Dear Friends,

Since the last issue of inSpirit, so much has changed in our world; and yet, so much remains the same. Two virtues that seem to be essential in our neighborhoods these days are fidelity and resilience. They are important qualities for surviving and, more importantly, for thriving amid the global pandemic, civil unrest and unprecedented climate disasters that have visited our planet in recent months.

The Sisters of the Holy Cross strive to live faithfully day-by-day, trusting that God’s transforming love is present in the people and cosmos that surround us. With the collaboration of our Holy Cross Associates, employees, friends and benefactors, we find nourishment in God’s Word and in virtual community. Even as we have had to fast from the familiar—including God’s sacramental presence in the Eucharist and milestone celebrations in our life in Holy Cross—our faithfulness and resilient hope as we mutually discern “what is ours to do” in the world today.

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

Compassion comes in many packages

Aid through the airwaves

Grace in uncertain times

Initial professions cause for celebration

Raising voices against racism

Funds help sister care for ill inmates in pandemic

“SISTER OF THE SPIRIT”

Vows amidst a pandemic

Growing where they are planted

Grant Them Peace

Recurring Gifts

“Jesus’ joyful and sorrowful face”
Compassion comes in many packages

While people may not be able to traverse borders during the coronavirus pandemic, compassion and generosity have no such boundaries: They freely flow around the world to comfort and care for those in most need.

“The generous spirit of our donors is an answer to prayer for many people living in countries where our sisters serve,” says Sister M. Rose Edward (Goodrow), CSC, the Congregation’s director of Development. “People who have been out of work for months continue to struggle to buy necessities like food and medicine, and once again, our benefactors have come alongside our sisters to respond to peoples’ needs. It is a joy to help alleviate suffering, foster hope and stand together during these difficult days as we pray for an end to COVID-19.”

The Congregation initiated a COVID Relief Fund in April 2020 to help those severely impacted by the pandemic in places where sisters live and minister. “Sisters began sharing stories about how local people were desperate for food due to required lockdowns and inability to get to markets. People were knocking on the convent doors for help,” explains Sister Rose. “The sisters did what they could with their own limited resources but knew this was not sustainable and needed the support of many.”

Here’s how funds from our compassionate donors are assisting those most in need.

Relief for people in Asia and Africa

On May 20–21, Super Cyclone Amphan struck coastal Bangladesh, uprooting trees, destroying homes and flooding villages—wreaking havoc on the lives of many who already were facing hardship from lockdowns during the pandemic. Holy Cross sisters sent funds for food relief to the Diocese of Khulna.

In another area of Bangladesh, Sisters of the Holy Cross purchased and distributed groceries and essential supplies to about 33 families in Kalachandpur. Family members had lost jobs due to the shutdown, especially women working in beauty parlors, garment factories and domestic service. “The people were so happy and warmly welcomed us,” says Sister Violet Rodrigues, CSC, Area of Asia coordinator. “They were praying for us and others who were providing food and supplies in different places. We prayed together and shared our feelings. They expressed their heartfelt thanks and gratitude for the generosity of our donors and their sacrifices.”

In Africa, COVID relief funds enabled the sisters to buy staples like rice and beans, as well as fruits and vegetables, and distribute them to about 35 Ghanaian families. Funds helped several families in the Bugembe-Jinja area of Uganda who were hungry and in need of medical assistance. Sister Nancy Rose Njeri Njorge, CSC, reports, “The families expressed their heartfelt gratitude, and they were really happy for all the help extended to them.”

Additionally, a gift from an anonymous donor to Kyembogo Holy Cross Health Centre

“We stand together with peoples and companions whose generosity and faith inspire and humble us in our common call to holiness.”

— Sisters of the Holy Cross 2019 Chapter Direction

A foundation grant made it possible for Holy Cross Sisters Semeita Mambu and Spiera Muhindo, second and third from left, to distribute food to those in need—the elderly, widows, orphans, and people with disabilities—in rural areas around Fort Portal, Uganda.

A mother receives a bucket of soap from Sister Jacinta Muemi Munyao, CSC, at Kyembogo Holy Cross Health Centre, Kirinda, Uganda, thanks to a donation for coronavirus relief.

The Congregation’s COVID Relief Fund and a foundation grant helped Holy Cross sisters buy and distribute staples, such as rice and beans, for Ugandan families in Bugembe and Jinja. The families expressed their heartfelt gratitude for the help given them, says Sister Nancy Rose Njeri Njorge, CSC, pictured second from left.

A foundation grant made it possible for Holy Cross Sisters Semeita Mambu and Spiera Muhindo, second and third from left, to distribute food to those in need—the elderly, widows, orphans, and people with disabilities—in rural areas around Fort Portal, Uganda.

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continued on the next page
A woman receives hand sanitizer from a young woman in training at the sisters’ sewing ministry in Kulaura, Bangladesh, before picking up food staples from the Sisters of the Holy Cross. Pictured from left are Sister Shuh Gomes, CSC, Father Valentine Taalang, OMI, a parish priest, and Sister Promila Gomes, CSC, who is partially hidden.

