, to incarnate divine compassion the way Jesus did during his life on earth. But it’s mutual too because I am so blessed by all of the persons I am with. The women and girls we meet on the streets and in the clubs are real people in real situations,” she reminds us. “They are all ages and from all walks of life, daughters, sisters, mothers, even grandmothers. They’re us.”

Programs offered through the Renee Jones Empowerment Center include:

- Self-esteem building/empowerment sessions
- Life-skills training

- Group therapy for minors through a partnership with Beech Brook
- Job readiness/employability skills/dress for success
- Computer training/customer service training
- Weekly support groups (women & youth) / Sister Circle
- Community educational events
- Health fairs
- Monthly special events: Open Mic Night, movie night
- Arts & Theater
- Annual events: Young Women’s conference, Women to Women conference, various holiday events for the community
- Annual, day-long human trafficking symposium and annual national human trafficking day conference, both in partnership with Notre Dame College

Project Red Cord is another outstanding program offered at the Renee Jones Empowerment Center. This diversion program is for first-time offenders of street prostitution. Project Red Cord Phase II provides support to victims and survivors of human trafficking, helping them to rebuild their lives, connect to services, and work to return hope where hope was taken away. Phase II also provides support services for ex-commercial sex workers.

Another program at the Empowerment Center is “Purify the Mic.” Purify the Mic is a spoken-music production open to poets, singers, rappers, comedians, and other creative artists, fellow connoisseurs, and enthusiastic listeners who appreciate the arts. Purify the Mic offers a relaxed and down to earth setting, a place where individuals can feel free to be themselves. Freedom of speech is encouraged, except profanity is prohibited. In turn, the program follows with a featured artist(s) who, through creative expression (i.e. poetry, rap, song, drama, etc.), encourages, edifies, and empowers the audience with their compositions concerning Jesus Christ!

The Renee Jones Empowerment Center's annual, young women's conference invites women 13 to 19 years of age for lunch, workshops, entertainment and a fun-filled day of empowerment.

"One gap that still exists is an emergency shelter for women who run away or escape," reports Sr. Cecilia. "Women rescued during a law enforcement sweep operation are leery to enter a homeless shelter. It's too easy for their pimps to find them. In addition, everyone who enters a homeless shelter in Cuyahoga county must now go through a coordinated intake system and be assessed as to how critical the situation is before space is granted. That adds to their humiliation and fear."

Sr. Cecilia says recognizing victims of human trafficking, particularly in the sex trades, is not necessarily easy. "It's more than seeing how they are dressed. It takes an intuitive sense," she explains. "I observe where and how they are looking around. We go into strip clubs where women are recruited for human trafficking. Other times, human traffickers will force women to work at these clubs because they haven't reached their income quota with "tricks". The women come in all shapes, sizes, races, ages and backgrounds, from inner city and suburban who often need money to support a drug addiction."

Sr. Cecilia and Renee agree that one primary goal is to help the women feel valued and loved. For example, each Valentine's Day, they greet strippers entering the clubs with long-stem red roses. "It's amazing how they respond – shock, tears, hugs. Equally amazing is how the male customers respond," chortles Renee, with a wink. On other occasions they distribute bags of basic toiletries with a note of encouragement included.

"One prostitute told me she has kept every single note, and she reads them now and then for encouragement,"

Renee says, overcome with emotion. "That is when I am rewarded. It made me feel great." She continues, "At the very least we keep showing up. The women have come to expect us. They know we are there for them no matter what."

The Renee Jones Empowerment Center also sponsors a weekly support group on Saturdays so women receive mutual support from each other. "One thing that has made a difference for our women is knowing there are one or two safe people they can open up to," says Sr. Cecilia. "Typically, they have been betrayed by the very person they thought cared about them, a parent, other family member, or a friend."

Both women explain that human trafficking and drug addiction go hand-in-hand. "Pimps will get the women hooked on crack or heroin so they are dependent on the sex trade for income," Renee explains. "We know we cannot force women to accept help. We make ourselves available to them. Some women call rather than come to the center; other women who come will call others and invite them to come and be a part of our support group."

"Some of the women do all right; others get pulled back into prostitution," shares Sr. Cecilia. "Ohio laws are changing to become more in line with Federal laws, more focused on the pimps and johns as law breakers, and exploited women and children as victims. Women don't usually wake up and say, 'I think I'll sell my body for sex today.' Minors are always victims, legally they can't consent to commercial sex. I work with the police where I live in the Collinwood neighborhood. They've let me come on vice sweeps to meet with women who are brought to the holding/staging area before being transported to the Justice Center. I'm there as an advocate for the women. It helps the women to have another woman there just to be with them. Usually they're handcuffed and can't even wipe their own tears."

The Renee Jones Empowerment Center is a 501(c)3 agency that receives funding

through private donations; grants from the Cleveland Foundation, Neighborhood Connection and The Hilton Fund for Sisters; and churches, groups and an annual fundraiser.

"We don't receive government funding so we have the flexibility to work with the women and not be restricted by government regulations. Sr. Cecilia says. We have to be flexible because there aren't any cookie-cutter answers. We give each person what she needs. Each story is unique. We are not a luxury suite here at the Center, we focus on the individuals. There is no paid staff; everyone is a volunteer. We've never experienced crime at our site and I'm never afraid to come here and work."

"Sr. Cecilia is my personal angel," exclaims Renee, wrapping her strong arms around the Sister. "It's God we met. It is so dark out there. When you see the heartbreak of women from all walks of life, it helps us do what we do. We pray in the car before entering a strip club. We do a lot of debriefing when we return to the Center. Only we know what we saw. It's a different world out there. I've seen it all in the past 10 years since the Center opened."

