“WHAT I WAS NOT PREPARED FOR WERE THE WAYS IN WHICH MY HEART WOULD BE STRETCHED AND BROKEN OPEN EACH DAY.”

~Sr. Eilis McCulloh, HM

IN THIS ISSUE: Sr. Eilis McCulloh shares her experiences of living and studying in Guatemala.
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Volume 36, Issue No. 2

HM Voice is a publication of the Sisters of the Humility of Mary.

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Cover Photo:
Sr. Eilis McCulloh learns how to make tortillas at La Escuela de la Montaña during her trip to Guatemala. (Photo by Sr. Eilis McCulloh)

Special thanks to Sister Joanne Gardner

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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.
Dear friends,

I write this letter as we prepare for our annual Harvest Day, a time that offers us the opportunity to share the abundant resources we hold in this sacred land. All that we do here at Villa Maria with our land flows from our Land Ethic.

*We, Sisters of the Humility of Mary, claim our history of being connected to the land of Villa Maria. … We honor our interdependence with all ecosystems as an ethical obligation. The spirit of our founders and the charism of humility inspire personal and communal choices as we witness to our respect for and commitment to God’s creation wherever we reside and minister.*

*With wonder and awe, we participate in divine creativity and invite others to share in abundant opportunities for healing, spiritual enrichment, and education. … Our Land Ethic strengthens our hope for a sustainable future as we celebrate our unique place in the cosmos.*

—Excerpts from the HM Land Ethic

Several of the articles in this edition of *The HM Voice* speak of many of the efforts and projects that have taken place at the Villa as we work together to find a sustainable future.

On Saturday, August 3, the Sisters, Associates, Covenant Companions and partners in ministry gathered in Magnificat Chapel to participate in the annual “Missioning.” All who have been called or drawn to the charism and mission of the Sisters of the Humility of Mary are reminded of the mission to bring more abundant life to others, especially to those who are poor. This year’s theme, “Letting New Life Unfold” was celebrated in prayer, song, blessing, and sending forth for the coming year.

The challenge before all of us is found in the words of Pope Francis quoting from the “Earth Charter” in his encyclical, *Laudato Si,* 207:

*“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.”*

In addition to those who are directly involved in our life and ministries, we are very aware of the many friends, benefactors, and volunteers who help let new life unfold through their prayers and donation of time, talent, and treasure. In this autumn season that reminds us of the bountiful graces God has poured out on us through the generosity of so many people, we are grateful for all of you who walk together with us. May you be blessed.

In Mary’s humility,

*Sister Toby Lardie, HM*

Pastoral Leader

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**Leadership Team**

Sr. Karen Bernhardt  
Sr. Margaret Marszal  
Sr. Carol Anne Smith  
Sr. Barbara Wincik  
Sr. Toby Lardie, Pastoral Leader
Villa Maria Farm
Gains Organic Certification

By John Moreira, Director of Land Management

In 2017, the Villa Maria Farm started the transition towards organic certification for all field crops, garden crops, and greenhouses.

Starting in late 2016, numerous contacts were made with organic suppliers, organic grain seed merchants, organic agronomists, organic certifying agencies, and organic grain purchasers. There aren’t many locally, but all those contacted have been more than willing to help the farm in this transition period by answering any questions that have come up during the process. A few local farmers also transitioning some of their farms to organic production have been a big help in mentoring the farm staff.

The main reason for transitioning to organic farming is to become better stewards of Villa Maria land. It’s healthier for the soil and soil organisms, for the groundwater systems, for increasing the land’s biological diversity, and also healthier for the farmers. Organic certification requires a three year cycle of using organic farming methods on fields that were farmed conventionally in prior years.

Although Villa Maria Farm vegetable crops have been raised organically for over a decade, they have never been certified. Part of the problem had been the requirement of needing to have the greenhouse certified organic so that the vegetable starts could be certified organic. The vegetable starts have always been raised organically, but some of the other crops cultivated in the greenhouse, such as Easter lilies, Poinsettias, and flowering hanging baskets, need to be grown using chemicals so as to have a sellable product. Thankfully, because Richard Graney, the greenhouse operator, had already physically demarcated the greenhouse—there is a specific section where only vegetable starts are grown—with some additional signage and visual demarcation, the greenhouse production of vegetable starts is able to be certified organic.

