Youngstown Ursulines Legacy Planning Leads to New Corporation

As part of our legacy planning, we’ve created the corporation Ursuline Ministries. The Board of Ursuline Ministries hired M. Brigid Kennedy as President of the new corporation. She had been co-director of our HIV/AIDS ministry.

Ursuline Ministries comprises our Beatitude House, Ursuline Sisters Senior Living and Ursuline Center ministries. Beatitude House helps homeless women and their children break the cycle of poverty through housing, education and other assistance. Our Senior Living ministry provides apartments for independent adults ages 55+ of moderate income on our Motherhouse property. The Ursuline Center is home to ministries for health, wellness and education, as well as our HIV/AIDS and Prison ministries. The board includes our leadership team members as well as lay partners, who will help us maintain the vitality of our vibrant ministries long into the future. This is part of a long-range plan that acknowledges the good, creative work of the Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown, past and present, and the fact that there are fewer of us than in previous years. Over the last few decades, our ministerial relationships with lay colleagues have been very fruitful. The creation of this corporation and board will help our ministries to bear much fruit going forward. The board is accountable directly to the Ursuline Sisters. Additionally, we’re grateful for a $10,000 grant from the Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland which it bestowed to help with our legacy planning and ministry coordination efforts.

Ursuline Book of Prayer, Volume II, now available

The Ursuline Book of Prayer, Volume II, for Ordinary Time, is available. Now you can pray daily with this one-of-a-kind book that the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph use for Morning and Evening Prayer.

As the introduction explains, “The Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph have chosen to adopt a format for communal and personal prayer that seeks both to respect the ancient Christian tradition and adapt to contemporary needs and insights.” The result is a greater selection of scriptural texts for daily prayer.

There is information about the lives of saints on their feast days, memorials, and commemorations. There are more than 300 hymns included in the prayer book as well. Including its index, the prayer book is 1,774 pages.

Each Ursuline Book of Prayer is $60. Copies are available in the Gift Shop in Maple Mount. If you would like a book mailed to you, the cost is $70 to cover postage. To add Volume I of the Ursuline Book of Prayer, which encompasses Advent and Christmas, the cost is $90 for the two, or $105 if they need to be mailed.

Send your checks made out to the Ursuline Sisters, 8001 Cummings Road, Maple Mount, KY 42356. Please specify “prayer book” with your purchase.
News from the Louisville Ursulines

Bourbon Baroque: An evening of 18th century orchestral music from the Ursuline Manuscript

On Saturday, Sept. 23, the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville hosted a Bourbon Baroque concert in the Motherhouse Chapel. The concert was a huge success with a standing room only crowd, and spotlighted our beautiful chapel. This was the fourth in a series of events celebrating the Ursuline Motherhouse Chapel’s Centennial year. Louisville, Kentucky-based Bourbon Baroque specializes in the historically informed performance of 17th and 18th-century music inspired by the art and culture of the royal House of Bourbon. John Austin Clark and Alice Culin-Ellison are the artistic directors, and there was a special guest appearance by the Sacred Heart Academy Madrigal Choir.

There is a wonderful Ursuline connection with the music from this concert. In 1727, the group of Normandy-based Ursuline Sisters that set sail to help French pioneers settle in the newly founded city of New Orleans brought with them a newly printed collection of spiritual contrafacta* texts set to “pop” tunes of the day. These common tunes were by famed celebrity composers including Campra, Lully, Clérambault, and Mouret among others and served as the main tool to bring natives and pioneers alike into the fold, raising morale.

Fast-forward nearly three hundred years: the music survived in manuscript, and was offered at our concert! The artistic directors selected songs in reverence to “La Sagesse,” or wisdom and education. The young women of the Ursuline convent school would have conceivably sung the alma mater, Coeur Destinés, in homage to the fount of knowledge bestowed upon them by their teachers who were instated by “Le Roy” (The King of France), and ultimately through God. How fortuitous, perhaps divinely so, for this music to find its way to the Motherhouse Chapel of the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville. The circle from France to New Orleans; Quebec to Louisville; and finally New Orleans to Louisville is complete.

Here is a link to the video of the Bourbon Baroque concert:
https://livestream.com/accounts/14401319/events/7740860

Sacred Spaces: Louisville’s Inspiring Catholic Church Architecture

On Sunday, Sept. 24, the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville hosted a talk by local architect and historian Steve Wiser. The talk featured the architecture of local Roman Catholic churches from the mid-1800s up to today’s modern sanctuaries. The fifth in a series of events celebrating the Ursuline Motherhouse Chapel’s Centennial year, the talk was well attended with a full house.

Wiser explored the physical changes in church design from the 1800s through Vatican II, which included the removal of communion rails, high, formidable altars lowered to make the priest feel more accessible and reoriented toward the congregation, seating plans changed from rigid and rectilinear to a less formal, more social circular or semicircular arrangement.

“The call was for ‘full and active participation,’” says Sr. Jean Anne Zappa, chapel preservation development fund director for the sisters. “And the modern architecture was more about being warm and welcoming,
versus the enormity of space that makes those feel smaller in the presence of God.”

An interesting piece to the story to the building of the motherhouse and the Ursuline Chapel of the Immaculate Conception is that it occurred at the same time the U.S. had entered World War I and a deadly flu epidemic was beginning to sweep across the country. At the same time the sisters’ energy and attention were involved in the church construction, they also were actively caring for ill and wounded soldiers at Camp Taylor. No blueprints exist for the chapel, and no lists of donors or patrons have been found. It remains a bit of a mystery as to how the chapel was funded and built, but the sisters remain forever grateful for this magnificent spiritual home.

