



AM Associates News

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Associates Reflect on *Love Gives Everything* by Suzy Blackburn

In June 2018, at their annual meeting in Wilton, associate area coordinators were introduced to the Directional Statement, *Love Gives Everything*.

Sisters Kathleen Cornell and Charmaine Krohe addressed the group, providing context and inspiration. When the participants returned to their respective areas, they brought with them videos of the two addresses, as well as the accompanying handouts and reflections.

This past fall associates throughout the province had the opportunity to come together in their respective areas to view and discuss the sisters' presentations, and to begin their own reflections on the Directional Statement. This approach has been a highly successful.

From Ontario to Baltimore, from Wilton to Chicago, associates found the videos to be engaging and inspiring. "Sister Kathleen's presentation on the history of the Directional Statements placed everything in context," said Ontario Associate Rosemary Craven. Karen Didier noted that, "The associates at our December meeting in Chicago felt that Sister Charmaine was speaking directly to us. The experience was effective and very engaging." Associates in Baltimore broke into applause at the end of the video.

Now that associates have been introduced to *Love Gives Everything*, they are looking forward to deepening their reflections and putting those reflections into action. They are eager to engage with sisters and the Council as response to the Directional Statement unfolds in the coming years.

Associate Heritage Trip by Karen Didier

Associate Karen Didier traveled with 15 Central-Pacific Associates and Sister Rosemary Bonk to Germany in September 2018.

The group visited sites in Cologne, Erfurt, Neunburg, Regensburg and Munich. They also met with associates from Germany. They spent some time in small-group discussions in an effort to better understand the differences between the areas.

The associates visited Blessed Mother Theresa's mother's room in Munich and renewed their covenants at Blessed Mother Theresa's grave site.

Karen felt it was a truly excellent experience being with friends, eating a lot, and enjoying the German beer.

Cont'd on pg. 2

At right: Karen visiting the grave of Blessed Mother Theresa.



Wilton First Covenanting



Front row: New Associates Lucy Freeman, Patricia Kelly, and Helen Martinez
Behind them - Companions: Associate Jean Fredricks, Sister Francis Mensik, and Sister John Vianney Zullo

Associates and sisters gathered at Villa Notre Dame in Wilton, on September 28-30, to welcome new members, renew covenants, and to reflect on *Love Gives Everything*.

On Saturday, the 29th, associates and sisters met in Caroline Hall to watch Sister Kathleen Cornell's video presentation on the common threads that run through past Directional Statements, linking them to *Love Gives Everything*. Afterwards, Sister Maria Iannuccillo shared reflections on *Love Gives Everything*, and facilitated responses from those gathered. In the afternoon, Associate

Director Suzy Blackburn updated the group on current and upcoming associate initiatives, and Associate Leslie Lopez directed a period of journaling and reflection.

That evening, in VND's chapel, three pre-associates, Lucy Freeman, Patricia Kelly, and Helen Martinez, pronounced their first covenants. Sister Maria accepted the covenants on behalf of the Provincial Council, and invited the other associates to renew their covenants. Afterwards, sisters and associates celebrated the occasion with cake in the dining room.



Cont'd from pg. 1

September 28, 2018, was the first time that associates from our North American Central Pacific Province met with members of the Companions on the Way (our SSND associates) from our groups of North and South Germany.

For the group of North America, this day was the highlight of their visit of the heritage sites, the places where our foundress, Blessed Mother Theresa, grew up and later worked.

Like a Deer that Longs by Rosemary Craven

On Saturday, September 22, 2018, some of Ontario's associates, pre-associate enquirers and sisters, gathered at Notre Dame Convent in Waterdown, to participate at a workshop led by Sister Mary Heather MacKinnon (AMSSND Water Committee), entitled "Like a Deer that Yearns for Running Streams."

Sister's inspiring presentation began with a clear and concise "Q&A" interaction of questions and answers. This lively interaction resulted in reminding us that the AMSSND's Four Commitment Committees (Water, Immigration, Human Trafficking, Haiti) are continuously working to address and fulfill the respective Directional Statements from the 23rd and 24th General Chapters: *Love Cannot Wait* (2012) and *Love Gives Everything* (2017).

The effectiveness of the work implemented by these four "working groups," involves a continuum of inter-relationships and steady flow of information, with and among SSND, United Nations, SHALOM, and Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation (JPIC) (all non-governmental organizations).

We learned that access to WATER is a critical and GLOBAL CONCERN (due to abuse and misuse by humanity, in the name of progress and profit); and therefore, WATER must be addressed by EACH and every ONE of us as "a spiritual gift" AND a human right!

