



That all may  
know the Savior

Fall 2021

# SISTERS OF THE DIVINE SAVIOR

## Salvatorian News

*Walk  
with us*



Dare I say it? Life is slowly getting back to normal – or at least a new normal. As such, we look forward to hosting our **2021 Woman of Faith Award Presentation & Reception** in person and via livestream on September 23. Turn to Page 4 to read about Kai Gardner Mishlove, whom we'll honor that evening for her *Tables Across Borders* initiative to support Milwaukee-area refugees.

One week later, we will say goodbye to a member of our Mission Advancement Office when Jan Penlesky retires as Director of Communications. Jan's departure opens the door for Mission Advancement Associate Kaitlin Seebruch to step up to that position. Later this fall, we'll also bid farewell to Lori Graff when she retires as Director of Mission Advancement. Our search to fill Lori's position has begun. All these changes call to mind the words of our Founder, Blessed Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan: *Go forward courageously and faithfully on the path that Providence shows*. Blessed Jordan's July 21st feast day began a year-long celebration of his beatification. As you walk with us through the "Year of Blessed Francis Jordan" we ask for your prayers.

In our Savior's name,

*S. Beverly Heitke, S.D.S.*

Sister Beverly Heitke, SDS  
Provincial Leader

## Salvatorian Sisters make a little go a long way

**S**isters on the Frontlines began as a pilot project of Foundations and Donors Interested in Catholic Activities (FADICA) with GHR Foundation and the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. It soon grew into a Catholic Extension program with a wider alliance of nonprofits. The goal: Make 1,000 grants of \$1,000 each directly to Catholic Sisters to help people whose life struggles were compounded by the pandemic.

**Sister Liza Segleau, SDS** saw an opportunity to enhance support for her clients through *Sisters on the Frontlines*. She manages a Wisconsin Interdisciplinary Care Team (WICT) that assesses and intervenes for iCare members with complex medical and psychosocial needs. When Sr. Liza's \$1,000 grant was approved, she reached out to her care team to plan the best way to use the funds. News of the grant quickly made its way to iCare's CEO-President, who offered a 200% match. With funds totaling \$3,000, Sr. Liza's team helped a homeless expectant mother move into safe housing, a war veteran suffering from combat trauma avoid eviction, and a heart transplant candidate with limited resources pay for travel and lodging for frequent out-of-town medical appointments.



Sr. Liza says her work fulfills our Founder Blessed Francis Jordan's vision for Salvatorians to dedicate our lives to serve *wherever* we are called. "iCare gives me a 'boost' in what I am called to do. It's the perfect environment and the perfect population for me to reach out to and walk with."



**Sister Patrice Colletti, SDS** says COVID has begun to loosen its grip on the Lake Traverse Reservation tribal community she serves in northeast South Dakota. But she reminds us, "Mourning continues on many levels. The deaths of honored Elders and traditional spiritual leaders means a loss of the traditional language and culture."

Sr. Patrice's *Frontlines* grant is a blessing that has transformed an old storefront into WarCloud Drop In Center, named in memory of Paul WarCloud. He was a local artist, author and activist who dedicated his life to preserving tribal traditions and language until he died in 1973. The WarCloud Center is a safe gathering place for people of all ages who live on the streets, in abandoned buildings, in the woods north of town, or at the local shelter. The building rehab is led by young tribal member Dawn Ryan. Dawn's

*continued on page 3*

# Companions in Mission

**Jackie B.** first met the Salvatorian Sisters in the late '80s while searching for a spiritual retreat. Her then-pastor suggested meeting one-on-one with Sister Pat Kieler, SDS in Milwaukee. Coming from out of town, she stayed on the top floor of Mother of Good Counsel convent, or as Jackie calls it, "the Old Convent." She says her time spent with Sr. Pat was life-changing. "I was at a crossroads in my life and her direction helped me with discernment." Jackie is one of many who has benefited from Sr. Pat's spiritual direction over the last 40 years.

Eventually, Jackie moved closer to Milwaukee and began coming to prayer services and events hosted by the Salvatorian Sisters. Those encounters led to friendships with Sisters Jean Schafer, SDS and Karlyn Cauley, SDS. Today, Jackie relies on our website and newsletters to stay connected with her SDS friends. Her long-time friendships and intentional charitable giving plan have inspired Jackie's faithful generosity to support our U.S. ministries and international missions for more than 30 years. It includes cash gifts and more recently, a gift of stock.

Several years ago, we welcomed Jackie into our Apostolic Circle after she named the Sisters of the Divine Savior in her will. She knows her gifts to the Salvatorian Sisters directly help people in need. She says, "I am committed to trying to find ways to leave the world a bit better than I found it."