Here is a link to the PDF of the talk on our website: http://www.ursulinesisterslouisville.org/uploads/SacredSpaces.pdf

New Archivist: Angelica Bullock

Ms. Angelica Bullock started as archivist for the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville on Monday, September 25. Sister Martha Jacob, our former archivist, will continue to be our congregational historian. Angelica holds a BA from Xavier University, Cincinnati; a MA from the University of Albany, Albany, NY; is currently a doctoral student at the University of Louisville and also holds a Graduate Certificate in Public History (Archival Management) from U of L.

Angelica’s extensive experience in archives includes interning since 2013 at the University of Louisville archives, where she was involved in exhibitions for the Parkland and Smoketown neighborhoods; at the Sazerac Company Archives in Frankfort, KY, from 2015 until April 2017 and at Riverside Church (New York City) this past summer. She has had classes in archival practice at the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati and at the Speed Museum in Louisville.

Originally from New Jersey, she says she “fell in love with Louisville.” After her first interview, she e-mailed that she was excited about the possibility of working for a place “that has such a rich history.” She wrote, “I believe archives can be an act of service: it would be an honor for me to preserve such an important collection.” We welcome Angelica!

New Director of Communications and PR: Kathy Williams

The Ursuline Sisters of Louisville welcome Kathy Williams as Director of Communications and Public Relations, who started with us July 5, 2017. Kathy has an extensive background in design, writing, editing, art direction, marketing and social media. Kathy’s experience includes working as an art director in Chicago, running her own graphic design and marketing business, and working for the Kentucky United Methodist church headquarters in their communications department. Additionally, she served as a director of youth ministry at a local Catholic parish for eleven years.

Kathy’s BA degree is in fine arts/graphic design from the University of Louisville. She holds a MA degree in theology/marketplace ministry with a digital media focus from Loyola University New Orleans, where she was the recipient of the 2015 Lim Scholar award, and inducted as an Alpha Sigma Nu, Jesuit Honor Society Member.

Kathy is responsible for all internal and external communication, graphic design, social media, public and media relations, as well as strategic marketing to support the ministries of the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville, while articulating their mission, values, philosophy and position. Welcome, Kathy!
Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk

Jubilarian Celebration

On Saturday, September 23, 2017 the Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk, US Province celebrated the Jubilees of five of the Sisters. Sr. Margaret Golub and Sr. James Francis McDonnell celebrated 60 years in religious life. Sr. Mairead Barrett, Sr. Joanne Callahan and Sr. Margaret O’Brien celebrated 50 years. Over 200 Sisters, Associates, family and friends joined the Jubilarians for mass at St. John Nepomucene Church in Bohemia, NY. The mass was celebrated by Fr. Eugene Barrett, OFM, Sr. Mairead’s brother. Sr. Margaret O’Brien offered a very thoughtful and inspiring reflection. Following the mass everyone was invited to a party in the lower Church. It was a great day of celebration.

Sr. Ann McHugh Honored

On October 1, 2017 the Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk, US Province held their annual luncheon at Strathmore Vanderbilt Country Club in Manhasset, NY. Each year one of the Sisters is recognized for their many years of service, dedication and generosity. This year the Ursuline Ministry Recognition honored Sr. Ann McHugh, OSU.

Sr. Ann McHugh, OSU

Sr. Ann McHugh was born in New York City to Neil and Esther, the second oldest of ten children. She graduated from Bishop McDonnell High School in Brooklyn. She holds a BS Degree from St. John’s University, an MA in Pastoral Ministry from Fairfield University and a MS Degree in History and Political Science from St. Joseph’s College in West Hartford, CT. She also received Certification in Spiritual Direction from Fairfield University and in Chaplaincy at St. Raphael’s Hospital.


Following her M.A. in Pastoral Ministry, Ann was led in new pastoral directions. She served as a Pastoral Minister in parishes in the Diocese of Rockville Centre. This afforded her opportunities for Hospital Ministry where she became a Pastoral Visitor and often coordinated the Pastoral Visitor Teams of volunteers. A major turning point in Sr. Ann’s later ministries came with her CPE training in the Hospital of St. Raphael in New Haven, CT. She became the first Ursuline of Tildonk in the US Province to become a Board Certified Hospital Chaplain. From 1985 on, she was primarily occupied in Hospital Chaplaincy. Sr. Ann served as a Staff Chaplain in several Suffolk County Hospitals on Long Island.

One of the most rewarding positions was as coordinator of the teams of volunteers for pastoral services in St. Charles, Mather, and Stony Brook University Hospitals. For this work she was recognized and honored in the Port Jefferson (NY) area as 1996 Woman of the Year in Religion. From 1999-2000, Sr. Ann served, on behalf of the Rockville Centre Diocese, as Chaplain for Franklin Hospital in Valley Stream, NY. Eventually she moved in the direction of Pastoral Care in Hospice Ministry. From 2000-2007, she served for 3 years as full-time Director of Pastoral Care in the Brookhaven Hospital Hospice (Patchogue, NY), and during her last three years was available for part-time Pastoral Visiting with the Good Shepherd Hospice and Brookhaven Hospital Hospice. After retiring from years of serving in hospital and hospice chaplaincy, Sr. Ann recognized there was a need for women to be able to gather together and share their stories. She created the Woman’s Sacred Journey group. Woman’s Sacred Journey is a spiritual sharing group where women gather together on a weekly basis in an open and sharing environment. They pray together and share their sacred journeys.

