Sound Sisters

Meet some Sisters who reap the benefits of staying on the move in our special Mind, Body, Spirit section beginning on page 12.
Sustainable stewardship of natural resources is part of the corporate witness of the Sisters of the Humility of Mary. Please join us in making recycling a priority.

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**MIND, BODY, SPIRIT**

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**Mind, Body, Spirit**

**Pope’s Encyclical Creates Climate Conversation**

**Missioning Ceremony Includes Novitiate Entrance Rite**
In August we celebrated our community days which concluded with Missioning, an annual ritual to renew our commitment to be sent forth renewed for the mission and ministry to which God has called us. The theme this year, “Called to respond to the needs of our time with vision, courage and generosity,” is a line taken from our HM Mission Statement.

We have an idea of what vision, courage, and generosity meant for our early sisters who had the courage to say “yes” to their unknown future in a new land. What might it mean for us today in these difficult times, in a world of such rapid changes, with complex global realities all around us? It can feel overwhelming at times and beyond our abilities to make even the smallest change.

But what we do know is that the mission belongs to God. And we know that we have been called to participate in some way in God’s vision for this most amazing future before us. The courage called for today includes the fidelity to believe that the promises made to us by God will be fulfilled (Luke 1:45). We have been richly blessed by God in the celebration of Sr. Eilis McCulloh as she entered the novitiate in August and Sr. Audrey Abbata as she pronounced her first vows in September. Both events illustrate the mysterious pathway of the Spirit moving us into the future.

We all live different lifestyles with various daily rhythms, but we are given to one another in community and service. We often speak of the ministry of presence, simply being with others, being there for others, offering our time in the present moment. Pope Francis invites us, in his Apostolic Exhortation, The Joy of the Gospel, to “remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other (cf. Ex 3:5). The pace of this accompaniment must be steady and reassuring, reflecting our closeness and our compassionate gaze which also heals, liberates and encourages growth in the Christian life.” (169)

In this issue of The Voice, we share with you simple examples of witness, of presence, of ways that our sisters and associates and partners are doing ordinary things, sometimes in extraordinary ways.

“Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.” (Pope Francis quoting from the “Earth Charter” in his encyclical, Laudato Si’, 207)

The autumn season reminds us of the bountiful graces God has poured out on us through the generosity of many benefactors. We are grateful for family, friends, companions and all those who walk together with us. May you be blessed.

In Mary’s humility,

Sister Toby Lardie
Pastoral Leader

Dear friends,

In August we celebrated our community days which concluded with Missioning, an annual ritual to renew our commitment to be sent forth renewed for the mission and ministry to which God has called us. The theme this year, “Called to respond to the needs of our time with vision, courage and generosity,” is a line taken from our HM Mission Statement.

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Pastoral Leader
As the HM Associate Community celebrates its 30th anniversary, we take a look back and forward with Director Patsy Richards, who along with her husband, Anthony, became an associate in 1999.

**What is an Associate and what year did the Associate Community form?**
Associates are an active group of laity who have a central focus on the ministry of Jesus and the charism and spirit of the congregation to which they are associated. The first group made its Initial Commitment in 1985. Associate membership was formally proposed in the Chapter of 1981. Sr. Madeline Shemo was appointed director. The associate office was moved to Villa Maria in September of 1988.

**Why the need for an Associate Community?**
Elements that emerged from the beginning were with the purpose of sharing ministry, spiritual benefits, and to expand the spirit and charism of the community to the broader Church. This partnership with the sisters and associates would mutually benefit both groups as the collaboration would broaden the vision of ministry and of the Church for all involved. Associates are an active part of the sisters’ ministries, sharing the mission of the community, sharing in prayer, joining with the sisters for workshops and retreats, sharing expertise and talents, and sharing in community life.

**What does the HM Associate Community offer men and women?**
The Associate Community offers women and men a distinctive way to live out their baptismal commitment. Imbued with the spirit and mission of the sisters, they extend the Humility of Mary charism. The charism of humility invites associates to bring more abundant life to God’s people through their individual faith lives, service and community. Each associate is supported in a vibrant community which fosters strong connections with the sisters in the spirit of humility, hospitality and joyful service to God’s people.

“We were all so thrilled and honored at our initial commitment ceremony. My son asked, “Mom, does this mean you are going to be a nun?” I said I did not think his father would approve of that, but I was going to be connected in a special way to the sisters.”

-Ann McGill, celebrating 30 years as an HM Associate

“As an HM Associate for 25 years, I have been blessed to journey with these remarkable women of the Gospel, to share and participate in their mission and ministry, and to try to reflect in some way their life-giving spirit and charism.”

-Kathy Csank
What is it that is inviting to men and women?
The strong desire for a deeper spiritual life that will influence how they live and work – how they see the world around them. The attraction is being associated with a community – both sisters and associates – committed to living a spiritual life in the world, with a dedication to bringing about social justice and change. In faith and prayer, mission and ministry, and community, associates and sisters share in one spirit and one charism. When an associate chooses a congregation to become associated with, it has to do with the charism which in turn has to do with mission and ministry. Associates are attracted to the charism of the founder as expressed through the lived experience of the sisters and associates. The task for each associate and religious is to keep the charism alive in one's daily life. Being an associate is about helping make a difference in the world. It is about furthering the mission of Jesus.

