



# Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters

*called by the Spirit • embracing the world*

**PROVINCE BULLETIN**

Vol. 40 No. 8 – USA – AUGUST 2020



## *Celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

The most common comments and adjectives used in relation to the construction and move of the Convent of the Holy Spirit to the new site (319 Waukegan Rd) that I heard over the years were: “well prepared”, “perfectly organized”, and “planned in detail”. Due to this meticulous process undertaken beforehand the transition went smoothly and accurately to the satisfaction of all. This event happened 20 years ago on August 3, 2000. Remembering this event is an occasion to pay a debt of gratitude to all who were involved in the process of conceptualizing, envisioning and overseeing the broad-minded and courageous step.

In this bulletin and next month, we will hear from a few Sisters who already made or are in the process of making arduous preparations and adjustments in their respective ministries to the new environment in which we live.

The above raises the question about my preparedness for what is here and what is yet to come? During the past months, we have been asking ourselves what does the pandemic teach me, my community, and my neighborhood? What have I done personally to prepare myself for a new reality? Am I ready to adjust and respond, enriched by my reflections, sharing and learning? What is the Holy Spirit asking of me?



### *Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters in the United States and the Caribbean*

<i>Northfield, IL</i>	<i>Grayslake, IL</i>	<i>Epworth, IA</i>	<i>New York, NY</i>	<i>Antigua</i>
<i>Waukegan, IL</i>	<i>Chicago, IL</i>	<i>Memphis, TN</i>	<i>Jamaica</i>	<i>St. Kitts</i>



# DAY AT A TIME



Written By:  
Sr. Nadiya Levchenko, SSpS



What does it mean to be DRE during the 2020 COVID crisis? I would call it: DRE = **DARE** to **REMODEL** the **EDUCATION**. Why? Because every day gives me a challenge of changing circumstances and it forces me to remodel plans again and again. It's somehow like the blind leading the blind. Do I have answers? No. Do I know the future? No. Do I see the best choice for the Religious Education program? Not at all. How can I lead, if I don't know the direction? It's difficult, frustrating, and challenging. Can my colleagues (DREs) and I, continue to lead families and children if we don't know where? Yes. We can and we do our best to meet families where they are. To calm fears, ease their struggle, and to share hope. Maybe this is what all children should learn during this year: that God is with us, no matter what.

We were the first Parish in the Archdiocese of Chicago with canceled Confirmation. Like everyone else, we postponed all other Sacraments. Finally, when Churches started slowly to reopen, we could proceed with 1st Reconciliation - 4 families at the time. Later with First Communion: 8 families at the time. Counting spaces and pews, restricting attendance from families, live streaming Masses for those vulnerable at home or those far away. In the end, we were able to celebrate Confirmations: 20 families at the time!

Celebrations were so different and simple. We got so used to having processions with first communicants, or common pictures, kids reading their short parts, bringing gifts to the altar, Confirmation sponsors with their hand on the right shoulder of their confirmands... All of those beautiful traditions were impossible to implement this year. DRE's struggling with preparation is not about logistics only, and how many pews or how far families sit, but how can we make the ceremony special without all those special moments?

The most common phrase I've heard during this time from our diocese leaders was: "Be creative, use your imagination!" You know, it doesn't really help. I think I share the common DREs feelings of being lonely and lost. All the while, we strive to not give up and to believe that the bright day is coming!

I've been really blessed by the presence of my catechists. Many parishes lost volunteers because families are overwhelmed with the current situation. I've been blessed by faithful catechists, who are willing to continue and not give up. Their faith and commitment give me the courage to continue. Just one day at the time. They give me their trust, enabling me lead. With this, I can only say: I'll try my best... one day at the time... with the grace of the One who is with us, no matter what.

# EXPERIENCING GOD

*Tertians' 30-day Retreat*



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Sr. Salud Osornio, SSpS

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I want to start by thanking God for the many blessings that I have received even in the middle of this pandemic and with all the changes that it brought to our society. Although almost everything stopped, we were able to have our retreat. The retreat that

took place in the Convent "Spiritus Divinae Sapientiae" of the Province of South Brazil from June 1 - 30, 2020.