Sr. Ann has had a full life of service to so many as teacher, chaplain, pastoral care for those in hospice and their families, to women seeking ways to know the Lord and share their spiritual journeys. We thank Ann for all that she has done throughout her years as an Ursuline Sister of Tildonk, U.S. Province.
News from Cleveland

Cleveland Ursulines welcome new mission, justice personnel

In July we welcomed two new staff members to key congregational positions. Joanne Buckman, OSU, succeeds Joan Petersen, OSU, as Director of Mission Integration. Most recently Joanne ministered as coordinator of Leadership for a New Day, a leadership development program for young adults. She has also served in congregational leadership and in administration at Dominican ecology centers in Akron and Columbus. Joanne brings leadership skills and a deep understanding of mission to her work with sisters, co-ministers and others friends and followers of Angela.

The congregation has also welcomed Paula Miller to the position of Social Justice Coordinator. Paula, well-known in the justice arena of Cleveland, is a product of Ursuline education and a friend of many Ursulines. Paula is a member of Cleveland’s Catholic Worker community. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in justice work, including a tenure living and ministering on the Mexican border. She creates opportunities for sisters of every age to engage in the work of justice, whether in prayer, advocacy, action or education.

Lay partners assume school leadership

The academic year is off to a good start and blazing some new trails in the process. For the first time in its history Beaumont School is under lay leadership. Wendy Hoke, the school’s fifth President, came to Beaumont from St. Vincent Charity Medical Center where she served as vice president of Marketing and Communications. She succeeds Gretchen Rodenfels, OSU, who stepped down at the end of the past school year. Wendy joins Principal Nick Beyer. Under their capable leadership, Beaumont will continue to educate young women for life, leadership and service in the Ursuline tradition.

History has also been made at Urban Community School (UCS) with the appointment of Tom Gill as the school’s first lay President, succeeding long time Director Maureen Doyle, OSU. Tom has served at UCS since 2010, first as Development Director, then Chief Operating and Development Officer, and as Associate Director.

The Ursulines are confident that these lay partners will uphold the rich tradition of Ursuline education that has been the hallmark of Beaumont and Urban Community since their founding.

Pray for our Sisters who have entered into Eternal Life

Sister Justine Hill (Toledo)
Sister Agnes Seebach (Tildonk)
Sister Margaret Mary Feahilly (Tildonk)
Sister Jean Redigan (Tildonk)
Sister Jane Frances Stock (Chatham)
Sister Joan Walz (Maple Mount)
Sister Mary Judith Osthoff (Maple Mount)
Sister Louise Marie Willenbrink (Rita) (Louisville)
Sister Evelina (Roger) Pisaneschi (Louisville)
Sister Delores (Charles Marie) Kemper (Louisville)
Sister Mary Germaine (Mary Francis) Thorburn (Cincinnati)
Sister Ruth Ann (Mary Agnes) Hartmann (Cincinnati)
News from Brown County

Ursulines Preserve Character and History in Sale of Motherhouse Property

Recently the Ursulines of Brown County made the decision to sell to Chatfield College the land and buildings on which the college is located in rural St. Martin, Ohio. Following is the June 20, 2017 statement from the Ursulines of Brown County regarding this decision.

The Ursulines of Brown County, with great concern for their neighbors and committed to good stewardship of the land, have taken steps to assure that their long-held property in St. Martin will maintain its character under new ownership.

The community arrived in northern Brown County in 1845 and has been serving the rural area ever since. We have been involved in education on the grade school, high school, and college levels, provided religious education to neighboring Catholic parishes, sponsored a summer camp for girls and spiritual retreats for women. The Sisters have been involved not only in parish activities but also in civic organizations as well.

Currently, we have 23 members from 61-95 years of age. Like many religious congregations, we realize that we are nearing completion as a religious community. However, we are counting on our sponsored ministries, Chatfield College in St. Martin/Cincinnati and Ursuline Academy in Cincinnati, as well as the many other people we have ministered to and with, to carry on our mission to further the Gospel of Jesus, value each individual person, and educate future generations.

For several years, the Ursulines of Brown County have been discerning about the future of our land as we near completion. We have been blessed to care for this land for almost 172 years. The Legacy Statement developed in 2010 concerning the care and protection of the Ursuline land reads, in part:

“First and foremost, every endeavor must reflect Gospel values and be in harmony with the nature of the land, its beauty, tranquility, and restorative potential for the human spirit. Our land is holy ground supporting efforts to experience and share the love of God in a myriad of ways. We want to ensure that there will be no impediments to deter these efforts from fullest expression.”

As part of our effort to put the Legacy Statement into practice, we placed the farmland in a conservation easement and returned the waterway to its original configuration as Solomon’s Run. These moves assure that both the 83.6 acres of farm land and the waterway will remain as they are into perpetuity.

Recently the Sisters made the unanimous decision to sell the non-farm property to Chatfield College, which the Ursulines founded in 1971, effective July 1, 2017, and to auction the farmland in the near future. Because the Sisters are older and we are well aware of the challenges and the costs when a person ages, the proceeds from these sales will be used for retirement needs of the Sisters. Both the Sisters’ residence known as Brescia and the Ursuline administration building known as Springer will continue to be utilized by them.

Sr. Phyllis Kemper, Congregational Minister for the Ursulines of Brown County, said that this decision to divest themselves of the property did not come lightly. “The process toward making the decision took several years of prayer, discernment and consultation with professionals in the areas of real estate, finance, law and township and county government. The realities of aging helped us to understand that we wish to spend our last years ministering to people rather than caring for buildings and property. Through Chatfield College and future farmers, the legacy begun by our foundress Julia Chatfield will continue into the future.”

