



That all may
know the Savior

SISTERS OF THE DIVINE SAVIOR

Salvatorian News

Walk with us

As you know, the pandemic has put a lot of gatherings on hold – birthday parties, concerts, vacations, and the election of our Province's new leadership team. Originally scheduled for 2021, we postponed our election until 2022 due to COVID-19 related concerns.

As I complete seven years in Provincial leadership, I would like to thank you for all the ways you walked with me and our Province during an unprecedented and historic time. In 2021 alone, we celebrated the Beatification of our founder, Blessed Francis Jordan, and discovered more ways to navigate a worldwide pandemic. Our stewardship update beginning on Page 1 offers a glimpse at the ways you helped us carry our mission through 2021.

I, along with six other Sisters of the Divine Savior, will celebrate a jubilee this year. On Page 3 we share about our combined 415 years of religious life. Our summer celebration will not only honor our 2022 Jubilarians but also those who did not get to celebrate in 2020 and 2021.

As I say my final farewell in this column, I look back on our companionship in service to our Divine Savior. I enjoyed getting to know you through spirited experiences like our prayer services, Catholic Sisters Week projects, annual Woman of Faith program, and diocesan mission appeals. It has been a privilege to witness your financial and prayerful support of our sisters at home and internationally.

Our relationship with you nurtures our mission to make known the goodness and kindness of Jesus in many ways to many people in many places. I ask for you to walk with our new Team in prayer as they guide our Province forward.



With appreciation,

A. Beverly Heitke, S.D.S.

Sister Beverly Heitke, SDS
Provincial Leader



A new year is often seen as a fresh start. We resolve to eat healthier, read 100 books, and have a better year than the one before. For many, however, 2021 felt like a continuation of 2020. Life's challenges remained the same – dodging COVID-19 and stumbling through Zoom calls – and blessings seemed in short supply. But, as we look back on 2021, we're humbled by the unexpected blessings you generously gave our U.S. Province and international Sisters of the Divine Savior.

Your generosity ensured students in Colombia and Mozambique have access to high quality education.

It's obvious that our elder sisters' needs were a priority to you in 2021. Generous gifts designated to Salvatorian Sisters Residence (SSR) provided a new refrigerator, assistive listening devices, and handicap accessible doors. Also, the Residence will soon add a handicap accessible van to its vehicle fleet, thanks to an end-of-year gift. A van will facilitate transport to medical appointments and fun outings. We are deeply grateful to all our donors whose compassionate support helps improve quality of life for our sisters.

In May 2021, you ensured children could continue their studies at Salvatorian schools in Colombia and Mozambique. Aggravated by the pandemic, students from single-parent families, low-income households, and families with multiple students were at risk of missing out on high quality education. That risk is no more because your generosity provided 220 students with one-year scholarships. Tuition support offers financial stability and a hope-filled future not only to families but also to the schools. The opportunity a Salvatorian education provides lives on because of you.

Following Thanksgiving, we participated in **Giving Tuesday** to provide two Sri Lankan Salvatorian Sisters with a year of professional education. Through social media and our monthly eNewsletter, we surpassed our \$1,802 goal. We intend to use the surplus funds to support education for two additional sisters, Sisters Oska and Angelika. All four sisters are pursuing three-year education degrees.

Companions in Mission



Adele M. discovered a deep love and admiration for Tanzania during her first visit in 1966. A relatively new country at the time, Adele jumped at the chance to join her sister, Carlotta, formerly Salvatorian Sister Fredrick Mary, in the missions. She says, "I left everything behind because I knew it would be there when I got back. I had to take advantage of the opportunity in front of me."

The opportunity was to teach alongside her sister and other Sisters of the Divine Savior at an all-girls school in southern Tanzania. Adele's graduate degree in education qualified her to teach agriculture, hygiene, and self-reliance – courses suitable for a country dependent on farming. She proudly taught beside our

Salvatorian Sisters who believed, and continue to believe, in the intrinsic right of education for all.

