



SSpS

Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters

called by the Spirit • embracing the world

PROVINCE BULLETIN

Vol. 39 No.5 – USA–MAY 2019

THE UPPER ROOM

*Fearful, Disheartened,
Locked Up Community*

THE MIGHTY WIND

*Fired Up, Rejuvenated,
Bold Disciples*

PENTECOST

*You and I Vulnerable
To Be Transformed,
To Be Sent*

Credit: Designed from: Arcabas' Spirito Santo



Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters: in the United States and in the Caribbean

Northfield, IL

Grayslake, IL

Epworth, IA

Antigua

New York, NY

Waukegan, IL

Chicago, IL

Memphis, TN

Jamaica

St. Kitts



OLA

CELEBRATING A MISSION TO BREAK THE CYCLE

Sr. Judy Vallimont, SSpS

The blessing day for the new school building of Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Preparatory School in Jamaica was sunny and bright with a cooling ocean breeze. Sr. Yuliana Meno, Principal, was busy “seeing to things” prior to the celebration. At 2:00 p.m. that Monday, April 29, 2019, we all assembled under the canopies set up for the gathering and the celebration began with everyone singing the school song. Fr. Frank Power, SVD, (Pastor) led the opening prayer. Ms. Margaret George, chair of the school board, gave the welcome and served as Emcee.

Children from the school performed through song, dance, and poetry recital. Msgr. Gregory Ramkissoon, CD, was the guest speaker. Others who addressed the group were Ms. Claudette Henry-Harris from the Department of Education, Sr. Judith Vallimont as representative of the PLT and a representative from Food for the Poor. Sr. Monica Mabel Balbuena, provincial during the construction, cut the main ribbon. After all the ribbons were cut, Msgr. Ramkissoon blessed the building, and each classroom. Sr. Yuliana expressed thanks to Mr. Mark

Kelly, Project Supervisor, and then presented posters expressing gratitude to the various benefactors who contributed.

These included relatives of Sisters Jeanne Blie and Marie Louise Jilk, parishoners from St. Norbert’s parish in Northbrook, Food for the Poor, and others. After the celebration, all were welcome to a buffet luncheon. Our sincere thanks to all who have contributed to help make this a big success.



SSpS Sisters along with partners, teachers and friends celebrating.

Celebrating our Tubilarians



60
Years

70
Years

70
Years

70
Years

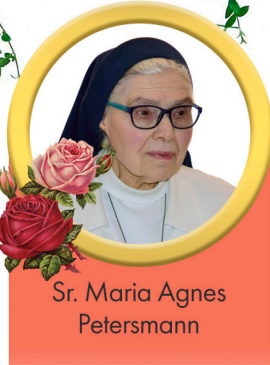
70
Years



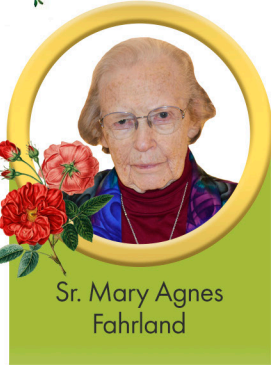
Sr. Jeanne
Blie



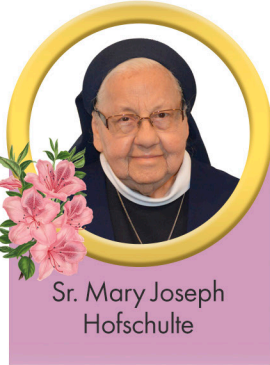
Sr. Catherine
Mueller



Sr. Maria Agnes
Petersmann



Sr. Mary Agnes
Fahrland



Sr. Mary Joseph
Hofschulte

God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. Hebrews 6:10



During our pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Aparecida, Sisters from Cuba and the USA were the animators, so we prayed the rosary and sang songs. At the end, Sr. Miriam called on the intercession of the Blessed Mother using the different names and places by which she is honored in Latin America: Our Lady of

Aparecida, of Copacabana, of Lujan, of Guadalupe, of Titicaca ... When she paused, I whispered a suggestion - Regina Coeli - let's sing the Easter antiphon to close the prayer. Sr. Miriam took up my proposal saying "Our Lady of Regina Coeli - pray for us". We burst in a healthy laughter instead of the joyful song.