How has the Associate Community relationship with the sisters changed over the years?
Initially sisters acted as directors and associates as co-directors. When the sister left the position as director, it was decided the Associate Community would be associate led. I am the first director and that took place in 2011. Although there are many dimensions to the position, it is about assisting the HM Associate Community to live their associate commitment of faith and prayer, mission and ministry, and community and to foster an understanding in the HM Community about what it means to be an associate. I do this with the help of area coordinators and an advisory board. We have associate area coordinators in Cleveland, Akron/Canton, and Villa/Youngstown, who plan experiences in those areas so associates can live their commitment where they are. Our new handbook defines our purpose and commitment. We have our own mission and vision statement, and have our own fund-to-fund ministries with donations coming from associates and those who want to help further our mission and ministries. We also now have Lifetime Commitment for associates who desire to make a lifetime commitment to the HM Community. Our commitment has always been faith and prayer, mission and ministry, and community, however, we have refined and defined the dimensions of the commitment.

What does the future look like?
Across the country, association continues to grow. Associate communities are seen as God’s way of calling more of us to carry out His Gospel message in a special way. Being an associate is not about membership and recruiting new members, but about invitation – invitation to a way of life – personal invitation from associates and sisters and also what others see as inviting in association. The North American Conference of Associates and Religious (NACAR) has commissioned the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) to undertake a major new study of religious congregations in the United States and Canada. This research will build on the findings from the first study of its kind, Partners in Mission: The Associate-Vowed Relationship in the United States, which was completed by CARA and published by NACAR in 2000. Associates and those in similar relationships to religious communities are emerging as an essential presence in North America today.

Congratulations to the six 30-year associates: Ann McGill, Patrice McCarthy, Toni Kline, Marie Solgos, Donna Sheridan and Judy Albanese.
The Winds of Change
Pope’s Encyclical Creates Climate Conversation

By Sr. Barbara O’Donnell

Pope Francis’ recent encyclical is gaining attention all around the world. Since its release, *Laudato Si’* has raised both affirmation and criticism on both national and international levels.

I first read Pope Francis’ encyclical in preparation for an evening sponsored by the Thomas Merton Center in Pittsburgh entitled, *A Climate for Change: A Multi-Faith Conversation.* The program was endorsed by several local faith communities and Earth groups. The Episcopal Church of the Redeemer hosted almost 100 guests, who gathered to hear panelists share responses to *Laudato Si’ - On Care for our Common Home* from the perspective of different faith traditions.

**Part of the Discussion**

It was a privilege to serve with others from Pax Christi/ St. Sylvester Catholic Parish, the Islamic Center of Pittsburgh, the Jewish Beth Shalom Congregation, St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Hindi Ramakrishna Vedanta Center, and a member of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh’s Order of Interbeing. Each of us spoke to the heart of our faith, based on tradition, teachings, values and vision. Common elements of truth were repeatedly interwoven as each of us included beliefs of being in right relationship with God, humanity and Earth.

A few people read statements of faith affirming specific aspects of caring for creation with a deep sense of respect. Reference was made to similar language or comparable understandings of the encyclical given our unique paths of spirituality. One panelist mentioned how inspiring...
it is to see the influence of an international religious leader speak out with inclusivity, passion and courage in an effort to address the increasing impact of global climate change.

Comments and questions from the audience continued the dialogue. Everyone was invited to participate in a follow-up study series, *A Climate for Change: Greening Our Faith.* One purpose is to build enthusiasm for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change scheduled Nov. 30 to Dec. 11 at Le Bourget in Paris, France.

The session concluded with prayer followed by a social with refreshments, networking and informational displays. The enriching experience deepened my appreciation of Catholicism and all faith traditions.

**An Ecological Crisis**

I imagine Pope Francis prayed often the words of Saint Francis, "Praise be to you, God of All Creation," before continued on next page
naming the encyclical. The English translation, Praise Be, expresses the pope’s spirit of humility and gratitude for the gift of life and the mystery of the cosmos.

A glance at the six chapter titles reveals comprehensive thinking about the interconnectedness of all life. Each chapter identifies specific concerns within the context of faith and human responsibilities. Pope Francis makes clear that “We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.”


A Universal Invitation
Pope Francis writes as a pastoral leader extending a universal invitation for us to talk with each other about our individual and communal relationships. He names “ecological conversion” as essential to the process for spiritual renewal that expands our understanding of the common good.

Personal and communal responses are needed to the sobering questions that Pope Francis asks about consumerism and lifestyle choices, renewable energy, and moral obligations to those who are poor. The introduction states, It is my hope that this encyclical letter, which is now added to the body of the Church’s social teaching, can help us acknowledge the appeal, immensity and urgency of the challenge we face. I will begin briefly reviewing several aspects of the present ecological crisis with the aim of drawing on the results of the best scientific research available today... and provide a concrete foundation for the ethical and spiritual itinerary that follows.

Throughout the encyclical, he quotes scripture, previous popes, bishops’ conferences, and other relevant sources. What Pope Francis presents is not new to Catholic thought. It strengthens an immediate call for contemplation and action for justice focused on love of God and all of creation. For followers of Jesus the Christ, Francis affirms sacrifice and reconciliation based on a unified spirit that emanates from an ethical way of being — Gospel living.

I imagine Pope Francis prayed often the words of Saint Francis, “Praise be to you, God of All Creation,” before naming the encyclical. The English translation, Praise Be, expresses the pope’s spirit of humility and gratitude for the gift of life and the mystery of the cosmos.

Pope Francis reminds us that inner peace is closely related to care for ecology and for the common good because, lived out authentically, it is reflected in a balanced lifestyle together with a capacity for wonder, which takes us to a deeper understanding of life.
Protectors of God’s Handiwork

Pope Francis reminds us that inner peace is closely related to care for ecology and for the common good because, lived out authentically, it is reflected in a balanced lifestyle together with a capacity for wonder, which takes us to a deeper understanding of life. He also says, Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.

Educated as a chemist, Pope Francis is attentive to scientific evidence. He is not naive as he inspires an awareness of the integrity of all life forms and a balance of all dimensions of our lives. He voices concern for those most vulnerable and without resources to adapt to severe changes. Climate refugees have already traveled miles to find new homes. Island people have negotiated with mainland populations in seeking a place to live. Media coverage of ecological diminishment appears almost daily.