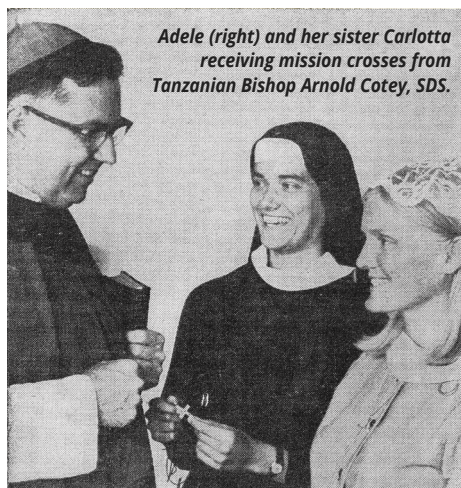
As the years went by, Adele got her degree in nursing, Carlotta left religious life, and they partnered with their friend, Judy, in 2001 to bring solar cooking to southern Tanzania. All three women were focused on starting their nonprofit Solar Circle until a group of Tanzanian Salvatorian Sisters approached them in 2007. Former students of Adele and Carlotta, the Sisters turned educators needed help raising funds to build a primary school in Buyuni, Tanzania.

Brick by brick, Jitegemee Primary School grew out of a dusty plot of land through the supervision of Tanzanian Salvatorian Sisters and the fundraising willpower of Adele, Carlotta, and Judy. Jitegemee (jee-teh-geh-máy) in Swahili means "The energy, spirit, and commitment an individual or a community has deep within that bring about good development for themselves and others." A name fitting for a school anchored by our mission to foster an awareness of a loving God among peoples in whatever place and by whatever means the Spirit of God inspires.

Nowadays, Adele handles the majority of fundraising due to Judy's heavy involvement in Solar Circle and Carlotta's death in 2012. Adele

describes her fundraising approach as grass-roots and says, "I believe in progress, not perfection." While slideshows, high school fundraisers, yard sales, and car washes may not bring in a lot of money, every dollar counts. All the money Adele raises is processed by our U.S. Province and earmarked for the school.

Jitegemee Primary School opened its doors to students in 2020. Adele and Judy have only seen the completed school through pictures but they hope to one day travel to Tanzania to see it in person. Fundraising is now focused on establishing a school maintenance fund, stocking classrooms with textbooks and desks, and buying a school bus to boost pupil enrollment. Adele remains supportive of our Tanzanian Sisters, saying, "When you visit Tanzania as much as me, you start having the same vision they do." A vision to inspire a life of service and morally and ethically educate God's children.



Adele (right) and her sister Carlotta receiving mission crosses from Tanzanian Bishop Arnold Cotey, SDS.

Donating online to the Sisters of the Divine Savior is a secure and convenient way to support our ministries. You can designate your gift for Jitegemee Primary School and other special needs, honor or remember a loved one, and share special prayer intentions. To give a gift online go to: sistersofthedivinesavior.org/donate

In Memoriam

Blood sisters and Salvatorian Sisters Rita and Georgene Faust had 158 years of religious life between the two of them. Two of fourteen children, the Faust sisters grew up in a deeply religious family. They had an uncle, Fr. Frederick Dorn, SDS, three aunts, six first cousins who were religious, and an older sibling who became a Sister of the Divine Savior – Sr. Phyllis Faust.



Sr. Georgene, right, visiting her older sister, Sr. Rita

Sister Rita Faust, SDS (Sr. Frederick) was professed 80 years as a Sister of the Divine Savior when she died on September 18, 2021. She served in a multitude of ministries as a teacher, director, assistant coordinator, and volunteer. No matter the ministry, she gave her whole self: "Whenever I go from a place, I go empty because I leave something of myself; and I go full because I take something of that place with me..."