Comings & Goings

- 5/20 Sr. Agathe Bramkamp's home leave to Germany.
- 6/09 Sr. Selvi Selvaraj will be returning to her Region of Mexico. Thank you Sr. Selvi for your generous service at the Holy Spirit Life Learning Center and your joyful presence in the community.
- 5/29 Sr. Margaret Kissani's home leave to Papua New Guinea.

REFLECTION ON VOWS

AT 1ST PROFESSION & BEYOND

Sr. Engratia Gales, SSpS

It was Saturday, May 11th, the 118th anniversary of the beginning of our community here in the United States. It was also First Vow Day for our novice, Sr. Marie Eunide. God's call! Ministry! Vision! Vows! Such thoughts came to my mind as I joined in our beautiful Liturgical Celebration. Thoughts of my own First Vows pulled me back into my own past. Over 80 years ago, I joined the SSpS missionary community leading me to today's memories.

My First Vows! After two preparatory years as a novice, my choice was a "yes". (In my heart, "forever".) Years only confirmed my decision. The Spirit God had opened wide His store of grace, My Guest! One can only marvel in the surprise of it all.

These ardent aspirations that began at the dawn of my spiritual missionary life grew in depth, even as did the virtue of hope. As time and life, trusting in God to achieve perfection, and "Oneness with Jesus" lurked over the horizon, each dawning day, gave promise.



Sr. Marie Eunide signing the vow formula.



My prayers joined Sr. Marie Eunide's, rejoicing with her as a new SSpS member, to "walk" the Missionary road of our Congregation. All Members, dear Sister Marie Eunide, unite and embrace each other and now include you in a loving solidarity.



Sr. Engratia Gales, SSpS.

We are called by the Spirit to embrace the world, also the one next to us. Christ is Risen! Let us climb God's way! God's reality! Marvel at surprises! God's Design goes on! Nothing better could or will befall us. All is well.



Srs. Julita, Elwira, Marie Eunide, Judy, and Dorota.

Prayer Request

On April 27, 2019 Anthony Akpa – brother of Sr. Uloma and seven cousins sadly died in a car accident. A few other relatives were injured. We beseech the mercy of God upon our dear Sister Uloma and her family during this time of mourning.

Sr. Monica Darrichon's mother Ramona & uncle Camilo are experiencing health issues.

The General Chapter for SSpSAP is June 17, 2019 - July 17, 2019.

Book of the MONTH



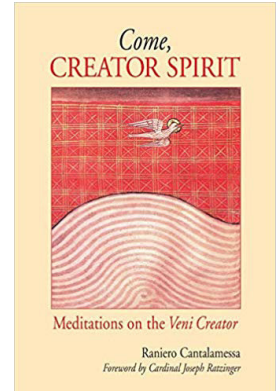
“Come, Creator Spirit”

By: Rev. Raniero Cantalamessa

The author, Rev. Raniero Cantalamessa gives us a meditation for each verse of the Veni Creator, connecting each line to scripture verses and ending each chapter with a prayer. Each meditation is inspired by symbol, image, scripture, poetry and living models of holiness. This book is a reflective guide to understand the Church’s experience of the Spirit today and throughout history. Anyone searching for something meaningful and inspiring related to the Holy Spirit, may want to try, COME, CREATOR SPIRIT.

In the introduction Father Cantalamessa tells us the Veni Creator was composed in the 9th century by Abbot Rhabanus Maurus, a great theologian. Over the years, great musicians such as Bach, Mahler and Gregorian Musicians have set music to it.