Pope Francis is clear. Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, and political and for the distribution of goods. It represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day.

Serving as a panelist for the inter-faith conversation was a personal blessing. It inspired me to include the two prayers at the end of the encyclical in my own spiritual practice. May Pope Francis’ message influence the UN Representatives from 195 countries and one bloc (European Union) during the climate change discussions in Paris. The conference goal since the 1992 Rio Earth Summit is still: “to achieve a legally binding and universal agreement on climate, from all the nations of the world.”

Small group gatherings in parishes and homes may be the best way to share thoughts, feelings and choices for action. Along with the text itself, excellent resources for study and reflection are available (see sidebar). Some of those may help us discern how to assimilate the meaning of Pope Francis’ concept of “integral ecology.” How do we make it our own? What does it mean for us personally and for the entire Earth community? We might reflect more on what draws our attention and what motivates us toward change. What inspires and encourages us to live more simply and more lovingly in God’s presence?

What Pope Francis presents is not new to Catholic thought. It strengthens an immediate call for contemplation and action for justice focused on love of God and all of creation. For followers of Jesus the Christ, Francis affirms sacrifice and reconciliation based on a unified spirit that emanates from an ethical way of being — Gospel living.
Missioning Ceremony Includes Novitiate Entrance Rite

By Kylene Kamensky

HM Sisters, HM Associates, and HM Partners in Mission gathered in Magnificat Chapel on August 8 to participate in the annual Missioning that takes place each August. In keeping with the HM Mission, this year’s theme was “Called to respond to the needs of our time with vision, courage, and generosity.” Sr. Toby Lardie spoke of each quality with quiet enthusiasm that drew smiles and laughter from the audience.

“Oh that God would just gift us with a clear vision of what the future would be and maybe a strategic plan how to get there,” she said. “But God invites us to see our lives and the world as God sees it—with deep compassion. It takes courage to commit ourselves over and over to a lifestyle that’s very counter-cultural. It takes courage to believe in the vision.”

The annual ceremony also included the Rite of Entrance into the Novitiate for Eilis McCulloh, who ended her candidacy year and took the next step on her journey as she became a novice. To mark the occasion, Sr. Eilis was given an HM medal, a copy of the *HM Constitutions*, pictures of the HM founders, and a chapel key.

“The novitiate is the most important time of formation and this required canonical year is a gift with both blessings and challenges, a year of intense spiritual and personal growth,” said Sr. Toby. “Very few people in today’s world are willing to consider things like commitment and an alternative lifestyle that gives witness to the deeper values of love, faithfulness, and a life of service to others, especially those who are vulnerable on our margins. So God has blessed us with Eilis, a woman who seeks God’s vision for her life, and with courage and generosity, asks to be one with us in community.”

“It was with great joy that I requested to enter the Novitiate,” said Sr. Eilis. “Entering during Missioning was extra special as it a ritual of ‘sending forth’ as I was ‘sent forth’ by the Community into the two years of Novitiate.”
Sister Experiences Peace, Joy During First Profession

Sr. Audrey Abbata continued her journey with a First Profession ceremony in September, where she professed to live the next three years in vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. She received a ring to be worn as a symbol of God’s love and her dedication to the service of God’s people as a member of the Sisters of the Humility of Mary. She also signed the Book of Profession, adding her name to all the Sisters of the Humility of Mary in service to God’s people.

“The ceremony was such a beautiful expression of joy and gratitude for the God who loves us wholeheartedly,” Sr. Audrey recalled. “All of the excitement and trepidation leading up to the day had disappeared. I had found peace. In a chapel full of sisters, family and friends, it was just God and me as I said those words I vow to you my God. When I got to the words according to the Constitutions of the Sisters of the Humility of Mary, I was profoundly touched by a new awareness of how deeply I have become Humility of Mary, and how much our community means to me. The ceremony is over... my new life is just beginning. I am entering into this phase with a tremendous sense of curiosity, wonder and a deep sense of gratitude to God and our HM community.”

Sr. Toby Lardie, HM Pastoral Leader, presents Sr. Audrey with her ring during the First Profession service held in September. Photo by Tony Mancino
The family that golfs together stays together. Sr. René Parman is lucky enough to have two families – her birth family and her HM family – to experience this with.

Since the 1960s, Sr. René has played golf, with her three sibling sisters, and most recently with her HM Sisters, Barbara Noble and Mildred “Millie” Ely, along with Melinda Smith, an HM Associate Community member.

At 95, Sr. René clearly recalls her first experience with golf. “My mother said if my sisters wanted to golf, they had to take me with them,” she said. “So they got me everything I needed and we went. I was in full habit and asked my sisters, ‘What do I do?’ and they said, ‘Just hit the ball!’”

So with that simple advice and never having formal lessons, Sr. René learned by watching other people play.

“I would just work at it until I was doing it like I thought it should be done,” she said.

Although she recommends lessons for those who want to be really good golfers, Sr. René is quite content to focus on other joys of the game.

“I just love being on the course and the feeling of being somewhere far away,” she said. “I enjoy being surrounded by nature, looking at the clouds, trees and flowers. It’s very peaceful and it keeps me physically moving. It’s a marvelous exercise, and I attribute golf to why I am moving around and others are not.”

While superb genes no doubt play a significant role in her good health and longevity – her mother lived to be 98 – Sr. René is quick to maintain she has made a commitment to staying active and healthy.

“People say you are just lucky. I say no, I work at it,” she said. “I live in a four-floor house and have to go up and down the stairs for everything. I exercise in the morning after my prayers and sometimes in the evenings.”