In Uganda, provided emergency COVID-19 supplies, including isolation tents, oxygen equipment, surgical masks, gloves, sanitizers, soaps, thermometers, as well as food for patients with HIV or AIDS who are struggling to maintain treatment regimens.

Grants help sisters respond to needs
Sister Promila Gomes, CSC, was awarded an emergency grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation for Sisters for outreach to the people of Kulaura, Bangladesh. The funds provided food for more than 500 people (150 families). Emergency medicines were provided through the Holy Cross Health Education Center (HCHEC) and personal protective equipment was given to those in need, including HCHEC staff. (See related story, page 23.)

In Bangladesh, Sister Cecilia Karuna Corraya, CSC, provided sustenance to the local Pirgacha community, thanks to a grant from the Donald D. Lynch Family Foundation.

Gratitude for generosity
The organization generously agreed to pay for an hour-long talk show that aired once a week for a month in Fort Portal—and I wanted to run the announcements every day, but funding was limited,” Sister Semerita says.

In Ugandan cities and towns locked down tight by COVID-19 restrictions, families are feeling the pressure. In some areas, lack of work and resources and imposed isolation have taken a serious toll, resulting in increased incidents of domestic violence.

Seeking funds for the radio campaign, Sister Semerita approached the Africa Faith and Justice Network (AFJN), a U.S.-based Catholic advocacy group that focuses on U.S. policy toward Africa and also works with congregations to support peace building, human rights and social justice. (The Congregation supports AFJN with its membership.)

“During the radio talk shows, people called in seeking help and others reported sexual abuse of children within families, confirming that the need for intervention is great,” says Sister Semerita, who participated in the call-in programs with ARU collaborators. “I have been following up with individuals who have called in and want someone to talk to.”

Aid through the airwaves
Sister Semerita Mbambu, CSC, right, organized a radio program and announcements to address increased instances of family violence in areas of Uganda during the coronavirus pandemic.

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Care of Creation: Recycling program SOARs in Ghana

To celebrate the fifth anniversary of Pope Francis’ encyclical on inequality and ecological sustainability, the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development has announced a special Laudato Si’ anniversary year, May 24, 2020–May 24, 2021, calling for a special anniversary year, May 24, 2020–May 24, 2021, calling for the importance of recycling, and linking this activity to care for God’s creation. Blessed by the generosity of donors and foundations, SOAR has removed more than 15,000 pounds of plastic waste from the environment and provided jobs for more than 40 women. SOAR currently operates in the archdioceses of Cape Coast and Accra. In the 2020–2021 year, thanks to a grant from the Raskob Foundation for Catholic Activities, programming is expanding to the neighboring Diocese of Sekondi-Takoradi, with the goal of tripling the amount of plastics collected and jobs provided. Today, SOAR serves as an inspiration and a model of sustainability for others, even as it seeks new horizons.


Funds help sister care for ill inmates in pandemic

Orphaned and living on the streets of Lima, Peru, Rocio was 16 when she killed a man in self-defense. Arrested, Rocio ended up at the Chorrillos Women’s Annex Prison, where she met Sister Lilma Calsin Collazos, CSC, and her pastoral health team. Sister Lilma and her volunteers were visiting the prison twice weekly to bring desperately needed health services and spiritual support to incarcerated women and their young children imprisoned alongside them.

But with the arrival of COVID-19, all visitors were barred. Prisoners were dying, children were being orphaned, and no help was forthcoming from officials. Rocio, in training to fulfill her dream of becoming a nurse, volunteered to help. The team provided her with personal protective equipment, and she worked tirelessly to minister to her fellow prisoners.

In the meantime, Sister Lilma and her team found other ways to intervene. They convinced police officers to deliver an oxygen machine, blood pressure monitoring units, and a meter to control breathing, as well as medicines to manage COVID-19 symptoms. When an oxygen balloon was needed but was no longer available, the team looked for other types of equipment that would perform a similar function. They acquired masks, aprons, gloves and disinfection equipment and managed to get the items into the prison.

“It has not yet been possible to control the spread of the virus in the prison, but it has been possible to control the severity of the disease,” Sister Lilma says.

By June 2020, more than 60 percent of the approximately 1,200 women were infected. “I had toiled for six weeks and saved more than 60 lives were lost, including Rocio, who had toiled for six weeks and saved many lives.”

“We still do not know how far this situation will go. But as long as those of us who minister to give us the strength, we will continue to help the inmates and their children in an attempt to save their lives,” says Sister Lilma.

In 2019 Sister Lilma had received support from the J. Homer Butler Foundation to help expand her ministry. When COVID-19 hit, some of those funds were used to combat the virus’s rampage through the prison. Your donations to the Peru Mission fund for Sister Lilma’s ministry will help her continue the fight against the coronavirus.