On June 20th we invited 100 neighbors, friends and stakeholders to an open meeting to share with them our decisions about the property. Those present were encouraging and supportive as many represented multigenerational relationships with the Sisters. Following the public announcement of our process and decisions, we received many comments that expressed sadness about what we have needed to do, but also shared understanding and gratitude for the “courage and integrity” which have brought us to this present action.

John P. Tafaro, President of Chatfield College in a public statement said, “The Ursulines of Brown County have an incredible history of service and educational ministry for more than 172 years, having played a major role in the academic and spiritual formation of children and adults, not just on its own land and campus, but throughout the region’s public and private schools. The Sisters founded Chatfield College in 1971 to meet the needs of the community then, and have continued to support us, and our students, as they do still today. This incredible gift of land and buildings is yet
another example of their love and generosity that has been visible, continually, for all 46 years of our existence. Now, as an independent entity, our Catholic College remains and will continue as an Ursuline School, true to the core values the Sisters have instilled in us. We are proud to be part of their vast legacy, and honored to continue the educational tradition they began so long ago.”

In the agreements made between the Ursulines and Chatfield College, the Sisters may retain use of the two buildings they are presently occupying for as long as we need them. Brescia continues as a residence for the four sisters living there now and the community administration remains at Springer House, although the buildings are now owned by Chatfield College. In addition, the community may have access to other College buildings as needed.

Sisters Gather in Prayer and Remembrance
The Ursuline Community spent Saturday, June 24th in a day of prayer and remembrance. As part of the ritual on that beautiful summer morning, the Sisters were invited to walk the grounds and reflect on their memories so vividly a part of our past and present. Following a sharing of memories amid tears and laughter, the Sisters continued the day with a luncheon. All sisters received a framed print of the landmark front lane to the property. This rendering was done by Sr. Marjean Clement, OSU many years ago.

Auction of Farmland on October 24, 2017
The last act of divesting ourselves of property will occur on October 24th. Our 85.368 acres of farmland will be auctioned. The three parcels were placed in a conservation easement in 2010 which assures that the land will continue as farmland in perpetuity. The advertising for the sale of the land includes the following statement: “The Ursulines of Brown County placed their farmland into a conservation easement in 2010 in anticipation of the day when they would no longer own their St. Martin property. They made this move to respect and honor the farming community in which they lived for over 172 years and in response to their spiritual call to be good and just stewards of the land. The proceeds of the sale of their land will go toward the retirement needs of the sisters.”

We ask for prayers for the auctioneers, the potential buyers, or neighbors and for us as we entrust our farmland to others who will tend the earth that we have cherished for so many years.

ANGELA’S PROMISE by Sr. Pat Brockman, OSU in Second Printing
Sr. Pat’s latest book is a simple poetic work that takes us back to the original hope of St. Angela Merici, who promised to remain more vividly with her followers after her death. In this poem, we witness Angela’s movement from the culture of the profound mysticism of medieval 14th Century to the individualism of 15th Century Renaissance. The sweeping changes of time have carried the original hope of Angela throughout the past 500 years.

In the strength of that vision, Sr. Pat has assured us of Angela’s witness in our own times, the independence of women, a deepened connection to the Church, and the interweaving of women and men at work together in the world.

Sr. Pat was drawn to write this poem from her many years of research, her work with many Sisters and her profound love of Angela.

If you have not had a chance to purchase this popular book, an Angela’s Promise order form is available through our website: ursulinesofbc.org. Cost of the book is $10.00 plus postage.
Ursuline Sister Sharon Sullivan a Brescia Distinguished Alumna

Ursuline Sister Sharon Sullivan will become the ninth Ursuline Sister of Mount Saint Joseph to be honored as a Distinguished Alumna of Brescia University during a ceremony Oct. 27, 2017, in Owensboro, Ky.

“I was quite surprised,” Sister Sharon said. “I didn’t think I’d done anything to deserve it.”

The award was created to honor graduates who exemplify the elements that encompass The Brescia Difference: Respect for the Sacred, Devotion to Learning, Commitment to Growth in Virtue, and Promotion of Servant Leadership.

Leaving behind a career in the private sector and with the Girls Scouts of America, Sister Sharon earned her teacher certification from Brescia in 1975, and worked in public schools as a special education teacher. She eventually joined the Ursuline Sisters in 1982, and began ministering at Brescia in 1984 as director of residential life. Through the years she served as a special education professor, chairwoman of the School of Education and academic dean and vice president for Academic Affairs. She held that position until 2010, when she began a six-year term as congregational leader for the Ursuline Sisters.

Her time at Brescia helped to crystallize a call to service, Sister Sharon said. “I was a child of the ‘60s. We were doing good for others,” she said. “Brescia took that to a completely different level. I’m still trying to grow into that. It’s not that you are doing, but you are allowing yourself to be a tool for the love of God. Up until that I thought, ‘I was doing it.’ It’s much, much different. It is said so beautifully in the respect for the sacred.”

Sister Sharon returned to Brescia in January 2017. She is now an associate professor, coordinator of the special education program and a consultant with the School of Education on a variety of accreditation elements.

Sister Sharon is the ninth Ursuline Sister to receive the honor, joining Ursuline Sisters Mary Matthias Ward, Lorraine Lauter, Vivian Bowles, Ruth Gehres, Michele Morek, Joseph Angela Boone, Rose Marita O’Bryan and Dianna Ortiz. Ursuline Associate Mary Danhauer also received the award.

The 2017 Distinguished Alumni will be honored at a 6 p.m. banquet Oct. 27 at the new Moore Center on the Brescia campus.