Daily walks and taking the stairs instead of the elevator are simple things she suggests people can do to stay
healthy, along with sensible eating habits.

“Do something every day with no excuses,” she advises. “Make sure you use your body parts and don’t forget about your mind. Anything that exercises your mind is just as important as the body.”

Sr. René keeps her mind active by continuing to work at the Villa as a finance office assistant one day a week, a job she has held since 1996. She readily admits the body slows with age but that doesn’t stop her from continuing to play.

“I used to love tennis but don’t think I could run like that anymore,” she said. “Golf is more my speed. I can’t play it the way I used to but that’s to be expected.”

Every Friday, Sr. René joins Sr. Barbara, Sr. Millie and Melinda for 18 holes of golf at Knoll Run Golf Course in Lowellville, Ohio. The HM Golf Circle, as they call themselves, has maintained this tradition since about 2008.

“The golf course gave me a lifetime pass for my 90th birthday, and probably didn’t think I’d be golfing much longer,” she said with a chuckle.

While Sr. René golfs for the pure enjoyment of the sport, others in the group are a tad more competitive.

“The best two are Melinda and Mille,” she said. “They are always checking scores. I do not take it too seriously and have never had a hole-in-one. Sr. Millie says I better get one before I go, and I say it better happen soon.”

Sr. René still golfs twice a year with her three sibling sisters, ages 93, 89 and 80.

“I just love the enjoyment of the company of others, where one encourages the other,” she said. “I am lucky to have my sisters and my sisters.”

Very lucky indeed.

Sister Throws Herself into Learning Cornhole

By Connie Moorhouse

Sr. Maryann Golonka, who serves as chaplain at Golden Hill Nursing Home in New Castle, Pa., has always been physically active, so when the call went out within the organization looking for people to participate in a cornhole tournament, she decided to give it a try. The tournament was open to anyone employed with Quality Life Services, which owns nine nursing homes in western Pennsylvania.

Cornhole is a lawn game in which players take turns throwing bags of corn at a raised platform with a hole in the far end. A bag in the hole scores three points, while one on the platform scores one point. Play continues until a team or player reaches a score of 21.

To prepare, she practiced with a cornhole board used for various Villa activities.

“I learned the rules of the game so I could position the boards at the right distance, and I practiced several times a week,” she said.

For the tournament, there were eight two-person teams. Sr. Maryann partnered with Frank Surrena, director of maintenance at Golden Hill Nursing Home. The pair won their first match, and she was unable to continue due to schedule conflicts, but says she really enjoyed playing and continues to “drag out the boards a couple times a week.”

“It is great exercise walking back and forth to pick up the bags and gives my arm a workout, especially when I play against myself,” she said. “Members of the food service staff and several sisters join me in the evening when I play, and I’m planning where to set up the board when the snow flies.”

A true love of sport if ever there was one.
Walking for Health and So Much More

By Connie Moorhouse

Sr. Barbara Herrmann began actively walking and jogging in 1975 when she was in her early 40s and has found it to provide a myriad of benefits, both physical and spiritual.

“I thought it would help me stay healthy but also found it to be refreshing, invigorating and feel it has contributed to my spiritual and mental wellbeing,” she said.

Sr. Barbara has found walking on the scenic nature trail at Buhl Farm Park in Hermitage, Pa., to be the perfect place to meditate and say her Rosary.

She walks three miles at the park on the weekends and for one hour on the track at Hubbard High School during the week. But she doesn’t stop there.

Over the years, she has competed in many running races, taking many first and second place awards. She has competed in every Villa Maria-thon 5K walk/run sponsored by Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center to raise funds for youth programs as well as promote health and wellness. She is also a member of Villa Hearts in Motion, a group of walkers/runners that gathers twice a week for improved health, camaraderie and to enjoy the beautiful Villa surroundings.

At 82, she shows no signs of slowing down. Most recently, she participated in the Mercer County (PA) Senior Games, an event sponsored by the Mercer County Area Agency on Aging to promote better health and fitness of Mercer County men and women age 50 and older. She finished with seven gold medals in the 1500 meter competitive walk, 55 meter dash, 100 meter dash, 800 meter run, 400 meter run, standing long jump and long jump. Plus, a silver medal in the shot put.

“I will keep up my exercise until I am no longer able to do so,” she said.

And from the looks of it, that may be a very long while.

Yoga Offers Mind, Body Benefits from a Mat or a Chair

Yoga has been a mainstay as an exercise class at the Villa for over 10 years. Most recently, however, instructor Carol Huncik has added a new variation to the offering — chair yoga.

Carol says yoga in any form is great exercise. “It’s a great way to stay limber,” she said. “The concentration is on strength, stability and flexibility — an amazing combination.”

The other component to yoga, Carol says, is a calming of the mind. “Yoga means union, union of the body with the spirit,” she said. “Many believe this means union with God, the Divine. The practice of yoga calms the mind, relaxes the body and leaves the student with peace.”

Chair yoga is a gentle style of yoga done from a seated position that incorporates the breathing and mind-body benefits of a traditional mat class and is a great option for older adults with mobility issues.
Special Diet, Exercise Helps Sisters Continue Ministry

By Connie Moorhouse

Sr. Dorothy Zwick and Sr. Maureen Tighe-Brown have always incorporated exercise and a healthy diet into their daily lives. Sr. Dorothy, 88, who celebrates 70 years as an HM Sister in 2016, has been a regular exerciser for more than 30 years, enjoying daily workouts on a NordicTrack fitness machine, walking, and most recently, a treadmill.

A daily runner, Sr. Maureen, 72, started running in 1977, competing in 10k and 15k races, placing a couple times in her age group.

