Staying the Course
Accepting the invitations that call us into the future
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HM Voice
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All of us are called by God in a particular way, all of us have responded, and we look forward in hope to continue to bring more abundant life to God’s people.

Dear friends,

As I write this reflection, the signs of autumn are beginning to show themselves: students return to school, we notice subtle changes in foliage as leaves start to change colors, a new coolness creeps into our nights, and the sun takes shorter journeys across the late summer sky.

Ronald Rolheiser, in his book *Sacred Fire: A Vision for a Deeper Human and Christian Maturity* says “We mature by meeting life, just as God and nature designed it, and accepting there the invitations that beckon us ever deeper into the heart of life itself.”

All summer our 150th anniversary events have pulled us deeply into the heart of our Humility of Mary legacy. This edition of the *Voice* includes several photos of the celebrations, but print and paper can’t quite capture the spirit, energy, and power of the people who gathered in Louisville, the Villa, and at Magnificat to proclaim the great things that God has done for us in these 150 years in America.

We know that we have been abundantly blessed by so many people whose lives have touched ours, blessed by abundant resources so that we, in turn, can share in God’s mission. We have felt the Spirit at work in, and through, us in our ministries and in our partnerships. We are grateful to those many benefactors who have collaborated with us throughout these years.

We know that when we partner together we are able to respond wherever the needs are. All of us are called by God in a particular way, all of us have responded, and we look forward in hope to continue to bring more abundant life to God’s people.

Together may we meet life where we are and accept the invitations that continue to call us into the future.

Blessings in these autumn days,

Sister Toby Lardie
Pastoral Leader

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**Leadership Team**

Sr. Karen Bernhardt
Sr. Mary Pat Cook
Sr. Carole Anne Griswold
Sr. Barbara Wincik
Sr. Toby Lardie,
Pastoral Leader
It is with great joy that the Sisters of the Humility of Mary announce Eilis McCulloh has been accepted into the community as a candidate. Her entrance was celebrated at a prayer service and ice cream social June 15.

“Eilis has many talents and gifts to share, but the most important one is her trust in God,” said Sr. Mary Stanco during her reflection at the service. “A trust that has lead her through darkness and light as she shares and deepens her story of faith and love.”

Following graduation from Westminster College, Eilis accepted a position in the Sisters of the Humility of Mary development office at Villa Maria. During that time, she participated in numerous young adult discernment retreats, and ultimately left her position at the Villa to do a year of volunteer service with a Franciscan community in Minnesota. Upon completing her volunteer service, Eilis felt a draw to the JOY yearlong live-in experience at Villa Maria Community Center.

“After working at the Villa, participating in retreats and completing the JOY program, entering the HMs felt like a natural next step for me,” she said. “I am excited to begin this new step of my journey with the HM Sisters. I am being called to do this.”

And the sisters are happy to have her.

“Eilis brings a sense of humor, many gifts, is generous and energetic, and has a passion for social justice,” said Sr. Cheryl Rose, who serves on the HM Membership Team. “The nuns love her.”

A Youngstown native, Eilis currently serves as a case manager with a refugee resettlement organization, work she will continue while living in Cleveland with her companion community of Sr. Mary Ann Spangler and Sr. Mary Slattery. She will work with Sr. Margaret Marszal as she transitions into her candidacy.

Sr. Mary Stanco concluded her reflection by encouraging Eilis to share her talents with the community so they may learn from her.

“Thank you, Eilis, for taking this step,” she said, “and God grant you the confidence to continue to share your story of faith and love. Teach us to listen to your wisdom. And together we will continue to share in this way of life.”

Eilis’ entrance marks the second candidate to join the Sisters of the Humility of Mary in 2014. The community welcomed Audrey Abbata in January.
Audrey Abbata was received into the novitiate in a ceremony on September 14 at Magnificat Chapel, Villa Maria. In addition to a Humility of Mary medal, a picture of the HM founders, a copy of the HM Constitutions, and a chapel key, she also received the title Sister.

Sr. Audrey now begins the next stage in her journey with the Sisters of the Humility of Mary in what is, according to Sr. Toby Lardie, pastoral leader, the most important time of formation.

“Novices live in a special time of grace,” she said as she reflected on the novitiate during the ceremony. “The purpose of the novitiate is deepening the call to follow Christ as a member of the community. It is a deeply personal period of time allowing oneself to be stretched and shaped by God in the process of transformation, integration, and incorporation into the community of the Sisters of the Humility of Mary.”

Sr. Carolyn Marshall echoed that in her reflection, speaking of religious life as being chosen by God and embracing that call.

“Audrey’s arrival at the Villa meant that she left a home and all that entails, a successful profession, the warmth of North Carolina and came trusting in what she hoped would be a community in which she could live out her chosenness and the call to serve God’s people. As affirmed in our Constitutions, Audrey, we, sisters, are renewed and enriched by your presence and your gifts and we welcome you as a companion and sister on our common journey of faith.”
Collaboration Helps Advance Mission

Forum for Sisters Fosters International Connections

By Kylene Kamensky

In early August the Villa hosted a group of American and international sisters for a week-long program offered by the Forum for Sisters. Twenty-seven sisters from Slovakia, the Ukraine, Poland, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Romania, and the United States participated in prayer, presentations and discussions during the program titled “Gospel Call to Servant Leadership,” which dealt with different types of leadership and concentrated on specific examples of the leadership of Jesus.