- Sister Betty Tranel



PANAM LEADERSHIP TEAMS GATHERING, SAO PAULO, BRAZIL

Sr. Dorota Maria Piechaczek, SSpS

Transformation was the overarching topic of the 1st Formation Seminar for Provincial and Regional Leadership Teams in the PANAM Zone April 28-May 3, 2019. The Leadership Teams were challenged by Jesus’ statement, “You give them (something) to eat” (Mk 6:37). We began by reflecting on transformative leadership which can be understood as being called forth into a space of unknown expectation and perception of what is to come. Srs. Maria Cristina and Margaret, General Counselors, guided us through new techniques of discernment and human interaction, which could broaden the leadership toolbox. Sr. Neli, with richness of experiences in the field of restorative justice, invited us to contemplate the use of similar methods in our community when varying opinions and perspectives call for reaching agreement in community living.

The number of schools in the Latin American provinces continues to be an enormous opportunity to exercise transformational work through education ministries. A team of educators who explore the possibilities to create vanguard educational communities is at work. The goal of the team was elegantly summed up by a quote from E. Gaetano: “Utopia lies at the horizon. When I walk toward it two steps, it retreats two steps. If I proceed ten steps forward, it swiftly slips ten steps ahead. What, then, is the purpose of utopia? Exactly this: that we keep walking.”

This statement keeps ringing in my ears, a secular translation of the Gospel message about the kingdom “already but not yet”.

Presence on social media platforms and the use of them is a strategic element in the process of transformative living. Branding, developing one’s identity, creating a logo, and projecting one’s image are part of the process.

A day scheduled as “Assembly of the Provincial (8) and Regional (3) Leaders” was both an experience of and an exercise in living communion. There is a genuine sentiment and willingness to exchange experiences, to collaborate, to learn from each other, to support one another, and to develop and sustain common programs. “Communion within the Congregation” was obvious during these days of building relationships and binding around the mission to ‘give them to eat’.



Sr. Dorota along with other Sisters attending the seminar.

HOLY SPIRIT
LIFE LEARNING CENTER

SPRING
HAPPENINGS

Sr. Rosa Da Costa Menezes, SSpS

The Holy Spirit Life Learning Center in Rogers Park, during its Spring term, continued to flourish by offering knitting, crocheting, arts, crafts, basic sewing, basic computer skills, basic guitar, and English as a second language class. One of our main objectives remains to aid people in developing new skills and growing self-esteem. We teach them about positive self-care options as well as how to have healthy growing relationships. Thanks to our lay volunteers, Sisters and students returning as teachers, we were able to incorporate not only a beginner and an advanced ESL class but also an intermediate level for this term. Our students are of Hispanic/Latin American and Vietnamese backgrounds.

We also care for our students, mentally

(psychological and emotional needs) and emotionally, by offering counseling as well. Referrals go through our Case Manager who determines the best need, either in-house or elsewhere for our clients. We have recently obtained a new Case Manager, Soledad Andrade, who has been in her role since mid-January. Summer is right around the corner and with it our Summer Peace Camp in Rogers Park and Summer Education in our Wheeling location. Our main goal in the camp is peace building, helping the children to learn constructive, peaceful ways to deal with conflicts and other problems. We are busy looking for volunteers as our spots quickly fill up. The children will learn about God, explore nature and have field trips to different locations not only for fun, but for service as well. We are really looking forward to the upcoming adventure this summer.



Sewing at the HSLLC.



Participants in a class session led by Sister Theresa.



Group photo: Sister Angelica with participants of the arts & crafts class at HSLLC Rogers Park.

ARNOLD JANSSEN SPIRITUALITY CORNER REFLECTION:

Nick Hien Nguyen, SVD

“The Love of Christ Impels Us: Rooted in the Word, Committed to his Mission.”

What is or how do we define God’s love? Often times we talk about God’s love as something fuzzy, a cozy kind of love; as if Love is a feeling – not a choice. Examples: I love a book, an iPhone, a pet, etc. This false understanding of love might often superficially conclude that God’s love is also about FEELINGS of comfort, happiness and even of peace.