Sister Mary Irene Cecil wins the Maple Leaf Award

Every year since 2000, at least two graduates of the former Mount Saint Joseph Academy or Junior College have been awarded the Maple Leaf Award, given to those who “personify the values of their Mount Saint Joseph education in contributions to their local faith communities, civic communities, and/or Mount Saint Joseph.”

Sister Mary Irene Cecil, a 1945 graduate of the Academy, was one of the 2017 winners honored on May 21.

She taught early grades, was reading supervisor in the Archdiocese of Louisville, and coordinated the staff for the Diocese of Owensboro. She taught religious education classes throughout the diocese, visited the sick in a parish, and along with another Ursuline Sister, developed a pastoral care program for the elderly sisters at Maple Mount.

Sister Mary Irene served the Ursuline community in leadership as a counselor and as congregational leader from 1980-88. Now in her 71st year as a sister, she still serves the sisters in Saint Joseph Villa with her gift of sewing.

Her nominator, Sister Mary Jude Cecil, called her a model of Saint Angela Merici. “She is an example of a dedicated, prayerful, contemplative, gracious and helpful Ursuline to all of us.”

Sister Mary Irene Cecil poses with her brother, Tommy Cecil, and Tommy’s daughter, Carolyn Sue Cecil A73, Alumnae Association president. Carolyn Sue won the Maple Leaf Award in 2015.
East Bridge Art Festival comes to Maple Mount in 2018

The former Mount Saint Joseph Picnic weekend Sept. 8-9, 2018, is the new home of the East Bridge Art Festival, which has been an extremely popular event in downtown Owensboro the past seven years.

The festival, featuring more than 70 artists and artisans, will move to Maple Mount in 2018 to start a new tradition among the beauty of the Mount Saint Joseph campus. Save the date!

Participation in Spiritual Direction Training Program still possible

If you were considering joining the next Spiritual Direction Training Program, but this year was bad timing, you're in luck. The class has been delayed to begin in October 2018 and run to July 2020.

The program, offered at the Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center, graduated its sixth class in August 2017. It teaches its graduates to serve as spiritual directors and companion people on their journey with God. The program will continue to accept participants throughout the coming year. Contact Sister Mary Matthias Ward, director of the Retreat Center, at 270-229-0200, or mary.ward@maplemount.org to learn more.

Ursuline Sister Cheryl Clemons brings her always popular women’s retreat to the Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center, Maple Mount, Ky., on March 16-18, 2018, discussing “Essential Questions: What Martha and Mary Can Teach Us.”

Stories about Mary and Martha of Bethany are found in both Luke’s and John’s Gospels. Most discussions of these two Gospel women focus on the frazzled worker Martha compared to her quiet, prayerful sister Mary. During this retreat weekend, women participants will be invited to consider these stories from a different approach: What life questions still relevant to us today do these two women evoke, and what answers might they suggest?

The retreatants will be invited to reflect on the following:

- How do we center our lives on Jesus?
- How do we care healthily for family?
- What is the role of friendship in our lives?
- How do we prepare for and face loss and/or death?

During brief presentations that peel back the layers of the Gospel stories, times of quiet reflection, group sharing and the celebration of the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist, retreatants will explore the links between Mary and Martha and their own lives.

For more information and to register, contact Kathy McCarty, 270-229-0206, or kathy.mccarty@maplemount.org.

The 2015-17 class of the Spiritual Direction Training Program graduated on Aug. 4, 2017, at the Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center, Maple Mount, Ky. The group completed a retreat week, then were blessed with holy oil before receiving their certificates in the Retreat Center Chapel. They are the sixth graduating class of the program, which began in 2004. Here, the graduates pose with their certificates, along with the team members. Front row, from left: Mary Oliva of Lexington, Ky.; Lisa Whitaker of Lanesville, Ind., and Steve Shulta of Paducah, Ky.; second row, Sister Margaret Link, an Ursuline Sister of Cleveland; Deacon John Fridley of New Baden, Ill., and Deacon Thomas Bradley of Des Moines, Iowa, ; back row, team members Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph Elaine Burke and Ann McGrew, and Deacon Victor Fromm.
The Hazy, Not So Lazy, Days of Summer

After a long, hot summer, fall is in the air with a bit of a nip and the leaves have started turning almost overnight. As we look back over the “hazy, lazy” days of summer, we realize they weren’t totally idle.

On June 20th, about 20 of the more able-bodied Sisters gathered to do some planning for the coming months, but also to listen to a presentation about the Saskatoon Mothers’ Centre located in Saskatoon’s core neighbourhood at Station 20 West. Shantell and Rahilah gave a lively presentation about the centre which has been called “a public living room where women meet to support one another.” This includes conversation, food, peer support and support for breastfeeding mothers. Pregnant, new mothers and grandmothers mingle and share their wisdom. The centre offers vital services but is always in danger of being shut down due to funding cuts.

From June 26th to June 30th Dr. Beverly Musgrave gave a retreat at St. Angela Merici Residence entitled, “Trust the Depth of God’s Presence.” Dr. Musgrave, a Clinical Psychologist, Pastoral Counselor and Spiritual Director from Halifax spoke to heart and soul about aging and the spirituality of aging. She cleverly wove the journey of aging into well-known scripture passages, making us appreciate them in different ways. Have you ever thought of seeing yourself as the person left in the ditch in the story of the Good Samaritan? Some of the topics covered were, “God Comes to us Disguised as Our Life”; “Living Our Unfinished Symphony”; “The Intersection of Loss and Meaning” and “The Creative Move into Aging.”