Sr. Pat Kolas, PHJC, presented sessions focusing on “leading like Jesus” and included the documentary Interrupted Lives: Catholic Sisters Under European Communism by executive producers Sr. Mary Savoie, CSJ, and Sr. Margaret Nacke, CSJ, as part of her material. Presentations on Pope Francis and his style of leadership given by Sr. Gay Rowzie, HM, and Dorothy Day given by Sr. Ann McManamon, HM, were examples of servant leadership in action.

Forum for Sisters is an organization that has its roots in the events that followed the fall of Communism in Central and Eastern Europe in the late 1980s. Catholic sisters emerging from under regimes that had suppressed religious practices needed help adjusting to the changes in the Church and being able to practice their faith openly without fear of harassment, torture or imprisonment.

Pope John Paul II asked for volunteers from the United States to assist these sisters, and in the early 1990s over 200 American sisters traveled to many countries in Eastern and Central Europe to set up programs that would help with many of the issues they were dealing with.

“It was such an exchange of love and ideas and religious reaching out to other religious. You just get attached to them, and they give to you and you give to them. We made a lot of friends.”

— Sr. Veronica Ternovacz, HM
facing, including religious leadership, parish work, English as a foreign language, theological programs, and updating libraries. The length of the programs varied from as short as two weeks to as long as two years.

Sr. Veronica Ternovacz, HM, current director of Forum for Sisters, was one of the many American sisters able to respond to the initial call for volunteers in the 90s and found her experience to be a “mutual exchange” with the European sisters.

“It was such an exchange of love and ideas and religious reaching out to other religious. You just get attached to them, and they give to you and you give to them. We made a lot of friends.”

In fact, this type of exchange was such a universal experience of the American volunteers that efforts to reestablish contact ten years after the original outreach culminated in the founding of Forum for Sisters by Sr. Lucianne Siers, OP, in Kansas City, Mo., in 2000.

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A Brief Look at Catholic Sisters Behind The Iron Curtain Before the Fall of Communism

After World War II the Soviet Union erected what came to be known as “The Iron Curtain” to separate itself and the Eastern and Central European countries under its influence from contact with Western and other noncommunist countries. This separation was maintained by both political and military force. Physical barriers, such as the Berlin Wall, guard towers, and armed patrol units policed the borders and made leaving nearly impossible.

This was maintained by political and military force. Physical barriers, such as the Berlin Wall, guard towers, and armed patrol units policed the borders and made leaving nearly impossible.

Many Catholic sisters living in these countries under Soviet influence were subjected to harassment, exile, imprisonment, and torture. Their schools, hospitals, and motherhouses were seized by the state governments, and they were forbidden from wearing their habits and veils. Many were forced to work on collective farms or in factories, and they were sometimes kept segregated in “concentration convents” where living conditions were very primitive.

But instead of eradicating religion, as those in power expected these measures to accomplish, it was pushed underground. Sisters still practiced their faith even though they could not outwardly show any signs of doing so. They lived in ones and twos, meeting in small groups and never knowing if the woman and her niece living in the same apartment building were members of their congregation that were trying to stay under the radar. Young women still joined religious orders in secret—though they did this at great risk. These “secret sisters” often spent years in formation before they were deemed ready to profess their vows because meetings with their Superiors were so sporadic. Vow ceremonies had to be conducted in the middle of the night so as not to attract police attention, and all papers were often burned to leave no evidence behind.

When The Iron Curtain finally fell, it was often difficult for the sisters to return to larger community life after so many years of living on their own or with one other person. Also, new facilities needed to be built since many of the motherhouses had been confiscated and either destroyed or put to another use.
The first retreats were scheduled in 2002 in Adrian, Mich.; St. Louis, Mo.; St. Paul, Minn.; Pittsburgh, Pa.; and Cincinnati, Ohio, and were followed by a convention in Hungary in 2005, a two-week convocation that included 25 European and 25 American participants at the Villa in 2008, and a weekend program in Chicago in 2011.

According to Sr. Veronica, in addition to strengthening the ties between the American and European sisters, one of the many reasons for offering such retreats and gatherings is to give the international sisters the tools to organize programs when they return home to their congregations.

Sr. Veronica also said that for her, working with Forum for Sisters touches on part of the HM Living Document—“As HM Sisters, we collaborate with others, sharing our charism and spirituality, for the sake of advancing the mission.” This fits neatly into the vision of Forum for Sisters, which focuses on spirituality, learning and peacemaking.

“As HM Sisters, we collaborate with others, sharing our charism and spirituality, for the sake of advancing the mission.”

— HM Living Document

Sr. Mary Christine Morkovsky, CDP, (San Antonio, Texas) adds an idea to a discussion topic board.

Sr. Janice E. Stiehl, CSSF (Poland), Sr. Honorata Grzeszczuk, CSSF, (Poland), Sr. Joachima Dvernytska, OSBM, (Ukraine), Sr. Romana Hutnyk, OSBM, (Ukraine) and Sr. Kamila Novosedlikova, FMA, (Slovak Republic). Contributed by Sr. Pat Kolas, PHJC.