A secondary reason is that the value of field crops can more than double by going organic. Currently, conventional field corn is selling for approximately $3.50/bushel (bu) while organic field corn sells for $8.00/bu. Conventional soybeans are selling for around $8.00/bu while organic beans sell for upwards of $21.00/bu. Conventional wheat prices are around $6.00/bu whereas organic wheat is $13.00/bu.

When the transition began, the farm applied for a grant from the Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS), a division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, to help pay for a “Transition to Organic Farming” grant.
Plan.” The NRCS formally approved the application on March 20, 2018. The transition plan is now complete and the grant has been dispersed to the farm. By spring of 2020, the Villa Farm’s 270 acres of field crops, 10 acres of vegetable crops, and greenhouse operation will be certified organic.

Global Organic Alliance (GOA) was chosen as the certifying agency. In the research process before deciding to pursue organic certification, it was found that certifying agency prices can range from $700 to $1400 per year for the certification. GOA’s price was the more affordable option; they also have been very forthcoming with answers to questions about the process. Additionally, according to the NRCS, once certified, Villa Maria Farm would be eligible for numerous funding grants through the NRCS for organic farm operations. The U.S. Department of Agriculture also has a grant that subsidizes up to $750 per year to help pay for the yearly organic certifying costs.

The organic certifying process is arduous and requires fastidious record keeping of seed and soil amendment inputs used, seed sources, crop rotations, production records, etc. All these must be able to be sourced back a minimum of three years. That process is now complete, and everyone looks forward to the start of the next crop year when Villa Maria Farm will be certified organic for all of its cropping systems.

The main reason for transitioning to organic farming is to become better stewards of Villa Maria land. It’s healthier for the soil and soil organisms, for the groundwater systems, for increasing the land’s biological diversity, and also healthier for the farmers.

The produce gardens at Villa Maria Farm will be certified organic for the 2020 growing season.
Honey Bees: Why Those Little Creatures are so Important

By Kevin Weber, HM Associate

[Editor’s note: Kevin is an HM Associate and member of the Land Committee. He is also an experienced beekeeper both at his home and at the Villa. He has presented an educational program on bees for Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center.]

Honey bees have long been an integral part of the Humility of Mary Community. Along with the benefits of pollination for farm crops, honey bees have provided the sisters with reserves of honey to add sweetness to foods prepared and consumed by members of the Community. Honey bees however, provide us with so much more than food to nourish our bodies. Honey bees actually have the propensity to nourish our spirit.

As Scripture so eloquently reminds us, though we are many members, we are all one Body. Nothing reinforces this notion more profoundly than a colony of honey bees. Defined by scientists as a super organism, the very survival of the colony is contingent upon each individual member actively participating in nurturing and supporting one another. Certainly, the human species would do well to adopt this philosophy in our own culture.

Because the Humility of Mary Community recognizes the importance of a strong association with honey bees, Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center (VMESC) has sponsored honey bee workshops supporting educational opportunities to individuals interested in learning more about these complex insects. Workshop participants can learn how honey bee colonies function, as well as the basic requirements for maintaining a colony of bees as a home hobbyist.

Participants can also gain a basic understanding of how human interaction has placed this species in grave danger of extinction and what steps we must take to reverse the damaging stress we have placed on honey bees.

The extinction of honey bees would place considerable stress on the human community. Scientists estimate approximately one-third of all of our food sources would be at risk or fail to survive without honey bees. Though honey bees are not the only pollinators in nature, they are responsible for pollinating most of the fruit we consume in this country. We need only look to the Chinese community to visualize how our country would be affected by the extinction of honey bees.

The native Asiatic honey bee is facing extinction in many parts of the Asian continent, so the Chinese are forced to hand pollinate fruit tree blossoms in order to have a consumable fruit crop. Individuals must take a handheld device, climb into the tree, and touch each blossom over and over with
Workshop Teaches Bee Identification Skills

By Eileen Mohr, HM Covenant Companion

What is it? A bee? A fly? A wasp? Paige Reeher, a graduate research assistant at the University of Akron, challenged VMESC workshop participants to use their knowledge to identify various photos and determine if the insect pictured fit into those categories. Although some of the insects look very much like one another, there are distinguishing features such as number of wings, shape of antenna and thorax, etc. In addition to testing participants’ recognition ability, Paige also presented detailed information about the Rusty Patched Bumblebee, which is on the endangered species list, and the Yellow Banded Bumblebee, which is a threatened species. After classroom work, a couple participants went out in the field with Paige to look for the above two species. Although none were found, the two field workers were happy to learn the correct way to net bees without getting stung. A good skill to have!