Kasoa, located along Ghana’s southern coast in western Africa, has experienced rapid population growth in the last 30 years, becoming increasingly more urban. While this expansion has generated new economic opportunities, it has also created new problems such as an exponential increase in plastics use and littering. Plastic litter clogs local drainage systems, resulting in flooding and standing water that spreads deadly diseases such as malaria. People living in poverty are disproportionately affected by such circumstances.

SOAR engages the community in the collection of plastic waste and provides education and outreach. The project pays individual collectors for plastic waste based on the current rate recycling partners are willing to pay for the material, simultaneously providing dignified work and ensuring the proper disposal of plastics. Partnerships with local parishes and schools have also been fruitful, serving as connection points for collection, building awareness of the importance of recycling, and linking this activity to care for God’s creation.

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A transformation of heart, mind and spirit that recognizes our responsibility to live in harmony with and to care for all creation. For more information, see Laudato Si’, paragraphs 216-221, at www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html.

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Remembering Sister Leonella’s legacy of education in Uganda

The seeds of Holy Cross were planted in Uganda in 1967, 12 years prior to the arrival of Sister M. Leonella (Moe), CSC. After serving more than 40 years in the United States, Sister Leonella accepted her first international assignment. As a young sister-teacher in California in the 1930s and 1940s, she had encountered a student body of diverse racial, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. This experience helped prepare her to transform teaching methods in Uganda to align with the vision of Holy Cross Founder Blessed Basil Anthony Moreau: “the mind must not be cultivated at the expense of the heart.”

Cross Founder Blessed Basil Anthony Moreau: “the mind must not be cultivated at the expense of the heart.” (Circular Letter 36, 1849)

Sister Leonella’s first assignment was teaching secondary English and literature at St. Maria Goretti School in Fort Portal, Uganda. While there she had the opportunity to introduce team teaching for instruction. This method expanded the British learning style of memorization of facts to allow for student-teacher interaction and development of relational skills.

Sister Eileen Dewsnup, CSC, remembers, “She was, put excellence, an educator after the heart of Moreau.” The team-teaching method, still used today, employs the talents and expertise of each teacher to strengthen student learning and interpersonal skills.

Sister Leonella connected with the Ugandan people through kindness and love. “No matter where I was working, I didn’t think of barriers,” she reflected. “I would look at an individual and say, ‘This person is friendly. We will get along fine.’ Kindness disarms people.”

Sister believed that as teachers and students began to know, encounter and love one another, they could become imitators of Christ. Her perseverance and dedication to making God’s love known and felt drove her to address challenges head-on, reflects Sister Patricia Gantz, CSC. “She was a determined woman, and when she had an idea, she found the way and means to make it happen. She was full of the message of Scripture and Jesus,” Father Charles Oyo of the Diocese of Fort Portal says that even today, many fondly remember her as the “Sister of the Spirit,” reflecting her deep reliance on the Holy Spirit’s guidance.

Sister Leonella’s impact on Ugandan education was noticed by then-Bishop Serapio Bwemi Magambo of the Fort Portal Diocese. He invited her to supervise secondary religious education for the diocese, including revision of the religious curriculum. Sister organized workshops and conferences for teachers and procured funding for updated religious textbooks. When there were not enough books for students, Sister Alice Condon, CSC, says, Sister Leonella “got a group of teachers together, and they wrote a 12-chapter book on Christian doctrine, mimeographed it and circulated it.”

“The syllabus in use at that time lacked relevance to the experience of most students, especially in the villages,” adds Sister Mary Alice Bowler, CSC. The curriculum methods in Uganda to transform teaching methods in Uganda to align with the vision of Holy Cross Founder Blessed Basil Anthony Moreau: “the mind must not be cultivated at the expense of the heart.”

Sister Leonella both as an educator and through the charismatic renewal movement, movement, empowering and encouraging lay leadership at the parish level. Sister Eileen notes that “discipleship for a Sister of the Holy Cross meant forming discipleship for a Sister of the Holy Cross meant forming new leadership to take over any work they had begun.”

Tibakanyana Gertrude of Uganda was mentored by Sister Leonella both as an educator and through the charismatic prayer group. “It was important to her that we be able to unite as a team,” she says.

Current Diocese of Fort Portal Bishop Robert K. Muhirwa recalls being invited by Sister Leonella to the CCR as a newly ordained priest. “She was always joyful, punctual, humble and gentle. Later, as I was writing my dissertation, she especially liked my work as it had to do with reconciliation in families and leadership formation.”

In 1994 Sister Leonella returned to the United States and remained active until her death in 2008. Reflecting on her time in Uganda, she said, “They were 15 wonderful years. It was wonderful work and I know it will continue.”

The Holy Cross legacy lives on in Uganda, especially at Moreau Nursery and Primary School, the Congregation’s sponsored ministry in Kirinda. It also lives on across the diocese. Bishop Muhirwa recalls a conversation with Sister Leonella when he was made bishop in 2003: “Her outstanding comment was, ‘You will have now an opportunity to put your dissertation in practice!’ Indeed, I see that being so in my ministry as the bishop of Fort Portal in the last 17 years.”