Sr. Kamila Novosedlikova, FMA, (Slovak Republic) and Sr. Terez Muranyi, SSS, (Romania) conduct a small group discussion. Contributed by Sr. Pat Kolas, PHJC.
Help Us Help Them
Sisters Respond to Immigrant Children in Need

HM Sisters are accustomed to responding to the needs God places before them. Recently, God placed an urgent need in front of the sisters – unaccompanied immigrant children.

When sisters, associates and friends gathered, one of the sisters brought forward the pressing matter — unaccompanied minor children being sent to Florida by the hundreds to await a hearing to determine their status. Many children are fleeing violence, human trafficking or other abuses. Without representation, many will be deported back to an environment of violence, abuse and even death. All gathered immediately came to the consensus that this was a crisis to which they must respond. And respond they did.

Within a week, $7,000 had been raised and Americans for Immigrant Justice (AIJ) was identified as the ministry partner that will provide representation for the children. The sisters committed to provide $60,000 to pay for one attorney and funds for immediate needs for the children.

In order to raise the money needed, the sisters have launched an online and mail effort, as well as taking to social media to raise awareness. The sisters are sharing video of their personal experiences working with immigrants, and their views on the current crisis. The sisters have also launched a hashtag #Istand on Facebook and Twitter (@VillaMariaPA) to try to raise awareness of the need to stand by the children.

“Our friends and donors support us because they know HM Sisters are present in the midst of these people. We are their ears and eyes on the ground. We are asking friends to join us by donating and inviting friends and family to participate,” said Sr. Toby Lardie, HM Pastoral Leader.

“Many people don’t realize some of these children are simply trying to find their family, who are already in the United States,” said Sr. Karen Bernhardt. “They are alone and frightened.”

To join in the effort to help the children, you can click the white “We are Facing an Unprecedented Emergency” box on our website’s (humilityofmary.org) home page, or visit the Facebook page for links and information (search Sisters of the Humility of Mary).

Sr. Karen Bernhardt displays the Twitter hashtag created to raise awareness for the children.

Unaccompanied minor children fleeing violence, human trafficking or other abuses were sent to Florida by the hundreds to await a hearing to determine their status.
A Future Full of Hope

Love for Sacred Land, Mission Lead
HM Community to Refuse Fracking

By Sisters Mary Cunningham and Barbara O’Donnell
Villa Land Committee

“I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, not for woe, plans to give you a future full of hope.” Jeremiah 29:10-11

This year the HM Community is celebrating 150 years of living in the United States and tending the sacred land of Villa Maria. We give thanks for all who have walked before us on this land — Native Americans, European settlers, and our HM founders with their faith, hope, courage and spirit of Mary’s humility.

We look forward to a future full of hope but, at the same time, we are dealing with the interruption and disturbance to ecological sustainability because of fracking on land adjacent to the Villa.

Horizontal hydraulic fracturing is a large industrial operation with well pads of multiple wells going down vertically over a mile into the earth. Each has “legs” that extend horizontally up to two miles in different directions. Over 4 million gallons of water, one of Earth’s most precious resources, along with sand and chemicals, are pumped into each well under great pressure in order to fracture the shale and release gas/oil.

Along with gas and oil, the process also brings to the surface radioactive waste, brine and toxic organic compounds including neuro-toxins and carcinogens. Fracking creates potential harm to ground water, air, soil and the quiet atmosphere for which the Villa is known.

In 2010, the HM Community was approached to lease Villa land for drilling. Over the next two years, we consulted experts to learn more before deciding. We held over a dozen public town hall meetings with presentations from scientists, attorneys, ethicists, farmers, university professors, community organizers, oil companies, health professionals, environmentalists, leased and unleased landowners, and those already suffering harm.

We looked at the benefits, detriments and long-range consequences of fracking. Its negative health effects and the contamination of private water supplies are well-documented. Within 50 miles of the Villa, other harmful results include dumping of toxic waste into the earth and local waterways, earthquakes in nearby Ohio, an oil train derailment, gas explosions, and oil fires. In the bigger picture, we know burning of more fossil fuel intensifies the threats of climate change now being felt globally.
After much prayer and reflection on scripture, Catholic Social Teaching’s principle of Care for God’s Creation and our HM Land Ethic, the Leadership Team, in consultation with the Villa Land Committee, decided not to allow fracking on the Villa land.

At the heart of our discernment are our love for the sacredness of the Villa land and our HM mission of bringing more abundant life to God’s people, especially persons who are poor. The Villa is home to many species — plants, trees, animals and humans — living in harmony and sharing the healing beauty, spirit of peace and abundant life of Villa Maria. Residents and guests enjoy educational, spiritual and recreational opportunities.

Where is the future full of hope God promised? For us, hope emerges daily in the teeming, vibrant life at Villa Maria. Nature pours forth her beauty and sustenance each day.

