

# Sowing Goodness



Renew  
*Transform*  
RESPOND

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SUMMER 2022

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Notre Dame San Jose (NDSJ) is committed to the education and leadership of women in the San Jose community, and empowering young women to choose challenging career paths and become pacesetters.





# Welcome to the Summer 2022 Issue of *Sowing Goodness* Magazine

## Sowing Goodness Volume 1, Number 1

The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (SNDdeN) make known God's goodness through educating for life and taking a stand with people living in poverty, especially women and children.

*Sowing Goodness* is published twice a year for friends of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur U.S. East-West Province by the Mission Advancement office.

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## On our Cover

Sister Pat Rolinger helps a young student tend to the garden at Cuvilly Arts and Earth Center, Ipswich, Massachusetts.

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur U.S. East-West Province is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our tax identification number is 04-3210469.

This inaugural issue presents our new magazine name and a fresh approach to sharing stories of Sisters, Associates, colleagues, volunteers, students, faculty and staff all working together to further the mission and ensure the legacy of St. Julie Billiart. *Sowing Goodness* was chosen as a way to highlight our work across all our ministries, especially through education where the 'seeds of goodness' are planted at an early age and are cultivated at every stage of life. Pope Francis reminds us that "Life's truth and beauty may be found not so much in possessing as in giving, not so much in accumulating as in sowing and sharing goodness." —Pope Francis, Lent 2022

Our theme for this year, announced as we celebrated our Missioning Day on February 2, stressed the call to care for one another and our common home through our many ministries:

*Now is the time! Full of hope we answer the call to renew,  
transform and respond with action as we live our mission  
as stewards of all God's creation.*

Indeed, the SNDdeN are truly full of hope and the feature stories highlight how we are working to **Renew, Transform and Respond** in the areas of environmental justice, women's leadership and education. Within these pages you will also learn more about the work that we do across our province to continually *Make known God's goodness*. We hope you find inspiration as you see the impact of our work.

*"Be like the sunflower that follows every movement of the sun,  
and keep your eyes always turned towards our good God."*

—SAINT JULIE BILLIART

With gratitude,  
The Leadership Team of the U.S. East-West Province

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# Our Community

## SISTERS, ASSOCIATES AND VOLUNTEERS EMBODY THE LEGACY OF ST. JULIE

THE LEGACY OF St. Julie Billiard lives in the hearts of Sisters, Associates and Notre Dame Mission Volunteers. The far-reaching impact of this extended community is grounded in the congregation's focus to observe the signs of the times and address the needs and concerns of all people. The Constitutions of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (SNDdeN) speak directly to this, stating, "As a Congregation encompassing a diversity of peoples and cultures, we want to develop a worldwide perspective which makes our own, wherever we are, the concerns of all people." (*Constitutions, Article 26*)

As **vowed SNDdeN**, women work to renew the spirit of communities by celebrating the gifts of many cultures, to transform the world by educating for justice in our ministries, and to respond to the challenges of those living in poverty, especially women and children while continuing to support one

The SNDdeN are rooted in their love of the good God, and the devoted friendship of St. Julie Billiard and Françoise Blin de Bourdon inspires Sisters today to make known God's goodness. In a collection of St. Julie's letters, she speaks of the necessary courage to be a part of this congregation. "Come, my dear daughters, we must have courage in the century we live in. Great souls are needed, souls having the interests of the greater glory of God at heart."

*The Letters of Saint Julie Billiard, Letter 35*

another in a prayerful communal life. SNDdeN invite Catholic women to pray and reflect on God's call to them as women who can bring the mission and charism of St. Julie Billiard to the world. For those who want to discern a possible life choice for vowed religious life, SNDdeN want to dialogue with you about your call and the Notre Dame de Namur way of living and serving.

**Sister Rosemary Reynolds, SNDdeN** offered this reflection, "God never stops inviting us to be with him on the journey. As a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur, we are called to have hearts as wide as the world and to bring the goodness of God to all we meet along the way.

"We are all called and, for each person, this is a call to follow our good God. For me, that has been a call to religious life and I do believe that this is a viable choice in today's world. We need women who believe that they can make a difference in the world by sharing God's goodness and love."

**Another important facet of the SNDdeN community is the cohort of Associates.** For those who want a closer relationship with the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, there is a vibrant community of Associates of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.

**LEFT TO RIGHT** Sisters Beth Plesche, Nancy Uhl, Karen Pozniak, and Marie Annette Burkhart represent the SNDdeN at the 2022 LA Religious Education Congress.





Maureen Peccolo, Diana Hernandez and Sara Maennle make their new commitments as Associates.

Dame – International (NDI) to place volunteers with Sisters abroad, and in 2016, launched the Boulangerie Notre Dame in Les Cayes, Haiti.

NDMV believe that education is the central tool in the struggle for human dignity and self-esteem. In addition to building community among members, the goal is to promote and encourage education, community empowerment, leadership development, and multi-cultural harmony.

Faviola, a NDMV said, “I have seen tremendous growth not only within myself but with my students. I am proud to have positively impacted our community and seen these young kids grow.” *Faviola (Wilmington member and future second year New Orleans member)*

The work of SNDdeN, Associates and NDMV is a calling to *renew, transform and respond* to individuals and communities.

In 2015, Pope Francis said in his message for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, that, “The Christian vocation is first and foremost a call to love, a love which attracts us and draws us out of ourselves.” This loving community of SNDdeN draws on the gifts and talents of its members, to respond to God’s call and bring forth God’s goodness. \*



By **Kimberly Mazyck**,  
Director of Outreach  
and Partnerships

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a vowed Sister, an Associate or a volunteer, please contact:  
**kimberly.mazyck@sndden.org**

Associates are women and men, living their baptismal call in the spirit of St. Julie Billiart who proclaimed God’s goodness throughout her entire life.

The invitation to Association is open internationally to women and men of all cultures, from age eighteen and over, to join the SNDdeN in prayer and ministry. This relationship creates opportunities for Associates to respond to local needs and transform the condition of life for those with whom they come into contact. For many, Association provides a rich and deep connection to God and ministry with a community centered around the mission of St. Julie.

Maureen Peccolo, who celebrated her commitment as an Associate on June 4, 2022, has always seen the

SNDdeN as her second home. She fondly remembers that when she interviewed for her current job in the Belmont regional office, her mother was praying for her in the chapel on the NDNU campus. She said it has been “beautiful to witness [the Sisters’] charism and how they work and treat others.”

Through the **Notre Dame Mission Volunteers (NDMV) program**, others live out the charism of St. Julie Billiart through a period of service. NDMV was founded in 1992 by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to promote literacy and education. In 1995, NDMV partnered with AmeriCorps to form Notre Dame – AmeriCorps (NDA) with NDA members serving in 24 cities each year. In 2006, NDMV began Notre

“When I think about what I’d like to do, I’ve always fallen back on the idea that I’d like to help people, and that a better, kinder world is possible. So I hope to be able to do things that advance those ideas in the future. Near term, that might be helping out in classrooms when I can, or working at the food bank when time allows. Long term, maybe helping with city planning or things of that nature to help make a better quality of life for the people around me.”

**Will (NDMV, Seattle member)**



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

# The Power of Hope

BY SUSAN DENNIN

PERVASIVE DROUGHT, raging wildfires, disappearing forests, and extreme weather and temperatures seem to be our reality no matter where in the world you might live. Does our changing climate cause you to wonder what you can do? Does it seem too much for one person to make a difference? In a corner of New England, gardeners as young as three are showing us that one person, no matter how small, can make an impact.

