Dear Friends,

I write this message for inSpirit as the Family of Holy Cross prepares to celebrate the congregational feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross and Our Lady of Sorrows. As women with passion for God's mission, we are moved each day to be companions in our time and place. We stand, as Mary did, at the cross of suffering and find there seeds of resurrection hope. This issue illustrates in various ways the profound call we hear today. It is a call to stand in solidarity with the poor and powerless. It is a call to walk with and in the midst of those suffering from violence and injustice. It is a call to welcome and accompany women willing to say yes to a Holy Cross life of prophetic witness. It is a call to join with others who share our values and our hope for reconciliation and peace for the life of the world.

It is an exciting time in the Congregation! A new General Administration is beginning to focus its energies on the work that is ours to do (see photo on page 4). Our geographic Areas are also in the midst of leadership transitions. Together for the next five years, we will celebrate and seek new ways to promote the common good.

I hope this issue of inSpirit allows you to glimpse the ways Sisters of the Holy Cross are engaging our global presence to nurture resurrection hope among those we serve and those who serve alongside us. I invite you to read these stories and see in them the bonds that connect us and all members of the human family. We stand together with peoples and companions whose generosity and faith inspire and humble us in our common call to holiness and wholeness. “Transform us, O Beloved, to be love for the life of the world.” —2019 General Chapter Prayer

In Holy Cross,

Sister M. Veronique (Wiedower), CSC
President, Congregation of the Sisters of Holy Cross

Sisters of the Holy Cross
Founded in 1841 in Le Mans, France, the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross is an international and intercultural community of women religious whose motherhouse is in Notre Dame, Indiana. The Congregation serves in Bangladesh, Brazil, Ghana, India, Mexico, Peru, Uganda and the United States. Sisters of the Holy Cross are called to be witnesses of God’s transforming love for the life of the world. Their ministries focus on providing education and health care services, eradicating material poverty and ending discrimination—giving witness to God’s desire for the transformation of human hearts, human relationships and all creation. To learn more, visit www.cscsisters.org.

General Administration
Sister M. Veronique (Wiedower), CSC
Sister Piedad Teresa Gomes, CSC
Sister Catherine Ochoa, CSC
Sister Esther Adjoa Entswah, CSC
Sister Kathleen Mooney, CSC
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Sisters of the Holy Cross

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GRANT THEM PEACE
STAMP DONATIONS

ON THE COVER
Each year, the Sisters of the Holy Cross who have been professed 25, 50 and 75 years are honored at the July jubilee celebration at Saint Mary’s. We invite you to experience this joyful occasion through the images on the cover of inSpirit.

CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT:
Festive banners with swaying ribbons are lifted high at the 2019 jubilee celebration at the Church of Our Lady of Loreto, Saint Mary’s, Notre Dame, Indiana. Holy Cross Sisters Shipa Roazaro, left, Esther Adjoa Entswah, center, and Mary Renu Samaddar are all smiles as they observe their silver jubilee, marking 25 years of vowed life in the Congregation.
Sister Margaret Mary Nino, CSC, sounds her drum in thanksgiving to God for the jubilarians as the Loretto Choir, background, joins with clapping.
Holy Cross novices bring forward the altar (offering), a Bengali ritual composed of candles, incense and flowers. Left to right, Sisters Anitha Tripura, Chidyari Sri and Anna Maria Roy.
Golden jubilarians Sister Helena Sharp, CSC, center, and Sister Celine Dauries, right, raise their hands in blessing during the celebration.
Sister Frances B. O’Connor, left, shares a tender moment with 75-year jubilarian Sister M. Carmen (Davy), CSC.

CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT:
Donations support Sisters bestowed honors, awards
Sisters minister to war victims in northern Uganda
Forging friendship across continents
Project provides outlook on nonviolence
“Faith kept me strong as I journeyed”
Grant them peace
Stamp donations

Congratulations to the Sisters of the Holy Cross who have been professed 25, 50 and 75 years in the Congregation.

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Sisters minister to war victims in northern Uganda

Koch Goma Subcounty in northern Uganda is one of many areas of central Africa that has been terrorized for the past 20 years by the presence of the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). Thousands of Ugandans were murdered or raped, and hundreds of children were abducted for service in the LRA. Many fled the Koch Goma region, creating a massive refugee crisis and a devastating economic, social and educational impact in the area.

Today, as the LRA threat has subsided in this region, many Ugandans are beginning to return to their villages and communities. The current generation of residents grew up in Internally Displaced Person camps where there was abuse, violence and mistreatment, and no formal work training. The victims of decades of LRA atrocities—a majority of them women and children—are traumatized and in need of basic health services, counseling, education, training and spiritual support to rebuild their lives.

“The Archbishop (John Baptist Odama of the Archdiocese of Gulu) requested our presence to bring hope to the people who are just now returning to their lands following this long war [between the LRA and Ugandan military forces]. This war has set the region back tremendously with significant poverty, violence and lack of basic health care,” noted Sister Lilian Brige Aweno, CSC, who is serving in the archdiocese alongside Holy Cross Sisters Beatrice Wangatia and Grace Kittinsa.

The Sisters of the Holy Cross have had a presence in Uganda, in both health care and education ministries, for more than 50 years. Now a new outreach ministry has been born to respond to the needs in the northern part of the country.

The sisters are currently housed at St. Jude Children’s Home, a place for children who are abandoned, neglected, physically challenged and HIV positive, and have nowhere else to go. The center accommodates 89 children. Holy Cross sisters are helping at their temporary residence by transporting children in wheelchairs, telling them stories, praying together, singing and dancing.

Responding to people’s needs

“We are working on providing a counseling center where the people can meet and share their experiences,” stated Sister Lilian. “Most of the youth are traumatized and as such need proper counseling and follow up for they have lost hope in life.”