“When our eyes are enlightened by the Spirit, they open to the contemplation of God in the beauty of nature and the grandeur of the cosmos, and lead us to discover how everything speaks to us of God and everything speaks to us of God’s love. All this arouses astonishment and a deep sense of gratitude in us.”

—Pope Francis

Finally, hope lies in the steps each person takes to live more simply, curtail waste, recycle, eat locally grown food, and lessen consumption of limited resources like water, energy for heating and cooling and fuel for travel. Together we can pray for a change of heart and an attitude of gratitude. We can join others to learn more, attend public hearings, influence legislation, and take action that respects and protects our planet. We can speak on behalf of all species and the children and grandchildren yet to be born who will live with the consequences of our choices today.

Why the Sisters of the Humility of Mary say no to Fracking

• The land of Villa Maria is sacred to us and an integral part of our heritage.
• We have lived on this land since 1864. Over those 150 years, the land has sustained our well-being and that of many other people.
• As a religious congregation, our mission of bringing more abundant life to all is our priority. Unlike for-profit corporations, financial gain is not our reason for existence. However, we do understand why some landowners might choose to lease their property, especially those suffering financial hardship.
• Drilling for gas/oil is a heavy industrial operation which violates the pastoral nature of our home and property.
• Our Humility of Mary Land Ethic, affirmed by the entire congregation, requires us to discern in advance the potential consequences of any decisions we make regarding the land.
• The Land Ethic calls us to care for God’s creation by living in right relationship not only with humans but also with Earth and all life communities (plants, animals, etc.)
• Fracking uses up millions of gallons of one of Earth’s most precious, life-sustaining resources — water.
• We have an obligation to insure health not only for ourselves but also for future generations.
• Attentive to scientific study, we know that even with the best of technology, human error is inevitable and has already been documented in some areas of Pennsylvania. Water and soil contamination, air pollution and serious illness for humans and animals have resulted.
• We do not want to intentionally risk the health of Earth’s priceless resources or the health of humans and animals.
• In our opinion, current government regulations are seriously inadequate in overseeing gas/oil drilling.
We’re not Destroying the Planet, We’re Destroying Ourselves
(The following blog is reprinted with permission from Margaret Swedish, presenter at the August Community Days of the Sisters of the Humility of Mary)

I recently spent several days with the Sisters of the Humility of Mary to offer some reflections for one of their annual community days. I came ahead of time because I wanted to get to know the community a bit before speaking to, and with, them – not just the human community but the eco-community of which they are an integral part. This year they are celebrating 150 years on a piece of land in western Pennsylvania – 750 or so acres of organic farm, woods, wetlands, and more. From the moment I arrived I could feel the love these women – and those who work the land – have for this sacred place.

And this is what has also arrived on the border of their property and around their neighborhood – fracking wells.

HilCorp Energy Co., a giant in the fracking world, has played hardball with the sisters and others around them. They often won leases by telling something drastically less than the truth, and sometimes by outright lies (like telling their neighbors that the sisters had signed, and telling the sisters that neighbors had signed when this was not true, a common tactic among fracking companies).

So in many ways this was a profound meditation on the whole of the human dilemma right now – the confrontation between Earth as Gaia, One magnificent web of life, supportive of a creative process that made us possible and which many spiritual traditions down through the ages have seen as an unfolding wonder and mystery; and Earth as resource for industrial expansion to be used for human “advancement” as well as to gain power and wealth.

It’s painful to see the fear among some of the people on the land as they realize that even with their strong commitment to never allow fracking on their property, they cannot control what will happen underneath them as the company drills down, fractures the shale, and pours toxic water and sand into the wells to force up the gas. By the time I left, I felt an intense connection to the love of this place, the fear, the understanding that as wells are being constructed, permanent damage is already being done – wells sprouting out of the corn fields.

But if I had to put a bet on the future, I would bet on these women. For all the damage being done around them, they are committing even more deeply to the land, to their responsibility and legacy there, to deepening the relationship, and working with the larger community to slow down, and one day, put an end to this destructive industry.

It’s this act of faith that I am learning to trust – this faith that even amidst the damage and the losses, some of them permanent, there are enough humans with strong spiritual bonds to the Earth as sacred and gracious and revelatory that we can be of service to the new life that the Earth will surely bring forth, even as an old evolutionary era ends by the deliberate actions of its most voracious species.

As the photographer J. Henry Fair says: I really don’t like this phrase, “Oh, we’re destroying the planet.” No, we’re destroying ourselves.

Yes. Whatever we do to the planet, it will move into a new evolutionary era. Its life will not be over, but something new and unrecognizable will emerge and life will keep humming along. Earth doesn’t need us to go on with its evolution. Our decision is really about whether or not we want to be a part of it, to see what we ourselves might be capable of thanks to our gifts of consciousness, spirituality, thought and culture (the search for meaning).

And I agree wholeheartedly that much of that decision will come down to whether or not we are willing to not buy that smart phone or eat that next hamburger, because a lot of people doing ecological work are far from realizing that those are the very actions that are consuming the planet we need for life. If we insist on those things, if we insist that, in our case, it’s okay, or that we can save the planet without a drastic reconstruction of how we will live here (resting deeply on simplicity, staying home and rooted, and giving up most of our consumer items), the Earth will dismiss us without any regret.

