



That all may
know the Savior

Spring 2019

SISTERS OF THE DIVINE SAVIOR Salvatorian News

*Walk
with us*



As one of our core values, the word *collaboration* often threads our conversations. Webster defines it, "working with another person or group to achieve something." I'd tweak Webster just a bit: sharing our gifts with one another to fulfill our mission.

The 2019 theme for our Salvatorian Family Years on Fire celebration is "Passion for Collaboration." True to our founding vision, we seek ways to collaborate. One example is supporting professional education for our sisters in Africa. It began in 2009 with our commitment to lead an English Language Immersion Program in Tanzania. In the spirit of collaboration, Lay Salvatorian Sue Haertel will return for her sixth time in June to lead ESL classes for our sisters from Tanzania and Democratic Republic of Congo. She'll also mentor two local sisters to lead the program in the future.

Close to home, we collaborate through our religious sponsorship of Divine Savior Holy Angels High School, Hadley Terrace Senior Apartments, St. Anne's Salvatorian Campus in Milwaukee; and Divine Savior Healthcare in Portage, Wis. We share our gifts to instill a culture of compassion among their lay governing boards, administrators and staff. They share their gifts to strive for organizational excellence.

You collaborate with us too, when we invite you to walk with us in mission. Faithfully, you open your hearts to our invitation through your prayers and gifts.

Gratefully,

A. Beverly Heitke, S.D.S.

Sister Beverly Heitke, SDS
Provincial Leader

Your gifts and God's grace unite our hearts

Living out our mission this past year has drawn us closer to you as we've relied on your support for our ministries. Despite miles between us, your prayers and gifts have brought us together, and hopefully, help you feel connected to the people we serve. To say, "we couldn't do it without you" isn't glib talk. God's grace and your generosity truly have sustained us this past year.

In spring 2018, we shared with you the determination of our Sri Lankan sisters to improve quality of life for their beloved people by nurturing the minds and hearts of the next generation. The sisters' education support program strives to foster confidence and a sense of responsibility for self, family and community. Lessons in leadership and cooperation nurture a sense of community. Spiritual guidance teaches youngsters to draw on their faith to cope with their struggles living on the margins of society. Your generous response to fund this education support program is now sowing seeds of hope for children and teens in Sri Lanka. Your gifts are helping to instill in them a sense of dignity and to lift them to their full potential that is God's dream for all.

As we entered the 2018 Advent season, we asked you to open your hearts to support the needs of our North American Province. We

continued on page 2 —>

A 2018 foundation grant has renewed the Salvatorian Shelter Project to build more concrete block homes for families in Sri Lanka.



Your gifts and God's grace

continued from page 1

shared stories about our sisters who no longer engage in full-time paid ministries, but whose hands are still hard at work.

They make known the goodness and kindness of Jesus in their day-to-day encounters with preschoolers, prisoners, parish communities and SDS-sponsored institutions. During the 2018 Christmas season, we received 545 gifts ranging from \$1 to \$20,000. Each and every one is a testament to your trust in our stewardship of generosity inspired by faith.

As much as we depend on your generosity, we want you to know of our efforts to fund our ministries in other ways too. Thanks to your faithful support year after year, we are able to invest time and energy in applying for foundation grants to fund special initiatives. They include an anti-trafficking education program in Colombia, South America; a shelter project for "roofless people" in Sri Lanka; leadership training for our sisters in Mozambique, Africa; and programs offered by our Jordan Ministry Team to prepare lay ministers in the sprawling Diocese of Tucson, Ariz.

Sometimes, we receive unsolicited blessings that are truly pennies from heaven. Such was a \$35,000 gift we received from an anonymous donor after

Sister Grace Mary Croft, SDS, speaks to new faculty and staff about our sponsorship ministry at Divine Savior Holy Angels High School.



Typhoon Mangkhut struck the Philippines last September. The donor's generous gift will help with relief efforts and with repairs to the Salvatorian Sisters' chapel and convent in the Pangasinan area. They were damaged when the large cross that serves as a beacon for miles toppled from the chapel roof.