There were seven participants: two Divine Word novices and five of us SSpS Tertians along with our directress Sr. Nilva Moro, SSpS and Fr. Miguel McGuiness, SVD Novice Master.

Father Miguel guided our retreat according to the Ignatian spiritual exercises. He was a great person who helped us go deep within ourselves to find the love of God in each moment. The goal was to configure our thoughts, our actions, and our attitudes to God's, like Jesus, with Jesus and in Jesus. It was 30 days of prayer from the morning until the evening, searching every single day for closeness and intimacy



with God. This was a very precious gift God gave me during this time of preparation for perpetual vows. I had the whole day to sit at Jesus' feet and place myself close to God's heart, to see him and allow him to see me.

Even though, I will be honest, in the beginning it was a little tiring yet, as the days went on, I started to discipline myself and organized my time in order to best experience this reflection. Every day we had four periods of meditation - prayer, with two sessions between them. We had Mass, supper and we concluded our day with adoration. These were all solid spiritual moments.

Indeed, it was an abundant blessing to live this experience, especially in this difficult time in which we are living as the universal family. I am also happy to share about my renewal of vows that took place August 15, 2020 at 5:00 pm in our community Madre Maria. The ceremony was very simple and very cordial. There were only the members of our Tertianship community, Sr. Ilca Hendges, SSpS, the Provincial, and Father Manoel (Capuchin) who celebrated the Mass.

Dear Sisters to all of you, I find only one phrase that expresses my most sincere gratitude for your prayers for me. Thank you so much!





# NEWS & APPOINTMENTS

On August 2, 2020, Yolette Dorce was received into Novitiate during a prayer service at the Waukegan Community (Novitiate House). Congratulations Sr. Yolette and assurance of our prayerful support. In addition to classes and activities with Sr. Elwira Dziuk, SSpS, Novice Directress, she will join the weekly, for the time being virtual, encounters of Inter-congregational Novitiate (ICN) starting on Septemebr 1, 2020.



Sr. Kristina Lajar, SSpS, enrolled at South College and will be taking online classes in the field of nursing.

On October 15, 2020, Sr. Theresa ThanhThao Nguyen, SSpS, will officially begin Tertianship program with Sr. Carol Welp, SSpS as her directress. They will live in Waukegan Community. In the meantime, Sr. Theresa ThanhThao will fly to California for a few weeks to help care for her mother. While there she will be able to participate in scheduled events via zoom.

In the first days of August, the 15th General Chapter capitulars met on Zoom in four separate meetings to reflect on the future of the joint Arnold Janssen Spirituality project. For 27 years a Team was actively promoting our common spirituality. The original structure was temporarily suspended in 2018. The general chapters of the SVD, SSpSAP and our own are to discern and make proposals for the project's new phase. In the meantime, in June 2020 an AJS website was launched, ([www.vivatdeus.org](http://www.vivatdeus.org)) which will gather and make available to the Arnoldus Family material related to our Trinitarian spirituality missionary charism.



During the week following our retreat, SSpS Sisters Carol Welp & Evelyn Lobo moved to the Waukegan Community.

On July 28, 2020, we said our Thank you and Good bye to Mrs. Ewa Jurczak, our long time nurse in charge. We pray for God's blessing for her retirement and move to Poland.



(Continued on Pg.5)

*Sr. Lidia Kunze, SSpS, moved to the Convent of the Holy Spirit Community. Sr. Lidia Kunze plans to return to Argentina Misiones on September 9, 2020. Sr. Theresa Tawiah's flight to Ghana was cancelled. The new booking is set for Sep. 11, 2020.*

*On August 19, 2020 Sr. Kristina Lajar, passed the three months mark after kidney transplant surgery. We are grateful to God, the medical teams, Sr. Arnolda Kavanamur and all who accompanied Sr. Kristina with loving support and prayers over the years and especially at the time of the surgery.*

*Sr. Yustina Intan's resignation from the Vocation Team was accepted. She will assume another ministry in Epworth, IA.*

*Sr. Skolastika Wea, discerned and asked to wear a religious habit.*

*In the next few days, the Provincial Leadership Team will meet with all Community Leaders to discuss a few matters and possibly agree on a common goal for the coming year.*