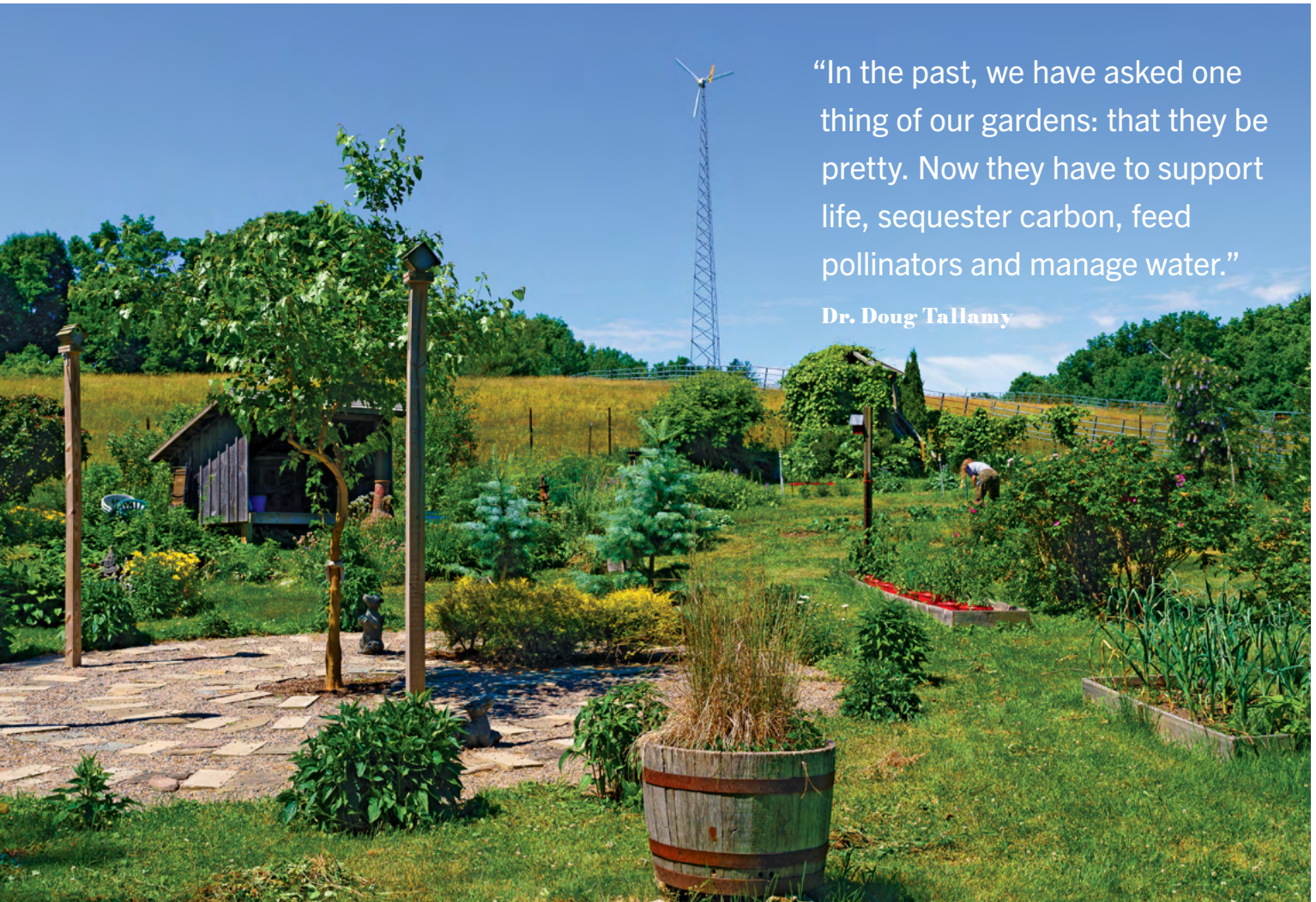
In response to Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* call to care for our common home, students and staff at Cuvilly Arts and Earth Center in Ipswich, Massachusetts are taking a grass-roots focus on biodiversity and environmental sustainability. Guided by the impactful writings of Dr. Doug Tallamy, who espouses a garden for wildlife approach, this ministry of the SNDdeN is playing a part in revolutionizing the way people garden and landscape to benefit wildlife and communities. And the urgency to act now is critical.

The data on environmental loss in the United States is sobering. According to Tallamy, we have turned 54% of the lower 48 states into a matrix of cities, suburbs, roads, airports, power and pipelines, shopping centers, golf courses, infrastructure, and isolated habitat fragments, with 41% more of the U.S. into various forms of agriculture.<sup>1</sup>

The gardens of Cuvilly Arts and Earth Center, Ipswich, Mass.

What is the consequence of turning 95% of the natural world into an otherworldly landscape? The direct impact is on the non-human species who require nature to survive. God's vast array of creatures need food and shelter to thrive and reproduce, and we need the healthy biodiversity of these creatures great and small to ensure our ecosystems' survival and our own. Without intervention, we could lose a significant portion of our pollinators by the middle of the century.

Yes, this is a daunting challenge and one that will require dedication and a spirit of hope. To achieve results requires us to live out a commitment to the environment and its systems through which we are all dependent. In the SNDdeN theme for the East-West Province this year, the Sisters committed to the call to *Renew, Transform and Respond* to the pressing needs of our society. There is no time to waste when it comes to caring for Mother Earth!



“In the past, we have asked one thing of our gardens: that they be pretty. Now they have to support life, sequester carbon, feed pollinators and manage water.”

Dr. Doug Tallamy



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“The human species is very resourceful and we should be able to share the world with all God’s creation.”

**Sister Patricia Rolinger**



But you may ask, “What can I do while I wait for my local, state and federal government to make lasting changes?” Sister Patricia Rolinger, SNDdeN, Executive Director of Cuvilly Arts and Earth Center is helping to answer that question. Her team at Cuvilly is responding to a call to action that revolutionizes the way people garden and landscape to benefit wildlife and communities.

She has led the ministry that integrates agriculture and the arts for over 38 years through education and community programs. The Center inspires children and families to explore their innate creativity and connection to the earth. They encourage stewardship of our resources and strive to model ecological sustainability in a space that embraces their guiding principle that all life is sacred and the diversity of life is essential for the planet’s well-being.

An understanding of environmental issues is critical for the survival of our planet. Children especially need to experience themselves as an integral part of the natural world. By establishing pollinator gardens with native plants, they

encourage the wild bees, butterflies and other pollinators to return to the land. Small gardens have been set up by the children and they regularly tend and cultivate them. Sister Pat plans for more of the surrounding acres to be returned to their natural state, and is working with experts in native plants to shepherd the multi-year process. She hopes that the land will continue to welcome native birds, wildlife and of course, pollinators.

“The human species is very resourceful and we should be able to share the world with all God’s creation,” said Sister Pat. ✨

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To learn more about Cuvilly Arts and Earth Center and support their efforts, visit our website: [www.snddeneastwest.org](http://www.snddeneastwest.org)

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Doug Tallamy from [www.homegrownnationalpark.org](http://www.homegrownnationalpark.org)



# Caring for Creation

## Environmental Education at the Academy of Notre Dame Tyngsboro

BY JENNIFER KLEIN, ACADEMY OF NOTRE DAME TYNGSBORO

IN THE FALL OF 2021, after months of research, discussion, and curriculum planning by the Academy of Notre Dame in Tyngsboro, Massachusetts (NDA Tyngsboro) multidisciplinary, volunteer STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) Team, a comprehensive environmental education program was developed, including the construction of a donor-funded geodome on their beautiful 200-acre wooded campus. Now, a year of academic programming has been completed and a key component of their bold five-year strategic plan,

*Inspiring Excellence*, has been met.

Guided by their strategic plan, the new environmental education curriculum aligns with the Hallmarks of a Notre Dame Learning Community and Pope Francis's encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, related to care for our common home. The "Dome," as it is affectionately called, is an outdoor greenhouse and learning lab that serves all ages, Pre-K through Grade 12, at this SNDdeN school in Tyngsboro, Massachusetts.

NDA Tyngsboro chose to enhance its environmental education programs for various reasons, including a strong

institutional commitment to creating healthier and more civically engaged communities and providing its students with the physical and psychological benefits afforded by spending time in nature. Most notably, more than 50% of their high school graduates now go on to pursue STEAM majors in college, so NDA understood the need to respond to their students' changing interests and the needs of the time. "As a school, we believe that these living classrooms instill a greater sense of respect for our environment and the earth in future generations,"

shared Dr. Vittoria Pacifico, Head of School. “Environmental education is rooted in the belief that humans can and should live in harmony with nature. It truly has the power to transform lives and society. We feel honored to be able to give this gift to our students.”

The geodome provides hands-on learning opportunities, educates students about how to care for our environment, and makes environmental studies come alive. This unique experience, the first of its kind in their region of Massachusetts, will have an impact on future scientists, engineers, educators, and business leaders.

Inside the geodome, skylights self-regulate using bees’ wax and air temperature, fans operate using solar panels, and the 3,000-gallon fish tank and raised garden beds work together using thermodynamics to regulate heat and cold. Nearby, students grow seasonal flowers and produce in the hoop house, tap the on-site maple sugar trees to taste-test homemade maple syrup and enjoy an outdoor classroom space with an obstacle course and puppet theater. A pollinator garden will soon be developed with native plants and flowers, which is part of NDA Tyngsboro’s commitment to the larger mission of the Global Climate Forum with SNDdeN schools across the world.