“I run about 45 minutes to an hour at least five days a week,” she said. “I’m very slow and always joke that a little old lady runs by my side and I can’t believe how slow and funny she looks, and then I see it’s my shadow. But at the end of my run, I’m still moving and feel good, so that’s all that matters.”

Sr. Maureen does the cooking for the pair, who has always eaten a low-fat, low-sodium diet. For the last 15 years, they have subscribed to the Mediterranean diet, which incorporates the basics of healthy eating with lots of vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, legumes, potatoes, whole grains, breads, herbs, spices, fish and seafood — plus a splash of flavorful olive oil and even a glass of red wine — among other components characterizing the traditional cooking style of countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea.

“The diet is healthy and tasty with easy recipes,” said Sr. Maureen, “and helps us be active and healthy enough to help our dear parishioners at St. Patrick Church in Youngstown in any way we can.”

And help they do. The two regularly visit sick parishioners and assist those who have a death in the family. In addition, Sr. Dorothy attends all funeral Masses and visits the HM Sisters in Visitation Hall at the Villa each week.

Sr. Dorothy is also a member of the parish staff at the church, a leader of prayer, and regularly offers a Word and Communion service.

And it looks as though following a diet good for the heart seems to do wonders for these two sisters with very big hearts of their own.

A teacher for over 20 years, Carol said the big misconception about yoga is that only the young and very athletic can do it. “Yoga is for every body and every person.”

Carol’s chair and gentle yoga classes are offered on most Saturdays and open to the public. For more information on dates, times and location, call Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center at 724-964-8886.
Sister Embodies Motto and Encourages All to Have Active Lifestyle

By Kylene Kamensky

A sound mind in a sound body is a motto that Sr. Claire Young has lived by for many years. From her own school days to her time as the first physical education teacher at Magnificat High School to the present, she has always maintained an active lifestyle.

Whatever form that activity has taken — field hockey, basketball, running, swimming, or walking — Sr. Claire has always believed that everyone should establish their own routine of doing something for their health. “It keeps you mentally, physically, and spiritually alive.”

Sr. Claire was the first physical education teacher at Magnificat High School, where she said she faced many challenges. It was her first assignment after completing her time in the novitiate, and the gym facilities were not yet complete. She had to be creative and organize activities between classes. In 2010, she was honored for her contributions to the wellbeing of Magnificat students when she was inducted as part of the inaugural class of the Magnificat Athletic Hall of Fame.

Sr. Claire started jogging when she was the Dean of Girls at Archbishop Hoban High School in Akron, Ohio, in the 1970s. “It gave me a lot of pep and energy to start the day,” she said. And when a colleague wanted to run with her, she welcomed the company. After a time, she began entering 5k races with that colleague. Two races that stand out for her are ones she did in Cleveland: the first race’s final stretch was running down the main aisle of Higbee’s Department Store and out the front revolving door, and the second race’s final stretch was the inside of the old Cleveland Browns Stadium.

“I met a lot of people and went a lot of places,” she said of doing the various 5k races. “It was very social.”

After she returned to the United States, Sr. Claire proved the adage that it’s never too late to learn something new when she picked up competitive swimming. “I learned how to swim effectively when I was 70,” she said. “And I began to swim competitively because I learned to swim correctly.”

Sr. Claire was involved with US Masters Swimming — an organization for adult swimmers that helps local swim clubs provide instruction, coaching, competitive events, and learn-to-swim programs — for a
Sr. Maryann Golonka has done many things to stay active over the years, but one thing she has done consistently since 1986 is fly kites. As a child she enjoyed flying kites she made from newspaper or paper dry cleaning bags. That joy came back to her the first time she went to the Outer Banks and saw how easy it was to fly kites on the beach. “I went to the dollar store, got a kite, and lo and behold, up it went,” she said. “And from that time on, I have flown kites on the beach, while on retreat and other places, developing a ‘kite spirituality.’”

She explained, comparing kite flying to many aspects of life:

- To fly a kite successfully, you have to look up and sometimes the kite will get close to buildings or trees while getting enough lift for it to go up, which involves risk, and isn’t life also full of little risks?
- Letting out the right amount of string is crucial since the wind, like the Spirit, blows where it will. If there is too little string, the kite may not soar. Playing it safe may not be where God is calling you at that point in your life, or complacency may have set in and you feel comfortable where you are.
- But watch the kite if the wind is right. It wants to go, tugs at the string and is hard to hang on to, just like hanging on to something in life can stifle personal, spiritual or professional growth.
- It is almost impossible to fly a kite with no sustained wind. This is much like not being able to “fly” spiritually without a sustained prayer life.
- And just like life, there is joy and sorrow in kite flying.

“So the next time someone tells you to go fly a kite, take them up on it. It just may do your mind, body and spirit some good.”

Kite Spirituality

By Connie Moorhouse

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Sister Races to Share Message of Hope

By Kylene Kamensky

Editor’s note: While we were in production for this issue of the HM Voice, Sr. Susie’s illness progressed and she went home to God. We gratefully remember her loving spirit and her zeal for life. Please see her Tribute on page 27.

When Sr. Susie Corrigan had to miss her usual Race for the Cure event five years ago due to a scheduled HM Community meeting, she never thought it would lead to a new opportunity to get involved in the fight against breast cancer.

To make up for missing her usual race, Sr. Susan Schorsten invited Sr. Susie to attend the Akron Race for the Cure event and it was there Sr. Susie found the Dragon Dream Team.

The Dragon Dream Team is a group of Ohio breast cancer survivors based out of Akron who take part in the sport of dragon boat paddling and provide each other with support, camaraderie, and sisterhood.

The team had their boat on display at the Akron race and Sr. Susie was curious enough to sign up for more information. She was invited to a gathering in Akron and was immediately struck by the mission and the overall camaraderie of the group.