Renee concludes, "I've always been a person who believed one person can make a difference. I believe it is a matter of the heart. My heart is about touching and helping the people. Sr. Cecilia and I share this same passion. We want human trafficking victims and survivors restored to beauty, the beauty that God sees in them." †

**"The women and girls we meet on the streets and in the clubs are real people in real situations."**

– Sr. Cecilia Liberatore, SND



# NICARAGUA PARTNERSHIP PILGRIMAGE

by Sr. Marie Manning, Global Mission Coordinator



“Being immersed in the daily life of our sisters and brothers in Jinotega, Nicaragua, was truly a profound experience. I witnessed a joy and resilience that is often missing in our materialistic society.” That comment by Notre Dame Associate Margaret Lanese, calls to mind so many poignant memories of the January 2-10 Nicaragua Partnership Pilgrimage. The goal of this inaugural group visit to the Notre Dame Mission in Jinotega was to see Christ in the sacred places and people of Nicaragua, and to develop mutually-enriching relationships.

One of the memories our group of twelve now treasures prayerfully in our hearts is the memory of an afternoon we spent with young pregnant women at Casa Materna. Jinotega’s Casa Materna is one of more than 100 similar homes across Nicaragua, established in response to the large number of teen pregnancies. Sister Dolores, one of our SND missionaries in Jinotega, explained to us that her involvement at Casa Materna is one of presence, or “accompaniment,” demonstrating the Church’s concern for these vulnerable teens, many of whom have been abused by older men, sometimes by family members. Only about 40% of the teens have partners

“OUR MISSIONARIES ARE HAVING A STRONG IMPACT ON THE PEOPLE SIMPLY BY LOVING THEM AND BEING PRESENT TO THEM.”

- Sister Laura Wingert

who will provide ongoing support. Nonetheless, the young women want to keep their babies. Adoption is rare, although sometimes the children are later “gifted” to older women. Because hospitals are generally inaccessible to these teenagers who live in the mountains, the teens walk many miles to Casa Materna a week before they are due, in order to be prepared for giving birth in the Jinotega hospital. Reflecting on this reality, Sister Laura Wingert later wrote: “The young women at Casa Materna stole my heart. I could not help thinking about Mary and Joseph on the way to Bethlehem when I heard how far they had to walk to get help. Our missionaries are having a strong impact on the people simply by loving them and being present to them.” Sister Dolores and the group of pilgrims shared the afternoon with these young women on January 6, providentially the Feast of Epiphany. Our group and the teens offered our giftedness to one another; we bonded by making jewelry together and painting one another’s fingernails! No words are needed in the universal language of love. It was a bittersweet experience for us; our goodbye hugs conveyed our solidarity and heartfelt concern for the young women and their babies.

Our visit to Las Cureñas, a women’s black pottery cooperative, was also a memorable experience. We admired the strength and skill of these empowered women who – as Associate Gardenia Witherspoon later commented – “are effectively and personally transforming their world...gaining self-sustaining financial independence.” Many of the twelve members of Las Cureñas, a twenty-five-year-old cooperative, are single mothers who use their income to support their families. We were amazed at the extensive pottery process, beginning with the women harvesting their own clay from the hill of a family member’s property and transporting it by mule.

We discovered how challenging it was to form pots, even when one of the potters was assisting our attempts at the non-electric potter’s wheel. “Déle, déle!” (“Go ahead, keep going!”), María would exclaim to the learner, who exerted every leg muscle to keep the wheel spinning. For the remainder of the pilgrimage, “Déle!” was an exclamation often accompanied by peals of laughter.

On another day of our pilgrimage, we met Gema, one of the women who picks coffee beans for 10 hours a day and makes only \$6.37 daily. After slipping and sliding on the muddy hills of La Fundadora Coffee Farm where 12 of us combined an hour’s worth of harvested coffee beans to fill one basket, we pilgrims were extremely grateful when we were invited to sit down for a coffee break! During this rest period, the owner of the coffee farm explained processes used to assure sustainability, which requires that ecology, economics, and social justice are in harmony. We were all impressed by the Nicaraguans’ environmental practices, so evident in Fundadora and in other places we visited.

It was not only Nicaraguan women who so impacted us “Gringas” from the North; equally impressive were the three Chardon missionaries (Sisters Charlotte Hobelman, Roseanna Mellert, and Dolores Mikula) who accompany the Nicaraguan people, especially women and children. Sister James put into words what other pilgrims were thinking, “I am blown away by the happy, carefree and yet spiritual attitude of our missionaries. They are content with what they have or can get, with no complaining. The

“I AM BLOWN AWAY BY THE HAPPY, CAREFREE AND YET SPIRITUAL ATTITUDE OF OUR MISSIONARIES. THEY ARE CONTENT WITH WHAT THEY HAVE OR CAN GET, WITH NO COMPLAINING. THE PEOPLE ARE THE SAME WAY AND THEIR JOY IS CONTAGIOUS.”

- Sr. James Kelly

people are the same way and their joy is contagious.” Associate Bonnie Castle’s memories also capture that joy, “I miss having a little one come running and jumping into my arms for the greatest hug and kiss I have ever received. I miss seeing the special needs children as they gave their all with such pride and skill to help in recycling used materials.”

So much more could be said of this profound experience in Nicaragua, but allow Associate Margaret Lanese to sum it up: “I share the sentiments of Jesuit Fr. Dean Brackley who so aptly described his experience in Central America, ‘First it will break your heart, then you fall in love, and then you are ruined for life.’ Hopefully, this being ‘ruined for life’ will enable me to live in a more simple, faith-filled, Christ-centered, equitable way.”

As Coordinator of Notre Dame Global Missions, I am especially grateful for the hospitality of our missionaries and the people they accompany, for the bonding which took place during our pilgrimage, and for a deepening understanding of the insight shared by Pope Francis in “The Joy of the Gospel”: “I can say that the most beautiful and natural expressions of joy which I have seen in my life were in poor people who had little to hold onto.” †

*Sr. Kathleen Glavich, SND,  
dressed as a first-century woman*

A writer is a person who uses written words in various styles and techniques to communicate ideas.

Writers produce various forms of literary art and creative writing such as novels, short stories, poetry, plays, news articles, screenplays, or essays. Skilled writers are able to use language to express ideas and their work contributes significantly to the cultural content of a society.