The retreat ended on the 30th and the next day all the Ursulines of Prelate celebrated Canada’s 150th anniversary with a picnic supper and a special prayer service. Then we held a Canadian Trivia Contest. Did you know that lacrosse, not hockey, is Canada’s official sport? An evening of games and fellowship rounded off the time spent together.

August brought a community meeting so various issues, such as leadership, properties, care of the sick and aged, could be addressed. August 15th was given over to celebration. The Feast of the Assumption of Mary is the day most of the Sisters made their vows, certainly worthy of celebration. We started with Mass, followed by brunch. The day was topped off with a BBQ supper at the Generalate for anyone able to attend.

Over the summer, some of the activities Sisters engaged in were birding, painting, and just enjoying nature, as well as a tour of a magnificent garden. Crafting, “spa” days and games took place on a regular basis at our retirement residence.

At this point in time, the retirement home continues to be in flux, as we are close to receiving our personal care home license. Soon afterwards, we will start accepting lay people into our residence. As we all know, change is not easy, and so we daily continue to face the challenges this new fork in the road is bringing us.

September is half way over and life continues. Early in September, Sr. Felicitas Drobig exhibited her art at an annual Art in the Park event. Four hundred artists showed their wares and many hundreds, including a fair number of her Sisters came to look and admire. It is always amazing to contemplate human creativity.

The 20 Sisters met again, this time on the Feast of The Triumph of the Cross. Fr. Paul Fachet, omi, talked about the artist Sieger Köder and especially about the image “Face to Face” which depicts a Roman soldier nailing Jesus (not seen) to the cross while a crowd looks on. This viewpoint puts the viewer into the position of Jesus as he is nailed to the cross. The picture and talk offered a lot of food for thought.

So, since the lazy, hazy days of summer were not exactly lazy, we can imagine that the next few months will continue bringing interesting situations and events our way.
An Update from the Toledo Ursulines

Sister Antoinette Celebrates Two Milestones in 2017

Sister Antoinette Cosentino has celebrated two special events in 2017. February 14, 2017 marked 80 years of religious life, and on June 15, 2017 she celebrated her 100th birthday.

Family and friends of Sister Antoinette came from near and far on June 10th and enjoyed an Italian feast together. On her actual birthday, Sister Antoinette attended Mass at the Ursuline Center with her community of Sisters, Associates and friends, followed by a luncheon, cake and ice cream.

In all, Sister Antoinette spent 68 years in the classrooms of Toledo, Perrysburg, Tiffin, Lima, and New Washington, Ohio, and DeWitt, Michigan. For many years, Sister Antoinette assisted in the Sacristy at Ursuline Center, and up until recently she offered communion once a week to residents at the Woodlands of Sunset House in Toledo.

“I just keep going. It’s beautiful, the blessings I’ve had,” she says. All these wonderful yet challenging days are happy memories now. “My friends keep me going with their prayers.”

Welcome New Associate

Clem’s relationship with the Toledo Ursulines began many years ago. Back in 2004, Clem and his wife Elizabeth had the opportunity and joy to move from New England to Toledo to be closer to their son and grandchildren. Clem was attending 8 a.m. daily Mass at a local parish, yet longed for a church that offered Mass later in the morning. At the time he was volunteering and driving three visiting Sisters from India where they needed to go. It was while chatting with those Sisters that Clem learned about the Ursuline Sisters and the later Mass offered at the Ursuline Center.

“This place has become the center of my life,” Clem says. “My spiritual life has taken three giant steps.”

Monthly Prayer Period for Creation

The Laudato Si committee is planning a monthly prayer service for all aspects of Creation. It will be held the first Monday of every month. Using a variety of prayer forms and contemplative silence, we will pray for the environment as well as the prayer requests sent out by the LCWR, including immigration, human trafficking and respect for life.

Prayer Shawls

Several years ago at an Associate meeting, Associate Karole Sigg suggested the idea of a “Prayer Shawl Ministry.” All liked the idea and it was decided we should do it.

Volunteers crochet or knit a shawl with love and prayers for the recipients. The shawls are blessed at a Mass. Anyone, man or woman, who has, or is, facing health problems would benefit from being wrapped in that Spiritual Love. There are currently 15 shawls to choose from.

In June 2017, new and present St. Ursula Junior Academy students were invited to an evening to learn about the Prayer Shawl Ministry. Sister Donna Frey introduced the evening by giving a brief history of the Prayer Shawl Ministry that was begun by the Associates of the Ursuline Community.

About 50 students, parents and school personnel gathered to share in this common experience. Ten fleece blankets were made and will be blessed in the fall of the school year and decisions will then be made as to who may be the first recipients.

Following the session, all were invited to make ice cream sundaes. This prayer shawl activity is an extension of the work of the Ursuline Associates and could develop into something more, involving other students of various grade levels.
Ursuline Sisters of Chatham

Celebrate, Flourish, Now

From June 11 to June 16, 2017, we Ursulines of Chatham, steeped in the Chapter theme, “Celebrate, Flourish, Now”, gathered at Villa Angela to reflect on our past four years and to establish our direction for the future. As the forty-four participants met daily, they were surrounded and lifted up by the prayer of the other sisters in the Community. In a time of uncertainty and vulnerability for many people and for creation itself, everyone was encouraged in the opening reflection by the words of Hopi Elders:

“The elders say we must let go of the shore, push off into the middle of the river, keep our eyes open, and our heads above the water. And I say, see who is there with you and celebrate... All that we do now must be done in a sacred manner and in celebration. We are the ones we have been waiting for.”