Sister Georgene Faust, SDS, walked many paths and interacted with many communities as a lifelong educator and Sister of the Divine Savior. During her decades-long teaching career, she stated she found "the goodness and kindness of Jesus, the Savior, in the poor, the financially well and in the educationally poor." Sr. Georgene was professed 78 years when she died on October 25, 2021.

Read about Sisters Rita and Georgene here: sistersofthedivinesavior.org/in-memoriam

Celebrating 2022 Jubilarians

40 YEARS

When **Sister Pat Russell, SDS**

started having thoughts about religious life, she told herself they'd go away.

She hoped visiting religious orders would affirm that religious life was not for her, but meeting the Salvatorian Sisters changed everything. Immediately comfortable upon her first visit, Sr. Pat remembers, "I was really touched by the people and the spirituality." Following her entrance into religious life, Sr. Pat served parishes in Alabama, Tennessee, and Wisconsin with her expertise in business administration.



overcome crisis periods in their lives and cope with the ongoing challenges of mental illness." Now retired, Sr. Jeanette compassionately serves at-risk populations as a volunteer nurse.

60 YEARS

Sister Elizabeth Ann Christensen, SDS

(Sr. Mary Charles)

entered religious life in 1959, and is candid about the doubt that set in 20 years later. Not sure where she was supposed to be anymore, she left the community for a year and a half. Eventually she returned and advises anyone considering religious life: "Listen to your heart." Although born in northern Minnesota, Sr. Liz retired to sunny Arizona where she volunteered on a full-time basis until 2017. Back in the Midwest, she misses Arizona's weather the most when it's -9 degrees.



65 YEARS

Sister Pauline Feiner, SDS

(Sr. Mary Neil) finds the utmost fulfillment in

parish ministry. She says, "The parish is the place where our faith is shared, nurtured, and celebrated." When she stepped down from full-time ministry, she moved on to provide part-time pastoral care at St. Rose in Clintonville and St. Mary's in Bear Creek, Wisconsin. Sr. Pauline attends to the odds and ends of the parishes and primarily ministers to the elderly and sick.



60 YEARS

Sister Carol Thresher, SDS
(Sr. Mary Blaise)

finds it hard not to reminisce when writing the post-1985 history of her Province.

Swarms of memories from her 18 years in Brazil and time serving on the U.S. Provincial team buzz around in her head. While Sr. Carol enjoys revisiting the past, she always has her eyes on the future. "I'm confident that whatever it brings, I will discover God in its midst."



65 YEARS

Rarely does **Sister Virginia Honish, SDS**
(Sr. Francis de Sales)

find time to look back on her life. In fact, when she thinks about her days as a school administrator and leadership team member, she jokingly questions if that was really her. "Time flies by; I don't keep thinking about what has been, I just keep going." Sr. Virginia isn't slowing down



65 YEARS

Sister Beverly Heitke, SDS (Sr. Mary Clarence) said "yes" to many

calls to serve over the years. International leadership and hospital administrator in Rome, sponsorship coordinator in Portage, Wisconsin, and dentist and Provincial team member in Milwaukee. Sr. Beverly isn't fazed by her multiple ministries, saying, "Religious life is a deeply life-giving vocation. It has offered opportunities to me and calls me to be life-giving to many people."



60 YEARS

Sister Jeanette Clarke, SDS

became an early advocate for mental health awareness during her longtime ministry as a

psychiatric nurse. As a health professional and someone of deep faith, she says, "It's rewarding for me to see people



Go to: sistersofthedivinesavior.org/jubilee-celebrations

You can send Jubilee greetings c/o:

Mission Advancement Office | 4311 N 100th St | Milwaukee, WI 53222

missionadvancement@salvatoriansisters.org

A gift to support our mission is a meaningful way to honor a Jubilarian.