*"The sisters befriended me  
when I didn't even realize  
I needed a friend."*

— Jackie B.,  
Apostolic Circle Member



Jackie's heart for others was instilled by her mother Germaine. She remembers her mom inviting people in need to spend a couple days in their home, often saying, "You can always add a cup of water to the soup." When Germaine passed away, Jackie became aware of numerous organizations where her mom had volunteered. Like Jackie, her mother believed in giving without fanfare.

*Our SDS Apostolic Circle recognizes Jackie B.'s generous foresight along with that of other friends who name the Sisters of the Divine Savior in their will or estate plan. With their consent, we recognize Apostolic Circle members on a plaque at the SDS Community House in Milwaukee. During the Christmas season, we pray for their intentions during a special Mass at our Motherhouse, Villa Salvator Mundi in Rome, near our founding site in Tivoli, Italy. For information on leaving a legacy gift, contact Lori Graff at 414-466-7414.*

## Counting Your Blessings

*Your goodness and kindness abound*

Your generosity to support tuition needs at Salvatorian schools in Bogota, Colombia and Chimoio, Mozambique is a true blessing! Your gifts will enable 160 students to continue their education for another year, despite their families' growing economic hardships amid the pandemic. Each and every day, our sisters witness the life-changing promise learning holds for their students. Your gifts will lift these children to their highest potential and show them a future filled with hope.



## In Memoriam

**Sister Debra Breese, SDS** was professed nine years when she died on April 17, 2021. She entered our religious community after raising her family. Ministering as a recreation rehabilitation aide at Divine Savior Healthcare inspired her to learn about the effects of dementia on residents in her care. Sr. Debra said, "My mind sees the words Jesus spoke: 'The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve' (Mark 10:45)."

**Sister Patricia Wieloch, SDS** (formerly Sr. Salesia) was professed 70 years when she died on June 30, 2021. Sr. Pat loved working with the elderly, caring for their grooming, exercise and other needs of daily living. She regarded her work as a nursing assistant a privilege, and continued to grow in her 27-year ministry at Divine Savior Healthcare in Portage, Wis. In her time serving there, she helped her senior patients know they were loved and very special in God's eyes.



Read about Sisters Debra and Patricia here:  
[sistersofthedivinesavior.org/in-memoriam](https://sistersofthedivinesavior.org/in-memoriam)



## Frontlines

continued from page 1

father was tribal chairman when Sr. Patrice served on the reservation 35 years ago. He was a man of vision whose leadership guided the tribe toward greater self-sufficiency. With volunteer labor, Dawn is honoring his legacy.

The WarCloud Center is a place for folks to access COVID shots, get masks, speak with a nurse volunteer, and get rides to a COVID test site two miles away. Families also come to the center to check on loved ones who struggle with addiction or mental illness.

Sr. Patrice says, "People are working together to create a safe space where families can process some of the trauma of this difficult time. This project witnesses to Gospel values and traditional Dakota values. The WarCloud Center is important to our reservation, but the grass roots effort that makes it possible is even more so. When people are part of creating a better life for their community, their families, it's powerful."

### Sister Ellen Sinclair, SDS

says, "Before the pandemic, I served as a pro bono attorney with the Legal Action of Wisconsin Eviction Defense Project. When

the pandemic struck, I began meeting virtually with residents facing eviction for a variety of reasons."

In cities across the U.S., COVID-19 caused thousands of people to lose their job – and then their home. Milwaukee was no exception. Early on, the CARES Act moratorium offered some tenants a reprieve. Since September 2020, tenants eligible for the CDC Moratorium got a temporary stay. Still, Milwaukee County saw hundreds of evictions.

Sr. Ellen also received a \$1,000 grant through *Sisters on the Frontlines*. She says, "By collaborating with Community



## Joy-filled ... awesome ... astounding



The Basilica of St. John Lateran, where Sister Mary Evelyn Zimbauer, far right, and Lay Salvatorian Jan Bitzan witnessed Blessed Francis Jordan's beatification

"It was a great joy to be present for the long awaited beatification of Blessed Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan on May 15th. Getting to Rome was challenging due to COVID-19 restrictions. Lay Salvatorian Jan Bitzan and I were allowed to travel to witness a once-in-a-lifetime event. And once-in-a-lifetime it was! The Basilica of St. John Lateran was absolutely awesome and I'll never forget curtains opening to unveil the beautiful colorful portrait of Blessed Francis Jordan. The long, joy-filled clapping that followed was astounding. Afterwards, our General Superior, Sister Maria Yaneth, graciously invited us to a celebration at the Motherhouse. It was a jubilant gathering of a 6-course meal and a special torte (sweet cake). A special prayer service followed our meal and a Mass of Thanksgiving the next day. To end our trip, we received a tour of the remodeled Salvatorian Fathers' Motherhouse chapel containing the remains of Blessed Jordan. On top of his tomb burns an eternal flame."