*Sr. Rebecca David is still currently in Cebu, Philippines and Sr. Arnolda Kavanamur in Techny due to travel restrictions.*

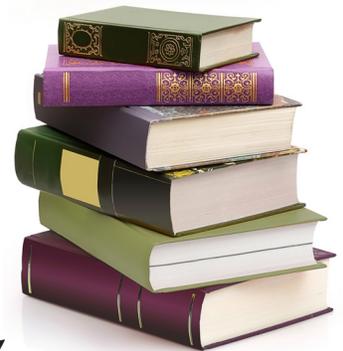
*During the Extraordinary Urbi et Orbi Blessing, Pope Francis admonished us that during this pandemic we take care of the most vulnerable among us. We are pleased to report to you that the Provincial Council approved two donations in response to the organizations fundraisers: Aid for Women (the usual October Baby Shower at the Convent is cancelled) and Misericordia, Heart of Mercy.*

*Amidst this pandemic we feel the need for, seek and are overwhelmed by suggestions how to cope, how to help others live meaningfully, diminish stress, frustration, sense of confinement and loneliness. If you haven't found the panacea, I am quite positive this is the case also with you, here are some suggestions to go on with the search: I found great articles in Human Development, the Spring-Summer issue 2020 and Sr. Lynn Levo's webinar "COVID-19: The Impact of Isolation & Confinement on Religious Communities" <http://www.hoffman.net/en-us/about/videos/default.aspx>*

Author, Paul Coutinho, S.J. is an Indian-born Jesuit Priest with a friendly, gentle sense of humor and a special gift for asking deeply thought-provoking spiritual questions: Do you have a real relationship with God, or do you just have a religion? Do you know God, or do you just know about God? Have you ever considered believing in a God without limits? A God powerful enough to enable you to think, love and live differently.

In his book, HOW BIG IS YOUR GOD?, Rev. Coutinho challenges us to answer these questions and many more. Each chapter will draw readers with an open mind and a longing heart to a closer relationship with God and will encourage them to experience the infinite breadth of God in a deeply personal way. The author introduces us to people in various world religions, from Hindu friends to Buddhist leaders to St. Ignatius of Loyola. In reading HOW BIG IS YOUR GOD, you will deepen your experience of God by moving from religion to relationship. - **Written By: Sr. Betty Tranel, SSpS**

# Book of the Month



**"HOW BIG IS YOUR GOD?"**

*By: Paul Coutinho, S.J.*



## IN MEMORIAM

*July 30, 2020, Karolus Kila, uncle of Sr. Yuliana Meno, SSpS, died in Flores, Indonesia.*

*July 31, 2020, Juan Humberto Juarez Guardado, younger brother of Sr. Sara Juarez Guardado, SSpS, died in the USA*

*August 14, 2020, Mrs. Salustiana F de Avalos, mother of Sr. Ma. Cristina Avalos, General Councilor, died in Argentina*

*August 25, 2020, Mr. George Sasthamkunnel, father of Sr. Litty George former Treasurer General, died in India.*

ST. ARNOLD JANSSEN  
SPIRITUALITY CORNER REFLECTION

Sr. Rosalia Galmin, SSpS

**“THE REDEEMING ACTION OF GOD”**

Some villagers decided to pray for rain. On the day of prayer, all the people gathered, but only one boy came with an umbrella.

**That is faith.**



When you throw babies in the air, they laugh because they know you will catch them.

**That is trust.**



Every night we go to bed without any assurance of being alive the next morning, but still we set alarms to wake up.

**That is hope.**



We plan big things for tomorrow in spite of zero knowledge of the future.

**That is confidence.**



On an old man’s shirt was written a sentence “I am not 80 years old; I am sweet 16 with 64 years of experience.”

**That is attitude.**



We see the world suffering, but still, we get married and have children.

**That is love.**



As I reflect on those words, I am amazed and filled with joy about the grace of God that moved the hearts of young members within the two communities of the Arnold Family, SVD and SSPS, here in the United States. With generosity of heart they said yes to God when they renewed their vows, pronounced their first and final vows. With great trust in God’s grace some were ordained to be a priests and with confidence in God’s abiding love they set out to be partners in His divine mission.

