



School Sisters *of* Notre Dame

Central Pacific Province

Winter 2012

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Partnering with the U.N. to promote the
advancement of women
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Celebrating International Women's Day

Our Mission

is to proclaim the Good News as School Sisters of Notre Dame,
directing our entire lives toward that oneness for which Jesus Christ was sent.

— *You Are Sent*, Constitution of the School Sisters of Notre Dame

FROM THE PROVINCIAL LEADER

Sister Mary Anne Owens, SSND

“Wherever divine providence calls us, there we are most ready to go.”
— *Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger, January 7, 1864*

We have traveled many miles from the June 12 beginning of our new Central Pacific Province. Our journey as a province, and as individual sisters, continues to be responsive to God’s call. We are blessed and we are challenged. We are gifted and we are called. We are meeting one another and exploring new possibilities. We are most ready to go where God calls us.

In this issue you will meet some of our sisters and see how they are discovering and responding to God. We are happy to share with you the achievements and awards our sisters received. And being true to our mission, in the spring, we will honor women in leadership who are dedicated to serving others. Though we are a new province, our mission remains constant, calling us daily to proclaim the good news...and direct our entire lives toward that oneness for which Jesus Christ was sent. We also offer the annual stewardship report for your local campus. Next year’s report will encompass our Central Pacific Province.

We are grateful for your partnership, your financial and prayerful support. As we begin 2012, we pray with and for you as we continue on this journey



SCHOOL SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME IN THE 21ST CENTURY

By Sister Valeria Beuke, SSND

“Urged by the love of Christ, we choose to express our mission through ministry directed toward education.... Like Mother Theresa, we educate with the conviction that the world can be changed through the transformation of persons. Thus, our ministry demands a Christian vision of what the human person is destined to become.”
(*You Are Sent*)

From the time of its foundation in 1833, the School Sisters of Notre Dame have focused on the education of youth and on the concerns of women. In today’s society when 70 million children do not attend school and women are subject to the injustices of inequality, violence, trafficking and extreme poverty, SSNDs carry out their mission in many ways, particularly through active participation in the United Nations Non-Governmental Organization (UN-NGO).

SSNDs have been affiliated with the U.N. since 1992; interest in joining the U.N. dates back even further. In 1992 the congregation’s General Chapter established the UN-NGO office. The congregation was granted Special Consultative status with the U.N. Economic and Social Council in 1997.

With the help of the UN-NGO office, the international SSND congregation continues to advance the mission of Jesus to work toward that oneness for which Jesus was sent. The goal of the NGO office, according to past NGO representative Sister Ann Scholz, is to be “instruments of hope and action for authentic living of solidarity.” This commitment is evident in the multiple activities performed by the staff members.



Sister Eileen Reilly, Glenance Green, Sister Sharon Kanis, Sister Miriam Jansen and Adaku Ibekweme outside the United Nations

By providing reflections on the global situation, the NGO office educates members of the congregation, its colleagues and the general public. It is present at the U.N. as an advocate for the poor, especially women and children. SSNDs at the office regularly work with other NGOs to empower people, to eradicate poverty and to ensure the right to education for all. It strives to animate people to proclaim the Good News, to be responsible citizens and to help transform society.

The UN-NGO staff has made itself available to various groups by offering informative workshops. Topics include human rights, SSND values, transformative education, the Millennium Development Goals, women’s rights and concerns, and education for all. These workshops alone have educated and motivated hundreds.

We have seen SSNDs actively committed to the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). This U.N. commission meets annually to evaluate progress on gender equality, to identify challenges, set global standards and formulate policies to promote the advancement of women worldwide. For many years participants from SSND high schools and colleges; peace and justice advocates; and colleagues from Peru, Germany, Ghana and Haiti have attended the Commission on the Status of Women sessions with SSNDs. These participants then shared their experiences with home audiences.

The SSNDs at the NGO office also collaborate with other U.N. agencies. This involves meeting and consulting with food and agricultural organizations and the World Food Program. The office regularly works with UNICEF’s girl’s rights, the Committee for Social Development, the Subcommittee for Poverty Eradication, Religious at the U.N. and Partnership for Global Justice.

In addition, the congregation has delivered 17 statements to U.N. bodies including the Human Rights Council and the U.N. Climate for Change Conference. Written and oral statements addressed the empowerment of women and girls, the right to education, eradication of poverty, migration and trafficking of human persons. Blessed Theresa believed that attending to the needs of women strengthened family life and would bring about change in society.

This summary of the UN-NGO office’s impressive radical availability and commitment inspires us to gratefully and actively respond to the invitations of our UN-NGO director, Sister Eileen Reilly, SSND. In partnership, we live our commitment to contribute positive systemic change in society by “working toward the enablement of persons and the promotion of human dignity.” (*You Are Sent*)

Our foundress, Blessed Theresa, would undoubtedly applaud and warmly support the efforts of 21st century SSNDs at the UN-NGO office as they energetically address these concerns of women and children.

School Sisters of Notre Dame of the Central Pacific Province live and minister from coast to coast as well as Guam, Nepal, Japan and beyond.