*– Wikipedia*

# SND Writers' BOOKS, BLOGS AND MORE!



*“There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.”*

– Maya Angelou

Skilled writing takes time – months perhaps years investigating topics and engaging in interviews; sleepless nights wrestling for just that right verb; hours upon hours honing, extracting all verbiage. Three Sisters of Notre Dame are quite familiar with the exacting art of writing. Published authors Sisters Kathleen Glavich, Melannie Svoboda, and Loretta Pastva minister world-wide through their beautifully crafted written words. They wield their pens (or more likely, punch their computer keyboards) to educate, encourage, and even entertain readers.

*The Fisherman’s Wife: The Gospel According to St. Peter’s Spouse*, by Sr. Kathleen Glavich, SND, asks readers to consider was it like to be a Jewish woman married to a man who leaves home for long stretches of time to follow a controversial preacher.

Sr. Kathleen explains the plot: “Readers experience the life of Peter’s wife vicariously. You meet the impetuous Peter, the tempestuous Zebedee brothers, and other apostles, people healed by Jesus, Mary, and the Lord himself. They spring to life as their stories are told through the eyes of Peter’s wife. At first she regards Jesus as a rival for her husband’s affections. When Jesus moves to her town of Capernaum, she witnesses his works. As she transforms from a doubter into a fervent disciple, you are treated to a unique view not only of Peter but of Jesus – his words and actions culminating in his death and resurrection.”

The book sells for \$19.95 and is available on Amazon.com, Barnes and Noble.com, some local religious

goods stores. A woman in Florida liked the book so much that she set up a Facebook page for it. “I’m getting positive feedback about the book in reviews, which is very affirming for a novice novelist,” says Sr. Kathleen.

This is the latest of the more than 70 books and five textbook series Sr. Kathleen has published. For 13 years, the dedicated writer worked as general editor of the *Christ Our Life* series, writing three revisions and adding a preschool program for three and four year olds. *The Fisherman’s Wife* is her first novel.

“My books published last year include *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (St. Mary’s Press), *Arts and Crafts from A to Z: Over 150 Ideas for Catechists and Religion Teachers* (Twenty-Third Publications), *Totally Catholic! A Catechism for Kids and Their Parents and Teachers* (Pauline Books and Media), and *Sunday Prayer for Catechists* (Liturgy Training Publications). Any day now I should be getting the first copies of *The Essential Guide to Catholic Terms* (Loyola Press). You can see some of my other books if you go to the bookstore on my blog,” suggests Sr. Kathleen.

“Although sometimes I miss classroom teaching, I’m still teaching through my writing – and I’m reaching far more people,” she explains. “For one thing, through my writing, I hope to deepen their relationship with God. For example, even the novel, although a historical romance, is a vehicle for bringing people to know Jesus better. From the titles, you can tell the other

purposes of my books are to educate people about the faith and, in particular, provide practical materials for religion teachers.”

Sr. Kathleen’s writing has led to many speaking engagements. This winter, she travels to Arabia for the third time to speak at their catechetical conference. “I was invited initially because the director of the Office for Christian Formation in the Arab countries purchased my book *A Crash Course in Teaching Religion* in a bookstore in Ireland,” she explains.

Sr. Kathleen says she writes her blog, “Catholic Faith Corner,” for the same reasons she writes books. “It’s like doing homework, but it’s worth it. Each week I offer something inspirational or informational, related to our faith, in hopes that it will bring people closer to God and help them live more fully and more joyfully,” the prolific writer describes.

Sr. Kathleen is not the only writer producing works within the order and significantly contributing to the cultural content of society.

“Teacher, student, author, speaker, listener, friend, poet, and farm girl,” Sr. Melannie Svoboda, SND, describes herself on her blog. Sr. Melannie has authored 12 books including *Traits of a Healthy Spirituality*; *When the Rain Speaks: Celebrating God’s Presence in Nature*; *With the Dawn Rejoicing: A Christian Perspective on Pain and Suffering*; *Just Because: Prayer Poems for Your Spiritual Journey* (Twenty-Third Publications); *Gracious Goodness: Living Each Day in the Gifts of the Spirit* (Loyola Press); and *Gospels to Go* (NCEA).

*continued on page 14*

# SND Writers' BOOKS, BLOGS AND MORE!

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Sr. Melannie Svoboda, SND

Each Monday on her blog, “Sunflower Seeds,” Sr. Melannie posts a reflection or simple musing on some aspect of spiritual life that includes things like walking in the park, slicing an onion for the casserole, caring for a child, spotting 16 turtles on a log in a lake, reading a line from scripture, laughing at a joke, or mourning a significant loss.

A Sister of Notre Dame for 49 years, Sr. Melannie greets guests to her blog: “Welcome to my blog! I’m so glad you came – whether by deliberate intent or by accident. This blog is for people curious about God and the spiritual life. It’s for people who like to pray or who struggle with prayer. For people whose faith is strong or whose faith needs strengthening. And for people who are trying to find God in the events and situations of their particular lives.”

Here is a taste of her writing style: “I confess: after I receive Communion, I sometimes watch the other people going up to receive. You might think I’m being irreverent, but I think there’s a special grace that comes

from watching the Communion line... It matters little if we walk or shuffle, if we use a cane, or if we carry a child. What matters most is that we come with our whole heart to receive this incredible gift that Jesus gave us the night before he died. If we realized the true worth of this sacred sacrament, I have a hunch, we would all be skipping to Communion!”

Sr. Melannie’s blog enables a free exchange of ideas between author and readers. A blog guest, Heather, wrote, “I once sponsored a child in Kenya who told me that her responsibility at Mass was to dance the gifts up to the altar. I loved the image and always pictured not a stately march but a lively twirling, swirling dance!”

Sr. Melannie recalls the first novel she wrote, “I was in third grade, and I wrote my book in a yellow tablet. The book was called, Sugar, about a little girl and a horse,” she says with a smile, recalling how her parents would not let her have her own horse. “I’m sure it was perhaps three pages long.” From that moment, her desire to write was unquenchable.