Historical Highlight

The following from Mother Genevieve Downey’s Notes details the sisters’ pursuit as amateur apiarists and illustrates the HM Community’s connection to their land (and bees!)

Sometime in the 1880s, the Community was excited by the appearance – or rather the sound – of a swarm of bees. They settled in an apple tree back of the chapel. All work ceased, in and out of the house. The novices and the children were soon buzzing louder than the bees. Father Franche, Sr. Ambrose and others of the home characters were the only “cool and calm” souls around.

From this visitation, Father Franche’s well-known bee colony originated. Until sometime around the early 1920s all of the Mass candles were made of bees’ wax, dark in color. Honey was furnished for our use also. Father Franche took great pleasure in that. Sr. Ambrose Mignot attended to them. At some time new hives were furnished, and to these the queen bee led her swarm.

This photo from a local newspaper in 1919 shows the beehives kept at the Villa. These particular hives were located where Potier Center (the former Villa Maria High School) now stands. The old school building was renovated into private rooms in 2013, which are now used by retreatants at Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center and other guests.

This lucky photographer caught this bee in action on one of the many flowers around the Villa grounds!
Two big events took place this summer on the Villa Maria campus. In July, thirteen Jubilarians were celebrated with a liturgy in Magnificat Chapel and reception following, and in August HM Sisters, HM Associates, HM Covenant Companions, and HM Partners in Ministry gathered to participate in their annual Missioning. Missioning takes place each year as part of August Community Days, where the sisters come together to hear reports and conduct community business. Enjoy these photos from those two celebrations.
SUMMER AT THE VILLA
SUMMER AT THE VILLA

Sisters of the Humility of Mary HM Voice • Fall 2019 • humilityofmary.org
On August 28, the feast of St. Monica, the Magnificat community gathered to bless and celebrate the Agape Mural and its call to racial justice.

The theme of the all-school prayer service was “Love Requires Justice,” and was planned in coordination with the Mission Department and student leaders. Magnificat was honored to welcome the members of the St. Adalbert parish community who served as models for the African and African American saints depicted in the mural. We were also blessed to join in prayer with representatives from St. Adalbert’s parish, the Sisters of the Humility of Mary Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation Office and Racial Justice Task Force, the Magnificat Board of Directors, and the Sisters of Charity Foundation.

The mural was the result of Chloe Becker’s ’20 junior-year theology Agape Experiment which calls students to pursue a project that makes the world more loving and just. Her work was inspired by her participation as a student in the Student Diversity Leadership Conference and her reading of the United States’ Bishops’ pastoral letter against racism, “Open Wide Our Hearts.” In particular, she felt called to respond to the bishops’ charge to “educational institutions to break any silence around the issue of racism, to find new and creative ways to raise awareness, analyze curricula, and to teach the virtues of fraternal charity” (26).

The mural celebrates the lives of St. Monica, St. Augustine, St. Benedict the African, Venerable Fr. Augustus Tolton, and Servant of God Sr. Thea Bowman as models of holiness and faith-filled living who can inspire viewers in answering the call to be saints. In remarks to the school community, Chloe explained her choice to paint African and African American saints, sharing, “It allows us as a community to get to know and celebrate the lives of saints that you might not know about or have seen represented as Black.”

The mural also calls attention to systemic racism, including criminal justice, education, healthcare, housing, and wealth. “As the bishops teach, it’s important for Catholics and ultimately, all Americans, to know about systemic racism, an injustice that devalues the sacredness of human life.”

—Chloe Becker
sacredness of human life,” argued Chloe. “Systemic racism exists, woven into the amount of wealth we own, the healthcare that we receive, the schooling that is available to us, the home that we live in, and the way the criminal justice system treats us.”