We smile as we remember that God is determined to make us more than we thought we could be. The response to that invitation always begins with a personal experience of being attracted to something and being captivated by it. The desire that constantly moves us forward in seeking the face of God and to put our whole attention and intention into God’s vision is the sure sign that we are in love with God and God’s mission.

I believe that our love relationship with God will help us to open or even tear down the curtains which separate us often and in many ways from seeing the face of God in the many faces of others who we are called to journey with and to serve. Then, in union with God, we create the space to share our faith. And in this Spirit we will experience God’s redeeming action in us.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

OUR PLANS ARE IN YOUR HANDS O' LORD!

**September 8, 2020**

145<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the foundation of the Society of Divine Word.

100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the foundation of the first seminary for Afro-Americans by the SVD in Greenville, MS.

**October 15, 2020**

Beginning of Tertainship for Sr. Theresa T. Nguyen.

**October 17, 2020**

PLT meeting.

**October 18 - 24, 2020**

Preached retreat by Fr. Dennis Callan, SVD at the Convent of the Holy Spirit.

**November 21, 2020**

PLT meeting.

**December 12, 2020**

PLT meeting.

**(2021)**

**March 1 - 20, 2021**

15th General Chapter in Arricia, Italy.



Our Trinitarian God is a community of loving relationships that gives life and desires to communicate God, inviting us to participate in God's life. God became incarnate to live among us, to share our humanity and at the same time, in the dynamism of the Spirit, to help us live in intimacy with the Father-Mother God, entering into the communion of the Trinity. From this experience, communication is a fundamental element of our lives, a means of growing as a person, as a community, as a society that feeds and enlarges the circles of communion.

## Prayer Request

*Sr. Margaret Kissani, is recovering from surgery at the Convent of the Holy Spirit and awaiting the doctor's decision regarding chemotherapy treatment.*

*Sr. Theresa ThanhThao Nguyen's mother, Nancy, was discharged from the hospital and is recovering from Covid-19 at home. Her father, Peter, is still in ICU on a ventilator after he suffered a heart attack.*

*Elena, mother of Sr. Monica Mabel Balbuena, undergoing cancer surgery and treatment in Argentina.*

*Maria, sister of Sr. Agathe Bramkamp is in hospice care in Germany.*

*Charles Wolff, brother of Sr. Vincent Wolff, who is terminal.*

*Sr. Rose Therese Nolta, will undergo a procedure for her condition at Alexian Brothers Hospital on Aug. 26th. The result of the procedure will become evident only after about 2 months.*

*Our Sisters especially Edel and Yuliana with their staff preparing to safely open schools on September 7, 2020 in St. Kitts and Jamaica.*

*All affected by Covid-19, by social unrest, inequality poverty and racism.*

# Education *for* Mission

Sr. Judith Vallimont, SSpS



Following in the Spirit of our Founder, St. Arnold Janssen, Sr. Leonarda Lentrup (foundress of the Paraclete Province) was strongly committed to the education of the Sisters for mission and ministry. This commitment was passed down through the succeeding provincials.

Today, our Province continues to support our Congregation in this endeavor by providing opportunity for Sisters from around the world and from our own Province to have professional training for ministry. My own conviction about education is that it is more than professional training. Education, at all levels, is a way to develop us as whole persons. As directress of studies, my priority is that each Sister sees “going to school” as a means to deepen her relationship with God who is Wisdom and to listen to what God is saying to her as she goes to class each day. The goal is not to become a better educated person, but a better person.

In 2020, four Sisters completed their programs of studies: Sr. Julita Bele Bau with a MA in Educational Leadership from DePaul University; Sr. Lidia Kunze with a MA in Biblical Studies from Catholic Theological Union, Sr. Theresa Tawiah with a MA in Counseling Psychology from the Professional School of Psychology in Chicago, and Sr. Xaveriana with a MA in Theological Studies from St. John’s University in New York. We congratulate them.