“When I became a Sister of Notre Dame, writing was not encouraged, or else we were not supposed to sign our names. Perhaps, they were afraid we would become too proud,” she laughs, thinking back. “Today, I am very encouraged by my community and given time to write. The Sisters are always so affirming. They also

allow me time to travel and give talks throughout the country. My blog gets more than 1,000 hits a week. I am excited by how many people I can reach through the blog.”

Humor is often an element in her writing. She considers, “C.S. Lewis always used humor in his writing. I believe God wants us to laugh. I think people learn more as they are laughing or take more in when they are smiling.” Sr. Melannie also writes for devotional magazines. Her free-lance articles have appeared in numerous publications including *America*, *National Catholic Reporter*, *Living Faith*, *Catholic Digest*, *Review for Religious*, *Liguorian*, *Give Us This Day*, and *Country Woman*. Sr. Melannie’s books, including *Just Because*, and *When the Blue Heron Flies*, and her poetry can be purchased at Amazon.com, on her website or at the SND Gallery in Chardon, Ohio.

Another productive SND writer, Sr. Loretta Pastva has traveled the world – Korea, Rome, France, China, Taiwan, Africa. “My deepest motivation in writing is a desire to make Christ the light of the entire world,” explains the passionate 83-year-old.

Like so many writers, Sr. Loretta fell in love with the craft in the first grade after penning a poem about a bird and watching her classmates’ enjoyment as she read it aloud. She went on much later to earn a Master’s degree in English from Notre Dame

*“There is nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at a typewriter and bleed.”*

– Ernest Hemingway

*“If there’s a book that you want to read, but it hasn’t been written yet, then you must write it.”*

– Toni Morrison

University in South Bend, Indiana; a Master’s degree in Theology with an emphasis in Scripture from St. Michael’s College in Vermont; and certification in Journalism from the University of Minnesota.

Reflecting back on her calling, the enthusiastic writer recalls as a seven-year-old child listening to her father read letters from her uncle as he traveled the world. “I traveled the globe through my imagination as I listened to these letters,” she describes. “I realized you could impact the world through writing.”

In 1971, Sr. Loretta began writing professionally. “I edited a four-book English composition series to help fellow teachers uncomfortable with teaching writing,” she recalls. Next, came a three-book series on grammar. Then, in 1976, she was commissioned by her community to serve as senior editor of a high-school religion series titled, *Light of the World*. “We produced eight books that covered the gamut of theology,” Sr. Loretta says. By now, the writing bug was firmly implanted.

Sr. Loretta collaborated with her staff to publish the first photo album of her province titled, “A Community of Faith.” Other projects included the publication of *Great Religions of the World*; *A Book of Ideas for High School Retreats*; and *Growing Up To*

*God, a Guide to Confession for High School Students*. “The sins change from second and third grade to high school,” she considers with a chuckle. Throughout the past years, her textbooks have sold in the millions.

From 1997 to 2000, Sr. Loretta was called to minister in Korea. While teaching English there, she was asked by the Superior General of her community to write a short history of the congregation and all their ministries across the globe in recognition of the 150th anniversary of the community. The finished book was published by the French publishing house, Editions du Signe.

Upon returning home to the United States, Sr. Loretta was hired by the same French publisher to travel across the U.S. and interview numerous Bishops and religious congregations to write their histories for publication as coffee-table books. “Perhaps the most interesting project at this time was my interview with the Carmelites for the Aged and Infirm in New York whose foundress, Mother Angeline McCrory, was being introduced for canonization. My work was cited as a step toward the realization of that process,” she states. “My next assignment took me to Africa to gather notes and photos for a history of our missions there. Of the books I’ve been involved with, *Vineyards in a Far Country* is one of my favorites,” Sister admits.



Sr. Loretta Pastva, SND

In between these projects, Sr. Loretta was the editor of SND’s newsletter, *Netmaker*, for 15 years, prior to its redesign as *Network* magazine. Most recently, the energetic Sister has written and published two volumes on the history of the Cleveland Province of Notre Dame covering the years 1924 to 1949 and 1950 to 1975.

Sr. Loretta happily concludes, “My writing has taken me all over the world. Now, I’m tempted just to sit in my rocking chair. However, I still write every emotion or thought, and writing remains the most natural way I can express myself. Writing can be a lonely job at times, and it is not the finished product that I find most rewarding. I hardly ever read one of my published books. Instead, there is a certain emotional satisfaction in capturing one’s thoughts and emotion in words. It is the artistic process I most enjoy. Yes – that is the joy I find in writing.” †



# SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME RECEIVE CORPORATE PHILANTHROPY AWARD

Leo Hyland, President of Cleveland Central Catholic (CCC), presented Sr. Margaret Gorman, SND, Provincial Superior of the Chardon Province, with CCC's Corporate Philanthropy Award on November 16th at the Wasmer Ironman Center. Sixty-eight people were on hand to celebrate and express their thanks.

Sr. Margaret says, "Probably the most touching aspect of receiving this award was seeing just how many people are dedicated to the mission of Central Catholic: faculty, staff, board members, donors, community partners. It really does 'take a village' and there is a wonderful supportive village grown up around CCC."

Sr. Margaret continues, "Historically, our mission of education was to serve the underserved, to contribute our efforts to those who could not afford an education. Today, we describe our mission as 'education for

transformation,' and CCC certainly has a transformative impact on students. I heard some wonderful stories at the awards dinner from teachers! Sr. Allison Marie and the Sisters who work at CCC really identify with the mission of CCC, and the province as a whole supports their ministry proudly."

There are currently six Sisters of Notre Dame serving at CCC in various capacities:

**Sr. Allison Marie Gusdanovic**,  
*Principal*

**Sr. Karen Dolovacky**, *Teacher*

**Sr. M. Joseph Fernandez**, *Guidance*

**Sr. Mary Antoinette Krejsa**, *Teacher*

**Sr. Kelley Rush**, *Intervention Specialist*

**Sr. Mary Seton Schlather**, *Teacher*

"We are thrilled to be a part of this vibrant school and community. I am impressed with the creativity and resourcefulness of everyone who comes together to support Central Catholic. Unlimited resources are never enough to make a good school. Talented and dedicated people willing to extend themselves for students are what make Central such an outstanding school," describes Sr. Margaret.