If we are to call ourselves "responsible stewards" of our HOME called EARTH—it is recommended that we:

- ◆ Recognize and remember the "spirituality of this gift" of WATER
- ◆ Ban the use of "plastic bottled water"
- ◆ Lobby against "fracking"
- ◆ Become a "Blue Community"

This motivating presentation and interaction ended with prayerful intentions by all ... for renewed commitment ... to PROACTIVELY and MINDFULLY respond to the Directional Statements of *Love Cannot Wait* and *Love Gives Everything*.



L-R: Associate Hermie Schuster, enquirer Anne Gallagher and Sister Louise Vanderploeg

"This is what the Lord asks of you: only this, to act justly, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8

In Memoriam



Dennis Doherty, husband of Associate Kathryn Doherty, Baltimore, November 3, 2018

Richard Schuster, son of Associate Hermie Schuster, Ontario, December 15, 2018

John Divico, Associate, Maryland,
January 24, 2019

Mary Ellen Flynn, Associate, Chicago,
February 14, 2019

News from the Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey Area by Kathleen Sylvester

For a number of years now, the associates from these states have been meeting together. In September of 2018, the group met for re-covenanting and, at the same time, made the decision to alternate their meetings space and time between Villa Notre Dame in Wilton, CT and Westport, CT. Previously all their meetings were held at St. Luke's in Westport, since several associates are members of that parish.

The decision was also made to change their meeting days to Saturday. The group meets on alternate months; the dates they meet in Wilton coordinate with the desert days offered in Wilton. This new arrangement allows for the associates to spend time with the sisters at VND and Lourdes in Wilton.

Associates had their first meeting with the new arrangement at Wilton on November 3rd. The group watched Sister Charmaine's video regarding the Directional Statement, had a spirited discussion about the

Statement and were pleasantly surprised when Sister Charmaine herself walked in following the discussion. (She was in Wilton for another meeting and stopped in to say "hi"). The afternoon closed with a prayer service during which each participant was presented with their "official copy" of the Directional Statement.

On January 12th, the group met in Westport, CT. After a wonderful lunch, Sister Maureen Flemming led the associates in a prayer based on *Laudato Si'*. Following the prayer, they watched the movie, *The Student, The Nun, and The Amazon*, which is about the life and work of Sister Dorothy Stang, SND, who was martyred for her work in exposing the gross destruction of the rain forest. The group reflected on and discussed Sister Dorothy's work and the work being done currently by sisters to protect the earth, our common home.

The group's next meeting is planned for March 23rd at Villa Notre Dame in Wilton, CT.



Ontario, CA Recovenanting by Hermie Schuster



Sisters and associates in Ontario gathered on October 20, 2018 to celebrate the first Covenant of Hong Pham during a liturgy held in the beautiful chapel of the Notre Dame Convent in Waterdown. Twelve associates also renewed their covenants.

Sister Deborah Cerullo, Provincial Councilor, received Hong's covenant as well as that of the other associates, on behalf of the province. Father Wayne Lobsinger, EV, was the celebrant of the liturgy.

Following Mass, associates were treated to dinner with the sisters in the convent dining room.

After dinner, Suzy Blackburn, Director of Associates, spoke about the evolving vision of the Associate Relationship.

Sister Vivian Zoller then led the group in a lively quiz on SSND history.

It was indeed a marvelous day.



Water: A Matter of Justice by Kathi Barth

On September 15, 2018, associates and sisters of the Chicago area met for a day of reflection on water issues.

Those in attendance were invited to learn more about making clean water a reality, one village at a

time. Sisters Ethel Howley and Eileen Denny facilitated the retreat at Roosevelt Place in Chicago.

All donations given that day were sent to Sister Jan Gregorcich, SSND, Director of Global Partners, Running Waters, Inc.

Reflections on Inter-culturalism and MAP by Delores Moore



In the late 1950's I lived in Connecticut. The neighborhood was predominately first and second generation Italians - the local grocery stores, restaurants and cemetery were the same. African-Americans were farm workers who followed the tobacco harvest or worked in the factories and lived in the Italian neighborhoods. Four miles

west were the Orthodox Jews. Although living in close proximity, each group maintained their individual identities, remaining respectful, cordial and separate except at school and in the market place. Multi-culturalism.

In 1994 I became a foster mother for a little boy from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) who died in 1996. My son and I went to the UAE to stay with his Muslim, Arabic-speaking family for a month. I learned how immigrants must feel when you don't speak the language, or know the traditions, practices and rules, and even your physical appearance is different. Love and motherhood became our common bond, and language was no longer a barrier. Cross-culturalism.

In August, I participated in MAP at the border in Douglas, Arizona and Mexico, spending a week with four SSND Sisters - Judy Bourg, Helen Jones, Lucy Nigh and Pat Ferrick. The goal of MAP is awareness; my intent was to render service. The greater service is to tell others, so that all may hear what is happening in the lives of the disadvantaged. Seeing "the wall" upfront, close and personal was painful. Seeing the suffering of the poor, sick and disabled Mexicans and hearing of deaths in the desert, separation of families, and exploited coffee farmers was heartbreaking. The tireless efforts of these four women who work to organize community resources, direct patient care, do advocacy and deliver jugs of water in the desert for undocumented immigrants was inspiring and life changing. Inter-culturalism.