Drawing upon the inspiration of readings from Open Wide Our Hearts and Scripture, Chloe reflected, “God commands us to love our neighbor with all of our hearts, all of our souls, and all of our minds, because all of humanity belongs to each other as one body. This calls us to justice work, where we can achieve God’s hope for us to live as one human family, knowing each other as siblings rather than stereotypes because we are, indeed, our brother’s and sister’s keepers.”
Breaking Bread and Sharing Life in Guatemala

By Sr. Eilis McCulloh, HM

[Editor’s Note: Sr. Eilis presented the following reflection about her experiences while in Guatemala to her parish community.]

Earlier this summer, I had the opportunity to study Spanish in Guatemala. After being blessed and sent forth by the community at liturgy, I spent six weeks studying at Proyecto Linguistico Quetzalteco in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, and La Escuela de la Montaña (or the Mountain School) in rural Sacatepequez. I chose this school because it taught Spanish by teaching the story of the country and its people.

When asked if I would be willing to share about my experiences, I said yes, but was unsure how best to convey my experience. However, while reflecting on my time being immersed in the Guatemalan culture, two pieces of advice stuck out to me. First, Don Pedro, a prophet for many of the Guatemalan indigenous people, implored all of us to “remember and tell their stories.” Secondly, the school coordinator at the Mountain School suggested that we “learn how to be in community with the people and with each other.”

When Jayna, the school coordinator, suggested that we learn to be in community with the people, I felt the purpose of my trip change. Being with the people meant learning from them, entering into their worlds and remaining present despite differences, unimaginable poverty—and, often finding out that there weren’t as many differences between us as we may have thought.

The Mountain School is located in the rural communities of Nuevo San José and Fátima. These communities were formed after campesinos fought for fair wages and just conditions on the coffee fincas [plantations]. After they were kicked off the fincas, many campesinos stayed together and formed these communities. Their resilience, strength, and determination infused the school with a remarkable spirit. Furthermore, La Escuela de la Montaña is in a unique position to support the communities by providing income to women and scholarships to local children. Their mission felt like a natural extension of my community’s mission to “share in Jesus’ mission of bringing more abundant life to God’s people, especially the poor, by responding to the needs of the times.”

Each day, I ate my meals with Señora Magda and her seven children. Her husband, like many of the men in...
the town, was rarely home as he travelled great distances to find work to support his family. Señora Magda’s home was in Nuevo San José. It was constructed out of clapboard and had a corrugated metal roof and no door. Chickens and street dogs roamed freely around her house. She proudly told me that they had finally received electricity...one lightbulb that was hanging from the wall near the entrance to her house. During meals, I sat in the family’s only chair and ate simple meals of tortillas, soup, mush (oatmeal), and noodles with cream cheese.

Señora Magda always asked me, “Quieres mas comida...” It was a question I was all too familiar with... How many times have our hosts asked us this question? How many times have we passed bowls of food around a table? It happens every time we sit around a table and share a meal. But, I realized that, here, it was not a question about food... It is an invitation to share life, to move beyond comfort zones, and to intentionally form community with one another.

What I was not prepared for were the ways in which my heart would be stretched and broken open each day. After a decade spent working with refugees and immigrants and traveling to other countries, I did not expect to be challenged by the poverty. I did not...
expect to initially move so cautiously through Señora Magda’s home as I raised my eyebrows at the dirt floors and the lone lightbulb in the house. During the first meal with Señora Magda’s family, I was embarrassed by how much I had yearned for my comfort zone and quietly planned to eat quickly before returning to the school. Unlike the divisions that are present in our world and in today’s Gospel, we are called to be bridges between our home cultures and those of the people with whom we were living.

But, that night, as I reflected on the day, I heard the student coordinator’s suggestion again. “Learn how to be in community.” This would be my challenge and hardest lesson.

Each meal, I returned to Señora Magda’s house and sat at the same table. With each plate of tortillas and each game of tag and tic-tac-toe, I felt the imaginary barrier between myself and Señora Magda’s family disappear. I let Señora Magda welcome me into her family and into her home. I felt at ease answering 100 questions from the kids, chatting about our similar dreams, and catching a stray chicken as it jumped on the table.

During my second week in Guatemala, I visited the village of Salcaja—located a 25 minute truck ride from the school, it was also a lifetime away. During the Civil War, it was the epicenter of many battles. As the first town colonized by the Spaniards, many people claimed Spanish (and not indigenous blood). But it was the indigenous people who helped the town flourish. It is home to the country’s many weavers who create the beautiful textiles and clothing that many people associate with Guatemala.