Sister Beatrice is working to bring healing to those suffering from trauma by offering to counsel families and children from the primary schools, performing social work, and interacting with youth, teaching them skills to utilize available resources to create income-generating projects. She also prays with the people and participates in other spiritual activities.

The sisters also are reaching out to the single women of Koch Goma. With the help of a grant, Sister Lilian plans to move forward with a skills-based sewing initiative designed to train single women to sew and embroider, empowering them to support themselves. She also teaches a business study and commerce course two days a week at the Koch Goma senior secondary school.

Sister Grace works with the Catholic Women’s Association (CWA) in the area, and frequently participates with them in faith sharing and planning. She also has taught the CWA women to make rosaries for the parish.

Challenges facing the sisters’ ministries

The sisters are continuing to assess challenges as they look to the future of their ministry with the people. For example, home visitation, the current method of outreach, reveals needs. “Each week when we visit, we find kids who have died due to sickness or a mother who has lost her child during birth,” said Sister Lilian. Additionally, to meet the educational, skills building and training needs of the community, the Koch Goma Central Primary School is in need of reconstruction due to damage from the war and storms.

Hope for the future

The sisters hope to bring healing to the people of Koch Goma, eradicate poverty and help empower them to be economically, socially and spiritually stable. Noted Sister Lilian, “[W]e hope to help them develop a spirit of trust in each other, thus valuing human life and strengthening right relationships.”

The residents of the area deeply appreciate the sisters’ presence. On August 18, people from 38 small chapels gathered for a eucharistic celebration and a reception in their honor. Sister Lilian reflected, “It’s my prayer that God will continue to give us the Spirit to be able to open and finish the good work he has begun in us all.”

Welcome new Congregation leadership

The Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross installed its new 2019–2024 General Administration on September 8 in the Church of Our Lady of Loretto, Saint Mary’s, Notre Dame, Indiana. Leadership members are, top row from left, Holy Cross Sisters Suzanne Brennan, councilor; Kathleen Moreney, general treasurer; Catherine Osborne, general secretary; Mary Teisann, councilor; and front row from left, Holy Cross Sisters Pushpa Teresa Gomes, first councilor; M. Veronique (Wiedower), president; and Esther Adjoa Entsiwah, councilor. We welcome Osimo, general secretary; Mary Tiernan, councilor; and front row from left, Holy Cross Sisters Pushpa Teresa Gomes, first councilor; M. Veronique (Wiedower), president; and Esther Adjoa Entsiwah, councilor. We welcome our new leadership and pray that they will be blessed in their ministry together! Read more about the installation of the new leadership members at www.cscsisters.org/new-holy-cross-leadership-installed/.

Holy Cross Sisters are welcomed by the mothers and aunties of St. Jude Children’s Home, Gulu, Uganda, and by Father Michael Lawrence Komaker, vicar general of the Gulu Archdiocese. Pictured are Sisters Lilian Brige Aweno, CSC, second from left, Grace Kittinsa, CSC, fifth from left, and Mary Louise Wahler, CSC, second from right.
Donations support students and school

Since Our Lady of Holy Cross School (OLHCS) opened the doors of its new building in Barakathal, India, in 2017, the sisters and staff have been hard at work, planning and developing the school to deliver a top-notch education in the Holy Cross tradition.

Sister Khochem Moussang, CSC, headmistress of the school, credits the loving generosity of many for helping the school begin so successfully. “Our Lady of Holy Cross School is deeply grateful for the kindness and generosity shown to our school in these first two years. This is a wonderful example of what the hands of many can accomplish together when united for the good of those who need us,” she said. During the school’s first year, students sat at new school desks and benches during class because of the Congregation’s donor-supported Ministry With the Poor Fund. The fund also provided a water filtration system to ensure clean water, and library books to advance literacy. A once-empty computer lab now has 25 computers, thanks to a grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Fund for Sisters. Students benefit by learning through computer technology and by gaining the computer skills and competencies that are essential in today’s digital world.

Another important planning goal was establishing a formal program to provide the students with meals during the school day. In this remote area of North East India, most families earn less than $1,000 annually as farmers. As a result, families struggle to meet their daily needs, including the most basic—food. The school was blessed to get an early start on this feeding program thanks to the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Dubuque, Iowa) Hunger Fund, which provided the school with start-up funds.

Providing recreation and physical activity for students was also on the sisters’ minds. The students clamored for equipment to play sports such as soccer, volleyball and badminton. “They were overjoyed when they saw what Sister Bijoycy Thongnibah, CSC, had in her suitcase after a trip to Saint Mary’s in Notre Dame, Indiana: nets, balls, racks, chess sets and other equipment. The sports gear was purchased by a South Bend, Indiana, couple who learned of the school’s need while volunteering at Saint Mary’s,” Sister Bijoycy expressed her deep gratitude this way “The children of OLHCS are so happy, and the sisters ministering here are inspired by the spirit of generosity of so many who journey with us in our educational mission to make lives better for the people of rural India.”

Holy Cross Ministries’ bus finds a new home

Holy Cross Ministries (HCM) of Utah, a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, recognized an opportunity to put a retired bus to good use by donating it to the Catholic Community Services Monastery Migrant Shelter in Tucson, Arizona. The bus will continue HCM’s mission to support the underserved by helping migrants—women, men and children—at the U.S.-Mexico border.

HCM used the bus for their School Readiness Program but found they no longer needed the bus because the hours of the preschool were expanded and children are now transported by parents.

Before sending the bus to its new home, HCM held a “Stuff the Bus” project to collect donations of basic items for migrants who are waiting to go through the immigration process and are currently staying in a temporary shelter.