Sister Leonella developed honored Ugandan traditions and spoke to the realities of Ugandans’ daily life to bring them closer to God.

Congregation welcomes new Saint Mary’s College president

Dr. Katie Conboy, formerly provost and senior vice president at Simmons University, a women’s college in Boston, Massachusetts, began her new role as the 14th president of Saint Mary’s College in Notre Dame, Indiana, in June 2020. Dr. Conboy succeeds Dr. Nancy Nekvasil, who served as interim president since 2018.

Prior to her time at Simmons, Dr. Conboy was a professor of English literature and then provost at Stonehill College, a Holy Cross institution in Easton, Massachusetts. She earned her doctorate in English literature from the University of Notre Dame and her undergraduate degree from the University of Kansas.

Dr. Katie Conboy

Sister M. Veronique (Wiedower), CSC, Congregation president, welcomed Dr. Conboy on behalf of the sisters. “As a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, Saint Mary’s College has worked closely with the Sisters of the Holy Cross in our mission. In 2018, we welcomed Dr. Conboy to this special place where you are called to build and live your faith. We look forward to working alongside you in this exciting time of renewal.”

Dr. Conboy said on behalf of the sisters, “I feel humbled to be welcomed into such a community that not only embraces renewal but continues to honor the legacy of our founders and the Congregation’s commitment to the education of women.”

Sister M. Leonella (Moe), CSC, left, enjoys the company of Sister M. Olivette (Whalen), CSC. Sister Leonella, described as an “educator after the heart of (Father) Moreau,” transformed teaching methods in Uganda to cultivate both the heart and the mind.

Sister M. Leonella (Moe), CSC, chats with students in Uganda. She developed religious curriculum that honored Ugandan traditions and spoke to the realities of Ugandans’ daily life to bring them closer to God.

LEFT: Sister M. Leonella (Moe), CSC, left, enjoys the company of Sister M. Olivette (Whalen), CSC. Sister Leonella, described as an “educator after the heart of (Father) Moreau,” transformed teaching methods in Uganda to cultivate both the heart and the mind.

BELOW: Sister M. Leonella (Moe), CSC, celebrates her Jubilee in Uganda.

Sister M. Leonella (Moe), CSC, chats with students in Uganda. She developed religious curriculum that honored Ugandan traditions and spoke to the realities of Ugandans’ daily life to bring them closer to God.

Sister Leonella both as an educator and through the charismatic prayer group. “It was important to her that we be able to unite as a team,” she says.

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by Sisters Sengme Rangsa Marak, CSC, and Ahati Christina Tripura, CSC

We sisters—Shikha Tripura, Ahati Christina Tripura, Agnes Atugonza, Christina Esi Aidoo, Rumi Pathang, Anna Maria Roy, Piasy Rita Costa, Chidary Sku and Sengme Rangsa Marak—are at the end of our two years in the International Novitiate. We made our first profession of vows with the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross on May 30, 2020. The theme of the ceremony was “Here I am, Lord, I come to do your will,” taken from Psalm 40.

The ceremony began with a vigil night on Friday, May 29, in Joseph’s Solitude chapel at Saint Mary’s, Notre Dame, Indiana. The prayer opened with a candle procession, symbolizing the Easter light of the resurrected Christ. During the vigil, we nine sisters each shared about our life experiences in the novitiate and what had brought us to say “yes” to God by professing our vows. As each of us shared, different cultural songs were sung as a way to express and celebrate our diverse

Grace in uncertain times
Initial professions cause for celebration

I was born and raised in Altotonga, Veracruz, Mexico. My parents wanted me to go to college and pursue a degree in business administration. But one night, we had dinner with a religious sister. Such was the impact she had on me that I suddenly said I wanted to become a nun. Everybody said I was crazy. The sister backed me up saying that the church needed crazy people because there were enough boring and bitter religious people already.

I joined a Mexican religious community in 2000 and 10 years later found myself discerning whether to continue my calling there. I found three religious communities that seemed appealing to me. I let the Holy Spirit do its job. I was going to join the first community that emailed me back. The Holy Cross sisters did, and here I am.

After professing my temporary vows in Holy Cross in 2015, I came to Utah. At the beginning of 2020, I had in mind to participate in the graduation ceremony at the University of Utah where I had earned my bachelor’s degree in social work. But things changed on March 13 when I learned that I wasn’t going back to school due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I did have a virtual graduation ceremony, though.

Initially, the celebration of my perpetual vows was going to be held at our motherhouse in Notre Dame, Indiana, but since traveling had become risky, it was decided to have the ceremony in Utah. In a way, I was happy because people who have journeyed with me would be able to be with me on this day.

The Congregation has allowed me to prepare myself not just in terms of religious life, but also professionally to attend to those in need. We, Sisters of the Holy Cross, are called to look at the signs of the times and respond to them, and my perpetual commitment is one way to respond to today’s situation in the world. I realize that I cannot conquer the whole world for Jesus, but what I can do is commit myself in whichever endeavor I’m called to do and do it well, to the best of my abilities, and with my mind and heart set on the One who called me to be his disciple.