A few years ago, I was celebrating Mass at one of the nursing homes in Dubuque. Both the first reading and gospel of that day described God’s love for humanity. After the gospel, I began my homily by saying: “God is love...” and before I could even finish the sentence, I heard a loud cry from the congregation: “Oh, God, not again!” I have learned afterward that if I have to speak about love, I must speak not only from my knowledge but more specifically from my experience of what it truly means. Paul confirms to us that Christ’s Love “surpasses knowledge”. (Eph. 3:17-19)

There is an analogy that I like to share in respect to Christ’s love as “surpasses knowledge”.

One day I was in a library and browsed the new books shelves, and saw a WORLD BOOK Series: Discovery Encyclopedia. I just happened to flip to a page describing the Big Bang theory. This is how it explains the theory. In the beginning, there existed a single atom, a thousand times smaller than the head of a pin. It was a million times hotter than the Sun. When it exploded, within a micro-fraction of a second, it expanded to a width wider than a galaxy. Wow!

I read this and I understood the description of the “what’s” of the Big Bang, but I could not fathom the “how’s”—How could this possibly happen? My mind could not and still cannot wrap around this phenomenon. A Big Bang concept or theory is somewhat understandable and explainable, but at the same time, it seems impossible and surpasses all human knowledge. Christ’s love for humanity could be compared to this Big Bang theory. Christ’s love (or God’s love) to humanity is somewhat discussable, but certainly it surpasses human knowledge, and definitely is not a cozy feeling or a fuzzy thing.

KEEP HOPE ALIVE

Sr. Rose Therese Nolta, SSpS

It was a lovely evening when Srs. Dorota Maria Piechaczek, Judith Vallimont, Agathe Bramkamp, Maria Joseph Nguyen and Rose Therese Nolta went to the “Keep Hope Alive Benefit” for the Archdiocese of Chicago Office of Human Dignity and Solidarity - Immigration Ministry on May 13, 2019. This year it was in a larger venue at IBEW Local 134 Union Hall, on South Martin Luther King Drive, Chicago.



During the evening there were wonderful choices of food: Asian, Italian or Mexican Cuisine. Before the program we were able to have a picture with Cardinal Blasé J. Cupich. He gave his opening remarks and presented awards for service to the immigrants, to individuals and parishes. This year Sr. Kathleen Long, O.P., Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa received the St. Frances Xavier Cabrini Award. Some in the Waukegan area may know

of her work at the Advocacy Center for Latino Immigrants and Education. We were also entertained by three dance performances: Foy School of Irish Dance, Tatra Polish Dancers and Ballet Folklorico Sones Mexicanos. It was a joy to see the three groups dance.

Elena Segura, the Senior National Coordinator of Immigration gave her remarks on the many activities for immigrants. Towards the end of the program, a Video: “Voices of Hope”, gave us a concrete view of some of the work of the Archdiocesan Office. We hope that this benefit helps them to continue their tremendous work for immigrants.



Cardinal Blasé J. Cupich with SSpS Sisters Rose Therese, Dorota, Judy, Maria Joseph, and Agathe at the KHA Event.

BOND OF COMMUNION OF SISTERLY LOVE

Sr. Selvi Selvaraj, SSps



Once I completed my responsibilities to the Generalate in Rome before integrating into my Region (Mexico), I requested some time for personal renewal and time to update myself for my mission. Therefore, I chose the Paraclete Province in the USA to do a course on spiritual accompaniment for one year and have experience in the Holy Spirit Life Learning Center, where our Sisters welcome and accompany women and children. The Sisters welcomed me to the Province with open hearts. After one year and five months in the Province, I can say in a nutshell that my experience was a *“Communion with God and myself, Communion with others and with the Congregation.”*

Communion with God and myself: Journeying within myself, has helped me to deepen my faith: to recollect and to integrate day-to day the God experience. God has been present in my life more than any other time. God’s merciful face has been shown to me in different ways during my personal renewal time. The big change I notice in my life now is that I have become more calm and peaceful.