This fall, four Sisters are continuing their studies. Sr. Gertrude Ahegbebu, after completing an AA degree at Oakton Community College, is working toward a BA in Psychology from Lake Forest College. Sr. Margaret Kissani is pursuing a BA in Theological Studies at Divine Word College. Sr. Skolastika Wea is continuing at Loyola University Chicago for a BA in Theological Studies. Sr.

Yustina Intan is earning an AA in General Studies at Northeast Iowa Community College.

Beginning new academic adventures are three Sisters. Sr. Marie Eunide Voltaire is daring the ins and outs of pursuing on-line studies for a BA in Educational Leadership from the University of West Indies (Antigua site). Sr. Kristina Lajar is excited about her online studies with South College, a two-year pre-nursing program. Sr. Rebecca David, once travel is possible, is planning to attend Divine Word College for a BA in intercultural studies. We wish each of these Sisters all the best as they grow in mind and spirit through their studies. May the Spirit of Wisdom and Knowledge form them, guiding them into deeper loving commitment to God and mission.

## *Summer Happenings*



The Contemplative Prayer Group, facilitated by Sr. Leonette Kaluzny, has been meeting on the Convent’s lawn on Saturday mornings during the month of August.



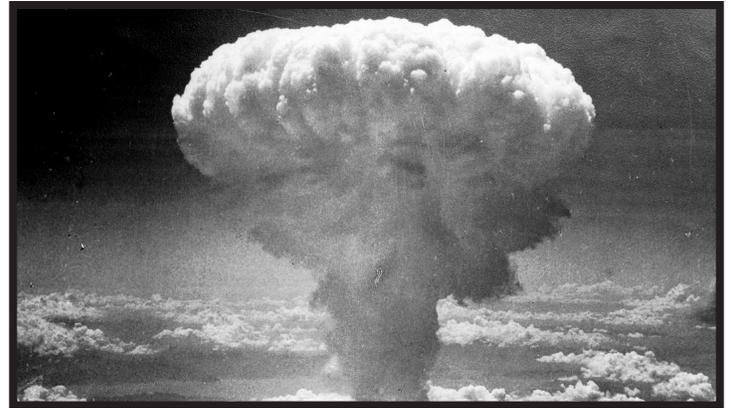
# JPIC Corner

*"Prayer in Action"*

*Time for Peace & Prayers | August 2020*

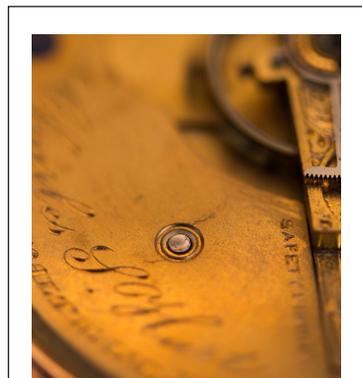
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Seventy-five years ago this month, the U.S. dropped a uranium bomb called "Little Boy" on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. It was the first use of nuclear weaponry in history. Three days later, the plutonium bomb known as "Fat Man" was dropped on Nagasaki. Six days after that, the Japanese surrendered, and World War II ended. There's little disagreement about what the bombs did: The two blasts and their immediate aftermaths resulted in 150,000-246,000 deaths. (atomic archives resources). **The bombings are a stark reminder of the vulnerability of our humanity and the critical importance of working toward a nuclear-free world.**



There are many unknown stories about the effect the bombings had on the lives of those outside the areas bombed. Father George Zabelka was the Catholic chaplain for the 509th Composite Group (the 1,500-man USAAF group whose only mission was to deliver atomic bombs to Japanese civilian targets). Fr. Zabelka was one of the few World War II clergy leaders who eventually came to recognize the contradictions between what his faith had taught him.

After Fr. Zabelka was discharged from his service as a military chaplain, he felt that both he and the church had made serious ethical and theological errors in legitimatizing the organized mass slaughter that occurred. He came to understand that (as he articulated it) *"the enemy of me and the enemy of my nation is not an enemy of God. Rather my enemy and my nation's enemy are children of God who are loved by God and who therefore are to be loved (and not killed) by me as a follower of that loving God."* (excerpts from interview with (Rev.) Emmanuel Charles McCarthy Center for Christian Non-Violence).