As I stood outside one of the little shops, a husband and wife stopped to talk with us. “We lived in the US,” they told us proudly.
One of the other students started asking them questions. I heard Don José say that they lived in a number of states along the east coast. I knew that they were probably farmworkers, but asked them if this was true.

“Yes,” Don José told me proudly. “Our children are still in the states, but we wanted to come back to the land that is in our blood.”

I explained to them that I had spent time working with the farm workers in Florida. With this, Doña Maria Inez’s eyes lit up. “We lived and worked in Florida for seven years… picking cucumbers.”

After more conversation, we found out that we had both lived in Immokalee. I interned with the attorney who had helped them adjust their status and, later gain citizenship. We hugged each other...amazed that our worlds were connected by a small town in Florida.

As we are reminded in today’s second reading, we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses. What I learned in Guatemala was that I am surrounded by these witnesses to la lucha, or the struggle—the struggle to survive, the struggle for dignity, the struggle to live. But in la lucha was a community that reached out and welcomed outsiders in, who helped one another, who gave thanks to God, and who believed in the power of community.

But perhaps more importantly, Guatemala reignited an energy and urgency to the vows I have professed as a Sister of the Humility of Mary. I reflected on the last lines of my vows, “I will strive to share the love of Jesus through the message of the Gospel and the witness of my life.”

I realized that the only way to authentically live this out was to let Señora Magda welcome me into her life and her family...to be reminded that we are all connected by my chance meeting with Don José and Doña Maria Inez…and to always remember to tell the story of the people in Guatemala.

And, so, I challenge all of us to: remember their story and tell their story...and to think about how, together, we are called.
**Sister Receives Alumni Award**
Sr. Anne Victory received the Amadeus Rappe Award from The Ursuline–St. John College Alumnae Association at the 2019 reunion dinner and awards celebration on September 27. She was honored for her lifetime work as a nurse educator and more recently for her work with the Collaborative to End Human Trafficking. Established in 1971, the Amadeus Rappe Award is presented annually to “an outstanding graduate of Ursuline or St. John College who has demonstrated an interest in the college and the alumni association and who has made an outstanding contribution to their religion, profession, home, or community.” The award is named for Bishop Amadeus Rappe, the first Bishop of the Diocese of Cleveland.

**Sister Takes Honors at Local County Fair**
Sr. Jeanette Dufek won both first and third place honors for her cross-stitching projects at the Lawrence County Fair in early August. Congratulations, Sr. Jeanette!

**Valley Fine Arts Academy Publishes Book**
The young creatives of the Valley Fine Arts Academy recently saw their artwork and prose efforts in full color print with their published book “Do You See Me?” The book was celebrated in early November by the Academy students, their parents and supporters of the Academy.

As Kris Harper, executive director of the VFAA stated in the Forward to the book, “How many times do we dismiss a child because they are an annoyance or because we don’t take time to listen to them? Children need to know that their emotions, love, disappointments and pain are seen and heard and not dismissed.”

Funding for the book including preparation and printing was through a Sisters of the Humility of Mary program grant for 2018-19.

The Valley Fine Arts Academy, a hosted group of Villa Maria Education & Spirituality Center, provides year-round programs for youngsters ages 5-13 including homeschoolers. Facilities at the Villa are used during the year for enrichment programs and in summer months for Arts Camp at the Villa.

Sr. Joanne Gardner, Sr. Elaine Schindler, and talented students from the Dana School of Music at Youngstown State University staff the Academy which began in 2015. Mr. Harper is the organist for Villa liturgies.

**Sister Sponsors Summer Enrichment Event**
Sr. Mary Catherine Blooming sponsored a summer event held at St. Joseph High School, Natrona Heights, called “X-Press It.” This five day event for students included workshops in mock trial, competitive speech, photography, page design, and filmmaking. Among the presenters were a lawyer, a college professor, a high school administrator, and a publisher.
Sister Receives Faculty Award from NEOMED

Congratulations to Sr. Carolyn Capuano, who was presented with the Medical Ethics and Health Humanities Award by the Department of Family and Community Medicine at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) on May 13, 2019. Sr. Carolyn is an adjunct faculty member at NEOMED, where she team teaches in the Human Values in Medicine curriculum and also team teaches a Capstone class “Spirituality and Medicine”. The award “recognizes a faculty member who demonstrates excellence in teaching; contributes to innovative curricular development; serves as a role model for students and faculty; contributes to faculty development; and serves as a mentor and advisor to students.”