In the month of September 2018, I started my course on spiritual accompaniment at the Claret center. The whole dynamic of the spiritual direction course was helpful for me, starting with the sharing of what I noticed during the week and

taking time to reflect on some aspects in particular. The attitude of presence is an essential aspect for spiritual accompaniment. I have learned to respect the sacredness of sharing and the sacred space of the other. I have become more aware of myself, which I consider important to accompany others. A spiritual companion is a person like the midwife who assists in giving birth.

Communion with Others: After a few days of orientation and virtue training, I stepped into the Holy Spirit Life center in Wheeling. I felt as if I entered into my dream-- a long time desire to have/ to work in our own center for women.

The time I have spent at the center has been a learning experience for me. I could perceive in the women and the children, who came to our center for classes or other services such as counselling and accompaniment, felt at home and welcomed. Although we are surrounded by individualism, our life learning center fostered communion and unity among the women and children. I am blessed to be part of the life journey of the women who frequented our center.



Sr. Selvi greeted by Sr. Dorota.

(Continued on Pg.9)

In listening to them, I have noticed a silent fear, because most of them are undocumented, living many years in the country, living in constant fear of being deported anytime. Our center has given hope to them.

One of the specific objectives of the center is to support victims and survivors of domestic violence. I was surprised to know that there is lot of domestic violence in the country, where seemingly women experience freedom and liberty. In my last encounter with a woman who came seeking for someone to listen to her, I was reminded of a quote from Anne Frank: I see the world being slowly transformed into a wilderness; I hear the approaching thunder that, one day, will destroy us too. I feel the suffering of millions. And yet, when I look up at the sky, I somehow feel that everything will change for the better, that this cruelty too shall end, that peace and tranquility will return once more. This is my hope that one day our people will soon live in peace without fear of deportation and violence.

Communion with Our Congregation: Although I lived mostly in a small community, I frequently visited the Provincial house-community, where I am currently residing. Being with our Sisters has been an experience of merging the old testament and the

new testament. When I turn to one side, I meet Sisters with a lot of life and mission experience and are in the praying ministry. And on the other side, I meet Sisters who are engaged with the challenges of active life and mission. It was very inspiring to listen to the history of the Province. Actually, for me, it's part of the history of the Congregation. The joyful living of Sisters in praying ministry has rekindled within me a desire to dedicate my life for mission. My gratitude to all of them who touched my life. I always feel at home in the Province, which gave birth to my mission country Mexico, and feel the bond of communion and Sisterly love. Normally, in our Congregation the mission mandate is announced on Pentecost. As I leave for Mexico on June 9th, the feast of Pentecost, I feel being sent again to my mission country, filled with the Holy Spirit as did the disciples and apostles.



Sr. Selvi alongside Sr. Marie Eunide celebrating her First Vows.

A COMMUNITY EFFORT ON IMMIGRATION

Sr. Rose Therese Nolta, SSpS

On Saturday, April 27, 2019 Sr. Rose Therese Nolta went to Kankakee, IL for an Immigration Symposium at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. This day was organized by St. Paul's Episcopal Church in affiliation with the Interfaith Alliance, Aunt Martha's Illinois Welcoming Center, and Connect Kankakee. This symposium was to bring about a dialog among residents, business leaders, elected officials, and clergy to gain insight and understanding of issues affecting the immigrant community.

Various areas from social and economic impact of ICE agents detaining people in their courthouse, to housing ICE detainees at Jerome Combs Detention Center in Kankakee. Rev. Isaac Anchan was the MC/

leader who stressed respect throughout the event. After the prayer, personal stories from immigrants and then various presenters as the Attorney General, the County Sheriff, Sr. Bernadine Karge, OP and Fred Tsao from Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights ICIRR). A folder of various materials was given to participants. Connect Kankakee put out a clever booklet that illustrates the myths regarding immigrants. Sr. Rose Therese gave a report regarding the day at the organizing committee of the Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America's (CRLN) monthly meeting.



Rev. Isaac Anchan, Pastor.



Sr. Bernadine Karge, OP, Lawyer.



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Sr. Margaret Anne Norris, translator of SSpS - SVD will be attending a Spirituality & Intercultural Workshop in Steyl, Germany 1/27/20 - 2/15/20.