Casanicolas shelters migrants

Daniel, 14, and his 18-year-old brother were forced to leave Honduras for their safety. A local gang killed their mother in retaliation for their resistance to joining the group. For Daniel, the most painful part of the trip was the sadness and remorse of having to leave the area immediately and not being able to bury his mother.

The opportunity to share stories like this, along with a safe place to stay and eat, is what migrants who visit Casanicolas in Guadalajara City, Nuevo León, Mexico, find during their stay. Founded by Father Luis Eduardo Villarreal Rios in Mexico, the house reduces migrants’ vulnerability by assisting them in various ways—providing shelter in a secure place, promoting human rights and offering pastoral care. Many visitors stay at least three days, but if they have a special situation, they can stay anywhere from two weeks to a month.

“Of course, migrants want a dignified life and a place to share so they feel that their lives are important and a value to society.”

— Sister Esperanza Jacobo Acevedo, CSC

“The second goal is to eradicate material poverty by providing basic food supplies of rice and beans to the migrants at Casanicolas, thus helping to nourish them as they continue their journey,” she added.
Laura Fetter, a junior high teacher and social concerns coordinator at Blessed Sacrament School, sensed her passion to maintain the school's Holy Cross heritage would need to take on a new dimension—especially after Sister Marietta (Simpson), CSC, the last Holy Cross sister at the school, retired in 2017.

The Washington D.C.-based school was established in 1923 and staffed by the Sisters of the Holy Cross; later, the sisters turned the school over to lay leadership. Laura has been building bonds between the school and sisters for a number of years.

“My favorite work on behalf of the sisters is the Labors of Love campaign we do each year before the Mission Fair. Students do chores for $2 each and try to raise as much money as they can to support the sisters and Moreau Nursery and Primary School (Kirinda, Uganda) in particular.”

These fundraising efforts have helped Moreau School purchase needed books and supplies and provide scholarships to children with no other way to attend the school.

In 2018, Laura began to wonder if she could take the relationship between the schools to a new level. She planned a trip to Uganda to see the Congregation’s ministries and to discuss with the sisters in person how that friendship might continue to grow.

Laura said of her idea “…perhaps we could create stronger relationships with our alumns and the Holy Cross sisters if we could find a way for them to engage more directly. The more our students learn about the mission and ministries of the sisters, the more they will come to understand that they are a vital branch of our faith family. The sisters’ work in education, in medicine, in pastoral care, and in hospitality remind us of our call to love others.”

In June 2019, Laura and fellow Blessed Sacrament parishioner Marisel Wilbur traveled along with Daniel Flowers from the Congregation’s Development Office to visit the ministries in Kirinda, Uganda.

“The sisters’ mission to witness God’s love for all creation was fully demonstrated in Uganda. “In a grander way, God’s love and enormity was revealed in the voices and joy of the children at the Moreau School who obviously feel the compassion of the sisters and the staff. Through their songs and poems and continuous generous gestures of hospitality, I was teeming with joy to be part of their environment,” said Laura.

Laura talked with the students about her career as a teacher, read them stories and even taught them new songs. As for what comes next, Laura and the sisters in Uganda are already planning for potential future trips with Blessed Sacrament alumni and parishioners to share their gifts and talents in ways that can be beneficial to advancing the ministry.

Laura said of her idea “...perhaps we could create stronger relationships with our alums and the Holy Cross sisters if we could find a way for them to engage more directly.”

Laura’s visit included time in the classroom at Moreau Nursery and Primary School above, as well as conversation with Sister Edith Tumuhimbise, CSC, left, then headmistress of the school, above, and headmistress of the school; continued on next page
social service institutions. Their inquiry pinpointed domestic violence as a key concern for the community.

Called to build communities of justice and love through right relationships—a directive underscored by the Congregation’s 2006 Corporate Stand on Nonviolence—the sisters set to work. On the advice of their sources, they focused their efforts on violence prevention, helping people avoid conflict and, when necessary, resolve it.

“We hoped to address this issue by empowering others through education,” shared Sister Mary Alice. Joined by Sisters Rita Godhino and Patricia Anne Closey, the group began the West Adams District Nonviolent Communication Project.

Through an act of serendipity, the sisters were introduced to Reflective Educational Perspectives, LLC, a Ventura-based organization that teaches conflict resolution and nonviolent communication. After the sisters received consultation and coaching, they approached St. Agnes’ pastor and principal about partnering with them for the initiative. With their enthusiastic support, the sisters then met with the faculty. “The program we are using helps people understand the causes of conflict and violence and teaches conflict resolution through mutual understanding,” Sister Mary Alice said.

To arrive at that understanding, program participants step out on a quest of self-discovery. Exercises and lessons challenge them to consider what kind of world they want to live in and how to get there. At the same time, a personal assessment helps acquaint them with the qualities and strengths they possess to make it happen.

The program also provides tangible approaches—centered around respectful communication and empathic listening—for diffusing tensions or hostile situations. It’s especially vital for children to learn these practices, the sisters say, because as they apply them in their own lives, they will also be examples to others as they emerge into adulthood.

From the outset, said fifth-grade teacher Ana Jelenic, students were eager to learn more about the project, which has been well received. For instance, a student who tended to internalize feelings was able to find expression through the program, and “eventually communicate those feelings verbally to me,” she said.

In general, Ana added, “I think students really enjoyed sharing their feelings and just having a check in with themselves. Sometimes we get so caught up in the day and don’t really ask anyone why they are feeling the way they do.”

This fall, the Holy Cross sisters/Saint Agnes team will pick up right where it left off, continuing its joint work of building a safer and healthier community. Ultimately, says Sister Mary Alice, “We want the children to have a sense of their giftedness and the giftedness of others, and to appreciate and value themselves as persons who have important contributions to make in their world.”