“Just that event was a big boost for me,” she said. “Everyone was so warm and welcoming. I witnessed that a woman can thrive living with breast cancer. You can be strong.”

Sr. Susie began training and competing with the group in the spring of 2011 and found that it provided her with an additional support group and an excuse to stay active.

“What I learned is paddling is serious; the motion isn’t like rowing or canoeing, it uses the whole body. And if one person is out of synch or not strong enough to do the work, then you can’t compete. That’s why we encourage each other to stay active during the winter months to maintain that strength and flexibility.”

The group currently has two boats and 60 members, both active and inactive.

Their oldest active member is 78 and the youngest is 25.

“There are a lot of young women,” Sr. Susie said. “Some show up after diagnosis and some show up later after learning about the team from a friend or family member. We also have connections through local hospitals and medical practices that put breast cancer patients in touch with us.”

The 40-foot boats boast colorful dragon heads and tails on the front and back, and can hold 20 paddlers, a drummer, and a steersperson. The drummer sits at the front and keeps the rhythm for the paddlers while the steersperson controls the direction of the boat from the back.

The paddling season typically starts in the spring around April or May and...
History of Dragon Boating for Breast Cancer Survivors

Dragon boat paddling as an activity for breast cancer survivors began in 1996 when Dr. Don McKenzie, a sports medicine specialist from Canada, began researching the benefits of physical activity for women who had been diagnosed and undergone treatment for breast cancer. At the time, doctors recommended that these women not engage in any rigorous upper body exercise to avoid other medical issues that could develop as a side effect of treatment.

Dr. McKenzie challenged this belief and chose dragon boating specifically because of its concentration on upper body strength. McKenzie assembled a group of 24 women, aged 32-64, that had varying levels of fitness and physical ability and implemented strength training and paddling technique programs. When the study concluded, not a single participant had developed the feared side effects. They had instead become happier, healthier, and had gained support, friendship, and an ability to raise awareness about breast cancer.

The sport has since grown into an international movement with over 150 teams from 14 different countries that belong to the International Breast Cancer Paddlers' Commission. Annual festivals are held by different teams, and large races are organized by the Commission.

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just ask for a special intention. “Then we wrap everything up in a package and leave it on the shore for God to deal with,” said Sr. Susie.

But according to Sr. Susie, it’s not just about the competition. “It’s about being healthy together and having a good time. We just want to help each other.”

And the group tries to help out any way they can. Their annual gala, Boatloads of Hope, raises money to fund their outreach to breast cancer patients in area hospitals.

“There’s always someone in need of support or encouragement. We also provide hope to women undergoing treatment. I didn’t know it was a ministry when I started,” said Sr. Susie, “but I came to see that it was a ministry — especially witnessing how the women pick each other up during the chaos of diagnosis. We’ve ministered to a lot of women over the years.”

“I admire them [team members] so very much because they have marriages and children, and they care enough about this as a commitment to their wellbeing because they know their wellbeing affects others around them.”

And while she may not be as active in competition as she used to be, the friendships she has gained and the women she’s helped in return are an immeasurable gift to her.

Paddles up, Sr. Susie. Paddles up!

For more information on the Dragon Dream Team visit dragondreamteam.org
Villa Library Supported Through Memorial and Honorary Contributions

It’s a little gem at the Villa and a popular place for people to relax, take some quiet time, and find inspiration. The Villa Maria Library was created to provide reading material of all kinds for sisters, apartment residents, retreatants, employees, and visitors. In many ways, its very existence is a gift from our benefactors.

When Rose Scheeff included the sisters in her estate, she said simply that it should be used for something the retired sisters needed. Rose and her husband, Bill, had come to rely on Sr. Rose Schaffer and Sr. Bernadette Vetter as spiritual touchstones and close friends. Her gift in their memory made the renovation of the library possible — now a comfortable and cheery space for everyone.

Beginning this month, donors may designate memorial and honorary gifts for the library resources fund. For a gift of $25 or more, a book plate will be placed in a book in memory or in honor of the person designated.

Sr. Barbara Sitko and Sr. Jeannette Abi-Nader, who are on the library committee and dedicate time to preparing newly arrived materials and other tasks, said the library is a hub of activity at the Villa. “The sisters come here for daily reading material, news, and magazines, as well as spiritual books. It feeds the prayer life of sisters,” said Sr. Barbara.

“Those on retreat particularly like the Special Collections room which is a designated quiet space,” said Sr. Jeannette.

The library is managed by volunteers, and Barbara Lepre of The Villa Shoppe who manages the budget. Judy Lisko, an HM Associate and library volunteer, said that large print books are a popular item. “The apartment residents and the sisters find the large print books easier to read. They are greatly in demand,” she said.

Apartment resident Gerrie DiMatteo said that the library is a welcome convenience. “Not all of the apartment residents have cars,” she said.

Other apartment residents agree with Gerrie. Theresa Biscardi enjoys short stories and a variety of books with a

“The sisters come here for daily reading material, news, and magazines, as well as spiritual books. It feeds the prayer life of sisters.”

— Sr. Barbara Sitko
moral. Marian Dzurnak enjoys large print novels by several authors. “I like the relaxing ones, not the thrillers!” she said, laughing.

Ann Smolkowicz follows certain authors that she enjoys.

Sr. Barbara hopes to be able to purchase Kindles. “The type size can be enlarged, which is great for some of our sisters who want to read but need much larger type.” Sr. Barbara noted that many titles can be downloaded for free from online services or from community libraries.

“The type size can be enlarged [on Kindles], which is great for some of our sisters who want to read but need much larger type.”

—— Sr. Barbara Sitko

The library also accepts donations of best sellers, large print, and spiritual books. Those that can’t be used are sold to buy materials from the wish list, or are donated to religious communities in other countries.