It’s not a decision about the Earth we face so much as a decision about ourselves – and those always come a whole lot harder.
Green Thumbs up to Magnificat Hoop House Project

The Seeds of Service Club at Magnificat High School officially has its own greenhouse that will enable members to fulfill the group’s mission of providing fresh produce to area food banks.

The new Hoop House style greenhouse was constructed this summer thanks to grants from the Sisters of the Humility of Mary and the Rotary Club of Lakewood and Rocky River, as well as 14 Magnificat students, who volunteered a large portion of their summer vacation to complete the Hoop House project.

The 20-foot by 24-foot structure features a plastic shell over a metal frame with solar powered vents that open and close depending on the rise and fall in temperature. Inside are four raised cedar beds, where the students planted tomatoes, peppers, greens, beans and cabbage. The design of the Hoop House is such that inside temperatures remain warm enough to continue growing produce well into December, making for regular donations to those in need.

Next to the greenhouse, the students built a spiral rock garden for growing herbs and other plants. This design allows for plants needing the least amount of water to be planted in the top tier and ones requiring more water planted near the bottom where water collects.

The aspiring green thumbs plan to gradually incorporate other features, including growing plants to beautify other areas of the campus, inviting guest speakers to discuss related topics of interest, and collaborating with other school groups, such as the business club, to develop fundraising opportunities.

(Information provided by Karen Uthe Semancik, Magnificat High School director of marketing, and Barb Galbincea, reporter for Northeast Ohio Media Group, as published on cleveland.com)

A sponsored ministry of the Sisters of the Humility of Mary, Magnificat High School is the largest all-girls Catholic high school in Ohio with a commitment to educating young women holistically to learn, lead and serve in the spirit of Mary’s Magnificat.
Celebrate the Day!

Sisters, associates, family, friends and partners in ministry gathered for four regional events this summer to celebrate the rich legacy of the mission, the vision and spirituality of the first young sisters who journeyed from France 150 years ago to lay the foundation for the many faithful sisters who followed. Prayer services were held at St. Louis Church in Louisville, at Villa Maria Community Center and at Magnificat High School in Rocky River, Ohio. In addition, sisters and associates enjoyed a special presentation by Sr. Carol Zinn, SSJ, president of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, who praised the Sisters of the Humility of Mary for being leaders, who are not afraid to do something first.

Please enjoy these images of the celebrations captured for us by Tony Mancino and LifeTouch Photography.
150TH CELEBRATION
Striking a Chord
HM Sister Develops a Lifetime Passion for Play

By Connie Moorhouse

Live your life and forget your age. Great words to live by but not many of us can say we actually subscribe to them – except Sr. Monica Boles, who at 84, maintains an active lifestyle that rivals most people a third her age.

Consider these numbers that look more like ages than true years of participation in any one activity:

65: the number of years Sr. Monica has been in the HM Congregation.

76: the number of years Sr. Monica participated in organized basketball and softball leagues.

75 and counting: the number of years Sr. Monica has played musical instruments as a part of her family’s love of music and as a member of various bands.

“I come from a musical family,” Sr. Monica said. “My father was very adamant about us playing. It was very important to my parents that their children learn and know music.”

Sr. Monica’s other passion – sports, particularly basketball and softball – emerged from being the only girl in the family. A self-proclaimed tomboy, she credits her three older brothers for her athletic ability.

“I learned from my brothers. They fired that thing [baseball] in there and I caught it or else,” she recalled.

Active on league basketball and softball teams in Akron from the age of 7 or 8, Sr. Monica gave up playing with “all the old folks” just a few years ago.

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Active on league basketball and softball teams in Akron from the age of 7 or 8, Sr. Monica gave up playing with “all the old folks” just a few years ago.
HMHP Executive VP Offers Touching Tribute

St. Elizabeth Pharmacy Staff Surprises Sister with 90th Birthday Party

Submitted by Patty Rush

The pharmacy staff at St. Elizabeth Health Center surprised Sister Margaret Mary Siegfried with a party to celebrate her 90th birthday. A former director of the pharmacy, Sister Margaret Mary stays in touch with many of the staff by serving as a volunteer at St. Elizabeth and often stops by to say hello to pharmacy staff members.

Some 85 people, including current pharmacy staff members and their spouses, as well as former staff members – some from as far back as 40 years ago – attended the party that was held July 29 at the Upstairs Restaurant in Austintown.

St. Elizabeth pharmacists Roseann Simunich and Cristine Raver, along with the support and assistance of their boss, Barry Shick, chief pharmacy officer for Humility of Mary Health Partners, planned the party. They told sister they were taking her out for a small birthday dinner. Sister was totally surprised by the greeting she received. One guest noticed how gracious sister was by circulating to all the tables and greeting everyone personally throughout the evening.

The group presented gifts they felt would be meaningful to the honored guest, including a rosary blessed by the Pope, a Papal Blessing, a letter of congratulations from The Most Rev. George Murry, bishop of the Diocese of Youngstown, and a money tree with 90 $10 bills.