Vows amidst a pandemic
by Sister Laura Guadalupe Tiburcio Santos, CSC

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Growing where they are planted

New community blooms at Saint Mary’s

Throughout the world, COVID-19 is driving people apart. But at the motherhouse at Saint Mary’s, the pandemic has created an opportunity for connection and community.

Unable to travel to their first missions worldwide after making initial professions on May 30, 2020, Sisters Shikha Tripura, Ahati Christina Tripura, Agnes Atugonza, Christina Esi Aidoo, Rumi Pathang, Sengme Rangsa Marak, Agnes Aluporaza, Chidary Sku, Anna Maria Roy, Edith Tumuhimbise, Ahali Christina Tripura, Shikha Tripura and Piasy Rita Costa, in August, as restrictions eased, sisters began returning to their home countries and educational studies.

The unexpected circumstance, says Sister Mary Tierman, CSC, a general councilor of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, “resulted in a graced opportunity for the formators to apply their experiences and knowledge from CTU, and for the newly professed sisters to deepen their experience of and reflection on transition, ministry and intercultural living.”

Adapting and making the most of their situation, the 12 sisters, who are from Uganda, Bangladesh, Ghana and India, ministered at Saint Mary’s by serving as health screeners, visiting with sisters in the convent and creating liturgical materials. For their role, the formators accompanied the newly professed—evaluating how their reality was impacting them, their feelings and prayer lives—and served as sounding boards during the transitional time. They also arranged materials, programs and gatherings, collaborating with Area coordinators and directors of the temporarily professed in each country to support the sisters’ ongoing formation.

“As women of faith, we embraced this reality as an opportunity to grow and discover something positive in the midst of chaos, and to build a strong community by supporting and encouraging one another.”

—Sister Evelyn Ntiamoah, CSC

“Serendipitously, due to travel restrictions, housing that would have been occupied by incoming candidates—who for now are receiving training and education in their home countries—became available for the group. “Sometimes,” says Sister Mary, “our crosses and our blessings are the same.”

This graced perspective makes for willing hearts and hands. “They didn’t ask for this,” says Sister Mary, “but they embraced it as part of their reality and found nourishment in living out our mission, which asserts, ‘Our life together enriches and strengthens us to foster community wherever we are.’”

“As women of faith, we embraced this reality as an opportunity to grow and discover something positive in the midst of chaos, and to build a strong community by supporting and encouraging one another.”

—Sister Evelyn Ntiamoah, CSC
GRANT THEM PEACE

These Sisters of the Holy Cross were called home to God since the last issue of InSpirit. While we feel their loss, we rejoice in their new found life. To make perpetual contribution, please visit www.cscsisters.org/donate-to-the-sisters-of-the-holy-cross.

Sister Patricia Mary Crane, CSC
December 1, 1946–June 20, 2020
Entered from Brooklyn, New York
Initial profession on January 4, 1992

“The road may be different, but the journey is the same for us all.” Sister Patricia Mary Crane was nearing 50 years old when she wrote those words in a letter stating her desire to make perpetual profession as a Sister of the Holy Cross on July 20, 1996. By then, Patricia was already a seasoned traveler who had hoped one day to be stopped in her tracks by a “burning bush” confirming her consecration to God’s will for her as a consecrated woman. Religious life was never such a challenging manifestation in her desert journey, yet she said yes because she saw that “It is in the ordinary of the everyday where I hope to be called.” Patricia Mary Crane began her journey in Hempstead, New York, as the firstborn of Harold Leslie Crane and Edythe Kathryn Bodrick Crane. As a registered nurse, she worked at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C., 1968-1979. Pat felt compelled to respond to a need for nurses in Yucatan, Mexico, in 1979. She later received a master’s degree in international public health, then volunteered in El Salvador for the Acuspalus International Medicine’s El Salvador Medical Project. There, she met Sister Maryanne O’Neill, CSC, who inspired Pat’s vocation to religious life because of all the ordinary things they shared: the laughing, crying, arguing, playing and praying together.

Sister Patricia Crane’s 32 years in Holy Cross began in 1988 as a layperson with the sisters at the Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring, Maryland, and as a sister-nurse at the Congregation’s health and hospital facilities in South Bend, Indiana, Fresno, California, and Murray, Utah.

From 1999 to early 2020, Sister Patricia served in various directorships in Peru, Uganda and Mexico. She also served as an administrator and counselor at the American Council of Congregations, beginning November 1, 2019.

The path she took in Holy Cross ended too soon, but she completed the journey that is the same for us all. She lives on in the hearts of her beloved colleagues, a woman whose compassion and care were normal. Now may God reveal to her fully the eternal simplicity of all that is holy and whole. Given her love of the Blessed Mother, how appropriate that Pat went home to God on the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Sister Joan Alleim, CSC
September 8, 1929—July 11, 2020
Entered from Salt Lake City, Utah
Initial profession on February 2, 1949

In Salt Lake City, Joan Alleim was the firstborn of Lebanese immigrants Joseph and Marie, who raised seven children.