Sisters’ Healthcare Legacy

The Healthcare Ministry of the Sisters of the Humility of Mary traces its roots to the earliest days of the Congregation in France. Today that Ministry continues through HM sponsorship, with the Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of Bon Secours, of Bon Secours Mercy Health. This fall, the Bon Secours Mercy Health System celebrated its first anniversary after a successful merger of the Mercy Health System and the Bons Secours Health System. The chart indicates the scope of this Catholic healthcare ministry spanning seven states and Ireland, the most recent member to be added to the Ministry. The System contributes nearly $2 million a day in community benefit addressing the social determinants of local communities and the issues of population health.

A recent commitment of BSMH which will impact greatly the neighborhoods in which the System serves, is to the Healthcare Anchor Network, a nationally recognized collaboration of 45 health systems seeking to improve health and well-being by leveraging institutional assets.

In immeasurable ways each day the co-sponsored health ministry of the Sisters of the Humility of Mary continues to bring more abundant life to God’s people especially those who are poor and underserved.

Right: Dr. John Boltri, MD, FAAFP, professor and chair of Department of Family and Community Medicine; Sr. Carolyn Capuano; Dr. Melinda Smith, MD, professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine and Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology; and Dr. Elisabeth Young, MD, vice president of Health Affairs, and dean, College of Medicine. Left: Sr. Carolyn Capuano and Dr. Julie Aultman, PhD, professor of medical ethics, Department of Family and Community Medicine.

Sisters Share Their Stories and Wisdom

Seven Humility of Mary sisters journeyed to Magnificat High School to speak with faculty about their experiences in ministry and the broader HM involvement and commitment to that ministry. As a part of the Catholic identity goal for Magnificat’s accreditation process, faculty have been learning more about the heritage, Mission, and Ministries of the Sisters of the Humility of Mary and identifying intersections with their work.

Following the session, Sr. Jean Orsuto commented, “It was my pleasure to come and talk to the faculty. They seem to be an amazing group of people and are very interested and committed to the mission and charism of the Sisters of the Humility of Mary.”

Faculty relished the opportunity to listen to the wisdom and stories of the sisters. Afterward, many remarked that they wished for more or could sit and listen for hours. Magnificat was most grateful to these sisters for their time, energy, and enthusiasm in sharing about their lives and work.

- Education, Sr. Elaine Schindler
- Human Trafficking, Sr. Karen Bernhardt
- Immigration and Refugees, Sr. Eilis McCulloh
- Retreats, Spirituality, Sr. Mary Ann Spangler
- Homeless and Housing, Sr. Jean Orsuto
- Parish and Hispanic Ministry, Sr. Cathy McConnell
- Care for Earth, Sr. Helen Jean Novy
- History of Health Care, Sr. Joanne Gardner
The following programs are provided by Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center (VMESC) and will take place at Villa Maria. Please call 724-964-8886 for more information or visit www.vmesc.org. Additional programs and speaker information can be found on the VMESC website.

Upcoming Programs

**Hanging Onto Hope in Our Imperfect World**  
*Presented by: Melannie Svoboda, SND*  
*Date:* November 15-17, 2019  
*Cost:* $185

As Christians, we are called to be persons of hope. But how do we do this amid the gloom and doom that sometimes pervades the daily news—and our personal lives? This weekend retreat explores the nature of Hope and her relation to her two sisters, Faith and Love. It also suggests some practical ways we can nourish hope and courage in our daily lives. The retreat will use scripture, music, short videos, stories, sharing, and humor to lead us deeper into the Source of All Hope, our Gracious God who loves us more than we can imagine.

**Empty Bowl Retreat: Be Swift to Love**  
*Presented by: Cheryl Rose, HM*  
*Date:* December 6-8, 2019  
*Cost:* $185

This fourth retreat in the Empty Bowl series will focus on the energy and power of divine love, our participation in relationship with God and its power to heal and transform. The compelling image of an empty bowl will open us to the divine presence. It is not necessary to have attended any of the previous Empty Bowl retreats to participate in this weekend.