Don Koenig, HMHP executive vice president, started off the evening with a tribute to sister and a history of her association with St. E’s. Here is that presentation:

We talk about our ministry of caring and service as a continuation of the great work that the sisters began more than 150 years ago, and 103 years ago at St. Elizabeth. We marvel at how the sisters cared for those who fell between the cracks of society’s care networks, and reached out to those in greatest need.

The sisters started here with nothing – nothing tangible, that is. However, the sisters started this ministry with the three greatest resources for success: their faith in God, their love for their fellow men and women, and their hard work every day.

The works of the sisters were quickly recognized and supported by our community for their selfless contribution to improving the health of our community, one person, one life at a time.

All of us who are called upon to continue this ministry of caring and service truly stand on the shoulders of giants.

Sister Margaret Mary Siegfried is one of those giants. She began her career Sept. 4, 1946, as a trainee – almost 68 years ago, when she was just 22. One year after World War II ended, Sister Margaret Mary was here – serving and caring for patients.

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Racing to Support Youth
Villa Maria-thon Advances Mission of VMESC

When staff of the Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center (VMESC) first discussed ideas for a fund-raising event, they had very specific criteria for what they wanted to accomplish.

The group wanted to promote health and wellness as well as showcase the picturesque Villa Maria Community Center, where the center is located. What better way to do that than to let people run and walk their way through the grounds to witness a sacred setting, where the beauty of God’s creation is in abundance.

Thus was born the initial Villa Maria-thon, held the first Saturday in June 2010.

With the popularity in 5K participation growing at that time, the event was an instant success and has grown each year. Bud Ringbloom, a Villa Maria employee, has participated in the Villa Maria-thon four out of its five years. An avid runner, who competes in at least one race a month, he said the Villa 5K attracts more runners each year because it is relatively new.

“Runners like to try different races every year,” he said, “and this course compares favorably to other courses.”

In addition to the race, participants also enjoy refreshments, race-day T-shirts, goodie bags, a children’s 50-yard dash, gift basket raffle, 50/50 drawing, a drumming circle, DJ, and the opportunity to purchase items from the Villa Farm Greenhouse and The Villa Shoppe.

A ministry of the Sisters of the Humility of Mary, VMESC provides educational and spiritual experiences for people of all ages. Funds raised from the 5K – an estimated $50,000 to date – are used to further the mission of VMESC by supporting youth programs, including GROW Camp, Farm-Based Environmental Education, youth retreats and the summer service program. VMESC programs annually serve several thousand children from Youngstown, Warren, New Castle and other local communities.

Plan now to join us for next year’s Villa Maria-thon, set for Saturday, June 6, 2015. For more information on the race or VMESC, visit vmesc.org.
VILLA MARIA-THON

Photos by Tony Mancino
Items of Interest

Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center Expands its Youth Programming

A staff of teens and adults from Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center welcomed 13 teen campers for a week of survival camp at Survivor: Teen Edition on the Villa grounds this summer. This new camp evolved from a desire to serve teens who had aged-out of GROW Camp. Activities included fire building, campfire cooking, first aid, knot tying, hiking with compass reading and water survival. The teens also helped the younger GROW campers make bird nests as a service project. The campers invited their families one evening to show off what they’d learned and to share a campfire meal, s’mores and drumming.

St. Martin de Porres High School to Build New Facility

Cleveland’s St. Martin de Porres High School, co-endorsed by the Sisters of the Humility of Mary and the Chicago-Detroit Province of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), is proceeding with plans to construct a new building slated for completion by the fall of 2016. To support the effort, which is deeply connected to the sisters’ own roots of providing quality education for those with little or no access to it, the HM Leadership Team will donate $125,000 on behalf of the HM community. Since opening in 2003, St. Martin has embraced its mission of transforming urban Cleveland one student at a time. Each of the approximately 350 alumni was accepted into college, and graduates are directly enrolling in college, attending college and persisting in college at rates topping national and state averages by as much as 30 percent.
Villa Montessori Center Celebrating 20 Years

Villa Montessori Center kicked off its 20th Anniversary with an ice cream social for current students, parents and alumni. More than 100 people gathered to sample sweet, creamy treats and welcome the school's new principal, Diana Betts.

In honor of this outstanding milestone of Bridging Small Children and Big Dreams, Villa Montessori Center is hosting several special events throughout the 2014-2015 academic year. For more information about any of these events, please contact Sr. Marie Veres, HM, at 216-641-4770 or villageecc@aol.com. Please visit our website for more information on how you can support Villa Montessori Center’s Mission of “Fostering Success for Young Children” at villamontessoricenter.org.

20th Anniversary Schedule of Events
- **November 21, 6–8 p.m.**
  Donor Appreciation Reception
- **April 25, 6–9 p.m.**
  5th Annual Tuition Assistance Benefit
- **May 8, 1:30–3 p.m.**
  Mother’s Day Reception and Violin Presentation
- **TBA**
  Graduation
- **TBA**
  20th Anniversary Closing Event for Alumni and Families

Villa Maria Apartments to Host 50th Anniversary Beatles Bash

Villa Maria Apartments on the Villa Maria Community Center campus is hosting a special program on Saturday, November 15 from 1 to 4 p.m. in Lourdes Assembly Room (lower level of the apartments) that celebrates the 50th Anniversary of the Beatles in America. The program is free of charge and open to the public.