Joan met the Sisters of the Holy Cross at Judge Memorial Catholic High School, which was located on South Salt Lake City, Utah. Soon after graduation in 1946, she entered the Congregation at Saint Mary’s, Notre Dame, Indiana. Upon reception of the holy habit, she became known as Sister Mary Christiana.

Sister Joan served 44 years in elementary education as a teacher or administrator in Catholic schools throughout California, Utah, and New York from 1949 to 1993. Many remember her as a friendly face, a radiant exterior, but a soft heart. Her mission was to children because “the future of our country is in their hands.” She had wonderful bonds with the state of Utah public school system and was appointed to state boards and teams, where she earned considerable respect for her unselﬁsh dedication and relentless determination, offering her expertise and wisdom.

In 1993 Sister Joan transitioned to health care ministry, serving in various capacities at hospitals founded by the Sisters of the Holy Cross. In Boise, Idaho, she was the vice president for Mission of Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center from 1994 to 1998. After administrating a facility for senior citizens, Madonna Manor in Salinas, California, for three years, Sister Joan was a generous presence at Saint Agnes Medical Center in Fresno, California, from 2001 to 2013, at the reception desk and as the mission educator.

In 2013 Sister Joan retired to Saint Catherine by the Sea in Ventura, California, before moving to Saint Mary’s Convent in 2017. Sister Joan always said that the major events of her life occurred on the feasts of the Blessed Mother, beginning the day she was born, September 8, the traditional feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Sister Joan, a strong woman of faith devoted to Christ the King, now sings with us the “Salve Regina.” Mother and Queen all merciful, our life, our sweetness and our hope, show us Jesus as we continue our earthly journey.

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cultural backgrounds. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, Holy Cross Sisters Brenda Cousins, novice director, and Catherine Before, assistant director, were able to attend the vigil ceremony.

The initial profession Mass took place in the Church of Our Lady of Loretto. The Mass began with a procession song, and dance, followed by the arrival of the profession celebrant, who was watched and stood six feet apart. As we had to adhere to COVID-19 safety protocols, the event was very different from any other profession ceremony in the history of our Congregation. Attendees included the novice formation community, members of the General Administration, and Sister Joy O’Grady, CSC, we were having a nuptial blessing from the Word. All the sisters at Saint Mary’s joined us by watching on closed-circuit television. Father Thomas Borromeo, CSC, presided over the Mass, and Sister M. Veroneque (Wiedower), CSC, Congregation president, received our vows.

The liturgical celebration of the profession ceremony was wonderful. We enjoyed beautiful music and the presence of each person playing a percussion instrument, three powerful Scripture readings, and a meaningful contribution, please visit www.cscsisters.org/donate-to-the-sisters-of-the-holy-cross.

Sister Lucy Lalsangzuali, CSC
August 13, 1974–June 4, 2020
Entered from Khawzawl, Mizoram, India
Initial profession on November 29, 2002

She called herself a pioneer. Sister Lucy Lalsangzuali was the first young woman from India to enter the Congregation.

Born in Lunagam, a small, remote, multi-ethnic village in Northeast India in the Champhai district of Mizoram, Lucy was the fifth child of four daughters and four sons of John Raupel and Carmel Rokhumi Varte, devout Catholics and simple farmers. With the encouragement of her parents and two local Holy Cross priests, Lucy began her formation in Shillong on May 24, 1999. On December 7, 2000, she began her novitiate in Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh. She felt called to serve all people “in the plains and hills, over the mountains and across the ocean.” When Lucy lived in community in Bodhgaya, India, she made time to plan activities for her neighborhoods, the orphans of Holy Cross Boys Town, a ministry of the men of Holy Cross. She had as much fun as her young charges when she used her guitar to help them settle down and focus. Sister Lucy’s last two ministries were in Meghalaya, India, at St. John Bosco Secondary School in Nongstoin and St. Paul Higher Secondary School in Jatah village, East Khasi Hills District. From 2012 to 2014, Sister Lucy crossed several borders by participating in the Sisters of the Holy Cross Leadership Development Program, beginning in Ghana, West Africa. Her administrative internship continued in Salt Lake City, Utah, at Holy Cross Ministries and at Saint Vincent de Paul, Our Lady of Lourdes and J.E. Cosgriff Memorial schools. Sister Lucy’s leadership was affirmed when she was elected a delegate to the sisters’ General Chapter in May 2019. Later elected a counselor for the Area of Asia, she assumed office in November. A short time later, she took seriously ill and never fully recovered.