Another way we strengthen our capacity to support Salvatorian ministries in developing countries is our commitment to the diocesan mission co-op program. In 2018, our sisters traveled to 20 parishes in 10 dioceses across the U.S. to share about our international missions. Each time our sisters speak to parishioners, they share the

experiences of more than 1,000 Salvatorian Sisters who minister in their home lands. The generosity of parish communities large and small enables our North American Province to respond to our congregation's greatest global needs.

As we go forward on the path that Providence shows, we ask you to stay by our side in 2019. We'll depend on your faith and trust to respond to a critical need served by a small community of our sisters in Pakistan. There, education and job skills training are slowly instilling dignity and confidence in women and girls to take control of their lives as valued members of the Pakistani patriarchal society.

In Memoriam

Sister Bernadette Kline, SDS professed 75 years, died September 23, 2018. Barely a year after opening our St. Joseph Mission School in Huntsville, Ala. in 1956, Sr. Bernadette accepted international mission assignments in Africa, England, Israel and Rome. She embraced each and every call to serve with an open heart.

Sister Carol Marie Haag, SDS (formerly Sr. Carla), died October 21, 2018. Teaching and administrative work filled many of Sr. Carol's 53 years professed as a Salvatorian Sister. She never imagined herself working with troubled teens, but she felt the Holy Spirit brought her to the youth detention center where she spent her final years in ministry.

Sister Rachel Wallace, SDS professed 59 years, died January 17, 2019. Sr. Rachel loved "ordinary" nursing, but her lifetime dedicated to the healing profession also included teaching nursing students, and parish nursing in her final years of active ministry.



Read about Sisters Bernadette, Carol Marie and Rachel here: <http://sistersofthedivinesavior.org/memorial/>

She celebrates Catholic education year-round

January 2019 marked 45 years since National Catholic Schools Week was officially declared a cause for celebration. Long before that declaration, Sister Mary Jo Stoffel, SDS has been celebrating on her own.

In 32 years of education ministry, Sr. Mary Jo has taught 1,037 first- and second-graders. She's sure of it, because she still has a list of her former students from each and every year. She's been praying for them too.

In her early years of teaching Sr. Mary Jo was known as Sister Boniface. She served in Catholic elementary schools from 1958 until 1990. Her assignments included Landover Hills, Md; Sauk Rapids, Minn.; a number of rural Wisconsin communities, as well as Mother of Good Counsel (MGC) and St. Pius X in Milwaukee.

Sr. Mary Jo began her teaching ministry in a second-grade classroom at St. Mary's School in Maryland. A classroom veteran, the late Sister Kristin Stopplesworth, SDS took the fledgling teacher under her wing and shared some advice that Sr. Mary Jo took to heart. "She suggested that I keep a list of all my students from year to year and continue to pray for them. I think it's the most wonderful thing I've ever done," Sr. Mary Jo says today. "I've been so grateful to Sr. Kristin because it's rewarding and keeps me connected to my teaching years."

Each night, Sr. Mary Jo says a collective prayer for all her former students. Then every Monday, she mentions each name listed on one of 31 loose-leaf pages secured in a small, black leatherette three-ring binder. The hyphenated school year and parochial school name

appears at the top of each page. The name of each child is neatly written in ink, in alphabetical order with last name first, just as it would have been on Sr. Mary Jo's class roster. With each name numbered, it's easy to see that her largest homeroom had 55 students – two years in a row – and her smallest had just 13 students in 1979-80.



Sister Mary Jo Stoffel, SDS

Sr. Mary Jo talks about "double-session" classes in her first two years of teaching. In the 1958-59 school year, she taught 48 second-graders in the morning session. Then she and another sister split an afternoon class of 45 second-grade students for two hours each. The next year she had 55 students in her morning session and 43 in her afternoon split session. It wasn't until 10 years into her teaching ministry that Sr. Mary Jo's class roster dipped below 30 students.

Sr. Mary Jo recalls that as she said goodbye to a class when she was missioned to a new school, her students would ask her to write to them. Each time, she encouraged them to write to her and promised that if they did, she'd write back. She always kept her promise. Typically she'd hear from a few former students, but after a while they'd stop writing – except for a second-grader named Judy from Milwaukee, and a boy named Dan from St. Mark's in Rothschild, Wis. To this day, both of them still correspond with their former teacher.