Celebrating Sisters

Our life together enriches and strengthens us to foster community wherever we are

by Holy Cross Sisters Rosamond Josephine Costa and Lina Mong

Sisters of the Holy Cross gathered to celebrate the perpetual professions of Sisters Semaria Tongpiar, Likha Rumur and Gidding Simyang, and the jubilee anniversaries of Sisters M. Bruno (Beiro), Mary Renu Samaddar, and Mrinalini Goretti Rema on May 31 at Holy Rosary Church, Tejgaon, Dhaka, Bangladesh. From left are Holy Cross Sisters M. Bruno (Beiro), Mary Renu Samaddar, Semaria Tongpiar, Likha Rumur, Gidding Simyang and Shilpi Rozario, and Mrinalini Goretti Rema (photo inset). Jubilarians are Sisters M. Bruno, Mary Renu, Shilpi and Mrinalini. Marking their perpetual professions are Sisters Semaria, Likha and Gidding.

“... Gratitude and thankfulness to God for his love and blessings.”

Holy Cross sisters living in Los Angeles, California, are addressing domestic violence through their West Adams District Nonviolent Communication Project. As part of the initiative, Sister Maryanne O’Neill, CSC, pictured, leads students at St. Agnes School in an exercise promoting mutual understanding and conflict resolution.

Sister Mrinalini Goretti Rema, CSC

Holy Cross sisters/Saint Agnes team will pick up right where it left off, continuing its joint work of building a safer and healthier community. Ultimately, says Sister Mary Alice, “We want the children to have a sense of their giftedness and the giftedness of others, and to appreciate and value themselves as persons who have important contributions to make in their world.”

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Sisters marking jubilee anniversaries and those making their perpetual profession of vows were celebrated on May 31 at Holy Rosary Church, Tejgaon, Dhaka, Bangladesh. From left are Holy Cross Sisters M. Bruno (Beiro), Mary Renu Samaddar, Semaria Tongpiar, Likha Rumur, Gidding Simyang and Shilpi Rozario, and Mrinalini Goretti Rema (photo inset). Jubilarians are Sisters M. Bruno, Mary Renu, Shilpi and Mrinalini. Marking their perpetual professions are Sisters Semaria, Likha and Gidding.

continued from next page
The church was filled with religious, celebrants’ family members and the people of Tejgaon parish. Bishop Bejoy N. D'Cruze, OMI, of the Sylhet Diocese, presided over the Eucharist, assisted by Bishop Paul Ponen Kubi, CSC, of the Diocese of Mymensingh. Some 45 priests concelebrated with the bishops. Sister Angela Galga Palma, CSC, of the General Leadership Team, received the perpetual vows of Sisters Semaria, Likha and Gidding in the name of the Church and the Congregation. Jubilarians Sisters Bruno, Mrinalini, Mary Renu and Shilpi lit the candles at the beginning of the eucharistic celebration and later renewed their commitments in the presence of the assembly.

Holy Cross sisters from the Areas of Africa, Asia, South America and North America pronounced their continued commitment to share their lives with Sisters Semaria, Likha and Gidding. Those present from the Area of Africa were Sisters Theresia W. Mbugua and Lillian Nyakaisiki; and from the Area of South America, Sisters Mary Elizabeth Bednarek, Vanessa Cruz Ferreira, Maria de Lourdes de Deus Pimentel and Conceição Nogueira dos Santos—all of whom had been in India for the General Chapter—and from North America, Sister Laura Guadalupe Tiburcio Santos, who attended for her cross-cultural experience. The presence of Sister Ridahun Basaiawmoit, bandmate of the perpetually professed sisters, was also appreciated.

A festive meal was served after the Mass. Family members of Sisters Semaria, Likha, Gidding, Mrinalini, Mary Renu and Shilpi joined in the event, sharing in and adding to the festivity and the joy of the Sisters of the Holy Cross. It was a great pleasure to have sisters from different areas of the world and from several local communities present to take part in and witness the marvelous celebration.

During an evening cultural program, local communities presented exciting performances and expressed good wishes for the celebrants. The jubilarians and perpetually professed sisters shared their feelings of gratitude and thankfulness to God for his love and blessings for their lives and vocations. The celebration closed with “Salve Regina,” a hymn to Mother Mary.

“Faith kept me strong as I journeyed” by Sister Ridahun Basaiawmoit, CSC

“You word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” (Psalm 119:105)

The above message strengthened my faith, planted in me by my parents, which continued to grow as I entered deeply into religious life. Through prayer, faith sharing, spiritual reading, retreats and spiritual direction, my faith was deepened and enriched. Faith kept me strong as I journeyed with the help of my parents, formators and sisters in community.

My heart was full with wonder when I reflected on how much the Lord had done within me. And I felt the Lord’s power and energy within my surroundings. I was excited and happy as I awaited the day of my perpetual profession, but at the same time, I was nervous as I prepared to profess my vows.

As the day approached, I put it all aside and trusted in God’s Providence surrounding me with peace, with the help of my sisters in Holy Cross. I had a meaningful and beautiful vigil, a night prayer and a bapismal ceremony (a baptismal ritual cleansing, from the old to the new, with turmeric root powder), followed with the blessing of light. I was touched and felt the presence of the Holy Spirit strengthening me with peace.

The May 6 ceremony was held in the chapel of the Grotto Church of Cathedral Mary Help of Christians in Shillong, India. For the eucharistic celebration, Father John Madur, vicar general of the Archdiocese of Shillong, was the celebrant. Sister Brenda Cousins, CSC, general secretary and Area of Asia liaison with the 2014–2019 General Leadership Team, accepted my vows, accompanied by Sister Pushpa Teresa Gomes, CSC, then coordinator for the Area of Asia.

I felt very grateful to have priests from Holy Cross and other orders, sisters from all around the world, discerners and my family members attending, witnessing and rejoicing over my perpetual profession.