All programming in the geodome and indoor Environmental Learning Lab is designed to provide age-appropriate, sequential experiences for students, with a deliberate focus on critical thinking and higher-level problem-solving. Applications this year included sound mapping and outdoor reflection in middle school theology classes, watershed games and lessons for a fourth-grade class, a nature walk for preschoolers, and a guest

alumna speaker for the upper school science club who shared her career in environmental economics. A student who participated in sound-mapping and outdoor reflection shared, “I heard a lot of noises: birds chirping in the trees, a wasp flying past my ear, the sounds of the leaves touching each other, wind hitting the trees, a chainsaw cutting metal, the crunch of small sticks, and little children playfully talking. I feel peace and calm ... it felt like all the hate, bullying, and all the other bad things people have done have never happened.”

Learners from all grade levels have had an opportunity to transport soil,

grow plants, and taste-test NDA-grown produce such as tomatoes, basil, garlic, kale, cabbage, onions, and more. Currently, the dome is being incorporated into the summer camp program. “Our Dome serves as a hub for discovery and activity. Only in the first year of inception, the possibilities for future activities are truly endless. It provides this special learning community so much opportunity,” said Alex Webb, Environmental Education and Enrichment Coordinator. This transformative educational experience at NDA Tyngsboro is a beacon of hope for the future of today’s students and our world. \*

“As a school, we believe that these living classrooms instill a greater sense of respect for our environment and the earth in future generations. Environmental education is rooted in the belief that humans can and should live in harmony with nature. It truly has the power to transform lives and society. We feel honored to be able to give this gift to our students.”

**Dr. Vittoria Pacifico, NDA Tyngsboro Head of School**



# Educating Women for Justice and Leadership

**COURTESY OF NOTRE DAME  
SAN JOSE HIGH SCHOOL**

PREPARING YOUNG WOMEN to think critically and respond to current and future economic and environmental issues aligns with the SNDdeN Hallmarks of a Notre Dame Learning Community, Catholic Social Teaching and the Gospel. It is also key to increasing the pipeline of future leaders. Since its founding in 1851,



Notre Dame San Jose (NDSJ) has been committed to the education and leadership of women in the San Jose community, empowering young women to choose challenging career paths and become pacesetters.

Nationally, women earn nearly 60% of college degrees each year yet they remain underrepresented in leadership positions. Women currently represent only 36% of practicing physicians, 24% of the U.S. Congress, 14% of executive officers, and 6% of S&P 500 company CEOs. As the oldest all-girls high school

in the western United States, NDSJ has an established history of providing education that cultivates leadership. Through their Education for Justice and Leadership program, they focus on developing critical thinking skills, complex problem-solving abilities and effective communication—encouraging students to respond to and transform the world around them.

It is said that each journey begins with a single step. For more than 15 years, the Woman's Place Project has been the first step for Notre Dame freshmen. Through the Project, they are introduced to many women, some famous and others virtually unknown, who have left an indelible mark on the world. This interdisciplinary course begins in September with each student being assigned a woman to study. As they get to know the women presented in their projects, they begin their journey of self-discovery and learn of the monumental changes that women can effect through courage, ability and the power of conviction. The full impact of the project is realized in March when the entire freshman class comes together to 'set the table' for their chosen women at the annual Women of Impact luncheon.

The luncheon honors these successful women who have played a role in our region's history, acting on behalf of peace and justice, embracing diversity and leadership, and forging new paths. The event highlights their important role in our community and provides resources to transform



the future through education that prepares young women for engagement and leadership in careers and fields where they are underrepresented.

In addition, each year, two such exemplary women are celebrated for their accomplishments, an alumna honoree and a community honoree. Over the last several years, honorees have represented a variety of industries including high tech, non-profit, education and the arts.

"Through our Woman's Place Project, we celebrate those women from across time and cultures and invite them to their place of distinction at the table," shared NDSJ Head of School Mary Beth Riley.

By example, these women serve as models for personal engagement and responsibility, stewardship, solidarity and advocacy; qualities and characteristics that will embolden these young women to make a lasting impact in their communities and the world. \*

# East-West *Laudato Si'* Action Plan Team

**BY SISTERS JOAN F. BURKE AND MARY ALICE MCCABE, SNDdeN COURTESY OF NOTRE DAME INTERNATIONAL, MAY 2022**

POPE FRANCIS PUBLISHED his letter “On Care for our Common Home” (referred to by its opening words in Latin *Laudato Si'*) in 2015 in which he addressed the existential threat of climate change. A few years later a group distilled from this work what has become known as the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform (LSAP) based on its seven goals. This resulted in a global appeal to all Catholics and persons of goodwill to join together to form a movement based on the *Laudato Si'* agenda.

The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur took up the challenge. The Sisters in the U.S. East-West Province spent last year reviewing the range of ways they already were responding to the “Cries of the Earth” and the “Cries of the Poor” to care for our planet and all of Creation. As daughters of St. Julie, the Sisters recognized immediately that this was in their DNA. St. Julie never stopped delighting in God’s goodness shining through all of creation. This dominant theme in her life was evident in the outcome of the international meeting of SNDdeN for their once every six years Chapter held in 2021. The delegates were led to name as

Sisters Mary Alice McCabe and Joan Burke share the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform with students and administrators in Ipswich, Massachusetts.

a specific *sign of our times* to live the call launched by Pope Francis. They stated, “We are called to respond within our local and global realities to those who suffer, and to pray and work for the transformation of the attitudes, structures, and systems that cause profound suffering.” (Chapter document)

The Sisters across the U.S. saw that they were ready to make public their commitment to the LSAP, and formalized this resolution on Earth Day, April 22, 2022, by enrolling in the LSAP. During the coming year, they will work together to identify specific goals and objectives to guide them

as they reach out and join with others in this urgent work.

All of us have been inspired by the youth of the world and their pleading that we recognize the urgency of this moment. Let us support them, our children, and our children’s children. ✨

To learn more and reflect on how you might join the Sisters and all who are committed to build a global movement to create a critical mass for effective action and systemic change, consult the website: [laudatosiiactionplatform.org](http://laudatosiiactionplatform.org)



# Sisters in Action

## A Lifetime of Hospitality

BY RACHAEL BERTONE

During her 65 years as a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur, Jeanette Braun, SNDdeN has had many roles. Yet whether teaching, producing television shows, working with NDMV-AmeriCorps volunteers or in any of her ministries, Sister Jeannette sees a common thread woven through them.

A loving spirit of welcome was a gift that she received from her parents; growing up, there was always room at the Braun's table for a lonely neighbor

**BELOW**

Ellen Chiri, new TOP director with Sister Jeanette Braun in the TOP kitchen

or someone in need. It's no surprise, then, that her latest, longest and last formal ministry has been to do just that.

Since 2012, Sister Jeanette has been director of the TABLE of PLENTY (TOP) a non-profit organization that provides a weekly supper for the elderly, struggling families and people without homes in the Half Moon Bay, California community. As she and volunteer helpers welcome and nourish the guests, they live out Sister Jeanette's favorite quote from St. Julie: "Our charity must not be limited by the love we have for one another. We



must have hearts as wide as the world."

Over the years, the organization has served more than 100,000 meals, and there have been hundreds of volunteers, including SNDdeN Associates. Their efforts have not gone unnoticed. TOP has been sustained by generous donations and grants, and in March 2022 Sister Jeanette received a Jefferson Award for Public Service for her work.

Sister Jeanette is stepping down from her role as director of TOP, leaving it in the good hands of a new director and refreshed board of directors. "I am filled with pride and gratitude," she wrote when announcing the changes, for "what we as a community have accomplished, not only in serving over 100,000 meals, but meals served with loving hospitality and respect to our neighbors in need."

Naturally, being an SNDdeN, her days of ministry are never over. Among other projects, she plans to be a TABLE of PLENTY volunteer—and also a guest!