When Sister Lucy made her perpetual profession of vows in Shillong on October 3, receiving only ordinary grace as forever “to Jesus who died for me.” Responding to God’s love song, she likened herself to “a guitar in the hands of my Music Master.” A chorus of Alleluias is now being sung in the Mizo language in the heavens above, among those of every tribe and nation.
Sister Rose Marie Canty had a variety of talents that she used extensively in over 74 years of consecrated life. Growing up in Maryland and Washington, D.C., she was reared with four siblings in a close Catholic family by her parents, Margaret (Creamer) and Owen F. Canty. Following initial profession, she taught in several of the Congregation’s East Coast elementary and secondary schools. With a Bachelor of Arts in business administration from Dunbarton College, Washington D.C., and post-graduate classes in accounting and financial management, Sister was a life-long supporter of the Congregation’s finances. Around 1968 she redirected her baptismal name in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. From 1957 to 1989 Sister Rose Marie served in different fiscal capacities with leadership responsibilities for various faith-based organizations. Her managerial and organizational skills, as well as her compassionate and inclusive approach to others, made her well-suited for leadership positions.

Sister Rose Marie was energized by the Second Vatican Council, whose teachings and spirit she lived in her daily life. In addition to her long-held appreciation for the writings of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, she had an evolutionary consciousness, looking forward to ultimate unity of all in the cosmic Christ. From 1990 to 2006, Sister Rose Marie addressed issues of systemic injustice through the Quixote Center, a justice and peace ministry in Maryland. This period of advocacy occurred during her so-called retirement years until she was 81 years of age. This small and gentle woman did not fit the stereotype of nonviolent protesters often portrayed in the media, nor did the other Holy Cross sisters standing on the U.S. Capitol steps with her.

Over a lifetime, Sister Maria Luisa laved 59 years in full-time ministries of education and pastoral care, in schools, hospitals and parishes in California, Utah, Idaho, Arizona, Texas, Florida, and Brazil. Sister retired from active ministry in 2008 to live at Saint Catherine by the Sea Convent, Ventura, California, where she served in a ministry of prayer while volunteering in chaplaincy in local hospitals, particularly in neonatal intensive care units. As an artist, she had once worked at Franciscan Communications in filmmaking in Los Angeles. In Ventura, she enjoyed making pottery, painting watercolors, and tending the garden she tended from the patio outside her bedroom.

Sister Maria Luisa wrote in a reflection years ago that transitions were difficult and challenging for her, but they opened new vistas and provided “an ongoing pilgrimage of discovery.” After a long illness, Sister Maria Luisa completed her pilgrimage of discovery. She died at Mary Magdalen, Ventura, California, on the feast of St. Mary Magdalen, which also was the birthday of Sister’s mother, Magdalena, of 95 years of age. The whole Earth is now the altar upon which her devotion to prayer and thirst for evolutionary consciousness, looking forward to ultimate unity of all in the cosmic Christ.
College forum creates space for stories

Voices were also raised in summer 2020 when Congregation President Sister M. Veronique (Wiedower), CSC, and Dana Taylor, assistant Justice coordinator, attended a five-week forum through Saint Mary’s College, Notre Dame, Indiana. Brought to stakeholders by Redgina Hill, PhD, the college’s director of inclusion and equity, the forum explored the facets of systemic and individual racism, and how voices of people of color have been silenced over the centuries, with history being written from a decidedly white perspective.

Each of the five weekly forums followed a five-part process: Watch. Read. Listen. Pray. Discern. Dr. Hill moderated the phone calls that concluded each week’s exposure to the assigned movies, documentaries, podcasts and articles.

“A lot of people on the calls were wrestling with the history of our nation, the untold stories and narratives of women in attendance, their bravery in sharing personal stories, telling their truths, and asking difficult questions about inclusivity and privilege.”

— Dana Taylor, assistant Justice coordinator

“...the women in attendance, their bravery in sharing personal stories, telling their truths, and asking difficult questions about inclusivity and privilege.”

“I was deeply moved by ... the women in attendance, their bravery in sharing personal stories, telling their truths, and asking difficult questions about inclusivity and privilege.”

— Dana Taylor, assistant Justice coordinator

You did it! Donors ensure safe student transportation

Our goal of keeping students at Moreau Nursery and Primary School safe—a deep longing of Headmistress Sister M. Madeleva (Woff), CSC, as president of the college, admitted the first woman of color in 1943, a bold first statement about the importance of inclusivity. It was painful to hear from alums that our welcome of women of color has been less than wholehearted in the many years since then. It is one thing to take a stand about the dignity of all people. It is more difficult to take the many small and important steps in assuring that they experience belonging as we rule shoulders with each other each day.”

Small and important steps

One “small and important step” is Sister Florence’s collaboration with justice promoters of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious—Region 7 on a voter’s guide for the November 2020 elections in the U.S. The guide focuses on the intersection of migration, racism and the climate crisis. Each section includes the experiences of people, analysis in light of Catholic Social Teaching, and a call to faithful voting.

“...the society we live in is the outcome of human choices and decisions. ... What humans break, divide and separate, we can—with God’s help—also heal, unite and restore.”

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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 inch on each side of the stamp when cutting it from the envelope.