I was overcome by the support of the sisters and the hard work they put into organizing and arranging everything so well. I experienced great community teamwork that truly taught me how to be and to love everything so well. I experienced great community teamwork that truly taught me how to be and to love everything so well. I experienced great community teamwork that truly taught me how to be and to love everything so well. I experienced great community teamwork that truly taught me how to be and to love everything so well.
"Let us open our hearts anew"

On June 15, Sisters Irene Mwau Musyoka, Catherine Magoba, Nieves Lidia Ortiz Galván, Bernice Asele-Radu, Bertha Abua Owsuana, Dappy Hadima, Remina Bernadette Rongdy, Repa Anna Costa, Urmita Cicilia Rezaan, Anna Manar, Gausa Chambunguy, Motifl Mary Kharchani and Jecenta Myungme made their initial profession of vows at a celebration in the Church of Our Lady of Loreto at Saint Mary’s, Notre Dame, Indiana. Father Tom Bereteke, CSC, presided at the liturgy. Sister M. Veronique (Widower), CSC, Congregation president, received their vows.

Below are excerpts from a Reflection after the Word by Sister Catherine Osimo, CSC, who was inspired by the poem “O Crux, Ave!” by Sister M. Philip (Trantren), CSC.

Today all three readings constitute a love letter from the heart of God, the Holy One, Our Creator and Redeemer, the Breath of Life itself. Let us open our hearts anew, as if we were novices full of hope and deep desire.

God speaks first to Isaiah (43:1-5a). And Isaiah as prophet, stands up and gives voice to words of consolation at a time when ancient Israel feels abandoned, living in exile. Yet returning home has its perils, especially if one’s experiences have led to a fundamental reorientation in one’s faith and identity. God speaks through the prophet who suffers the same exile as the people, “Remember, I created you and formed you, Israel.”

The community of the beloved disciple in the second reading (1 John 4:1-16) lives at a time after Jesus walked the earth. The members are trying to live as the ideal community, loving and serving one another selflessly. We promise you our continued prayer and encouragement as you follow Jesus... Remember your friends, your sisters, your companions on the way. And when we meet at this table to break bread... we will hold you in our hearts and remember you by name.

We promise you our continued prayer and encouragement as you follow Jesus... Remember your friends, your sisters, your companions on the way.

She is young, my Community!

Look around you, beloved. You are surrounded by women, who long before your time came here from far away, left their people and came to this place, to people they knew not. Together, we were called by Jesus Christ to form a community of friends. But the Holy Spirit sends us forth from this place, hurrying to take up this work of resurrection.

Those of you who are young and full of zeal will bicycle, hop buses or drive vehicles of every kind, not to mention walk, walk, walk the royal road of Holy Cross. You go to join your families and sisters back home but will not be confined by the borders of your home countries. Those of us who are older will drive cautiously if still able and walk with determination, watching for the signs of the times. Some of us have wheels of another kind. Don’t think that the wheels of walkers, motorized chairs or wheelchairs make us slow to love or less zealous to live a life of consecration and integrity. Our yes is still yes.

We promise you our continued prayer and encouragement as you follow Jesus down other roads and highways. Remember your friends, your sisters, your companions on the way. And when we meet at this table to break bread, time zones won’t matter. We will hold you in our hearts and remember you by name.

She is beautiful, my Community!

She is mine! She is ours!

We are no longer novices, but ever young in the ways and wisdom of love.

“Let us open our hearts anew”
Sisters bestowed honors, awards

Interim President Nancy Nekvasil, center, of Saint Mary’s College, Notre Dame, Indiana, honored Sister Kathleen Reilly, CSC, left, member of the board of trustees, with the President’s Medal at the College’s 172nd Commencement on May 18. The President’s Medal is presented rarely and exclusively to those who have offered exceptional contributions to the life of the college and society.

Sister Kathleen received her bachelor’s degree in economics and business from Saint Mary’s in 1965. She taught accounting and worked in finance before entering health care ministry, where she would serve as director of the Secretariat for Pastoral and Community Services for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and as vice president for Mission at hospitals of the Archdiocese for the miracle of health.

In her Nursing Sciences role, Sister Maureen Grady, CSC, right, received an honorary degree from Saint Mary’s College for her work as a nursing lecturer, and for her 20 years of service in war zones in the Middle East.

As chief operating officer for Catholic Near East Welfare, Sister Maureen cared for war victims and supported the restoration of social services and infrastructure in Lebanon and Syria. She received the National Order of the Cedar Officer badge for acts of courage and devotion of great moral value to Lebanon, and the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice Medal from the Holy See for service to the Catholic Church. In her Nursing Sciences role, Sister Maureen has been a significant voice in advocating for a holistic and pastoral approach to health care. "Sister Maureen embodies compassion and courage," Interim President Nancy Nekvasil said in a media release, commending her "ability to connect with people on a personal level while addressing complex issues, whether an individual’s health or a community's scars of war."

For 32 years Sister Miriam P. (Cooney), CSC, inspired women at Saint Mary’s College in her role as a professor in mathematics. To honor her dedication and influence, alumna Karen “Kae” Bichimer Sobczyk and her husband Michael established the Sister Miriam Cooney, CSC, ‘51 Endowed Grant for Undergraduate Student Research in Mathematics.

The fund allows Saint Mary’s undergraduate math majors to conduct in-depth research with a faculty member during the summer. The research opportunity, said Kae, will demonstrate to students “that the theoretical math learned in the classroom comes alive in unique ways when integrated with real world experiences.”

As a math major, Kae was inspired by Sister Miriam’s passion for the beauty and application of mathematics and the confidence she had in her students. “Her example of a strong woman, leading with confidence and the love of Jesus, positively influenced me during college and into my professional life,” she said.