# Standing on the Shoulders of Giants— The Cemetery Project

BY SISTER EVELYN MCKENNA, SNDdeN

Excerpted from SNDdeN U.S. eNewsletter, July 2022

One day nearly two years ago, we were gathered as a group of friends and the topic of cemeteries arose because of the recent death of another of our close friends. As the conversation proceeded, we came to realize that the topic was an important one for us, since over the years the provinces in the Northeast had reconfigured several times. We formed a Cemetery Care Group to address this issue. Our initial research showed us that in the 1800s some SNDdeN who had entered in Waltham, Massachusetts were later missioned to Maryland, Connecticut, various parts of Massachusetts and elsewhere. Records, including those for cemeteries, were kept in various province offices and archives and we had to account for Sisters buried in parish cemeteries. It was evident that the condition of these cemeteries and headstones would also be a focus of our voluntary research.

Our next step was to coordinate various cemetery lists. The members of the Group chose one or more of these locations to visit and confirm the correct listing as well as the condition of each burial place. We found that because of changes in the various province configurations over the years,

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“As each of us made many visits to these locations we began to feel a special connection with the Sisters of long ago—or not-so-long ago. It was an inspiring experience.”

**Sister Evelyn McKenna**



**ABOVE**  
Sister Barbara Beauchamp (left) and Sister Mary T. Kelleher (right) at the cemetery located at NDA Tyngsboro, Massachusetts

there were some errors in records and we made corrections on our lists. Where gaps existed, we were in contact with some of our archivists. Over the two years of research, the lists for every cemetery were compiled, checked and confirmed many times over.

What is the result of this research? There is now a listing for all 18 of the cemeteries in the former Boston and Ipswich Provinces where Sisters are buried plus directions or maps for finding every grave in each of these. There is now at least one Sister who has committed to paying an occasional visit to one of these sacred spaces to assure its proper condition.

This cemetery project drew us even closer to our wonderful Sisters. We honor them and thank them for their lives and service over so many years. As Sister Anne Cyril, SNDdeN frequently reminded us, we are standing on the shoulders of giants.



Sister Sandy Price



Sister Joan Burke

## Welcome Back Sister Sandy and Sister Joan!

After years abroad both **Sister Sandy Price, SNDdeN** and **Sister Joan Burke, SNDdeN** returned stateside to Belmont, California.

Since returning from Nicaragua, Sister Sandy has been exploring new ministry opportunities including working with migrants at the U.S./ Mexico border.

Following her return from Africa in August 2020, in addition to catching up with many dear friends and family, Sister Joan has focused much of her attention to co-leading the East-West Province's *Laudato Si'* efforts (with Sister Mary Alice McCabe) and 7-year sustainability project to address Pope Francis's climate justice agenda.

To hear about their amazing ministries please check out their stories and videos at our website: [www.snddeneastwest.org/our-impact](http://www.snddeneastwest.org/our-impact)

## Trinity Celebrates 125 Years

Congratulations to Trinity College celebrating 125 years of education for justice! The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur made history on August 20, 1897, when they secured the articles of incorporation that created Trinity College. Across the next three years, they bought the land, raised money, recruited students, and in November 1900, the first class arrived on campus.

Trinity today is a healthy, vibrant university, and looks to build upon this success as the college heads toward the middle of the 21st Century.

Thank you to our Support Coordinators Sisters Georgi Coonis and Phil D'Anna who work tirelessly to assist Sisters in California and Washington with day-to-day affairs and in moments of need.







## Sister Maria Delaney, SNDdeN Named Congregation's Interim UN NGO Representative

We offer our prayerful support to Sister Maria Delaney as she takes up a new role as the Congregation's interim United Nations Non-Governmental Organization (UN NGO) representative. Sister Maria's extensive global experiences have prepared her well for this position. Sister Maria follows distinguished service from three predecessors. Sister Joan F. Burke, SNDdeN served as the first SNDdeN NGO representative. She began her assignment in 2002 and served until 2010 when she handed over responsibilities to Sister Jean Stoner, SNDdeN who served from 2010–2016. Sister Jean passed the baton in 2016 to Sister Amarachi Ezeonu, SNDdeN who is now on the Congregational Leadership Team.

# The 18th General Chapter Sets New Calls

## ELECTS A NEW CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM

In 2021, the SNDdeN 18th General Chapter (GC) was held with chapter delegates meeting virtually across five continents in multiple time zones—from September through December 2021. Delegates agreed on specific directions—or Calls—for the congregation to move forward with, including new initiatives around the environment and social justice issues. At the close of the GC, culminating on December 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, 39 SNDdeN delegates elected a new Congregational Leadership Team (CLT)

that will serve for the next six years.

The new CLT spent three months in transition with the outgoing CLT. Sister Mary Johnson, new congregational leader, worked in close collaboration with Sister Teresita Weind, congregational leader (2008–2021), to coordinate the leadership transition meetings during these months. On March 25, 2022, the transition of all responsibilities for the religious congregation was completed and Sisters from five continents joined through Zoom in a prayer ritual of handing over canonical authority.



### LEFT TO RIGHT

Sisters Lorraine Connell (Mass., USA), Amarachi Grace Ezeonu (Nigeria), Mary Johnson, congregational leader (Mass., USA), Evalyne Aseyo (Kenya), and Miriam Montero Bereche (Peru)

# Healing Balm in a Broken World: Reflection on Immigration Work at the Border

BY BÁRBARA GUTIÉRREZ, SNDdeN

Since we arrived in America in 1840, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (SNDdeN) have educated immigrant children and adults in our schools. The work has not been easy, nor has it been welcomed or supported by everyone. In the 1850s, Irish immigrants in Boston and Chinese immigrants in California faced discrimination and legal restrictions, similarly today, immigrants and refugees from Latin America continue to face the same conditions. And just as importantly, SNDdeN continue to advocate for them, serve them, and love them—different women, same mission. Our work with migrants and refugees continues despite the obstacles we face in dealing with our immigration system and public opinion.

During the past December and January, I had the opportunity to join our SNDdeN in Phoenix, Arizona,

where Sisters from around the country contribute to our work with asylum seekers. There, I witnessed some of the brokenness in our world. It is tragic and difficult to get my head around the fact that there are more than 100 million displaced people in the world according to the United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR).

What can we possibly do to help 100 million people experiencing hunger, violence, threats, discrimination and lack of medical services? Like any other mind-blowing statistic, it changes when we put a face to a number and a name to the face, and we do what we can to make a positive impact by helping one person at a time.

My experience in Phoenix helped me not get disheartened about our global reality but to carry on. I listened to horrific stories of people who wanted to be heard; while those stories of

brokenness made my heart heavy, the faith and hope reflected in the faces of men, women and children soothed my heart and gave me hope—paradoxical situations every day!

A little nine-year-old girl whose feet hurt because the black canvas slip-on shoes she received at the detention center were too small for her found joy in a new pair of shoes. Her toes were red, and she had blisters. We had five new children's tennis shoes at the Center, and one pair fit her perfectly. I helped her put new socks on and try the shoes. In a 'Cinderella' story, the shoes fit, and the child became a princess. She smiled as if she had received the greatest treasure and she could not stop looking at her new shoes. It was a bittersweet moment for me as I could not stop wondering when was the last time she had a new pair to wear.

A man traveling to North Carolina on the same day he arrived at the Center told me he had not seen his son in four years. When I said to him, "You will be holding him in your arms before the end of the day," he wept. There was pain reflected in his face but also hope and joy. Is that even possible?

These are two of the many situations that made me feel grateful, humble and powerless, all at once. The experiences reminded me that although we cannot solve all the problems in our world, we must do the little things we can. We do our part through small and seemingly insignificant tasks, and through the grace of God, we become a healing balm for broken hearts in a broken world.

Ref. Twasema asante (3x)  
Ewe Mungu wetu.  
TWAH-SAY-MAH AH-SANN-TAY  
AY-WAY MOON-GOO WAY-TOO.  
[We say thank you to you, our God.]  
1. Wewe ni Alpha na Omega  
WAY-WAY NEE ALPHA NAH OMEGA  
[You are Alpha na Omega]  
2. Hakuna Mungu kama Wewe  
HAH-KOO-NAH MOON-GOO KAH-MAH WAYWAY  
[There is no god like you.]

Sign with useful phrases at Habitat House in Phoenix, Ariz.



PLANNED GIVING

# St. Julie Billiart Legacy Society

## Create a Lasting Legacy

St. Julie Billiart Legacy Society was founded to recognize generous donors who have made a commitment to the future of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur through a planned gift. Every gift to the Sisters is critical in helping them continue the good work in their ministries and care for the Sisters in retirement.