— Sister Mary Evelyn Zimbauer, SDS

*Amidst the many challenges we face throughout the world, we joyfully embrace the beatification of our founder, Father Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan. The "Year of Blessed Francis Jordan" officially began on July 21, 2021, his newly declared canonical feast day that coincides with the anniversary of his ordination. After a year of prayer and thanksgiving, our celebration will come to a close on July 21, 2022.*

Advocates, we provided \$50-\$100 debit cards to help a dozen families move from temporary shelter to stable housing. The cards allowed recipients to decide what they needed to make their new housing a home. They used the funds for a variety of needs from rental application fees and moving costs, to retrieving household goods from storage or replacing essential items left behind upon eviction." For these families in desperate circumstances, those modest funds preserved a degree of dignity."

### SDS Mission Advancement Office

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# 2021 *Woman of Faith* helps refugees build bridges by breaking bread

Local restaurateur Caitlin Cullen met Kai Yael Gardner Mishlove on a frigid Milwaukee Sunday in a room of mostly strangers. They gathered to talk about a pop-up dinner series for refugees who had been granted asylum in Milwaukee. Kai's vision was to sell tickets for dinners prepared by the refugees to provide income for their families. Kai also envisioned a far greater good: to build bridges between diverse cultures. That vision inspired Caitlin to nominate Kai for the **Sisters of the Divine Savior 2021 Woman of Faith Award**.

Caitlin describes Kai's aha moment. "Kai's inspiration began with voluntary home visits to refugee women in the Milwaukee area. Every household was always cooking and offered food as a form of welcome. Over time, friendships grew over a common bond — food." After sharing her idea with these newfound friends, Kai launched *Tables Across Borders* (TAB). Caitlin says, "In just a matter of weeks, Kai set up a three-month, six-dinner-series fundraiser highlighting cuisine from five different countries." She also points out that Kai runs TAB as a volunteer. "Kai devotes much of her free time to facilitate understanding of our 'new neighbors' who have walked very different paths and need support to adjust to a new life in the U.S."

Rev. Christie Melby-Gibbons endorsed Kai's nomination for the Woman of Faith Award. She runs Tricklebee Café, one of three local restaurants that hosted the first dinner series. Christie says, "It's delightful to see the chefs in our kitchens, making their traditional food to share with people who may have never had anything like it."

After the first dinner series, TAB hosted four more events from September 2019 through February 2020. It raised more than \$16,000 to support refugee chefs' families from 10 different nations. When the pandemic struck, Caitlin's Tandem Restaurant partnered with World Central Kitchen to continue supporting the refugee chefs and help struggling local restaurants. Others followed Tandem's lead, including

*"Food connects people across cultures, world views and walks of life. It's nourishment for the soul and a testimony of faith, perseverance and new beginnings."*

– Kai Yael Gardner Mishlove



Tippecanoe Presbyterian Church Hungry Hearts Community Meals program and Milwaukee restaurants Amilinda and Damascus Gate.

TAB also pivoted to online cooking events in collaboration with Milwaukee's Lynden Sculpture Garden. The refugee chefs prepared cuisine from different countries with themes ranging from samosas, rice, wots (stews), desserts, breads and vegetables. Each real-time event featured chefs from different countries sharing recipes and cooking techniques. The online events continued to generate income and offered the chefs training and exposure. Kai adds, "It also heightened awareness of the refugees' positive contributions to our Milwaukee landscape. It has been an

incredible blessing and honor to witness their resilience and experience the beauty of their cultures, and connect that to my own."

In April 2021, Kai accepted a position with the Milwaukee Jewish Federation as Director of the Jewish Community Relations Council. Despite the demands of her new job, she remains dedicated to *Tables Across Borders*.

Caitlin says, "When I read the criteria for the Woman of Faith Award, I see a checklist of everything Kai is: servant, empath, teacher and translator." Rev. Christie agrees: "She is truly a carrier of the light, and she freely shines in whatever she does and wherever she goes. Kai is kind, empowering, joyful ... and is a gifted community organizer."

Follow *Tables Across Borders* at [facebook.com/Amilindatandemtricklebee/](https://facebook.com/Amilindatandemtricklebee/)



## WOMAN OF Faith AWARD

Please join us to honor

### Kai Gardner Mishlove

Founder, *Tables Across Borders*

### Thursday, September 23, 2021 • 7:00 PM CDT

SDS Community House • 4311 N. 100th Street, Milwaukee

**RSVP by September 17** to attend this free event

[sistersofthedivinesavior.org/woman-of-faith](https://sistersofthedivinesavior.org/woman-of-faith) or call 414-466-7414

Can't attend? Join us at [youtu.be/lhgDaQMzrJ4](https://youtu.be/lhgDaQMzrJ4)

Special Thanks to Milwaukee Jewish Federation,  
Gold Partner for this event  
[milwaukeejewish.org](https://milwaukeejewish.org)



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JEWISH FEDERATION