Sr. Mary Jo remembers Dan as a student leader even as a second-grader back in 1969. He went on to run his own cheese-making business when he grew up. Judy, whom Sr. Mary Jo taught in 1961-62, eventually became a teacher too. Years later, after Sr. Mary Jo was no longer teaching, she passed along to Judy some of her hand-painted bulletin board lettering to use in her classroom at the very same school where they'd met years earlier – MGC.

Of all her students, Sr. Mary Jo admits she best remembers "the naughty ones and the very bright ones," but she prays for them all. She knows, too, some of them have passed away, but she still says their names and simply asks God to be with them.



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It's easy to make an online gift through PayPal. You decide which is most convenient for you — monthly, quarterly or one-time gift. You don't need a PayPal account to make a gift using your credit or debit card, and you can choose a giving schedule that best fits your budget. Have questions? Call Lori in the Mission Advancement Office at (414) 466-7414 or visit sistersofthedivinesavior.org/donate.



Sister Marion returns to U.S. with new world view

Last September when the Milwaukee Brewers were chasing the National League Baseball Championship, Salvatorian Sister Marion Etzel told us she couldn't listen to the games in real time in Rome. She tried her best to keep tabs on the home team, saying, "About the time the post-game show airs, we're waking up to greet the new day. I always listen for good news!"

Now that she has returned to her home province and hometown of Milwaukee, Sr. Marion looks forward to much more than just tuning into Brewers' games come spring. Catching up with all the sisters is near the top of her list. That goes for relatives too, along with former neighbors, classmates, students and colleagues, and reconnecting with the SDS Community House staff and our sponsored institutions. Sr. Marion is eager to experience how things have changed since she left the U.S. in January 2013. Oh, and watching the evening news in English!

For all the good times to come, Sr. Marion's departure from Rome is bittersweet. Many things come to mind that she knows she'll miss from her six years serving on the SDS Generalate as general secretary and counselor.

"Coming to know a world view of our Sisters' congregation and the Salvatorian Family has been a privilege," Sr. Marion says, "and living with sisters from very different backgrounds than my own."

She has also come to appreciate the many cultures that intersect in Rome. "The faces, the languages, the feeling that we are all humans together, and that most people come together to honor the past and to look for spirituality. I realize that I'm in a 'pilgrimage city.'"

On a lighter note, who can blame her for saying she'll miss the mild weather – well, for most of the year. She describes the rest of the year in one word: "Hot!" One fond sight she'll hold in her memory is seeing all the trains and buses. "The public transportation system is wonderful and I love seeing all the tour buses that come into the big garage near the Vatican. Always a treat!"

As much as Sr. Marion has joyfully looked forward to her return to the U.S., she's going to miss new friends she's made over the last six years. As she slowly but surely integrates back into the life of her home province, we'll ask her to share more about her ministry in Rome. For now, we say simply, "Welcome home!"



Ellen Bartel fills new role for Province



We welcome Mrs. Ellen Bartel to our Provincial staff in Milwaukee as our Sponsorship Consultant. Ellen retired in May 2018 as president of Divine Savior Holy Angels High School (DSHA) after 20 years. During that time, she has shown us her gift for leadership, strategic thinking and steadfast dedication to our mission.

Ellen's breadth of leadership experience began at Lake Forest College in 1976 after earning her bachelor's degree from

University of Notre Dame. She also earned a master's degree from Notre Dame. Before joining DSHA as president in 1998, Ellen served in a variety of roles at Milwaukee's Alverno College for 11 years, including vice-president for Institutional Advancement.

As Sponsorship Consultant to our Leadership Team, Ellen will explore the future of our Province's sponsorship ministry at Milwaukee institutions DSHA, Hadley Terrace Senior Apartments and St. Anne's Salvatorian Campus; and Divine Savior Healthcare in Portage, Wis. Our religious sponsorship is a model of collaboration that fosters fidelity to our mission among lay women and men who

serve as board members, administrators and staff at our institutions. As Ellen settles in, she looks forward to embracing this new challenge.

"I am honored that the Sisters of the Divine Savior have asked me to join them in this important work as we prepare for and shape the future of sponsorship. To collaborate with the sisters in service to their mission is an opportunity that has enriched my life immeasurably," says Ellen.

2019 Passion for Collaboration



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