**Self-Care Retreat for Caregivers**  
*Presented by Dena Deluco & Maureen Lauer-Gatta*  
*Date:* January 24-26, 2020  
*Cost:* $225

Caregivers can become so involved in helping others that they neglect their own health and well-being. Caregiver Burnout is a state of mental, physical, and emotional exhaustion. At this retreat you will learn how to take time for yourself without guilt, shame, or blame.

**Coffee and Contemplation**  
*Date:* November 19, 2019  
*Presented by Janet Burkhart, HM*  
*Date:* December 17, 2019  
*Presented by Mary Stanco, HM*  
*Cost:* $7

The Coffee and Contemplation series focuses on a variety of spiritual and holistic topics. The program provides participants with input from a presenter and includes time for reflection and discussion. Program participants are welcome to stay for lunch at an additional cost.

**Taizé Prayer**  
*Date:* December 5, 2019 (Advent); March 12, 2020 (Lent); May 7, 2020 (Easter)  
*Cost:* Free

With open and ecumenical hearts, gather around the cross for prayer in the tradition of the ecumenical monastery of Taizé, France. This Christian interdenominational prayer form includes music, scripture, and silence. Light refreshments and an opportunity for fellowship follow the prayer service.

**2020 Programs at a Glance**

- **March 20-22:** Anne Kertz Kernion
- **April 4:** Tools for Acceptance with Maureen Lauer-Gatta
- **May 1-3:** Jim Finley (via Skype) and Cheryl Rose, HM
- **June 6:** Villa Maria-thon
- **June 13:** Praying with Color with Paulette Kirschensteiner, HM
- **June 14-21:** Individually Directed Retreat
- **June 25-28:** Rev. George Smiga
- **July 5-11:** Spiritual Direction Formation
- **July TBD:** Spirituality of Drawing with Paulette Kirschensteiner, HM
- **July 26-31:** Carolyn Capuano, HM and Melinda Smith, MD
- **August 16-21:** Jan Novotka and Marie Larkin
- **September 19:** Zentangles with Paulette Kirschensteiner, HM
- **September 20-27:** Individually Directed Retreat
- **October 2-3:** Writing Circle Retreat with Dena Deluco
- **October 23-24:** Ilia Delio, OSF
In Loving Memory

Sister Kathleen O’Donnell (Sr. Ann Kathleen) entered eternal life on April 3, 2019 at age 76. In her 49 years of dedicated and diverse ministry, she worked with a variety of populations in five different dioceses. Sr. Kathleen’s teaching assignments included St. Martha, Akron; St. Ambrose, Brunswick; St. Mary, Painesville and Our Lady of Grace, Pittsburgh. She served as a pastoral associate at St. Martha parish, Akron and as a pastoral minister at St. Philip and James, Cleveland and St. Agnes-Our Lady of Fatima, Cleveland. She ministered at Goodwill, Inc. in Chicago where she was a caseworker and had a special ministry with the deaf. Sr. Kathleen was a chaplain at Holy Cross Children’s Services in Clinton, Michigan. At the time of her death Sr. Kathleen was serving as a board certified chaplain at Mercy Medical Center in Canton, Ohio. She also generously shared her attention with those who are incarcerated.

Sister Theresa White (Sr. Mary Bede) entered eternal life on April 8, 2019 at 97. Sr. Theresa was a woman for others, generously sharing her multiple talents including culinary artistry, business acumen, and pastoral care. Her hallmark has been hospitality and service. She served at St. Cecilia, Blessed Sacrament and Lourdes Educational Center & Convent all in Cleveland and St. James, Lakewood and St. Stephen, Niles as a housekeeper and in food service. She served at Villa Maria Community Center as a helper in the Meat House and in the kitchen. Sr. Theresa’s ministry in the Diocese of Grand Island, Nebraska spanned 48 years. In 1970, she joined the late Fr. Robert Wiest and Sr. Carole Wakefield, HM, as a parish pastoral ministry team at St. Theresa’s in Mitchell and St. Ann’s in Mornill, Neb. The pastoral team ministered together for 27 years at St. Nicholas, Valentine; St. Mary, Nenzel; Resurrection, Grand Island; and St. Mary’s, Wood River. Following Fr. Wiest’s retirement in 1994, Sr. Theresa joined the Volunteer Department at St. Francis Hospital in Grand Island where she served as a minister of hospitality, Eucharistic minister, and patient visitor. In 2018 she retired to Villa Maria Community Center where she joined her sisters in the Ministry of Prayer and Presence until her death.