Planned gifts are creative ways to support the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur where you will have the satisfaction of knowing you are personally making a difference in the life and ministries of the Sisters.

## We Invite You to Become a Member

For more information about any of these options or to notify the Sisters of your estate plans please contact Jen Pearce, Director of Development at [jen.pearce@sndden.org](mailto:jen.pearce@sndden.org) or 617-387-2500.

“The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur have been a constant blessing in my life. This good work needs our support now and for the future. I wanted the opportunity to extend that support beyond my lifetime so I decided to make a gift to the Sisters through my estate.”

**Anne / member**

***St. Julie Billiart Legacy Society***

# Support Our Mission

Generous benefactors are at the heart of the Sisters' work today just as they have always been, making it possible for the Sisters to continue their mission of education and service to the poor.



**LEFT**  
Sisters Judy Flahaven and Roseanne Murphy



**BELOW**  
Sisters Judith Ward and Marie Prefontaine



Sisters Anne-Louise Nadeau and Patty Chappell

“When I reflect on my education by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, I realize it was more than just academics, it was an education in life by their example. My aunt was a Sister, and through her I got to know the goodness of life, and how it sustains me. In quiet yet powerful ways she embodied the love we all have for each other, especially when it’s scarce. To support the Sisters is to support a teaching of greater understanding and love for all of us.”

**Larry, San Francisco, CA**

## YOU CAN SUPPORT THE SISTERS...

- Wherever Most Needed
- Ministries in the U.S.
- Sisters Serving in Africa & Latin America
- Retired and Infirm Sisters

For more information or to support the Sisters please fill out the form or contact Jen Pearce, Director of Development at [jen.pearce@sndden.org](mailto:jen.pearce@sndden.org) or 617-387-2500. To see more stories of the incredible impact your support has made, please visit [www.snddeneastwest.org/our-impact](http://www.snddeneastwest.org/our-impact)

# TRIBUTE CARDS

To celebrate the lives of loved ones, many of our supporters send out **Tribute Cards**. We have four cards for different occasions showcasing artwork or photography of our Sisters. The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur remember both the recipient and the donor in their prayers. All donors are acknowledged.

To order please call our office at **617-387-2500** or visit our website **www.snddeneastwest.org**



**LEFT TO RIGHT**  
Memorial card, Celebration card, Blank card, Thinking of You card



Associate Aulani Cler and Sisters Patty Chappell, Martin de Porres Coleman and Jeannette Braun



Sisters Kristin Matthes and Catherine Waldren



Thank you to Support Coordinator Sister Marlene Biasiello for all you do.



**Susan Dennin**  
Director of Communications



**Jen Pearce**  
Director of Development

## STAY IN TOUCH!

Would you like to know more about the Sisters in between issues of the magazine?

Are you a Former Sister who would like to keep in touch?

You can sign up at: <https://snddeneastwest.org/e-news-signup/>, email [ewcommunications@sndden.org](mailto:ewcommunications@sndden.org), call **617-387-2500** or click on the QR code below.





# Glimpse of Our Past

Over the next year we will highlight the history of the Sisters in the East-West Province and look forward to celebrating the 175th anniversaries of the Sisters arrival in Massachusetts and California.

Founded on St. Julie Billiart's belief in the goodness of God, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur bring to their lives and work a respect for the goodness and dignity of each person and a care for justice for all.

## July 12, 1751

Birth and baptism of Marie Rose Julie Billiart

## February 2, 1804

Vows of Julie Billiart and first Sisters of Notre Dame

## April 8, 1816

The death of Julie Billiart

## May 13, 1906

Beatification of Julie Billiart. Official liturgical feast day.

## June 22, 1969

Canonization of Julie Billiart

### CREDIT

Thank you to our archivists, Nancy Barthelemy, Ipswich, Massachusetts, and Kathleen O'Connor, Belmont, California.

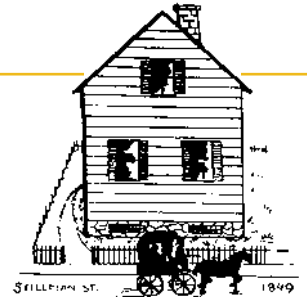
## 1804



The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur are women religious in an international congregation, founded in France in 1804 by St. Julie Billiart. Eventually they make their way to America settling in Oregon and Ohio.

## 1849

Three Sisters of Notre Dame come from Cincinnati, Ohio by rail and coach to Boston, Massachusetts to take over the church school at St. Mary's in the North End of Boston. They are given the Stillman Street home as their first convent in Boston.



## 1851

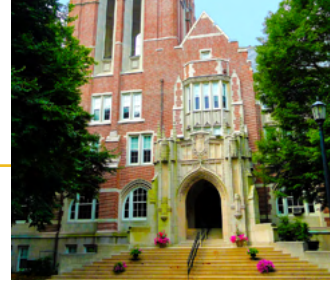
Sister Loyola and Sister Marie Catherine (shown below) journey from Oregon to San Francisco to meet four Sisters arriving from Belgium. At the request of Bishop Alemany, the Sisters remain in California. With 25 cents in their pockets and an abundance of faith, they open a boarding school in San Jose, the College (high school) of Notre Dame.





## 1868

Chartered as the first college in the state of California authorized to grant the baccalaureate degree to women, the College of Notre Dame becomes known as the “best school for young ladies” in the West.



The Sisters open Emmanuel College, the first Catholic women’s college in Massachusetts.

## 1919



The 60s were a time for change including the evolution of the Sisters habits. You can see the lightened attitude here with child star Shirley Temple Black, a friend of the SNDdeN, posing with Sister Roseanne Murphy and friends.

## 1960s

College of Notre Dame (including high school and elementary departments) moves to Belmont, California where it remains today. (It becomes a 4-year college in 1951.)

## 1923



## 1962

In 1962, the Massachusetts Province move their novitiate from Waltham to Ipswich, Massachusetts.



## 1946–70



The Sisters expand their mission to Hawaii, Oregon and Washington, and abroad including Brazil and Kenya.

## 2014

The Ipswich, Boston, Connecticut, Chesapeake and California Provinces merge to create the East-West Province of the United States.

## TODAY

Today there are 15 Notre Dame Educational Communities sponsored by the East-West Province in the U.S. The Sisters also serve in healthcare ministries as well as parish and social justice ministries domestically and throughout the world, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Japan, Brazil, Peru, Belgium, France, England, and Italy.

**Stay in touch to help us celebrate our 175th Anniversaries in Boston, Massachusetts and Belmont, California in the upcoming years!**

# Class of 2022

Congratulations to the Class of 2022! Across the country, our graduates excel in leadership, academics and athletics. We wish them Godspeed as they take on new challenges always remembering the spirit and mission of St. Julie to ‘make known God’s goodness’ in their pursuits.

## 1 Notre Dame Academy Worcester

32

students graduated

100%

college acceptance

1 student signed for Division II field hockey

1 student signed for Division III swimming

## Notre Dame Cristo Rey High School

100%

college acceptance into 4-year colleges and universities

64

students of the Class of 2022 have been awarded \$15,228,948 in scholarships over four years from the colleges and universities to which they applied

## 2 Jhanny Jimenez MIT

At 18, Jhanny Jimenez is a senior poised for a limitless future ... and he is on his way to MIT! At the age of nine, Jhanny emigrated from the Dominican Republic to Lawrence, Massachusetts with his parents and five younger siblings. A bright and inquisitive student with a desire for learning, he has been a top scholar since freshman year. He credits what he has learned, earned, and received through his NDCR academic studies and Corporate Work Study Program experience at MITRE Corporation for much of his success. Jhanny applied to MIT for early decision and was offered a full four-year scholarship. “It was such an amazing moment when I read through my acceptance package that I almost didn’t know how to react,” explained Jhanny. “My parents were so proud of me, and once they learned more about the school, their happiness was off-the-charts!”