If you are interested in making a memorial or honorary contribution designated for the library resources fund, contact the Development Office at 724-964-8920, opt. 1, x3291, or email HMDdevelopment@humilityofmary.org.
Sister Shares Writing Talent with Local Youth

Sr. Joanne Gardner team-taught “Creative Writing & Poetry” during a week-long Summer Arts Camp at St. Patrick Church, Youngstown, Ohio, where she is a parishioner. Children in grades K-12 from the parish, the neighborhood and beyond experienced daily sessions in vocal music, drum circles and boom whackers, as well as dance, visual arts, drama, and writing. Individual tutoring was available for those already playing an instrument.

Each CW&P class began with journaling about ANYTHING. Questions were invited and answered in writing. One 6th grade boy, who is not a parishioner, inquired why Sr. Joanne decided to become a sister and when! Rhyming words and stories appealed to the youngest campers in grades K-2. Acrostic poems were a favorite of those in grades 3-6 and the 7th-12th graders were genuinely engaged creating “blackout poetry.” Arts Camp participants can continue these activities at the new Southside Fine Arts Academy opening in October.

HM Website Gets New Look

The HM Website may look a little different from the last time you saw it. We’ve added dropdown menus to improve navigation and make things easier to find. We’ve also added new pages and updated the photo galleries. Visit us at humilityofmary.org to check it out!

New Picture Display at Villa Maria Community Center

A new picture display was added to the hallway outside Magnificat Chapel highlighting the sisters’ involvement with, and commitment to, the people of Central America. Photos were submitted by sisters and associates and arranged in a collage by Rudinec and Associates with the assistance of Sr. Jeannette Abi-Nader (pictured).
HM Volunteer Service Welcomes New Volunteers

The HM Volunteer Service Program welcomed the 2015-2016 volunteers with a weeklong orientation at Villa Maria at the end of August. Sr. Mary Stanco, director, brought in a variety of speakers who covered topics like working with people from different cultures, spirituality, Catholic Social Teaching, and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. The volunteers were also missioned in a ceremony in Magnificat Chapel. This year’s volunteers will serve in Cleveland, Ohio, and Miami and Immokalee, Fla.

Panerathon Proud

Three HM Sisters and four Villa Maria employees were among the thousands participating in the sixth annual Panerathon 10K/2 Mile walk/run Aug. 30 at the Covelli Centre in Youngstown. Employees [pictured left] running the 10k were Kathleen Perry, HM Associate; Terri Singleton; Nikki Cooper; and Christine Wilson. Sisters participating in the 2 mile walk were Sr. Barbara Herrmann, Sr. Jenni Skerk and Sr. Marie Ruegg. The largest fundraising event in the Mahoning Valley, the Panerathon benefits the Joanie Abdu Comprehensive Breast Care Center and Mercy Health Foundation of the Mahoning Valley.
Congratulations to Sr. Karen Bernhardt for being named Public Citizen of the Year by the National Association of Social Workers Ohio Chapter Region 8. She was selected for this award by local social workers for her outstanding contributions to the Region 8 community.

Congratulations to Sr. Mary Cunningham, who recently completed the three-year spiritual formation program in spiritual direction ministry offered by Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center. She now serves as a certified spiritual director.

Congratulations to Sr. Mary Catherine Blooming for receiving the Manifesting the Kingdom Award from the Diocese of Pittsburgh for her service to the Church and inspiring others to greater holiness of life. “The Diocese of Pittsburgh is blessed to have people like you, who generously share their gifts to help nourish The Church Alive,” said Deacon Kevin Lander, DOP associate secretary, in his letter of congratulations to Sr. Mary Catherine.

Congratulations to Sr. Therese Quinn on the celebration of her 100th birthday on August 4! When asked, Sr. Therese said her favorite birthday was her 10th birthday; it’s the one that stands out to her because all her friends came to her party and brought her presents. While she can’t quite remember exactly what those presents were now, they were definitely what a 10-year-old would want!
Upcoming Programs

The following programs are provided by Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center (VMESC) and will take place at Villa Maria. Please contact Dana Stiger at 724-964-8886 for more information or visit vmesc.org. Additional programs and speaker information can be found on the VMESC website.

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**Torah Studies for Christians**

**Presenter:** Rabbi Saul Oresky and Rev. George Balasko  
**Date:** Wed., Nov. 18, 1-2:30 p.m.  
**Topic:** Yom Kippur: The Day of Atonement  
This Bible education series is an opportunity for Christians to reflect on the Scriptures under the guidance of a rabbi. Working closely with the biblical text, we will explore the methods and insights of the sages of the Jewish tradition, their love for Torah, their eye for detail, their incisive questions, debates and creative storytelling. In this way we will deepen our appreciation of a Torah tradition that is at the core of Jewish life, which formed Jesus as a Jew, and which is the root of our biblical heritage as Christians. Join us in the fascinating journey of biblical and spiritual enrichment.

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**Coffee and Contemplation Series**

All programs are 9:30-11:30 a.m.

**Nov. 10, 2015**  
**Presenter:** Barbara O’Donnell, HM  
**Topic:** Harvesting Hope  

**Dec. 8, 2015**  
**Presenter:** Matt Abramowski  
**Topic:** Mary’s Advent Invitation to Us  

**2016 Dates:** Jan. 12, Feb. 9, March 8, April 12, May 10

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**I Care About You: Three Big Ideas, Six Blunders, and Ten Needs that Map Out the Adventure of Marriage**

**Presenter:** Jim Merhaut  
**Date:** Fri., Nov. 20, 8 p.m.-Sat. Nov. 21, 8 p.m.  
**Registration Deadline:** Wed., Nov. 11  
**Cost:** $275  
In this program, Jim Merhaut will introduce key principles for great marriages based upon his work with engaged and married couples and an abundance of relationship research. He will also demonstrate how marriages can easily fall into patterns that create bickering and frustration between spouses. Participants will learn to overcome these challenges with practical strategies that quickly bring joy back to their marriages. This program is appropriate for marriages that are not in crisis. Couples in crisis are advised to seek customized marriage coaching or counseling.