Sr. Mary Ann Baran, SND, taught at CCC for three years, from 1992-1995. She says, "Cleveland Central Catholic has been and is a loved place of ministry for many of us – a school where we were free and encouraged to live the mission of the Sisters of Notre Dame: to educate and to proclaim the goodness of God especially to the poor and under-served. To have our service recognized and honored is a source of much joy and lets us know, as CCC has been and is a gift and a blessing for us, we have been a gift and blessing for CCC as well."

Sr. Carol Dikovitsky, SND, taught at Central Catholic from 1982-87. She remarks, "Receiving the Corporate Philanthropy Award validated the sense of mission we have always felt toward Cleveland Central Catholic. So many of us have ministered there over the years and resonated with the school's philosophy, values, and mission to make a quality Catholic education available to urban students."

Helen M. Burdenski, SND, served at Cleveland Central Catholic from 1969 to 1973; known then as Sr. Mary Patricia. She lovingly describes, "In recent years, every time I visit the CCC campus, I am amazed by the many physical improvements to the campus, but even more so, I am impressed by the goodness of the students, their friendliness, their professional manner, and their high ideals."

Leo Hyland, President of Cleveland Central Catholic, reflects, "In addition to the time and energy the Sisters of Notre Dame have given to CCC, it is also important to consider the effect their charism has on our culture here. Truly, CCC takes our students as we find them, and raises them through faith formation, academic rigor and service to others. In this time-tested way, our students rise to their potential thanks to the blessings of good teachers and the sense of community that comes from a traditional Catholic education. Classic SND approach!"

Hyland continues, "The Sisters of Notre Dame continue to bless CCC with financial support. Most years, they provide our families with 'Julie grants' – annual scholarships in honor of St. Julie Billiart. CCC needs this funding desperately, as do our families. So, thanks in large part to the dedication and commitment of the Sisters of Notre Dame, CCC has a bright future." †



*"Talented and dedicated people willing to extend themselves for students are what make Central such an outstanding school."*

*– Sr. Margaret Gorman, SND*

# Notre Dame College President Announces Retirement

**Notre Dame College (NDC) President Dr. Andrew P. Roth, 67, announced his retirement effective June 30, 2014. Roth, the 13th president in the college's outstanding 91-year history, has served in this position since July, 2003.**

A native of Canton, Ohio, Dr. Roth earned a doctorate in Public Policy and Higher Education Finance from State University of New York at Buffalo, MBA in Marketing and Strategic Planning from Gannon University, MA in English from Case Western Reserve University; and BA in English and History from John Carroll University. A self-described "lifelong learner," Dr. Roth committed his life to higher education, serving the last decade at Notre Dame College. He previously worked as an administrator and tenured faculty member at Mercyhurst University in Erie, Pa. The esteemed educator's long and accomplished career encompassed English, communications, history, finance, marketing, strategic planning, educational leadership and public policy.

"I returned to Ohio more than a decade ago to assume the leadership of a beautiful, suburban, values-based college – embarking on a 'Voyage of Discovery' to build a regional asset. Notre Dame College's blossoming as the thriving institution it is today exceeds all my expectations. Through the teamwork of an excellent staff, faculty and dedicated trustees, NDC is a vibrant, dynamic campus – one of the finest small, Catholic, baccalaureate colleges in the Great Lakes region," states Dr. Roth.

"My relationship working with the Sisters of Notre Dame these past 11 years has been very positive, warm, collegial and supportive. I consider many among my good friends," Dr. Roth describes. "There are six Sisters of Notre Dame serving in various capacities at the College. Last year, we honored the Sisters with the Notre Dame Medal. In my speech, I said, 'I firmly believe that every day, somewhere, the Sisters of Notre Dame are making the world a better place.' And one of the greatest compliments I ever received is from a Sister who told me, 'You can articulate our charism as well as one of our Sisters.'"

Dr. Roth insists that the Sisters' presence on campus continues to have a positive impact on faculty, staff and student life. "Even though their numbers are few, they embody our commitment to mission. The Sisters of Notre Dame are living proof of that mission and keep the faculty and staff on their toes to remain true to their values."

Among his roles at Mercyhurst, Dr. Roth was a member of the English Department, founder of the Communications Department, and professor of Marketing in the Walker School of Business. As an administrator, he served as dean and vice president for Academic Affairs.

Previously, he was vice president of Enrollment, where he set admissions and enrollment records, increased the academic quality of matriculating students, and diversified the student body.

Upon his arrival in 2003, Dr. Roth recognized the need for the college to grow. His expertise in enrollment management proved a perfect fit at the time.

Under his direction, Notre Dame College's full-time enrollment has grown 325 percent since 2003; its total enrollment grew 193 percent. Dr. Roth attributes this to the outstanding work of the Admissions Office over the past 10 years and the energetic and enthusiastic support of the college's faculty, staff, coaches, alumni and friends.

Even in difficult economic times, Dr. Roth ensured the college adhere to the values of its founders, the Sisters of Notre Dame, and the college's mission – to serve the underserved. Notre Dame College is an opportunity college where 98 percent of its current students receive financial aid. The responsibility to serve all - including the underprivileged - is at the core of a Notre Dame education. Dr. Roth insists, "It is our moral and ethical responsibility as educators to teach our students not just how to earn a living but, more importantly, how to live a life."

Roth cites as his proudest accomplishments the establishment of an Academic Support Center for Students with Learning Differences; beginning a nursing program in 2006; maintaining the college's great ethnic and religious diversity; and remaining committed to access and affordability through its generous financial aid programs.



“IT IS OUR MORAL AND ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY AS EDUCATORS TO TEACH OUR STUDENTS NOT JUST HOW TO EARN A LIVING BUT, MORE IMPORTANTLY, HOW TO LIVE A LIFE.”