## 3 Notre Dame Academy Tyngsboro

The Class of 2022 has earned over

\$14M

in 4-year renewable merit scholarships

## 4 Notre Dame Belmont

\$11M

in scholarships awarded

### PICTURED

Alison Lewis—Salutatorian, attending University of Washington, Peyton Daley—Valedictorian, attending Stanford University, Amanda Tam—Valedictorian, attending UCLA

## 5 Notre Dame Academy Hingham

79

graduates in the class of 2022

100%

of graduates in the class of 2022 are matriculating to top colleges across the country, including Stanford, Wellesley, Wesleyan, and Emmanuel

## 6 Notre Dame San Jose

179

graduates with 100% college acceptance

\$25M

in scholarships awarded

19

first-gen scholars





1



2



3



4



5



6

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# Awards and Honors

## Justice-Seeker Award

### SISTER JOSITA COLBERT, SNDdeN ACCEPTS DISTINGUISHED AWARD ON BEHALF OF NBSC

The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur have a long history of commitment to social justice for the marginalized and impoverished. SNDdeN see themselves as part of a global community seeking to transform unjust structures and systems, participating in new ways of relating which enable all of creation to experience God's goodness. Working with advocacy groups is an important piece of dedicated personal ministry for many Sisters.

Sister Josita Colbert has spent her entire life working for justice and equality for the black community and people of color. Born and raised in Baltimore, Sister Josita's passion stems from the nurturing of her family who influenced her to collaborate with

others who would further advance and internalize the Nguzo Saba, as it relates to quality education, the celebration and respect of diversity and seeing diversity as God's hand in it all.

As a young vowed Sister, Sister Josita was impressed with the Book of Esther. She said, "I was inspired by her willingness to strip herself of all that would be of distraction in speaking and acting for the liberation of her people, regardless of the cost. I realized that as a Black religious woman in the early 50s, I too had to be bold, courageous, and certainly prayerful to confront the sin of racism as one who believed in the goodness of God."

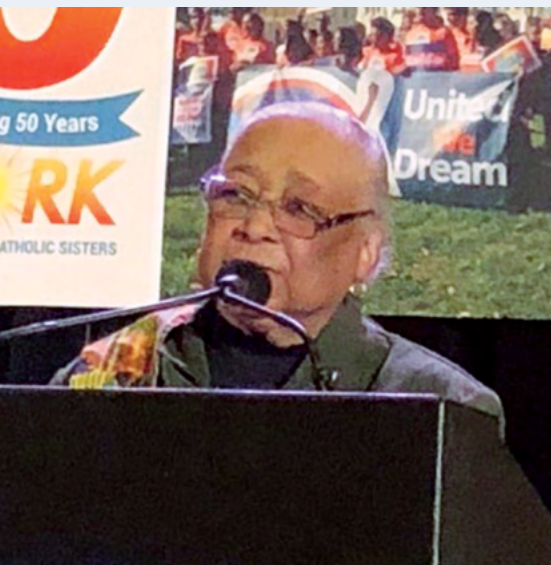
Sister Josita has been a member of several civil rights groups and has served on the boards of numerous organizations. In 1968 she was a founding member of the National Black Sisters' Conference (NBSC)—an inclusive Catholic organization of vowed Black Catholic women religious and associates from many religious congregations across the U.S.—and has served as its president since 2019.

In April 2022, Sister Josita received NETWORK's inaugural Distinguished Justice-Seeker Award on behalf of the NBSC at NETWORK's 50th-anniversary gala dinner and celebration. NETWORK

advocates for justice inspired by Catholic Sisters, and educates, organizes and lobbies for economic and social transformation. NETWORK awarded NBSC in recognition of their "pioneering and heroic stance ... and their willingness to challenge racism, wherever it is found," according to Joan Neal, NETWORK's Deputy Executive Director and Chief Equity Officer.

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"I have always been impressed with the Book of Esther ... her willingness to strip herself of all that would be of distraction in speaking and acting for the liberation of her people ... regardless of the cost ... I realized that as a Black Religious Woman ... I too must be bold, courageous and certainly prayerful to confront the sin of racism as one who believed in the goodness of God."



**LEFT**

Sister Patricia Chappell at the Dahlgren Dialogue at Georgetown University where she joined a panel discussion on the faithful life, powerful legacy and continuing lessons of Servant of God Sister Thea Bowman

## Bearing Witness and Leading the Way

### SISTER PATTY CHAPPELL, SNDdeN RECEIVES AWARDS FROM PAX CHRISTI AND LCWR

There is no need to ask Sister Patty Chappell, SNDdeN about her convictions or her faith. Just spend a few minutes with her and you will hear about her strong faith as she greets you with, “God is Good” anticipating that you will respond, “all the time.” During conversations about situations, whether personal or in the community, she always presents a resolution rooted in fairness. Her presence and spirit steadfastly bear witness to a life focused on justice, nonviolence and peacemaking. Thus, it is fitting that as **Pax Christi USA celebrates its 50th anniversary year, it will also commission 20 new Ambassadors of Peace including Sister Patty Chappell.** The celebration will take place during the closing Mass of the 50th-anniversary national conference, celebrated by Bishop John Stowe, Pax Christi USA Bishop-President, on Sunday, August 7th.

The addition of the new honorees brings the total of Ambassadors of Peace to 50 in honor of the important 50th anniversary of Pax Christi USA. Ambassadors of Peace are chosen for the contributions they have made in preaching and practicing gospel nonviolence, peacemaking, reconciliation, and justice. Ambassadors promote the mission of Pax Christi USA through word and witness, sharing the programs and campaigns with new audiences, serving as representatives in coalitions, and generally carrying the message of Pax Christi USA wherever they go. This is not an award; Ambassadors of Peace serve as living embodiments to the community and beyond of what it means to live a life rooted in the “peace of Christ.”

Sister Patty became the Executive Director of Pax Christi USA in October 2011 and left in May 2019 when she was elected to the leadership team of

the East-West Province of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. During her tenure at Pax Christi USA, she affirmed active nonviolence as a core Christian principle while asking others to do the same. Sister Patty’s commitment to nonviolence is evidenced by her leadership and training in anti-racism.

Sister Anne-Louise Nadeau SNDdeN, who served as the Director of Programs at Pax Christi USA from 2012–2019 and then also as interim Executive Director from 2019–2020 said, “An Ambassador of Peace is one, who by her/his presence, gives credence to the mandate ‘No Justice, No Peace’. Both when convenient and inconvenient, Sister Patty has proclaimed peace with justice all of her adult life and brought that gift to the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. As Executive Director of Pax Christi USA, she placed racism as the core thread weaving throughout all of the issues crying out for justice. This award is a confirmation of her ongoing commitment to the evolution of the Beloved Community among us.”

**The Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) selected Sister Patty Chappell as the recipient of their 2020 Outstanding Leadership Award.** LCWR sought to recognize Sister Patty for years of commitment to dismantling white supremacy while providing anti-racism training to help religious communities and parishes confront the systemic racism within their congregations. Sister Patty will receive the award at the August 2022 LCWR Assembly in St. Louis, Missouri.

# Sister Mary Margaret Pignone, SNDdeN Honored

## MEDIA CENTER ESTABLISHED AT ST. PETER'S SCHOOL, KROONSTAD, SOUTH AFRICA

After receiving her Doctoral Degree in International Development from American University, Sister Mary Margaret Pignone, SNDdeN went to South Africa in 1999 as Coordinator of Special Projects where she assisted the South African Province in reclaiming the historic SNDdeN property in Kroonstad, South Africa.

This property had been a Notre Dame school, chapel and convent since 1907. In 1972, SNDdeN gave up the property believing they were called to work with people most discriminated against in apartheid South Africa. It was given to the government and then used by the army. In the early 2000s Sister Mary Margaret, with SNDdeN

South Africa leadership, received the property back from the government—in exceedingly poor condition. Then Sisters Mary Margaret, Margaret Lanen and Catherine Hughes, along with three Adrian Dominicans, restored the property which is now St. Peter's School.

Sister Mary Margaret's passion for using resources available through modern technology, her sharing this love with students and their teachers along with her pivotal role in reclaiming the building and property, are fittingly acknowledged by naming the Media Centre in her honor. This Center is part of the earliest and most significant site in the history of SNDdeN in South Africa.



**ABOVE**  
A meeting in 2010 with parents (mainly mothers and grandmothers) discussing their request to the SNDdeN to open a high school for their children, to make it possible for them to complete their 12 years of school in one, faith-based school

**BELOW**  
A class in one of the two computer labs



## Sister Janet Eisner, SNDdeN, Nation's Longest-serving Woman College President, Retires



We honor Sister Janet Eisner, SNDdeN, as she retires after more than four decades of transformative leadership at Emmanuel College, Boston, Massachusetts. The College unveiled a tribute wall chronicling her many years of service to Emmanuel as a faculty member, Director of Admissions and President, and it serves as a powerful testament to the significance of her tenure not only for the College but for the students and graduates.