JPIC Corner – May 2018 “All are Welcome”

There is a nagging reality in our world that we all must face. Racism remains in our lives and is all around us. Our society has a long, dark history of attempting to use race to define people. Often times, this definition relies on stereotypes and words that still dehumanize and destroy the lives of mass groups of people. This is evident in our history of slavery, use of internment camps, segregation, and labor discrimination. Sound familiar? Some of same elements still remain and are being used again in the treatment of immigrants and refugees.



In an excerpt from an article written by Bishop Robert Barron entitled “*Charlottesville and American’s Original Sin*”, he calls racism “*the original sin*” of the United States. “It has stained our great history and too often infected our souls.” Bishop Barron points out that racism is a political issue as well as an economic, psychological, social, and civil rights issue. He also states that more than anything else, it is a theological issue.

Over the years, the United States’ government has made many strides to restore the dignity of all human beings by creating laws and policies to eradicate racism and the dehumanization of people. In their 1979 pastoral letter, “*Brothers and Sisters to Us*”, the U.S. Catholic Bishops recognize this effort in a statement that says, “*Because the Courts have eliminated statutory racial discrimination and Congress has enacted civil rights legislation, and because some minority people have achieved some measure of success, many people believe that racism is no longer a problem in American life.*” Sadly, dehumanizing people based on race still exists today and manifests itself in both obvious and obscure ways.



The U.S. Catholic Bishops further add from their 2018 pastoral letter, “*Open Wide Our Hearts*”, “*Racism can often be found in our hearts—in many cases placed there unwillingly or unknowingly by our upbringing and culture. As such, it can lead to thoughts and actions that we do not even see as racist, but nonetheless flow from the same prejudicial root.*” Racism and prejudice have a long history in the U.S. and, from a psychological perspective, these tendencies are rooted farther below the surface than we may realize. Accept it or not, we are all accomplices. Being an accomplice could mean passively allowing yourself to have a bias against people that don’t look like you.



open wide our hearts

“But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them.”

(1 John 2:11)

Problems occur when the categorization of people leads to bias towards people of color. **God made us — for true communion with others of all races, walks of life, and backgrounds.** We can best do this when we overcome our tendencies to develop biases, and, as a result are made free to see the whole person in front of us.

Racism can take a variety of forms – brutal acts, harsh and insulting language, crude and uncivil behavior. This environment tends to isolate and divide people.

So the goal for each of us should be to work toward being an inclusive community. The Catholic community, our institutions, our programs and policies must take a stronger posture against racism. Pope Francis said, **“In particular, any theory or form whatsoever of racism and racial discrimination is morally unacceptable.”** (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 433)

In the SSpS community, living our interculturality, internationality, and intergenerationality is one way we work against racism in our day to day life. Ministering and living with respect to each person roots us in the gospel values that has no part in racism.

Many of our ministries move towards the edges of societies where people are put aside by the effects of racism. In our missionary living we work to be “all to all” (1 Cor. 9:19-23). It would be good for us to reflect on living our interculturality as well as respect for each and every person in our ministries.

Moreover, that is the challenge for all of us. We need to look at our hearts, unpack and combat discrimination and prejudices in our own day-to-day lives so that we can rise above the sin of racism and discrimination, on a macro and micro level, in the pursuit of authentic love.

Mary, friend and mother to all, through your Son, God has found a way to unite himself to every human being, called to be one people, sisters and brothers to each other. We ask for your help in calling on your Son, seeking forgiveness for the times when we have failed to love and respect one another. We ask for your help in obtaining from your Son the grace we need to overcome the evil of racism and to build a just society. We ask for your help in following your Son, so that prejudice and animosity will no longer infect our minds or hearts but will be replaced with a love that respects the dignity of each person. Mother of the Church, the Spirit of your Son Jesus warms our hearts: pray for us.

(From USCCB Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love - A Pastoral Letter Against Racism 2018)



By Sr. Rose Therese, SSpS & Lori Brayer