– Dr. Andrew P. Roth, NDC president

Recognizing a need to pay tribute to the accomplishments of many who have served the college, Dr. Roth created awards and events to celebrate outstanding students, graduates, employees and faculty. Notre Dame College initiated the Bosche Award, given to the outstanding member of the graduating class, and the Finn Award, granted to the year's outstanding adult graduate. In 2006, the College created the Notre Dame College Medal, annually recognizing individuals whose exemplary lives bear witness to the College's mission to educate for personal, professional and global responsibility.

Since Dr. Roth's arrival, Notre Dame College has attained numerous milestones in fund raising, employment, campus facilities, academic programs and athletics. Fundraising successes gained significant momentum with almost \$6 million in major gifts and grants since March, 2012. The recent dedication of two new athletic fields, made possible by transformative private gifts, is visible testimony that

generous donors are recognizing the importance of values-based education.

The footprint of Notre Dame College's campus grew substantially in 2010 with the acquisition of the former Regina High School. Today, Regina Hall houses classrooms, student organizations, adult and online programs, Development, Alumni, athletics, campus ministry; and Regina Chapel.

Dr. Roth has been widely published on the topic of higher education recruitment and retention. He has delivered numerous papers and presentations on a variety of topics including strategic planning, the economics and history of the oil industry, administrative ethics, the impact of mass media on contemporary culture, and higher-education finance and public policy. In 2001, he published, *College Savings and the Tax Code: A New Spin On the "Who Pays for Higher Education," Debate* (NY: Garland Publishing, 2001), which the Review

of Higher Education called, "a major contribution to the literature of higher education finance."

Dr. Roth is married to Judy Roth, a retired banking executive, and has three children and six grandchildren: Daughter Samantha Balbier, her husband Gerry, grandson Nathaniel and granddaughter Anna of Pittsburgh, PA.; Son Paul Roth, his wife Kate, grandsons Alden and Connor, and granddaughter Madeleine of State College, PA.; and son David, his wife Sara and grandson Bo of Rock Springs, WY.

What does retirement look like for Dr. Roth? Dr. Roth says he and his wife will be residing in Erie, Pennsylvania where Judy's extended family is located. They look forward to enjoying family, particularly the grandchildren, but work is not out of the question for him. "I already have one consulting job, two colleges have asked me to teach – so, I'll find much to do but wishing Notre Dame and the Sisters of Notre Dame all the best will come first." †

# IN MEMORIAM

*Please remember  
in your prayers the  
following Sisters of  
Notre Dame who have  
recently passed away.*



## **SISTER MARY CHRISTIN**

*(Formerly Sister Mary Anne Christin)*

*“Let the little children come to me.”*

“For the Lord is the Giver of life to all. He has brought me into the world to do great things – so I must give Him my life, my total self, for His service.” (autobiography) It was on the Feast of the Sacred Heart that God embraced the human life of Sister Mary Christin and gifted her with eternal life. Sister’s sudden and unexpected death shocked and saddened her family, her Sisters, and all with whom she has ministered.

Eugenia (Jeanne) Maria was welcomed by her parents, Bernard and Frances (Tambascio) Alfieri, her brother and two sisters and surrounded by the love of extended family and neighbors. Her rich Italian heritage was a source of great pride. She attended St. Philomena Elementary School, Cleveland, and then Regina High School, South Euclid. In her junior year, the family moved to Mayfield Heights, Ohio, and St. Francis of Assisi Parish. At Regina, Jeanne was challenged and inspired to choose a profession that would be of service to others. She entered the Sisters of Notre Dame on August 22, 1970.

Sister Mary Christin received a bachelor’s degree from Notre Dame College, South Euclid; a master’s degree from John Carroll University, University Heights; and a second master’s degree from Ursuline College, Pepper Pike, Ohio. Sister ministered as an educator for 38 years, the last 26 at St. Helen School, Newbury, Ohio.

Whether as teacher of primary grades, preparing hundreds of children for the reception of the sacraments, or as principal, Sister had a passion for Catholic education. She loved children and nurtured every aspect of their development. Her understanding and compassionate heart was open to all, especially children. Sister was dedicated to the needs of the parish and the greater civic community. She never missed an opportunity to support and promote Catholic education.

Sister Mary Christin strove to create a faith-filled environment all around her where each person could grow and thrive as a child of God. Sister wrote: “I want to give everything, my whole life. I don’t want God’s work to only be my profession, I want it to be everything to me. I want to make the world aware of truth... aware of God and His presence.” (autobiography) May Sister Mary Christin now be encompassed by the limitless love of our good and gracious God.



### **SISTER MARY CHRISARA**

Margaret Ann was the younger of the two children born to Christian and Sarah (Finucan) Fishley.

After completing elementary grades at Gesu School, University Heights, Peggy attended Notre Dame Academy, Cleveland. Her high school years were filled with friends, wonderful classes and teachers, participation in many sports and a realization that God was calling her to religious life. Peggy entered the Sisters of Notre Dame on September 8, 1949, from St. Louis Parish, Cleveland Heights. At investment she received the name Sister Mary Chrisara.

Sister received a bachelor's degree from St. John College, Cleveland, and a master's degree in education from Xavier University, Cincinnati. She devoted 36 years to the ministry of education as teacher and/or principal at elementary schools in Ohio and Virginia. Sister Mary Chrisara later ministered as a receptionist/secretary at Missionhurst Retreat Center, Arlington, Virginia, and assisted in a variety of ways at Notre Dame Academy, Middleburg, Virginia. Wherever help was needed, Sister was present!

In 1994, Sister moved to the Provincial Center and began a ministry dear to her heart since she was 16 years old – driving. She drove the sisters wherever they needed to go and was well-known for her collection of maps and detailed drawings to help others find their way. When not on the road, Sister Mary Chrisara was ever available. Her generosity, sense of humor, laughter and kindness made her approachable and comfortable to be with. Sister included and welcomed all in her circle of friends.