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**Praise Be: On Care for Our Common Home**

**Presenter:** Barbara Lenarcic, HM, and Barbara O’Donnell, HM  
Co-Sponsored by the Sisters of the Humility of Mary  
**Date:** Sat., Dec. 5, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
**Cost:** $20  
Pope Francis speaks a universal message addressing urgent concerns for humanity’s relationship with Earth. Come to share insights about the encyclical with its invitation to shift our thinking and daily choices given the reality of global climate change. Pre-registration is requested.

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**Taizé Prayer**

Now on Thursday evenings at 7:30 p.m., Magnificat Chapel, Villa Maria  
**Dec. 10, 2015** (Advent)  
**March 10, 2016** (Lent)  
**April 21, 2016** (Easter)

continued on next page
Sr. Doris Steiner, H.M., formerly Sr. M. Justene, S.N.D., died Sun. April 12, 2015, at Villa Maria Community Center, Villa Maria, Pa. She was born July 25, 1935, a daughter of Edward and Justine (Kneffler) Steiner. She graduated from Notre Dame Academy, Cleveland, in 1953 and entered the Sisters of Notre Dame that same year. She transferred to the Sisters of the Humility of Mary in 1970.

Sr. Doris earned her Bachelor of Science in Education and her Master of Science in Education from St. John College, Cleveland, and a certificate in Pastoral Ministry from the Loyola Institute for Ministries Extension Program, Loyola University of New Orleans.

Sr. Doris served in the ministry of education in the Cleveland, Columbus and Youngstown dioceses during her 56 years in active ministry.

In the Cleveland Diocese she taught at St. Joseph, Amherst; Holy Trinity, Avon; and St. Vitus, Cleveland.

In the Youngstown Diocese she taught at Immaculate Heart of Mary, Austintown; St. John the Baptist, Canton; St. Aloysius, East Liverpool; St. Mary, Warren; and St. Brendan, Youngstown. From 1988-95 she served part-time as the coordinator for the Diocesan Office for Evangelization while maintaining involvement in parish ministry in the Youngstown and Columbus Dioceses. She ministered as a pastoral minister at Mother of Sorrows, Ashtabula; St. Paul, Canton; St. Benedict, Canton; St. Joseph, Massillon; and Holy Spirit, Uniontown. From 2005-13 Sr. Doris was the Religious Education Coordinator at St. Mary, Massillon.

In 2013 Sr. Doris returned to Villa Maria Community Center where she joined with her sisters in the ministry of prayer until her death.

Sr. Doris was preceded in death by her parents. She is survived by her brothers, Ronald Steiner, Canal Fulton, Ohio, and Donald Steiner, Canal Fulton, Ohio, and her
Sr. Susan Corrigan, H.M.,
formerly Sr. M. Kateri, died Thurs., Sept. 10, 2015, at Villa Maria Community Center. She was born April 10, 1940, a daughter of John P. and Catharine (Corbett) Corrigan. She graduated from Magnificat High School, Rocky River, Ohio, in 1959 and entered the Sisters of the Humility of Mary later that same year. Sr. Susan earned her Bachelor of Science in Education from St. John, Cleveland, her Master of Science in Education from Kent State University, Kent, Ohio, and her Master of Arts in Counseling from Walsh University, North Canton, Ohio.

Sister Susan served as a teacher, licensed professional clinical counselor and in HM congregational leadership during her 47 years in active ministry.

In the Cleveland diocese she taught at St. Martha, Akron and Blessed Sacrament, Cleveland.

In the Youngstown diocese she was a teacher at St. Patrick, Hubbard and St. Joseph, Massillon. She was a licensed professional clinical counselor for 18 years at Community Services of Stark County, Inc. in Canton and she was involved with the Resiliency Project with Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health, Canton. For a short time she provided counseling at the Personal & Family Counseling Service, New Philadelphia.

In the Pittsburgh Diocese she served as a member of the HM Leadership Team from 2005-09. As her illness progressed this past June she moved from Massillon, Ohio to Villa Maria Community Center where she served in the Ministry of Prayer until her death.

Sr. Susan was preceded in death by her parents; brothers, John F., James P., Joseph P., and Cornelius (Neil) Corrigan; and sisters, Patricia McCrone and Geraldine Shaughnessy.

She is survived by her sisters, Mary Columbro, Cleveland, and Conny Blake, Vero Beach, Fla.; her brothers, Daniel O. Corrigan, Rocky River, Ohio, and Donald M. Corrigan, Olmsted Falls, Ohio; many beloved nieces and nephews and their families; and her sisters in the Humility of Mary Congregation with whom she shared her life for 55 years.

See complete tribute at humilityofmary.org

The Gift of a Lifetime

Help us to continue providing more abundant life for God’s people by including the Sisters of the Humility of Mary in your will. To receive your free personal finance planner and information on the Heritage Society, please return the form below:

Name:_________________________________________________________
Address:________________________________________________________
City:________________State:____________Zip:_____________________
Phone:____________________

☐ Please send my personal finance planner and information on how I can become a member of the Heritage Society.
☐ I have already included the Sisters in my will.

Sisters of the Humility of Mary | PO Box 534 | Villa Maria | PA 16155
Shout joyfully to God, all the earth; Sing of God’s glorious name; give God glorious praise.

–Psalm 66