Since her inauguration in 1979, she has led Emmanuel through a time of exceptional innovation,

achievement and growth. She provided the founding vision for the Colleges of the Fenway collaboration; she forged a partnership that brought Merck Research Laboratories to campus; and in 2000 she led Emmanuel's transition from an all-women's college to a thriving coeducational institution. Over the past 15 years, applications to Emmanuel have increased significantly, enrollment has tripled and the campus has been transformed by the building of the Maureen Murphy Wilkens Science Center, the Jean Yawkey Student Center and a new 18-story, apartment-style residence hall.

Sister Janet reflected on her journey at Emmanuel saying "What is the common theme uniting all these advances? It lies in never losing sight of the mission and in always putting students first. And what is the takeaway? It is that when good people come together in common purpose, extraordinary things can happen."

Sister Janet's 43 years as president gave her the distinction of being the longest-serving woman college president in the country. Her more than four decades of leadership have transformed Emmanuel College into a leading liberal arts and sciences institution in the Catholic tradition.

## Sister Joanne Sullivan Retires as Principal of St. Patrick's Lowell

For twenty-four years Sister Joanne Sullivan, SNDdeN has been the principal of St. Patrick's School and Education Center in Lowell, Massachusetts. Founded in 1852, St. Patrick's is one of Notre Dame's oldest ministries in the U.S., serving our newest immigrants since its first days. Sister Joanne retired at the end of this school year. We thank you, Sister Joanne, for your commitment to the children and families of Lowell. Sister Joanne will be passing on the leadership of St. Patrick's to Timothy Ruggere. Tim is an experienced school leader, having served as principal at the high school and middle school levels. Most recently, however, he was the Adult Basic Education Director at Community Action, Inc. in Haverhill, Massachusetts. He has a M. Ed. from Boston University and a CAGS from Cambridge College.



# With Gratitude

On February 2, 2022, the 218th anniversary of our founding, and a sacred time of renewal, a period of reflection, a season of giving thanks and rejoicing—we proclaimed this a year of Jubilee for 42 Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur U.S. East-West Province. We are grateful for their years of service and commitment to the legacy of St. Julie.

We asked the Sisters how they responded to the Missioning Call during their decades of ministry, and are happy to share some of their thoughts.

“I have responded to the Call of Mission by answering the call of God not only to ‘serve’ but also to be a ‘sign’ to others that this vocation could be possible for them also.”

**Sister Martin de Porres Coleman**

“I have responded to the Missioning Call by ministering service to the physically challenged and homebound.”

**Sister Margaret Phillip Coffey**

“I responded to the Mission Call any time I was teaching. It was the highlight of my life.”

**Sister Helen Singleton**

“I responded to the Missioning Call by joyfully teaching beautiful young women at Cardinal Cushing Central High School in South Boston. I wanted them to believe that God is good and that they had the capacity and were prepared to reach for the stars.”

**Sister Mary Mulligan**



Sisters Joyce McMullen and Edithann Kane bring up the gifts during Mass.

“I have responded to the Missioning Call as secretary in the Maryland Province and as one of the formation directors, in the Chesapeake Province on the Leadership Team, in administrative service at the Archdiocesan Offices of Baltimore, at NETWORK, Notre Dame Mission Volunteers, and in the Tri-Province Development Office.”

**Sister Edithann Kane**

“I responded to the Mission by living a pilgrim life putting aside my plans to set out on a journey, allowing myself to be guided, accompanied and open the surprises God provided.”

**Sister Joyce McMullen**



## 2022 Jubilarians

**BACK ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT):** Sisters Roberta Rzezniak (60 yrs) Rita Raboin (60 yrs), Edithann Kane (60 yrs), Patricia Curran (60 yrs), Angele Lewis (50 yrs), Judianne Beltz (40 yrs), Marna Rogers (60 yrs), Mary Boretti (50 yrs), Lorraine Connell (50 yrs), Leonore Coan (60 years), and Joan Burke (60 yrs) **FRONT ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT):** Sisters Joyce McMullen (60 yrs), Joan Gregoire (70 yrs), Janice Waters (75 yrs), Francis Virginia Murphy (75 yrs), and Mary Mulligan (75 yrs)

### 75 Years

Ann Brennan  
Barbara Kavanaugh  
Immaculata McDonnell  
Mary Mulligan  
Francis Virginia Murphy  
Helen Singleton  
Alice Clare Tremblay  
Janice Waters

### 70 Years

Janet Cahill  
Martin de Porres Coleman  
Ann Marie Connolly  
Joan Gregoire  
Catherine Griffiths  
Raymond Loretta Kelley  
Bernice King  
Joan Maritz  
Barbara Matasci  
Margaret McCarthy  
Mavourneen McGinty  
Joan Mehigan  
Rose Elizabeth Monahan  
Catherine Perroni  
Rosalie Pizzo

### Theresa Ryder

Caroline Sanchez  
Julie Marie Thorpe  
Virginia Unger

### 60 Years

Joan Burke  
Leonore Coan  
Margaret Philip Coffey  
Patricia Curran  
Edithann Kane  
Joyce McMullen  
Carol Miller  
Kathleen O'Hagan  
Rita Raboin  
Marna Rogers  
Roberta Rzezniak

### 50 Years

Mary Boretti  
Lorraine Connell  
Angele Lewis

### 40 Years

Judianne Beltz

“I have responded to the Missioning Call by teaching young children the goodness of God and helping them carry it on all through life and pass it on.”

**Sister Theresa Ryder**



Thank you to our Northeast Support Coordinators who organized the Jubilee celebration at Emmanuel College, Boston.

**(LEFT TO RIGHT)**

Sister Ginny Scally,  
Sister Pat McSharry and  
Sister Roberta Rzezniak

**Stay tuned for our winter issue with profiles of all the jubilarians and photos of the celebrations across the Province.**

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# Spirituality

## Ipswich Retreat Offers a “Transformative” and “Life-Changing” Experience

BY JULIE DOWD

The Notre Dame Spirituality Center and Sponsorship Office co-hosted a two-day retreat for staff from the Notre Dame Health Care Center in Worcester and the St. Julie Billiart Residential Care Center in Ipswich. On a beautiful May weekend, more than thirty health care providers gathered for two days of prayer, reflection, rest and renewal. The retreat included presentations by author and spiritual director Ginny Blass on the themes of hope and resilience. Afternoon workshop choices included yoga, a meditative nature walk around the Ipswich grounds, prayer through art, and gardening with the Three Sisters Garden Project at Cuvilly.

Recognizing the difficulties encountered over the last two years, particularly for those who work in health care, the retreat was designed to thank those who provide for the Sisters and share the gifts of Notre Dame spirituality with colleagues. Participants included nursing staff, administrators, housekeepers, activities coordinators, pastoral staff and advocates. Sisters Mary Boretti and Ellen Keane anointed the hands of all participants during a closing prayer service using essential oils and words of blessing.

Many had never visited the province house in Ipswich and remarked on what a peaceful and holy place it is. Several commented on how much they felt appreciated by the Sisters and honored to be invited to the Spirituality Center. Participants shared that the retreat was a transformative experience, a welcome opportunity to reconnect with their faith, life-changing, and restorative. The retreat will be offered again next year May 5-6, 2023.

Sign-up for our newsletters to learn of the latest retreats.

## Carmel Retreat Center Provides Peaceful Haven

Nestled in a beautiful expanse just off Highway 1 in Carmel, California, you'll find Villa Angelica and the House of Prayer, a peaceful haven for visiting Sisters, their families, and former Sisters. Sisters venture to Villa Angelica and the House of Prayer from near and far for a few days to several months sabbatical. Though Villa Angelica and the House of Prayer are not open to the public, they do welcome nonprofit organizations. And, over the years, many nonprofit organizations have visited including a group of formerly incarcerated women, quilters and authors, as well as Zen, Buddhist and Jewish mediation groups.

Villa Angelica sleeps 18 and guests can prepare their group meals and retreat together in the space. Sisters Michelle Henault and Susan Olson, SNDdeN are gracious hosts, welcoming visitors, preparing meals and making visitors feel at home.





## Prayer Keeps Relationship with God Alive

BY SISTER NANCY UHL, SNDdeN

Joan Chittister, OSB, said in *The Breath of the Soul*, “Prayer is the breath of the soul, the life-energy of the spirit. It is the story of the interplay between God and me. It is the link between the inner and the outer life. It has its own rhythm. It is its reality. There is no formula for it beyond the need to nourish it with both words and silence.”