Sister Mary Chrisara began to recognize memory loss and the onset of Alzheimer's disease and in 2005 knew it was time to give up her beloved driving ministry. She faced this part of her life's journey with trust and surrender. Sister was a resident at Regina Health Center for several years to benefit from more specialized care, but was able to return to our Chardon Health Care Center in 2009. Sister Mary Chrisara was a prayerful woman. May she rest now, peacefully, in God's loving embrace.



### **SISTER ANN MARY**

*(Formerly Sister Mary Kenan)*

Born on Christmas Day, Ann was truly a gift to her family. She treasured her parents, James Patrick and Ann Marie (Ross) McLaughlin, and her five brothers and three sisters.

After graduation from Notre Dame Academy, Cleveland, Ohio, Ann entered the Sisters of Notre Dame on September 8, 1953, from Christ the King Parish. At investment, she received the name Sister Mary Kenan (later changed to Sister Ann Mary). Sister received her bachelor's and master's degrees in education from St. John College, Cleveland. She ministered as an intermediate and junior high teacher for forty years in elementary schools in Ohio, Virginia and Florida.

In 1997, Sister Ann Mary transitioned from education into the ministry of pastoral care in community and then in several parishes as pastoral associate and pastoral minister. She received certification as a Lay Ecclesial Minister for the Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio. In 2004, Sister Ann Mary traveled to India for a renewal. Later, she volunteered at the Hospice of the Western Reserve. She formed a bond of friendship with all she touched – meeting and greeting, listening and praying.

Always on the go, walking, hiking or camping, she recognized and experienced God's abiding presence and love. We are grateful for the gift of her life as she reflected God's goodness and provident care to all she encountered each day. We rejoice as Sister now rests in the heart of God.



## **SISTER MARY EMILY**

*(Formerly Sister Mary Cynthia)*

Emily was the last of five children born to John and Rose (Naciasta) Yuhas. Both parents were born in Czechoslovakia and settled the family in the Slovak neighborhood of St. Benedict Parish, Cleveland, Ohio.

After completing elementary grades at St. Benedict School, Emily attended Holy Trinity High School, Cleveland, and then transferred to Notre Dame Academy, Cleveland. She entered the novitiate of the Sisters of Notre Dame as a high school senior on February 2, 1947. At investment, she received the name Sister Mary Cynthia, and later returned to her baptismal name, Sister Mary Emily.

In 1949, before completing her college education, Sister Mary Emily began her ministry as an elementary school teacher. This ministry, as teacher and/or principal, spanned the next 43 years in schools in Ohio, Virginia, North Carolina and Florida. During these years, Sister received a bachelor's degree from St. John College, Cleveland, a master's degree from Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio, and an Advanced Catechetical Diploma from the Notre Dame Institute, Middleburg, Virginia. She loved the children and formed lasting relationships with collaborators.

After retiring from classroom teaching, Sister Mary Emily participated in such outreach ministries as receptionist, tutor, secretary, office assistant and volunteer at Hillcrest Hospital and the Geauga Department on Aging. A most treasured ministry, fulfilling a dream of being a missionary among the very poor, was to the people of Lancaster, Kentucky, in the Christian Appalachian Project. This time of prayerful service was dear to her heart.

Sister Mary Emily was diagnosed with cancer in 2011, but enjoyed a time of remission before a recurrence in early spring 2013. We rejoice now with Sister Mary Emily as she enjoys new and everlasting life. Alleluia!



## **SISTER MARY LORETTA**

*(Formerly Sister Marie Labouré)*

Loretta was the only daughter of Joseph and Helen (Evanko) Gedeon. Together with her older brother, Richard, she enjoyed a happy childhood. Loretta always enjoyed learning and excelled at her studies. At Wickliffe High School she selected courses that would help her secure good employment to earn money for a college education to attain her goal of becoming a teacher.

After graduation in 1964, Loretta worked for three years before enrolling as a full-time student at Cleveland State University. As a college freshman, she was accepted into the Cooperative Education Program that enabled her to do full-time substituting and tutoring in schools.

As a small child, Loretta thought of entering religious life, but because of family obligations was not able to fulfill that dream until 1972 when she joined the Sisters of Notre Dame. At investment, she received the name Sister Marie Labouré, later returning to her baptismal name, Loretta.

As a postulant, she continued her ministry in the field of education teaching children in primary grades and children with special needs for 25 years. Sister Mary Loretta was an outstanding teacher with a loving and responsive heart.

When it became necessary to retire from teaching, Sister Mary Loretta ministered to her sisters in community – supporting, encouraging and praying for their needs. For many years, Sister was a loving caregiver to her parents. She worked tirelessly, even as her own health declined, for their well-being and comfort until the time of their deaths.

Sister Mary Loretta trusted that God's goodness and provident care would sustain her. May she now rejoice, and rest, in God's eternal peace.



### SISTER MARY

Mary was the eldest of the five children born to Bernard and Mary Gertrude (Schroeter) Brady. Family was a blessing and a source of great joy throughout her life.

Upon completing elementary grades at St. Ann School, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, Mary, and later her two sisters, attended Notre Dame Academy. It was here that Mary had the opportunity to know and be inspired by the Sisters. She entered the Sisters of Notre Dame on September 8, 1942, and at investment received the name Sister Mary Peter, later changed to her baptismal name, Sister Mary.

Sister Mary received a bachelor's degree from Notre Dame College, South Euclid; a master's degree in education from St. Louis University; and an Advanced Catechetical Diploma from the Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Studies in Religious Education, Middleburg, Virginia. Sister ministered in elementary education for four years and for the next 40 years as a high school teacher in Ohio and Virginia, specializing in math and Spanish. She then entered into a new ministry in Arlington, Virginia, coordinating an English-as-a-Second Language program for Hispanic immigrants.

After returning to Ohio, Sister volunteered at Notre Dame College and Regina High School and began nine years of tutoring in the Notre Dame Skills Lab.

In 2007 Sister Mary moved to the Provincial Center and continued to tutor and assist in community wherever she was needed. Her loving and welcoming spirit extended to the Notre Dame Associates and those she met through hospice ministry. She was an active member of the ND Multicultural Committee until her death.