Contact the Mission Advancement department at missionadv@ssndcp.org or

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www.ssndcentralpacific.org,
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Cover Photo: This child represents SSND’s legacy of transforming the world through education and the diversity of sisters’ ministries, giving special attention to youth, women and those who are poor.

*Transforming the world
through education*

REFLECTION



Sister Joyce Ploch tutoring her student

*“True happiness is happiness in God.
Nothing suffices to fill the heart but God.”*

— Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger, September 30, 1823

By Sister Monica Wagner, SSND

When Blessed Theresa wrote this in her letter to the School Sisters in 1823, I believe that she intended us to truly be focused on the love of the Beloved for each and every one of us. This is the prevailing message of the Gospels: that the unconditional love of God continues to be proclaimed by each of us by the lives we live and the values that we profess. In the photo above, Sister Joyce witnesses to God’s love for her student.

True happiness is based on love. St. Paul encourages us, “Make love your aim.” (1 Cor. 14:1, NJB) It is in living lives that demonstrate our love of God, of neighbor and of self that we carry out our baptismal call as Christians. This is evidenced in the way we relate with one another. Our ministry to each other includes prayer, friendship, peace, love, fidelity and affection.

We are grateful for how you enable us to forward the mission of Jesus Christ in our ministries. We are also thankful for the ways in which you carry out this mission in your commitments. Together we continue to build the kingdom of God in the world in which we live.

Every day, let us hold each other in prayer as we respond in love to wherever God calls us. May we find our happiness in God.

MISSION ADVANCEMENT STEWARDSHIP REPORT

As we continue the legacy of our foundress, Blessed Theresa, we are grateful to each of you for your support. We are blessed by your gracious generosity, as this report reveals. By partnering with us, you assist us in continuing to serve others. Your financial support also enables us to provide quality care and a safe home for our sisters who are sick or retired from active ministry, many of whom serve in a ministry of prayer and presence.

We will continue to be good stewards of your gifts, so that the mission of the School Sisters of Notre Dame will benefit future generations. Together with you, our partners, we strive to assist others to reach the fullness of their potential and to direct their gifts in making the world a better place.

Please know, in respect for you and your privacy, we do not sell or share your information with anyone.

NOTRE DAME OF DALLAS STEWARDSHIP REPORT

NOTRE DAME OF ELM GROVE STEWARDSHIP REPORT

OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL STEWARDSHIP REPORT

SANCTA MARIA IN RIPA STEWARDSHIP REPORT

CELEBRATING OUR SISTERS

Sister Janise Berberich, a Spanish and religion teacher at Notre Dame High School in St. Louis, was named the 2011 Peabody Energy Educator of the Year.

Sister Celine Schumacher, a science teacher at Notre Dame High School in St. Louis, was one of the St. Louis-area educators chosen as a recipient of the 2011 Emerson Excellence in Teaching Awards.

Sister Caroleen Hensgen, who was the first female superintendent of schools in the United States, was featured in the *Dallas Morning News* on Thanksgiving morning.

Sister Frances Ann Eveler was featured in the *Catholic Missourian*, in Jefferson City, Mo. Sister Frances Ann currently works in Liturgical Fabric Arts at Sancta Maria in Ripa, but she spent many years as a missionary in Africa.

Sister Judy Scheffler, the principal of Holy Ghost School in Houston, was interviewed in the *Texas Catholic Herald* about how she has been “blessed with a vocation that has indeed given me so much and brought me such joy and a sense of fulfillment.”

Sister Jane Marie Hotze, pastoral associate at St. Anthony Parish in Effingham, Ill., was featured in the *Teutopolis Press* in a profile article about her life as an SSND.

Sister Shawnee Marie Daniels-Sykes received the Archbishop’s Vatican II Award for Distinguished Service in Society from Milwaukee’s Archbishop Jerome E. ListECKI on Nov. 8. Sister Shawnee was also featured in the *Catholic Herald* for her presentation on the AIDS crisis.



RESCUING REGINA

The Battle to Save A Friend From Deportation and Death



Regina Bakala

SISTER'S BOOK TELLS IMMIGRANT'S STORY

By Mary Conarchy

School Sister of Notre Dame Josephe Marie Flynn was serving as director of adult and family ministry at St. Mary Parish in Hales Corners, Wis., in 2000 when she met new parishioners, David and Regina Bakala. They became friends and it was only natural that David turned to Sister Josephe for help on March 22, 2005, when Regina, a Congolese torture survivor, was seized from her Milwaukee home by immigration officials. A decade after fleeing the Congo for the United States, having endured rape, imprisonment and torture for advocating democracy in her homeland, Regina found herself locked in a U.S. prison, facing deportation to almost certain death.

Sister Josephe became the leader of the Save Regina Campaign, a group of grassroots volunteers who set aside political differences to stop Regina's deportation to her Congolese torturers. Eventually, after two years of hard work, the group celebrated success when Regina and David were granted their joint application for asylum on April 2, 2007.

Sister Josephe was inspired to write a book. As she put it, "I wrote 'Rescuing Regina' so people could fall in love with one beautiful immigrant family while also witnessing the casual cruelty wreaked upon them by an immigration system run amok."