Prayer is essential to living religious life. When a woman makes vows to become a consecrated religious, it is prayer that will sustain her throughout this life. For the consecrated person, prayer is the way to return to the time she was first called. Prayer, in religious life, is the air that makes us breathe our call.

Prayer takes many forms for the religious Sister. Personal prayer can be participation in devotions, like saying the Rosary or meditation; a time to sit in the presence of God, or even a lively dialogue with God. Each woman finds a path to increase her relationship with God and that will be reflected in her personal prayer life.

My own prayer life has had many twists and turns. The way I prayed was appropriate for my needs at the time. When my husband died, his last words were, “Not now, God, I’ve been doing better.” He fought death with every

**“I have not always felt the presence of God. But when I do, I feel it keenly. Prayer is primary in keeping a relationship with God alive. Prayer has been an evolving practice throughout my life.”**

fiber of his being for ten years. Even at the moment of his death, he told God what he thought. My husband felt God with him, even when he disagreed.

When I was little, I said the prayers the Sisters taught me. When we students gathered to pray the Rosary, my little voice merged with all of my classmates. In my late teens, I questioned my faith, and I did not feel the presence of God. When I married my husband, he had an abundance of faith that he shared with me. Slowly, my faith returned, but it wasn’t until he died that I felt the ever-presence of God. This is when my prayer turned to conversation. I needed to know that God would be with me while I continued to raise our daughter, alone. I needed to know that the feeling of emptiness might someday be filled. I began to explore prayer. I learned to meditate. I have never felt more peaceful than I did when I began my meditation exercises.

When I entered the Novitiate, I discovered lots of prayer practices and I tried all of them. However, meditation and contemplation seemed to suit me. Then, I discovered Ignatian Spirituality. The Examen was new. This daily prayer whereby we express gratitude to God, reflect on our day and God’s presence in it, and ask for light in the future is what I was taught. As time went by, I re-phrased the Examen and made it my evening prayer. 1) For what was I grateful? 2) Where did I encounter God that day? 3) Where did I resist God that day? 4) What did I want for tomorrow. The hardest question to answer is always where I resisted God. Who wants to admit to that?

But there is one other way I love to pray. Ignatian Contemplation has you



using your imagination to reflect on Scripture. This has become my morning prayer. I read that day’s Gospel passage and place myself squarely into the scene. I feel the heat or cold of the day. I smell the air around me. I notice the colors. I place myself with the other characters of the story. I, too, hear the words of Jesus. I sense the mood of the people around me. I let myself feel emotions as his words pass over me. Foremost, I am with Jesus! Maybe it’s just in my imagination, but I feel it.

The final way prayer has played a role in my life, especially in Religious life, is through communal prayer. When we gather, our collective prayer is raised. It can be at Mass with the wider community or the prayer time you spend with your lived community. Every evening, we gather in chapel, sing, recite Psalms, listen to Scripture, share our faith stories and raise prayer petitions. Not only does this nourish my own faith life, but it bolsters the entire community’s faith life.

St. Julie Billiart said we should always be turning toward God. “Look to God as the sunflower looks toward the sun for life.” This is why both you and I pray.

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# In Memoriam

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We prayerfully remember our Sisters who have died since September of 2021. The following brief obituaries are testament to the rich lives that SNDdeN lead fulfilling their vocation of service to God. Please remember them in your prayers.



**Mary Clancy, SNDdeN**  
*(formerly Sister Catherine Angela)*

Sister Mary was fun-loving and loved teaching, especially the ministry of teaching students new to the U.S. who wished to learn English. She served at many schools during her 68 years as a SNDdeN. She died at age 85 on November 24, 2021.



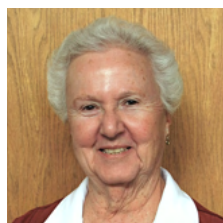
**Eileen Finnigan, SNDdeN**  
*(formerly Sister Helen St. John)*

A SNDdeN for 58 years, Sister Eileen was a long-time educator in Boston area schools, and for 11 years she was the bookkeeper for the Common Market Restaurants in Quincy. She died on January 19, 2022, at age 77.



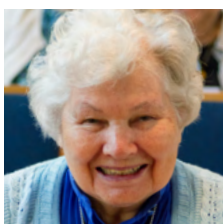
**Carol Ann Connor, SNDdeN**  
*(formerly Sister Francis Veronica)*

During her 67 years in religious life, Sister Carol devoted her life to bringing a gentle and gracious presence to those she ministered to as an educator and in parish services. She was 84 when she died on September 30, 2021.



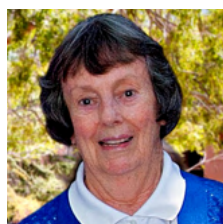
**Mary Louise Graziano, SNDdeN**  
*(formerly Sister Julie Peter)*

Sister Mary Lou taught in Massachusetts schools and in Salem, New Hampshire during her 63 years as a Sister. She also managed the Shelter for the Homeless in Lawrence, Mass. She was 82 when she died on July 26, 2021.



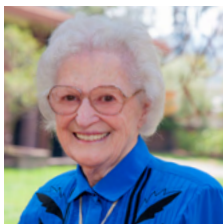
**Barbara Jane Dole, SNDdeN**  
*(formerly Sister Henrietta Jane)*

A SNDdeN for 59 years, Sister Barbara followed her years in education with work in government and business. She loved to walk around Boston and enjoyed eating lobster. She was 93 when she died on December 21, 2021.



**Barbara Hanagan, SNDdeN**  
*(formerly Sister Raymond Teresa)*

Sister Barbara taught in elementary and high schools in California and Hawaii. She was known for being gentle, soft-spoken, attentive to others and very kind. She died on April 8, 2022 at age 95, serving 76 years as a SNDdeN.



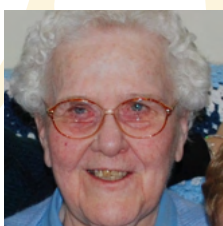
**Bernice Heinz, SNDdeN**  
(formerly Sister Madeline Marie)

For Sister Bernice, teaching was a natural and joyous fit, and she would stress the importance of speaking and writing correctly. A SNDdeN for 76 years, she was 93 when she died on December 23, 2021.



**Rita Murphy, SNDdeN**  
(formerly Sister Julie St. Francis)

Sister Rita served as an elementary school teacher, school librarian, Director of Religious Education and ESOL teacher in New England. A SNDdeN for 57 years, she lived her life with good humor and kindness of heart. She died at age 91 on April 20, 2022.



**Julie Cecilia Lyver, SNDdeN**

During her 73 years in ministry, Sister Julie Cecilia taught in schools in the greater Boston area, and was Principal at schools in Waltham, Shrewsbury and Somerville. She died on October 4, 2021, at age 92.

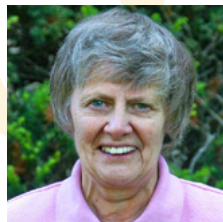
**Anne Frances Rhilinger, SNDdeN**

A SNDdeN for 74 years, Sister Anne Frances taught and was a Principal in Boston area schools and worked at the diocesan level in Worcester. For many years she ministered at St. Joseph's Residence for Women and Abby's House. She was 91 when she died on September 14, 2021.



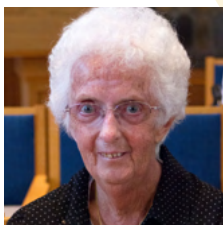
**Madeline McAdam, SNDdeN**  
(formerly Sister Madeline St. John)

A teacher for 27 years, Sister Madeline taught boys and girls of all ages, then moved into parish administration, also serving for 27 years. She died at age 89 on May 20, 2022, after serving as a SNDdeN for 70 years.



**Charlotte Francis Wickes, SNDdeN**

During 72 years in ministry, Sister Charlotte taught in schools in the greater Boston area. She was very involved in religious education at the parish and SNDdeN school and Archdiocesan levels. She died on November 2, 2021, at age 89.



**Kathryn Lawrence McGuigan, SNDdeN**

Sister Kathryn had a long career in education during her 64 years as an SNDdeN and made a profound impact at Academy of Notre Dame, Tyngsboro. She was an avid sports fan. She died on December 2, 2021, at age 87.

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,  
and let perpetual light shine upon them.  
May the souls of the faithful departed,  
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.  
Amen.*



**Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur**

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