Last March, Sister Mary was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and braved many hours of treatment. Sister was a woman of prayer and reflection. Religious life meant everything to her. She has ended her earthly journey; she has entered into God's gentle embrace.



### SISTER MARY TRINA

Marie Carmela, the first of two girls born to Joseph and Concetta (Caputo) Livignano, grew up in the "Big Italy" neighborhood of Cleveland where the first Italian immigrants had settled. She was always proud of and appreciated

her Italian heritage – it was an integral part of her life. Marie attended St. Anthony-Bridget Elementary School and then St. Peter High School. She came to know the Sisters of Notre Dame and was convinced that she could best serve God in religious life. Marie entered as a postulant on September 8, 1956. Her sister Phyllis, now Sister Joesetta Marie, also entered the community.

Sister Mary Trina was known for the love and dedication she brought to her ministry in food service. For 49 years, Sister prepared meals for sisters living at the Provincial House, Notre Dame College, St. Boniface Convent, Julie Billiard Convent and the boarding school students at Notre Dame Academy, both in Chardon and Middleburg, Virginia. Sister noted that the object of cooking is to "bring satisfaction and to foster community at mealtimes." To her daily encounters and interactions with the sisters, students, sales managers, delivery persons and employees, Sister Mary Trina brought a unique sense of humor, a smile, a cheerful remark, a sense of peace.

In 1997, Sister Mary Trina retired from the kitchen and was invited to undertake a parish census at Holy Rosary Parish, Cleveland. This evolved into a ministry of visiting the homebound, working with the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, assisting with the RCIA program and other faith formation activities.

Sister Mary Trina moved to the Provincial Center in 2011. As a resident in the Health Care Center, she continued to minister to the homebound. Her relationships with others were uncomplicated and direct. Sister Mary Trina's life was a reflection of God's gentle, loving care. May she now rest in God's gentle embrace. †



# MAKE A GIFT ONLINE TODAY

## WAYS TO GIVE

To make your gift via credit card please visit our website at [www.sndchardon.org](http://www.sndchardon.org) and click on Support Us in the lower left hand corner. This will lead you to ways in which you can partner with the Sisters of Notre Dame along with the online donation site. Consider a recurring monthly gift as an easy way to give.

## GIFTS OF STOCK

For instructions to make a gift through the sale of stock, please call **Dena Adler**, *Director of Advancement* at 440-279-1176. Making a gift of stock can provide benefits to your taxable income while supporting an institution close to your heart.

## PLANNED GIVING

Making a gift today in your Will or Estate Plans can secure the future for the Sisters of Notre Dame and their many ministries. If you would like to make a gift in perpetuity please call Carrie Higginbotham, *Director of Strategic Initiatives in the Mission Advancement Office*, at 440-279-1177.

There are many ways to in which you can make a difference in the lives and programs of the Sisters of Notre Dame. If you need more information or would like to visit the SND campus, please call the Mission Advancement office at 440-279-1176.

## SEND YOUR GIFT THROUGH THE MAIL

Please make checks payable to Sisters of Notre Dame. For special designations such as Global Missions, the Sisters Retirement, Education or Healthcare please make note in your letter or check. Gifts can also be made in memory or honor of a loved one.

## DOUBLE OR EVEN TRIPLE YOUR GIFT!

Many employers sponsor matching gift programs and will match your charitable contributions. Please check with your company to see if they are a matching gift company. If they are send in your gift with the form provided by the company and we will take care of the rest.

[sndchardon.org](http://sndchardon.org)

# Regina

ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION

## GIRLS NIGHT OUT

Friday, April 4 at **The Jake at Pizzazz**, located at 20680 N. Park Blvd., University Heights, OH.

The cost will be \$17 which covers food, soft drinks and gratuity. Checks made out to: **Regina Alumnae Association**

Send to: 9918 Johnnycake Ridge Rd. Mentor, OH 44060



### Mini Class of '74 Reunion

(l-r) Karen Paluf Kruse '74,  
Leslie Belli DiGeronimo '74  
Susan Castrataro DiBlasio '74

*Congratulations to the Conway family who had 100% attendance at the last Ladies Night Out! (l-r) Colleen Conway Cooney '74, Mary Kay Conway '75, Patricia Conway Rhoa '80*

## CLASS REUNIONS

**Planning a class reunion?** The Regina Alumnae Office will be happy to help you with address and email information. If you have made plans for a reunion, please let us know so we can pass on the information to your classmates when they inquire.

**Anything happening with the following?:**

**Class of 1964: 50 Year Reunion**

**Class of 1984: 25 Year Reunion**

## ALUMNAE SCHOLARSHIP

Again, the Regina Alumnae Association – through the sales of Spirit Wear, Legacy Books and your donations – is able to award another \$500 scholarship to the daughter, granddaughter, sister, or niece of a Regina Alum who will be attending a Catholic high school next year. The application form can be obtained on the Regina website at [reginahigh.com](http://reginahigh.com). The application must be returned on or before May 1st in order to be considered.

Sorry you missed the last Alumnae Retreat! The next one will be **February 20 - 22**. Put it on your calendar.

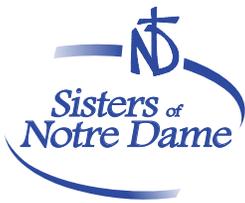
## EMAILING

If you do not receive our email announcements or had in the past and changed your address but forgot to tell us, please send the information to [rhsalum@reginahigh.com](mailto:rhsalum@reginahigh.com). We send out general information, class news, and information about family or classmates death arrangements through email.

**Thank you** to all who have informed us about deaths of relatives or classmates so we can send out the information. We will start to send out news about births, graduations, weddings, etc, if you send us the information.

## YOUR HELP AND INPUT

The next Regina Alumnae meeting is scheduled on **Wednesday, May 7**. If you are interested in helping to keep the Alumnae Association active, please consider attending this meeting. The location will be determined by the number of women who will be coming. Please email us at [rhsalum@reginahigh.com](mailto:rhsalum@reginahigh.com) or call 216-905-4851.



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