The afternoon’s program will feature Dr. Ken Womack, Penn State Laureate and author of four books on The Beatles including the recently released “The Beatles Encyclopedia: Everything Fab Four.” Dr. Womack’s interesting and informative multimedia presentation entitled “Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!: The Evolving Artistry of The Beatles” traces the band’s emerging songwriting practices, recording artistry, and musicianship from their early, primitive recordings through the aesthetic heights of “Abbey Road.” In addition to the presentations by Dr. Womack, the afternoon will also feature Beatles music from an area tribute band and opportunities to view Beatles-related memorabilia. Tours of the apartments and refreshments will also be available.

Get your old schoolmates together…or your current mate…or come solo…and step back 50 years and experience again the joys of the times and the music of The Beatles! For more information about this program or if you may have some memorabilia you’d like to share, contact Alan Bayowski at abayowski@humilityofmary.org or 724-964-8920 ext. 3340.
Community Kudos

Making a World of Difference
An August 21 missioning ceremony marked the start of a life-changing experience for 12 Humility of Mary Volunteer Service program participants as they began their year-long commitment working to bring life-giving service and love to migrants and immigrants, as well as ministries in education and legal aid at service sites in Cleveland; Immokalee and Miami, Fla.; and Villa Maria Community Center. The volunteers also benefit from special contact with the HM sisters, associates and partners in ministry.

Pictured (front row from left) are: Marjorie Pritchard, Valerie Carrera, Devan Stonebraker, Becky Seipel and Kay Scott; (second row from left) Elizabeth Juarez, David Gisoni, Beth Bartlett, Julie Benedetto, Kayla Shelley, Colin Frank, and Sr. Mary Stanco, program coordinator. Missing from photo: Carrie Vollentine.

Sister Nominated for Lifetime Achievement Award
Sr. Carole Anne Griswold was a nominee for the Catholic Health Association of the United States’ Lifetime Achievement Award, one of four awards presented each year at the Catholic Health Assembly to recognize remarkable contributions to Catholic health care. Sr. Carole Anne, who serves on the HM leadership team and retired last year after more than 45 years of service in the health care ministry and most recently as vice president of mission integration at Mercy Health in Lorain, Ohio. She called the nomination a “surprise” and an “honor.”

“It is a privilege to be nominated for such an award and recognized for a lifetime of contribution to the ministry of Catholic health care,” she said. “The person honored [with the award] is always very outstanding.”

The awards were presented during the Catholic Health Assembly June 22-24 in Chicago.

Sister Places in County Fair Competitions
Sr. Jeanette Dufek entered some of her cross stitching projects in a few county fairs this summer and came away a winner! Between the Lawrence County Fair and the Canfield Fair she was able to add three second place and three third place ribbons to her collection for her intricate and detailed work.
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 information are listed on the VMESC website.

**Women on Whose Shoulders We Stand**  
**Presenter:** Susan Schorsten, HM  
**Time:** Each session will begin at 9:30 a.m. and end at 4:00 p.m.  
**Cost:** $25.00 per session (Includes lunch and refreshments)

This program will be devoted to increasing the awareness of the significant contributions of women, named and unnamed, in the Scriptures; and to identify ways these women serve as role models for women today. The first two sessions will focus on women in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and the third and fourth sessions will focus on women in the New Testament. Participants are invited to attend as many sessions as they are able.

**Session II: Dec. 13, 2014**  
What can we learn from the stories of the women in the Old Testament?

**Session III: March 7, 2015**  
Who are the named and unnamed women in the New Testament?

**Session IV: April 18, 2015**  
What can we learn from these women of the New Testament? How might they serve as role models for us in the 21st century?

**Taizé Prayer**  
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. We are pleased to offer this unique experience at no charge.

Dec. 2, 2014 (Advent)  
March 24, 2015 (Lent)  
May 5, 2015 (Easter)

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**Coffee and Contemplation Series**

**Nov. 11, 2014**  
**Presenter:** Barbara O’Donnell, HM  
**Topic:** Grace-filled Gratitude

**Dec. 9, 2014**  
**Presenter:** Jeanne Thurin, HM  
**Topic:** A Holy Family Portrait

**Jan. 13, 2015**  
**Presenter:** Barbara O’Donnell, HM  
**Topic:** Light in Darkness

**Feb. 10, 2015**  
**Presenter:** Barbara Lenarcic, HM  
**Topic:** Women in the Early Church

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**2015 Programs at a Glance**