Sister Celine Metzger, the former Agnes Metzger, entered eternal life on April 27, 2019 at age 87. She began her years of dedication and ministry as a high school teacher and then served the Sisters of the Humility of Mary in many capacities of leadership responsibility including major superior, council member, administrator of Villa Maria Community Center, and novice mistress. She served the former Humility of Mary Health Partners as director of mission effectiveness at The Assumption Village in North Lima and as director of mission integration at St. Elizabeth Health Center, Youngstown. Sister Celine taught at Lourdes Academy, Cleveland, Magnificat High School, Rocky River, Villa Maria High School, Villa Maria PA and St. Edward Jr. High, Youngstown. She was a staff member of the House of Prayer in Youngstown. She was administrator of Villa Maria Community Center and a councilor on the leadership team prior to her election as major superior in 1989. She retired in 2009 and joined her sisters in the ministry of prayer until her death.

Memorial contributions may be sent to the Sisters of the Humility of Mary, Development Office, PO Box 534, Villa Maria PA 16155.
Sister Rita Costello, (Sr. Thomas Aquinas) entered eternal life on October 5, 2019 at age 84. She dedicated her life to God and enriched, educated, and enlightened countless people as a teacher, pastoral minister, and hospice chaplain during her 56 years of active ministry. She was beloved by all thanks to an amazing sense of humor and unmatched wisdom. Sr. Rita taught at St. Michael, Cleveland; St. Mary, Conneaut; St. James, Lakewood; St. Mary, Massillon; St. Margaret Mary, South Euclid and St. James, Warren. Sr. Rita taught at St. John High School, Ashtabula; St. Pius X High School, Atlanta, Georgia; Erieview Catholic High School, Cleveland; Magnificat High School, Rocky River and St. Edward Jr. High, Youngstown. She was a staff member at Malachi House, Cleveland and ministered to hospice patients at St. Joseph Hospital & Health Center, Lorain and later at New Life Hospice, Lorain as a chaplain. Following her retirement in 2015 she continued her participation in the HM Ministry of Prayer until her death. She was anticipating her 65th jubilee as a vowed religious in 2020.

Sister Cathy Joy Popoczy, (Sr. M Theresa Joseph, SND) entered eternal life on September 12, 2019 at 81. She served as a Sister of Notre Dame for 14 years prior to entering the HM Community in 1970. She was a dedicated teacher, pastoral minister, certified chaplain and volunteer. She taught at St. Michael, Cleveland; St. Mary, Conneaut; St. James, Lakewood; St. Mary, Massillon; St. Margaret Mary, South Euclid and St. James, Warren. Sr. Cathy Joy received her first experience in pastoral ministry when she served at St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Smyrna, Georgia. She served at St. Joseph Riverside Hospital in Warren in pastoral ministry, as director of Pastoral Care and as a certified chaplain. She regularly travelled with the local Warren police on Saturday nights in her capacity as chaplain. In 2003 she returned to Villa Maria Community Center where she volunteered in various capacities including the Reception Desk. She served in the Ministry of Prayer until the time of her death.

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:

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Sisters of the Humility of Mary | PO Box 534 | Villa Maria | PA 16155
Villa Maria Nativity Display

Indoor Advent tradition featuring hundreds of nativity sets from around the world with entertainment from musicians, choirs, & more

12 to 5 p.m.
Dec. 1 & Dec. 8
Villa Maria Conference Center, Villa Maria, Pa.

Free admission to display ● Group tours available upon request

The Villa Farm will offer fresh poinsettias, swags, wreaths & more
The Villa Shoppe will offer Fair Trade items, nativities & unique Christmas gifts

Dinners will be held on both Sundays
Please call for more information

As Sisters of the Humility of Mary, we share Jesus’ mission of bringing more abundant life to God’s people, especially the poor, by responding to the needs of our times.

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