The National Association of Catholic Chaplains (NACC) presented the 2019 Distinguished Service Award to Sister M. Emily (Demuth), CSC, during its annual conference in June. The award recognizes NACC members who exemplify outstanding service and dedication to the organization and to the field of chaplaincy.

Sister Emily has served in health care ministry for 70 years, with 40 of those years in chaplaincy work. During her time with NACC, she has worked in regional leadership, participated in dozens of certification committees, and mentored and certified other chaplains.

Sister Emily, who earned her nursing degree from Saint Mary’s College and received Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) training at Virginia Mason Medical Center in Seattle, Washington, ministers as a chaplain at Saint Agnes Medical Center, Fresno, California, where she also supports training of spiritual care volunteers and CPE students. “The years I am spending as a chaplain have been…a very blessed and sacred time in my life’s ministry,” she said.

Sisters bestowed honors, awards
teams in the early 2000s. She then became a member of the Athletics Department staff and the departmental chaplain.

Saint Mary’s Director of Athletics Julie Schroeder-Biek praised Sister Lou for her contributions to the department and college, her support and meaningful friendships with students and staff, and for her faithful and continued prayers. “I was very happy with the honor,” Sister Lou said, adding that what she appreciated most were students. “Sister Lou previously ministered with students.”

Sister Lou was recognized as a mentor to the women faculty at Saint Francis... .”

Sister Elsbeth Mulvaney, CSC, above center, received the Distinguished Individual Citizen Award from the Saint Alphonsus Foundation for her leadership, vision and creativity. Each year, the foundation selects as “Distinguished Citizens” a physician, an organization and an individual who represent the values of Saint Alphonsus Health System and contribute to the good of the community. Sister Elsbeth has served for 20 years as mission educator at Saint Alphonsus, Boise, Idaho. In her role, she shares the history of the Saint Alphonsus and introduces new employees to the organization’s mission and core values, which flow from its founding Catholic principles. “It is a privilege and a joy to interact with so many individuals and groups who are committed to our mission and compassionate care,” Sister Elsbeth said. She also develops and leads prayer services for special events and administers the employee emergency fund. Other award recipients pictured above are Bill Morgan, M.D., left, and Diane Rompelberg, right.

Sister [Mercedes] brought with her a different voice, the feminine dimension of God... . She became a mentor to the women faculty at Saint Francis... .”

Sister Irene Marie (Mercier), CSC, was born in Hastings, Nebraska, as Phyllis Ann Mercier, the older of two girls born to Irene LaBonte and Raimond Mercier in the new year of 1929. At 20 years old, Phyllis entered the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross in 1949, giving as her only motivation, “To acquire humility and unselfish service to God.” And it was unselfish service that Sister Irene Marie gave as an elementary teacher in Catholic schools in the Midwest from 1951 to 1976. Sister taught in nine schools in Indiana and Illinois. The list of schools is a veritable Litany of the Saints: St. Mary (Woodstock, Illinois), St. Vincent de Paul (Loganport, Indiana), St. Michael (Plymouth, Indiana), Christ the King (Bloomington, Indiana), St. Patrick (Davison, Illinois), St. John (Pawria, Illinois), Queen of All Saints (Michigan City, Indiana), St. Martin (Chicago, Illinois) and twice at St. Theodore (Chicago). Sister Irene Marie had an elementary lifetime teacher certificate in the State of Indiana, having earned her bachelor's in education at Saint Mary’s College, Notre Dame, Indiana, in 1967 and a master’s in education at Saint Francis College in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1973.

From 1976 to 1985, Sister Irene Marie ministered to the elderly in parishes in Alexandria, Virginia, and Lancaster, Pennsylvania. In August 1983, she moved to the Denver, Colorado, area to assist her sister Priscilla, Mrs. William Jeffers of Englewood, in the care of their parents, who were in their early 80s. In late 1985, Sister Irene Marie began serving as a hospital chaplain, first in Alexandria through 1988, then in Denver and later to nearby Littleton through 2005. She said of hospital ministry, “I am a good listener and this ministry is about listening to stories and telling stories. The patients and I are traveling together on a journey to God.”

Sister moved to the motherhouse in 2006, volunteering as needed until late 2008. Since then, she was devoted to a ministry of prayer at Saint Mary’s Convent, Notre Dame, Indiana, where she died, listening to the prayers of her sisters sending her to God.

Sister Ann Keating said of herself in 1990 at nearing age 65, “I’m a lioness; if you touch my cubs, I’ll protect them.” Sister had delivered at least 500 infants as a nurse-midwife during her 40-plus years in obstetric nursing at hospitals in California, Utah and New Mexico.

Betty Ann Keating grew up in Sacramento, California, always wanting to be a nurse like her mother, Vern Francis Keating, who had died when Betty was a child. Her father, William C. Keating, Sr., was a successful contractor. Betty moved out of their large home to attend Holy Rosary Academy, Woodland, California.

Betty entered the Sisters of the Holy Cross in 1943. As Sister M. Rose Angela she trained as a student nurse and graduated from the College of Saint Mary-of-the-Wasatch, Salt Lake City, Utah, with a Bachelor of Science in 1949 and was certified as a registered nurse at Holy Cross Hospital in Salt Lake City, Utah. She soon returned to her baptismal name after the Second Vatican Council. By 1969, as Sister Ann Keating, she had earned a Master of Science from The University of Utah, also certifying as a nurse-midwife. In 1970, already an experienced head nurse and director of nursing service at Holy Cross-sponsored hospitals in Salt Lake City and Fresno, California, Sister Ann served as an obstetrics instructor at Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Hospital in Watts, California, until 1974. After three years back at Saint Agnes Medical Center in Fresno, Sister Ann’s expertise in midwifery education continued at Los Angeles County/University of Southern California Women’s Hospital (1974–1976), Loma Linda University San Bernardino Campus (1976–1977), the University of San Francisco (1977–1988) and San Francisco General Hospital (1982–1984).