Rescuing Regina: The Battle to Save a Friend from Deportation and Death (Lawrence Hill Books, an imprint of *Chicago Review Press*, July 2011) was published last summer. The book uncovers the real dangers faced by asylum seekers in the United States and is a compelling call for reform of our country's detention and deportation policies.

Sister Josephe Marie Flynn is cofounder and chair of the Milwaukee Archdiocesan Justice for Immigrants Committee and a member of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. She speaks to groups locally and nationally about immigration issues.

Sister Josephe Marie and Regina Bakala are featured in the cover story of Wisconsin Woman of Greater Milwaukee magazine's November issue.



Sister Josephe Marie Flynn

CELEBRATING WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

By Colleen O'Donnell

School Sisters of Notre Dame are dedicated to transforming our world through education. This is particularly evident on International Women's Day, which is celebrated March 8. Throughout the world, thousands of events occur during the month of March to mark the economic, political and social achievements of women.

To coincide with this celebration, School Sisters of Notre Dame of the Central Pacific Province will host leadership events on two campuses.

In St. Louis, Mo., a Women's Leadership Luncheon featuring keynote speaker, Maureen Herrmann, president of Marian Middle School, will be held. Notre Dame of Elm Grove will host a Women's Leadership Luncheon featuring Eileen Schwalbach, president of Mount Mary College.

Held March 8, these free luncheons are an effort to further the understanding of women in leadership and to reflect on the integration of the spiritual and professional dimensions of life.

On March 11, a Piano and Bassoon Recital, featuring selections by women composers will be performed by Jed Moss and Dr. Christin Schillinger at Sancta Maria in Ripa. Tickets are \$25.

Opportunities are available to partner with SSND as we raise awareness of the achievements of women. Please consider attending or sponsoring one of our events. Tax-deductible sponsorships enable us to cover our costs and raise funds to support our sisters in ministry. Please see "Upcoming Events" for contact information.



Eileen Schwalbach



Jed Moss



Dr. Christin Schillinger



Maureen Herrmann

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 25

NUN RUN
St. Paul, Minn.
Contact Sister Joyce Kolbet at 507-389-4296
or jkolbet@ssndcp.org.

March 8

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP LUNCHEON
Notre Dame of Elm Grove; Elm Grove, WI
Contact Colleen O'Donnell at 262-787-1037
or codonnell@ssndcp.org.

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP LUNCHEON
Sancta Maria in Ripa; St. Louis, MO
Contact Debbie Rohrich-Tyler at 314-633-7032
or drohrichtyler@ssndcp.org.

March 11

PIANO AND BASSOON RECITAL
Sancta Maria in Ripa; St. Louis, MO
Contact Debbie Rohrich-Tyler at 314-633-7032
or drohrichtyler@ssndcp.org.

March 17

A CALL TO WONDER, A CALL TO COMMUNITY
Notre Dame of Elm Grove; Elm Grove, WI
Contact Sister Suzanne Moynihan at 262-787-1011
or smoynihan@ssndcp.org.

March 18

TAIZÉ PRAYER
Sancta Maria in Ripa; St. Louis, MO
Contact Sister Joyelle Proot at 314-633-7015
or jproot@ssndcp.org.

March 27

EMBRACING THE TWO HALVES OF LIFE
Notre Dame of Elm Grove; Elm Grove, WI
Contact Sister Rosemary Bonk at 262-787-1015
or rbonk@ssndcp.org.

April 14

WINE AND CHOCOLATE SOIREE
Notre Dame of Elm Grove; Elm Grove, WI
Contact Colleen O'Donnell at 262-787-1037
or codonnell@ssndcp.org.

MEET SOME AMAZING WOMEN: A NUN RUN
Milwaukee, WI
Contact Sister Barb Linke at 262-787-1016
or blinke@ssndcp.org.

May 19

WINE AND CHOCOLATE SOIREE
Our Lady of Good Counsel; Mankato, MN
Contact Joyce Prahm at 507-389-4212 or
jprahm@ssndcp.org.



Visit www.facebook.com/ssnd.centralpacific
for additional information and descriptions
of the events.

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS

February 22: Ash Wednesday

March 8: International Women's Day

April 8: Easter Sunday

May 9: Blessed Theresa's Death Day

 This newsletter is printed on
recycled paper with soy ink.

SHALOM *Prayer* for *Peace*

O God,

You are the source of life and peace.

Praised be your name forever.

We know it is you

who turns our minds to thoughts of peace

In this time of war.

We pray that enemies begin to speak to one another,
that those who are estranged join hands in friendship;
that nations seek the way of peace.

Strengthen our resolve to give witness
to these truths by the way we live.

Give to us:

understanding that puts an end to strife;
mercy that quenches hatred;
and forgiveness that overcomes vengeance.

Empower all people to live your law of love.

Amen.



SHALOM is the international network for justice, peace and the integrity of creation for the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

"As members of an international congregation, we recognize our obligation and opportunities to develop a world vision and a sense of global responsibility." (You Are Sent)