- **March 28:** RCIA Retreat  
- **April 24-25:** Climate Change Retreat with Dan Misleh and Barbara O’Donnell, HM  
- **June 6:** Sixth Annual Villa Maria-Thon (5-K and 2 Mile Walk)  
- **June 7-13:** Spiritual Direction Formation  
- **June 14-19:** Conference Retreat with Edwina Gateley (Mothers, Sisters, Daughters: Standing on their Shoulders)  
- **June 21-28:** Individually Directed Retreat  
- **June 25-28:** Art Retreat with Paulette Kirschensteiner, HM  
- **July 12-18:** Conference Retreat with Maureen Wild, SC (Mystics, Visionaries, Prophets – Hildegard, Teilhard, Teilhard & Thomas Berry)  
- **July 19-26:** Individually Directed Retreat  
- **July 26-31:** Guided Retreat with Carolyn Capuano, HM, and Melinda Smith, MD (Contemplation in Action: A Virtual Ignatian Pilgrimage)  
- **July 31-Aug. 2:** Weekend Retreat on Thomas Merton with Natalie Terry and Jimmy Menkhaus  
- **Aug. 9-16:** Individually Directed Retreat  
- **Sept. 18-20:** Weekend Retreat with John Surette, SJ (Walking Within an Evolutionary Universe)  
- **Oct. 29-Nov. 1:** Conference Retreat with James Finley (Turning to Thomas Merton as our Guide)
Sister Margaret Mary Siegfried has been the quiet heart of service for 68 of the 103 years that this healing ministry has existed at St. Elizabeth.

Turning 90, and still being a vital part of that ministry that she helped build and has served for two-thirds of its existence, is an extraordinary testament to her love and commitment to this healing ministry.

I ask you all to raise your glass and toast Sister Margaret Mary Siegfried with me, on behalf of the Board and leadership of Humility of Mary Health Partners and Mercy Health: Thank you for the great gift that you share with each of us, every day – your presence, your service, your role-model for each of us.

Happy Birthday! And God’s blessing on you for many more.

Reception into the novitiate 1953: the postulants in black dresses received the habit and white veil along with a new religious name. This ceremony marked the start of their two years as novices. During this time of prayer and study they prepared to make their first vows.

Reception into the novitiate 2014: a candidate receives a Humility of Mary medal and gains the title Sister to denote that she is moving into the next stage of her journey as a Sister of the Humility of Mary.
Sister Mary Louise Martin, formerly Sr. M. Thomas, died Friday, September 5, 2014 at Villa Maria Community Center, Villa Maria, Pa. She was born November 18, 1929 in Lowellville, Ohio, to Thomas and Julia (nee Shehy) Martin. She was preceded in death by her parents and is survived by her brother William P. Martin of Simi Valley, California and her sister, Julianna Sanda of Solon, many nieces and nephews and their families, and her sisters in the Humility of Mary Congregation with whom she shared her life for 61 years.

Sister Mary Louise graduated in 1947 from Lowellville High School in Lowellville, Ohio and entered the Sisters of the Humility of Mary Congregation in 1952. She completed her nurses’ training as an RN in 1950 at Mercy Hospital School of Nursing, Canton and earned her BSN at Catholic University of America, Washington DC.

Sister Mary Louise served as a registered nurse at St. Joseph Hospital, Lorain, St. Elizabeth Hospital, Youngstown and St. Joseph Riverside Hospital, Warren. She was also an instructor at Aultman Hospital School of Nursing, Canton and earned her BSN at Catholic University of America, Washington DC.

Sister Mary Louise ministered as a volunteer at Villa Maria Community Center and served on the pastoral care team; she also shared in the ministry of prayer until her death.

In Loving Memory

See complete tribute at humilityofmary.org

Hoagy Carmichael’s “Stardust”; and the ever-popular “Moonlight Serenade” by Glenn Miller.

Young at Heart and Age.
The Akron-based Moonlight Serenaders started in 1951 as a masonic band known as the Nobleman. The name changed in 2004 because it was no longer affiliated with the masons and to better reflect the type of music the band played. The 17-member band takes pride in playing the very best music from the Big Band era.

And while Sr. Monica is a senior member of the group, she is not the most senior. That honor goes to Mona Schaeffer, who at 92, has been with the band since its inception.

“I just love playing,” Mona said of the trumpet she has been playing for almost 80 years.

At 19, band newcomer Cassie Reagh hopes for that same longevity. She was approached by the group’s director following an alumni marching band performance.

“I hadn’t played the trombone in a year and wanted to get back into it because music makes me happy. I think it’s amazing they are still doing this,” she said of her older band mates. “I see myself doing this until I’m 92.”

A Spark of Enthusiasm. The band practices twice a month and does approximately 60 shows a year. “Gigs come mostly from people we know,” said Sr. Monica, who also serves as the group’s booking coordinator.

But that’s not all she does for the band.

“She is a spark of enthusiasm,” said fellow sax player John Smith. “She keeps us honest and going.”

Sr. Monica credits her constant activity with keeping her mind and body healthy. “I don’t have anything wrong with me physically,” she said. “I see people a lot younger than me that are much worse off.”

The only thing that may slip her mind is her age because she’s too busy living her life.

Sr. Monica Boles (front) has been playing music for many, many more years than band newcomer Cassie Reagh (rear), who hopes for the same longevity.
Villa Maria Nativity Display

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

12 to 5 p.m.
Dec. 6 -7 & Dec. 13 -14
Villa Maria Community Center, Villa Maria, Pa.
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

Roast Beef Dinner: 12-4 p.m., Sunday, Dec.7
Large $10 • Small $6

Spaghetti Dinner: 12-4 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 14
Large $7 • Small $5
Children 7 & under free • Take out Available

For more information: humilityofmary.org