Sister Ann remained in Fresno until 2004 when she retired to Saint Cajetane by the Sea, Ventura, California. There she became a master gardener in the civic community until 2017 when her ill health brought her to Saint Mary’s Convent, where she died. She said, “I might not have had a child of my own, but I was a mother of many.”

GRANT THEM PEACE

These Sisters of the Holy Cross were called home to God since the last issue of inSprint. While we feel their loss, we rejoice in their new reward. To make a memorial contribution, please visit www.cscsisters.org/donate-to-the-sisters-of-the-holy-cross/. The following remembrances were written by Sister Catherine Osimo, CSC.
Sister Julia Marie, CSC
(Teresa Marguerite Jacomet)
March 24, 1930–July 28, 2019
Entered from Toledo, Ohio
Initial profession on February 2, 1952

Teresa Jacomet arrived at Saint Mary’s, Notre Dame, Indiana, over 70 years ago to become a Sister of the Holy Cross. Her parents were Julia Berniece Jacomet and Leonard Jacomet, a tool and die maker. Upon reception of the holy habit on August 15, 1949, Teresa received the name of her mother, Julia, and was known as Sister Julia Marie thereafter.

Sister Julia Marie was attracted to the Sisters of the Holy Cross at 18 years old because she did not want to be limited to Ohio. As Sister Rita Bray, CSC, a long-time friend and companion in ministry, attested, “Julia did not want to be hemmed in. She wanted to be free to go anywhere.”

Sister Julia Marie served in Catholic elementary education as a teacher and/or principal for 28 academic years (1951–1980). The Sisters of the Holy Cross missioned Sister Julia Marie to schools in Indiana, Maryland, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas and Washington, D.C.

She completed her bachelor’s degree in history at Dunbarton College of Holy Cross, Washington, D.C., in 1965. Her master’s in education from Loyola University, Baltimore, Maryland, in 1979—specializing in developmental reading—enabled her to travel Appalachian country roads leading to her next ministry with the rural poor in Lancing, Tennessee.

From 1980 to 2006 Sister made the foothills of northeastern Tennessee her home in the Diocese of Nashville (now the Diocese of Knoxville). She and Sister Rita collaborated with the Brothers of Holy Cross, other religious congregations, three Catholic parishes and Protestant churches in the area. Sister Julia Marie immersed herself in community outreach, then founded the Plateau Home Congregations, three Catholic parishes and Protestant churches in the area.

Grace Joyce Watson was the daughter of Anthony Watson and Marie Black. Her parents owned a grocery business in Morris, Illinois, where Grace worked as a store clerk. She graduated from St. Angela’s Academy in 1950, and promptly entered the convent. She was given the name Sister Marie Anthony at her reception of the holy habit on August 15, 1951. Her mother had three sisters who were Holy Cross sisters: Sister M. Antionella (Black) and Sister M. Anna (Black), both deceased; Sister M. Lorraine (Black), at Saint Mary’s, mourns her mother.

From all accounts Sister Grace became the excellent elementary school teacher she wanted to be. A close friend, Sister Suzanne Patterson, CSC, said that Sister Grace loved her ministry of teaching. “Teaching was her deepest call; education was her longest, sustained ministry.”

From 1953 onward Sister taught at Catholic parochial schools in Flint, Michigan; Evergreen Park, Chicago, Woodstock and Morris, Illinois; and Valparaiso, Michigan City and South Bend, Indiana. Circa 1968 students would have known her by her baptismal name, Sister Grace. From 1990, Sister Grace was an active presence for over a decade in South Bend at Holy Cross School and St. John the Baptist School.

Sister Grace had taken her own education seriously. She graduated from Saint Mary’s College, Notre Dame, Indiana, with a Bachelor of Science in education in 1954; Cardinal Stritch University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with a Master of Science in reading in 1973; and Mundelein College, Mundelein, Illinois, with a Master of Arts in religious education in 1981.

In August 2006 Sister Julia Marie was appointed co-director of Angela House of Prayer and Retreat Center in Michigan City, Indiana. In July 2014, due to health issues, Sister transitioned to the motherhouse, assigned fittingly to a ministry of prayer. When Sister Julia Marie died at Saint Mary’s Convent, she transcended all limits and is enjoying a ministry of prayer. When Sister Julia Marie died at Saint Mary’s, Notre Dame, Indiana, over 70 years ago to become a Sister of the Holy Cross. Her parents were Julia Berniece Jacomet and Leonard Jacomet, a tool and die maker. Upon reception of the holy habit on August 15, 1949, Teresa received the name of her mother, Julia, and was known as Sister Julia Marie thereafter.

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The canceled stamps on your incoming mail can help the Sisters of the Holy Cross Ministry With the Poor Fund. Save stamps that have their perforations intact, are not too heavily canceled, and are not torn, cut or stained. Leave at least ¼” on each side of the stamp when cutting it from the envelope.

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The following are examples of the types of preferred wish list stamps

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- U.S. Mint Strips and Plate Blocks
- Non-U.S. Mint Stamp Sheets
- Postcards
- U.S. Mint Stamp Sheets
- First Day Covers
- Album Collections
- U.S. nonprofit and presort

To donate stamps, send to:
Sister M. Jane Chantal, CSC, Stamp Ministry,
100 Augusta Hall—Saint Mary’s, Notre Dame, IN 46556

Questions?
Call (574) 284-5675 or email stamproom@cscsisters.org

Need an ANNUAL GIFT SUMMARY?
Much sooner than we care to admit, it will be time to start preparing tax returns. If you would like a summary of all of your donations made in 2019, let us know. We will be happy to send one by the end of January. Once you are on the list, we will automatically send a summary every year. To order, call (574) 284-5641 or email development@csisters.org.