Each day was grounded in the morning’s prayerful reflection. There were opportunities for silence and for conversation in both small and large groups. Carefully considering our rich heritage and the call of the Spirit to ever deeper relationship, we arrived together at a set of values which will be our guide in the coming years:

- Rooted in a contemplative stance, we commit ourselves to moving forward in a spirit of collaboration, flexibility and transparency.
- We will attune ourselves to the movement of the Holy Spirit at all times and in all ways.
- We will be open and responsive to the needs and realities of changing times.
- We will transmit the Light of Christ with openness, inclusivity and clarity.

Our days together ended with ritual welcoming the newly elected Leadership Circle consisting of Sister Theresa Campeau, Community Leader and Sisters Noreen Allossery-Walsh, Pauline Maheux and Sheila McKinley, members of the Leadership Circle. This event was followed by a celebratory meal which was filled with moments of thanksgiving and appreciation for our days together and for all those who helped to make the time so rich and beneficial.

Jubilee 2017

“This opening verse of The Summons by John Bell began the Jubilee celebration on Sunday June 18, 2017. In this gathering we honoured the Jubilarians of 2017:

Sisters Rita Miller, Julma Dries and Jane Frances Stock – 75 years in religious life;
Sisters Margaret Pray and Vivienne Caron – 70 years in religious life;
Sisters May O’Hanlon and Elaine Weisgerber – 65 years in religious life;
Sister Margot Fish – 60 years in religious life;
Sisters Sheila McKinley and Marian Krauskopf – 50 years of religious life.

In the early hours of that Sunday morning, Sister Jane Frances passed peacefully from this life to celebrate her jubilee face to face with the God who first loved her into being and called her by name. During the Eucharist her corsage was on the altar as reminder of 75 years of faithful service.

- continued on next page
Company of St. Ursula, Group of the USA

In the Group of the USA, Marie Chantal Mukuluku renewed her temporary consecration for three years and Elena Taylor-Garcia made her first consecration for two years during the anniversary Mass in Quebec.

Sisters Margaret Mary Efkenan (Cincinnati) and Christine Pratt (Brown County) helped Mary-Cabrini Durkin bless this oak tree honoring the Company of St. Ursula on September 24. It recalls the spirituality of (the late) Kathleen Hallinan’s and Mary-Cabrini Durkin’s Irish ancestors, who listened to God’s voice in groves of oak trees. Many years apart (Kathleen in 1991, Mary-Cabrini in 1998), both women heard God’s call to the Company here, on the grounds of the Jesuit Spiritual Center.

Ursuline Sisters of Chatham, continued

Sister Noreen Allossery-Walsh welcomed the congregation on the glorious feast of the Body and Blood of Christ. The scripture readings were proclaimed by jubilarians, Sister May, Sister Margot and Sister Marian. Sister Marian reflected on the readings and Sister Sheila McKinley led the Prayers of the Faithful.

Sister Theresa Campeau, Community Leader, led the whole community in the renewal vows. After the celebration which ended with a joyful and spontaneous dance, we enjoyed a festive meal in the dining room with lots of opportunities for visiting and enjoying each other’s company.

As the prayer of renewal announced:

*Energized by the Risen Christ and empowered by the abiding presence of Your Spirit, we come together to renew our commitment to you. We do this inspired and strengthened by the courageous women who have gone before us and who walk with us today.*
Company of St. Ursula of Canada

Leadership in the National Conference
The Company of St. Ursula of Canada offers sincere congratulations to vice-directress Thérèse Bolduc on her re-election to the Executive Council of the Canadian Conference of Secular Institutes, an important responsibility within the Church of Canada.

The Executive Council, working with Cardinal Gérald Cyprien Lacroix, organized a Congress on Sept. 16 that seems to have retrieved the Conference’s former vitality after a period of diminished attendance at its annual meeting, resulting from age, illness, distance, and the cost of travel.

Cardinal Lacroix concluded this day of substantial teaching with an ordination during a Mass in the Sanctuary of the Cap-de-la-Madeleine. The new priest belongs to the secular institute Voluntas Dei. He is a physician born in Colombia.

It was a magnificent Congress! Its success probably led to the re-election of the Council members the following day, to serve through 2018. We offer our thanks and assurance of collaboration to them: Marcel Caron, priest of the Institute of Pius X, director; Raymonde Haché, o.m.m.i.; and our Thérèse Bolduc. We are proud of her!

The Council plans to gather as many secular institute members as possible in regional groups around Quebec, Montreal, Trois-Riviere, etc., to get to know each other and be well informed on recent and relevant Church documents such as the new Letter to Bishops about Consecration and Secularity, published by CICLSAL, and the coming Synod on youth, faith, and vocational discernment. Their dialogue continues with Cardinal Lacroix, a member of the Institute of Pius X, who represents secular institutes within the Canadian episcopal conference.

The Council members exemplify “Let’s set out! It’s our time!” – the theme for the 2017 Congress. They are on the road as the missionary disciples that Pope Francis asks us to be in this epoch of change.

Golden Anniversary
Celebrations in Quebec City marked the golden anniversary of the Company of St. Ursula of Canada, August 24-26. The President of the Federation, Maria Rosa Razza, and Vice-President Caterina Dalmasso came from Italy to join the festivities.
News from Brown County

Sr. Julia Chatfield Highlighted during Brown County, Ohio Bicentennial

Throughout 2018 Brown County, Ohio will be celebrating its bicentennial. The planners of the event are replicating the Chautauqua adult education movement made popular in late 19th and early 20th centuries. Chautauqua assemblies expanded and spread throughout rural America, bringing entertainment and culture for the whole community, with speakers, teachers, musicians, entertainers, preachers and specialists of the day.