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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 2020, 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@cscsisters.org.

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In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CARES Act has eliminated the Required Minimum Distribution for owners of traditional IRAs during 2020. However, charitable distributions directly from IRAs to charity by donors who are at least 70½ years of age are still allowed.

Such distributions are not counted as taxable income and are not subject to withholding.

This type of charitable giving has benefits that vary from person to person. Consult with your financial planner, CPA or attorney to decide if this type of distribution is right for you. If so:

- 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 and instruct your trustee to indicate on the payment who it is from and that it is from an IRA.

NEW rules for DONATIONS of STOCK

Don’t let your donation of stock go awry! New procedures required by our investment account provider, Bank of America (BOA), mean that more lead time is needed for donations of appreciated stock. It also means that your donation may be rejected by BOA if a new form is not received first. Here are the new steps:

1. Call the Development Office (574-284-5641) or email the Finance Office (williams@sccsisters.org), and we will email the BOA stock transfer authorization form.
2. Fill out the highlighted fields on the form (name of stock, number of shares, account number, DTC number, etc.).
3. Email the form to williams@sccsisters.org. She will submit it to BOA and notify you when BOA is ready to accept the stock.
4. Notify your broker that the stock transfer may be made.
5. When the transfer is complete, the Development Office will send you a receipt for your tax records.

Please note: This process can now take two to three weeks or more to complete, especially at the end of the year. The IRS considers the gift date for tax purposes to be the date of irrevocable transfer, not the date you started the process or gave instructions to your broker.

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Choose “Make this a monthly gift.” (Please do not send credit card information by email. It is not secure and we will not be able to accept it.)

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“Jesus’ joyful and sorrowful face”

Sister Renú Teresa Rosario, CSC, learned about serving people in need from her mother.

“She took care of the sick with her loving hand, not only family members, but people in the neighborhood,” says Sister Renú. In time, Sister Renú developed “a deep trust that one day, I will be a nurse.” This dream came true in 2012 when she received her degree. “My dream is fruitful through the Congregation,” she adds.

Before being named director of the Holy Cross Health Education Center in Kulaura, Bangladesh, Sister Renú cared for Holy Cross sisters who were ill. She remembers gaining “zealous energy” and experiencing “Jesus’ joyful and sorrowful face” through those she served.

The Holy Cross Health Education Center opened in 1987 and today serves 6,500 people annually on-site and via visits to distant and isolated villages. Preventive medicine is a main goal of the center, as is education about sanitation, diet and health care.

Sister Renú’s hopes and dreams include hiring more qualified medical doctors, a gynecologist and a therapist, as well as opening a maternity and delivery department, developing a therapy center for disabled persons or specially challenged children, and building a mini-hospital.

“COVID-19 was unexpected and created severe fear, doubt and wonder,” Sister Renú says. “Our health education center organized awareness seminars. After these seminars, people became cautious to protect themselves and others.”

Sister Renú wants to continue providing the awareness seminars, giving food and vegetables to those who have none, and supplying people with masks, soap and vitamins.

The Holy Cross Health Education Center is a recipient of the Ministry With the Poor Fund, and donors have greatly assisted in the center’s tremendous growth over the years. Donations will help the center continue to serve those who are poor and in need of care, as well as educate the community and stem the spread of the coronavirus.
My desire in childhood was to become a sister and a nurse. When I joined nursing school, I got more exposed to different religious congregations and that’s when I came to meet the Holy Cross sisters.

I was happy to join a life so different because I knew God was calling me. There were discouragements along the way, but I never gave up. I missed my family very much, but I loved God so much that I knew this was what I had to do.

I got more interested in Holy Cross because of frequent invitations and by attending weekly Mass, and some weekends I was invited to experience being with sisters, especially Sisters M. Edward Ann (Wetzel), M. Leonella (Moe) and M. Jane Chantal (Method). The Congregation had no Africans but that did not discourage me. I was attracted by their love and hospitality.

I became one of the first two Ugandans to join the Congregation. It was like a dream when I made my first vows, and here I am today, 30 years later. I am glad to see more young women are interested to join us.

My journey has afforded me with many opportunities to minister to God’s people through nursing, administration and pastoral ministries. I have been a director of the Kyembogo Holy Cross Health Centre, Kirinda, Uganda, for a good number of years. I served as a formator, a spiritual guide and have accompanied young women.

My primary hope is that as vocations increase, we can respond to more ministry needs in East Africa. I hope that Holy Cross will continue to grow.

Our ministry has been affected by COVID-19. The number of patients in the health center has gone down, and schools have been closed. There is a lot of domestic violence and there will be a lot of school dropouts, leading to pregnancy and single mothers after the pandemic. Poverty will increase while the rich get richer.

I believe and trust the One who called me; the One whom I follow in Holy Cross will continue to shower me with blessings, fill me with his love in hope and faith. My journey in Holy Cross has been a mystery, a joy, and fulfilling, especially in knowing that it is God who leads me and I am with other women on the journey to help me to go on.