*This is not Kengo Futagawa's watch.*

A watch belonging to Kengo Futagawa, a 59-year-old who was crossing a bridge. It stopped when the A-bomb hit Hiroshima on the morning of Aug 6, 1945.

Fr. Zabelka's change toward pacifism started months after the dropping of the atom bombs. He and three other priests travelled to Nagasaki, *"Three of us chaplains took a trip to Nagasaki to see [the results of] the bombing. There were no restrictions of any kind. So we went to the nearest place where there were still the survivors. And this I think is what really got me started on even a beginning of a new way of thinking on this. Because, here were little children that were horribly burned and suffering and dying. By that time there were nurses and doctors taking care of them, because this was two or three months afterwards. But this was the beginning of a whole new kind of worm squirming in my stomach that something was wrong. These little children had nothing to do with the war.*

(Continued on Pg.10)

*Why were they suffering?* (excerpt from The Reluctant Prophet – documentary) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-oITZo3ejz8> Father Zabelka's conversion inspired him to devote the remaining decades of his life to speaking out against violence in all its forms, including the violence of militarism, racism and economic exploitation. His commitment to the truth of nonviolence – just like Martin Luther King.

Throughout the remainder of his life Fr. Zabelka preached and prayed for peace and a better world. *"All religions have taught brotherhood. All people want peace. It is only the governments and war departments that promote war and slaughter. We can no longer just leave this to our leaders, both political and religious. They will move when we make them move. They represent us. Let us tell them that they must think and act for the safety and security of all the people in our world, not just for the safety and security of one country. All countries are inter-dependent. We all need one another. It is no longer possible for individual countries to think only of themselves. We can all live together as brothers and sisters or we are doomed to die together as fools in a world holocaust."* (excerpted from a speech Fr Zabelka gave at a Pax Christi conference in August 1985) <https://www.plough.com/en/topics/justice/nonviolence/blessing-the-bombs>

In 2019, Pope Francis visited Japan, which marked the first papal visit in 38 years. He chose to start his visit in Nagasaki, the city where Christianity first took hold in the country and later that day went to Hiroshima. Pope Francis made an impassioned appeal to the world for the total elimination of nuclear arms. Pope Francis also told those present, *"I felt a duty to come here as a pilgrim of peace, to stand in silent prayer, to recall the innocent victims of such violence, and to bear in my heart the prayers and yearnings of the men and women of our time, especially the young, who long for peace, who work for peace and who sacrifice themselves for peace. I have come to this place of memory and of hope for the future, bringing with me the cry of the poor who are always the most helpless victims of hatred and conflict."* <https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2019/11/24/pope-francis-nagasaki-and-hiroshima-makes-impassioned-plea-peace-and-nuclear>

Humanity needs to learn the way of peace. We need to move toward deeper levels of nuclear disarmament by safely disarming and neutralizing the stockpiles of nuclear bombs. Then we will move toward eliminating the horror of devastating warfare like Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We can help by reaching out to Congress to support extending the *New Start treaty* to limit nuclear weapons. <https://maryknollofficeforglobalconcerns.salsalabs.org/newstarttreaty/index.html?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=fc61a851-c179-428c-bf1a-08cce72ca3f9>

Pray that in this troubled world, we can learn to live peacefully with one another.

### *A prayer for nuclear disarmament*

Lord of all creation, make us instruments of your peace. Let us learn the lessons of the past, and put an end to nuclear weapons. Where there is hatred, let us sow love. May our love for each other and for all of your creation leave no place for making or owning weapons of mass destruction. Where there is injury, let us be bearers of your healing and pardon. May we create paths to dialogue, understanding and reconciliation. Where there is doubt, let us foster faith in you. May we let the weapons fall from our hands and know that you are God. Where there is despair, let us hold up hope. May our lives reflect your love in the face of violence, knowing that love is stronger than death. Where there is darkness, let us be bearers of your light. May our choices show that peace is possible. Where there is sadness, let us bring the joy of the Gospel. (Australian Catholic Community – JPIC)

**By Sr. Rose Therese, SSpS, Sr. Evelyn Lobo, SSpS & Lori Brayer**