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City _______________________ State _____ ZIP_________
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- Yes, please send me an annual gift summary.
- Yes, please name the “Sisters of the Holy Cross, Inc.” in my will.
- Yes, I have named the “Sisters of the Holy Cross, Inc.” in my will.
- Yes, my donations are anonymous.
- Yes, do not list my name.
- Yes, please take me off your mailing list.

Questions?
Call (574) 284-5675 or email stamproom@cscsisters.org

Sister Grace Watson, CSC
(Sister Marie Anthony)
October 13, 1932–August 14, 2019
Entered from Morris, Illinois
Initial profession on August 15, 1953

Sister Grace Watson, CSC, died at night on August 14, 2019. The next morning, her community, the Sisters of the Holy Cross, observed their anniversaries of initial profession of vows, including Sister Grace’s 66th anniversary as a vowed woman religious. She missed the celebration on earth but joined the feast prepared for her in heaven.

Grace Joyce Watson was the daughter of Anthony Watson and Marie Black. Her parents owned a grocery business in Morris, Illinois, where Grace worked as a store clerk. She graduated from St. Angela’s Academy in 1950, and promptly entered the convent. She was given the name Sister Marie Anthony at her reception of the holy habit on August 15, 1951. Her mother had three sisters who were Holy Cross sisters: Sister M. Antionella (Black) and Sister M. Anna (Black), both deceased; Sister M. Lorraine (Black), at Saint Mary’s, mourns her mother.

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After leaving the classroom, Sister Grace also joined with several sisters at Saint Mary’s, sponsoring a variety of projects in South Bend to assist the materially poor with practical help provided by grants from the Sisters of the Holy Cross Ministry With the Poor Fund. By the time she was 86 years old, our dear Sister Gracie had exercised great power for good in Christ’s name, like Mary, mother of mercy and love.
RECURRING GIFTS

Important!
- You must instruct the IRA trustee to transfer the funds directly to the Sisters of the Holy Cross (or other charity), not to you.
- Please let us know you are making an IRA distribution so we can provide the proper documentation for your tax records.
- This type of charitable giving has benefits that vary from person to person. Please talk to your financial or tax advisor about whether it is right for you.

You may change or cancel this recurring gift transaction any time by notifying the Sisters of the Holy Cross in writing by the end of December. We may be able to accept it.)

Mail to: Sisters of the Holy Cross, Development Office, 407 Bertrand Hall–Saint Mary’s, Notre Dame, Indiana 46556-5000; (574) 284-5641

Reminder about TIMING

According to the IRS, a gift is made on the date it is unconditionally delivered:

Checks: The postmark indicates the date of the gift and therefore the year in which the gift is deductible (not the date of the check).

Credit cards: The gift is made when the credit card is processed. If mailing a credit card donation in December, please mail early in the month. We process them on the date we receive them, but mail delivery can be very slow, especially toward the end of December.

IRA Qualified Charitable Distributions

IRA charitable distributions allow donors who are at least 70½ years of age to make distributions directly from their IRAs to charity. They count toward the donor’s annual required minimum distribution, but are not counted as taxable income and are not subject to withholding. Making a charitable distribution from an IRA rather than from other assets may be appropriate for you if:
- You do not itemize deductions.
- You itemize deductions, but will not be able to use all of them because you expect your total charitable gifts for the year to exceed 50 percent of your adjusted gross income.
- You may lose some of your itemized deductions because of your income level; or
- You are required to take distributions, but do not need them for living expenses.

Donor’s Information:

Name ____________________________________________________________ Date ____________________________

Address ____________________________________________________________

City __________________ State _______ ZIP ___________

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Credit card: (Please do not send credit card information by email. It is not secure and we will not be able to accept it.)

Statement of Authorization:
I authorize the Sisters of the Holy Cross to initiate recurring credit card transactions as indicated. I understand that a record of each gift will be included on my monthly credit card statement. I may change or cancel this recurring payment at any time by notifying the Sisters of the Holy Cross in writing by the 15th of the month in order to alter the next month’s transaction. I agree to abide by all terms and conditions of my credit card agreement.

Signature ____________________________________________

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I should have attended the Academy of Notre Dame in Washington, D.C., like all my Shea aunts. But I felt I didn't want to. My mother found out about St. Patrick's Academy downtown, which had wonderful business courses. She said, “If you go there, you’ll be set up for life.” As soon as I was in that school and met the Sisters of the Holy Cross, I knew, “This is it.” They were so warm and friendly and caring.

I started my vocation in the business office at Holy Cross Academy in D.C., but I was sent to teach in Austin, Texas. I took to teaching right away. What I really loved, though, was going on the Mexican missions. We prepared Mass and met with the people, helped the children get ready for their first communion and brought communion to the sick. I loved my work there; it was wonderful. Years later, I ended up back at St. Patrick’s as a teacher, and then principal. I loved St. Patrick’s, and the girls have been so faithful to me—writing, visiting and even mentioning me on Facebook!

They have a special love and appreciation for the sisters who taught them.

More than once I saw confirmation that God had brought me to Holy Cross. For one thing, I would never have asked to be a teacher. I never would have thought I was smart enough or good enough to be a teacher, but I ended up OK as a teacher. I think God has given me some way about me, that the girls knew I cared about them and loved them.

When we received the habit, the older nuns said, “We wish you perseverance.” And I thought that was a funny thing to wish us. But after 80 years I know that it’s a wonderful grace to have persevered in what I started out to be, with God’s help. I thank God for my beautiful life.”

Sister Marie Julie was born May 4, 1917, to parents Eunice and Thomas J. Shea Jr. in Washington, D.C. She professed her initial vows with the Sisters of the Holy Cross in 1939 and her perpetual vows in 1942.