This story originally appeared in SSND *Newslink*.

Chicago Associates Enjoy a Picnic in the Country by Karen Didier

SSND Associates of the Chicago area gathered on August 25, 2018 for the 4th Annual Associate Picnic.

Sisters and associates made the 1 1/2 - 2 hr. trip west of Chicago to enjoy a picnic hosted by Associate Karen Didier, her sisters and their husbands, Joe and Marlene Hilliker and Jeff and Rhonda Jahn.

Everyone enjoyed sitting around the deck, viewing the open country landscape.

As usual, the day was filled with laughter and delicious food.



Florida Rejuvenating

Associates and sisters from Southeast Florida gathered at Our Lady of Florida Retreat Center in North Palm Beach, on Saturday, September 8, for a day of prayer on the theme of "Theresa and Caroline and Catholic Social Teaching." Sister Mary Kerber, SSND, currently Director of Campus Ministry at Notre Dame of



Maryland University, was the presenter.

Before the closing liturgy, longtime Associate Linda Radosevich, of Orlando, Florida, made a special covenant, which according to the Plan of Association, is "a covenant for an indefinite period of time which does not need to be renewed to continue the relationship with SSND." The rest of the associates present then renewed their covenants.



Chicago Rejuvenating by Kathi Barth

On October 7, 2018, five associates, 13 sisters, one pre-associate, and Suzy Blackburn gathered to review the Directional Statements from the 18-24 General Chapters, to consider the future of the associate relationship, and celebrate the reconvening of the associates present.

Small groups reflected on the Statements and discussed how the associate relationship has grown and changed since 1987.

Suzy asked to group to consider what it means to be an associate. This process served as the beginning of a longer process that will help define us as a group as we live into our future as associates. We were encouraged to continued dialog around these questions with each other and with the sisters.

Suzy noted that a survey would be sent out to associates in the near future. All associates were



encouraged to complete the survey and return it to Suzy.

The associates' responses will be sent to groups of SSNDs for further discussion.

Chicago Christmas Gathering by Patricia Stibich

On a clear and sunny day in December, Chicago area sisters and associates gathered together at Roosevelt Place for an afternoon of prayer and holiday celebration.

Our first hour was spent viewing the video of Sister Charmaine's presentation of *Love Gives Everything*, recorded during the Annual Associate Area Coordinator meeting in June, 2018. Information was distributed to those present, including quotes from *Laudato Si'* as they relate to *Love Gives Everything*, and a brief discussion of the Directional Statement of the 24th General Chapter followed.

We then gathered in a circle with our wrapped white elephant gifts and had a fun time passing our gifts around as "Twas The Night Before Christmas" was read. Everyone, opened their new gift and then settled

down as Associate Pat Maccagnano, renewed her associate commitment to SSND.

A Christmas feast, highlighted by polish sausage, sauerkraut, mashed potatoes, many side dishes and desserts, followed by wishes for a "very merry Christmas" as we all left.

Prayer, commitment, food, and fun - it was the time shared together that made this holiday celebration a true gift from God.



Baking Cookies

Baking cookies is one of the traditions that many families, immediate and extended share at the holidays. The process of baking cookies; preparing the batter, decorating, savoring the sweet smells while in the oven, provides opportunities for sharing of stories and the simple gift of just being together.

For a few mornings in early December, part of "the SSND family", sisters and associates, had the opportunity to spend time together as we baked cookies. In the early fall, Sister Margaret Glick received a donation of approximately 13 Christmas themed cookie jars. Sister Margaret came up with the idea of sisters and associates baking together to fill the cookie jars, which would then be raffled off in mid-December. The funds raised would be donated to St. Ambrose Parish.

Sister Margaret took care of gathering all the supplies, from ingredients to cookie sheets, developing a schedule and recruiting sisters and associates. As the associate bakers arrived at Villa Assumpta, we worked side by side with some of the sisters in preparing, decorating and baking the cookies. And like every other family, the process of baking allowed us to share our stories.

Sisters and associates both spoke of what, and/or



Pictured left to right: Sister Trinitas Bochini, Associate Madelyn Ball, Sr. Rosemary Dilli, Associate Carla Hob-

whom led them to the SSNDs. Sisters shared stories of the various ministries to which they had been called to serve. The question, "Do you know...?" was heard often, reminding those present of the many ways we are connected to and with one another.

In mid-December, our own cookie sale and Christmas Jar raffle was held. The bags of cookies and the raffle raised over \$1,000.00 dollars, a holiday gift to St. Ambrose Parish. But those of us who baked also received a gift...a reminder of why we chose to be associates and the call to continue to live out the charism in our everyday tasks.