You can mail your donation or donate online:

sistersofthedivinesavior.org/donate-tribute

Hope for tomorrow >>

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Over Christmas, we shared a delightful story on Salvatorian Sister Dora Zapf's commitment to her community in New Holstein, Wisconsin. Although small in population, Sr. Dora has served her town for more than 48 years. As a former collaborator of the Salvatorian Mission Warehouse and current visitor of the homebound, Sr. Dora, like all our sisters, dedicates herself to serving God's people. She believes "God has blessed each of us generously. So, we must share our blessings with others." You shared more than your monetary blessings with us last year. We felt the blessings of your friendship in every note you wrote, prayer intention you vulnerably shared, and event you attended.

Out of concern for our sisters and surrounding community, we were unable to host our annual "Turn the Page" book discussion for **2021 Catholic Sisters Week**.

Instead, we participated in the Challenge to End Hunger, a grass-roots response to growing food insecurity related to the pandemic. In partnership with Divine Savior Holy Angels High School, we collected new and sealed paper and hygiene products and non-perishable food items. From March 1-14, we packed 54 bags and 38 boxes for Mother of Good Counsel and Blessed Savior Parish Food Pantries in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Once again in 2022, we'll participate in the Challenge to End Hunger for Catholic Sisters Week, March 8-14.

After 50 years in Arizona serving in prisons, parishes, homes, hospitals, schools, and on the U.S.-Mexico border, we said goodbye to the Grand Canyon State. Arizona Sisters Leticia Regala, Jane Eschweiler, Darlene Pienschke, and Rita Vogelsang are adjusting



Salvatorian Sisters Grace Mary Croft, Beverly Heitke, and Carol Thresher packed food for Catholic Sisters Week.

to Wisconsin weather and settling into new ministries. While we're sad to leave Arizona, we trust our southwestern priests, brothers, and lay people to continue to uphold the Salvatorian Mission.

Our founder Blessed Francis Jordan's July 21st feast day kicked off a year-long celebration of his beatification. His feast day

commemorates the anniversary of his ordination in 1878. Two U.S. Salvatorians, Sister Mary Evelyn Zimbauer, SDS and Lay Salvatorian Jan Bitzan, received special permission to witness the beatification ceremony on May 15, 2021 at the Basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome. Sr. Mary Evelyn described the jubilant celebration as a "once-in-a-lifetime event." We'll continue to celebrate the **Year of Blessed Francis Jordan** until July 21, 2022.

Last summer, diocesan mission appeals carried on as usual. Well, as usual as possible amid a worldwide pandemic. Large and small parishes throughout the Midwest invited us to their Masses in-person and digitally. Eager to burn some rubber, our sisters spent their weekends visiting parishes in the Dioceses of Green Bay,



TIP

DON'T LEAVE LIFE INSURANCE BEHIND

If you're still paying premiums, or if you have paid up on an old life insurance policy, there might be a better use for it.

As more people outlive the need for a long-held policy, they forget about the asset until an annual statement comes in the mail. After providing for your loved ones, please consider naming the Sisters of the Divine Savior as a full or partial beneficiary. You can designate proceeds to support one of our international mission projects or for our retired sisters' ongoing needs.

For more information, please go to sistersofthedivinesavior.org/planned-gifts. If you have questions or would like some friendly assistance, please contact Tim Kasza at kasza@salvatoriansisters.org or by phone at (414) 466-7414.



Grand Rapids, Fort Wayne-South Bend, and the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. In the spirit of collaboration, Lay Salvatorian Sue Haertel went on camera with Sister Barbara Reynolds, SDS to share the impact of parish support on mission efforts. They spoke about their work with the Tanzanian Education Initiative and our sisters who benefited from the program. Strangers, likely unfamiliar with the Salvatorian Sisters, opened their hearts to generously share their blessings with our international Salvatorian ministries.

We are so humbled by your prayerful and financial support of our mission to serve God's people. Food pantries down the road from our Provincial headquarters in Milwaukee and schools thousands of miles away in Colombia and Mozambique benefited from your boundless generosity. You have not only supported the people our sisters so dutifully serve but also our sisters themselves. With God in our hearts and your faith in our mission, we look forward to whatever tomorrow has in store.

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