As a part of reliving the Chautauqua experience, the celebrations will include three nights of music and portrayals of three significant figures in the history of Brown County. Sr. Julia Chatfield, foundress of the Ursulines of Brown County in 1845, will be the first of three historical persons represented. Ms. Kay Ornella, a 1969 graduate of the School of the Brown County Ursulines, will write the script and become Julia Chatfield for an evening in June 2018. The other two significant Brown County figures are Ulysses S. Grant and John Parker, an African American who was instrumental in the underground railroad.

Celebrating with our Jubilarians

75 Years
Sister Rita Miller (Chatham)
Sister Julma Dries (Chatham)
Sister Jane Frances Stock (Chatham)

70 Years
Sister Margaret Pray (Chatham)
Sister Vivienne Caron (Chatham)

65 Years
Sister May O’Hanlon (Chatham)
Sister Elaine Weisgerber (Chatham)

60 Years
Sister Margaret Golub (Tildonk)
Sister James Francis McDonnell (Tildonk)
Sister Margot Fish (Chatham)

50 Years
Sister Mairead Barrett (Tildonk)
Sister Joanne Callahan (Tildonk)
Sister Margaret O’Brien (Tildonk)
Sister Sheila McKinley (Chatham)
Sister Marian Krauskopf (Chatham)
Sister Christine Pratt (Brown County)
Sister Margie Efkeman (Cincinnati)

Let your light shine so people everywhere may see your good actions and praise God in heaven because of it. Matthew 5:16
**News from the Cincinnati Ursulines**

**Sr. Margie Efkeaman Celebrates Golden Jubilee**

Strains of “Wake the World with Dawning Joy” rang out as family members and friends of Sr. Margie Efkeaman gathered with the Cincinnati Ursulines on August 27 to celebrate Margie’s 50 years of vowed life. Fr. Dan Anderson, OFM, good friend of the community, presided and preached at the 11:00 a.m. liturgy. Members of the music group Margie sings with at St. Bernard Parish in Spring Grove Village led the gathered guests in song.

Margie greeted her guests with the call and response, “God is good – all the time! All the time – God is good!” celebrating God’s faithful love for her, which has animated her response to God’s ever-evolving call. The Scripture readings, intercessions, and song choices highlighted Margie’s prayer themes for this Jubilee year – God’s overwhelming goodness and her own justice journey.

“I was touched beyond words by the way Dan personalized the homily and the prayers throughout the liturgy,” Margie commented. “It’s clear that this was a prayerful experience for him as well as for me.” Following the homily, all the sisters present were invited to renew their own vows along with Margie. Several guests later remarked that that was quite meaningful for them.

Margie joined the musicians in singing the Communion meditation, “O God, You Search Me,” Bernadette Farrell’s interpretation of Psalm 139. This psalm has been foundational to Margie’s prayer throughout her religious life. The liturgy closed with a joyful “How Great Thou Art,” after which the celebration continued with a repast in St. Ursula’s Keller Center.

At the luncheon, Margie introduced her guests by groups of relatedness and encouraged them to meet and talk with someone they didn’t know or had not seen for a long time. The sound level and activity in the room suggested that they took that invitation to heart. Guests raved about the food provided by Power Inspires Progress (PIP), a training and jobs development program for individuals with barriers to employment. Word has it that some guests have already engaged PIP for their upcoming events!

Margie reflects, “This Jubilee has been – still is – a joyful celebration of all that has brought me to this point in my religious life, including many challenges as well as obvious gifts. As Paul describes in the day’s reading from Philippians 3, I’ve not yet reached the goal or finished the course. But having been ‘grasped by Christ’, I’m still racing – perhaps a bit more slowly, with age – toward the prize to which God calls me. I am deeply grateful for all my companions on this journey.”

**Sr. Ruth Ann (Mary Agnes) Hartmann Obituary**

Mary Agnes was born Dec 16, 1929, Cincinnati, Ohio, to Lawrence and Ruth Dulle Hartmann, and was baptized at Old St. Mary’s Church. She received her first Communion and was confirmed at St. Monica Church. Mary Agnes grew up with her siblings Bernard, Robert, Edith, Ruth, Lorraine, Lawrence, Richard and Thomas. She once wrote “if my life were a movie, the title would be “A Family of Eleven.” She has enjoyed her wide extended family of many nieces and nephews, and their families.

Early in life, while attending St. Monica School, she became interested in the Ursulines at St. Ursula Convent and Academy. Her sister Lorraine (Sister Mary Lawrence) entered the convent first, and with her parent’s encouragement, Mary Agnes entered the community Feb. 11, 1949. At her reception on Aug. 19, 1949 she took the name of Sister Ruth Ann, in honor of her mother and her devotion to St. Ann. Temporary vows were made on Aug. 17, 1951 and her final vows Aug. 17, 1954.

Sr. Ruth Ann graduated from Our Lady of Cincinnati College in 1959 with a bachelor of education degree, and from Xavier University in 1964 with a master’s degree in education. Throughout her life, she enjoyed watching sports, including SUA basketball and soccer games, and was a devoted Cincinnati Reds and Bengals fan.

She was a dedicated junior high school teacher at St. Francis de Sales; principal and eighth grade teacher at St. Henry (Dayton, OH); fifth grade teacher at St. Ursula Villa; and junior high teacher at St. Monica and Our Lady of Visitation schools. Her other ministries were house...
coordinator, directress of the temporary professed, superior of the Sisters of St. Ursula, and CCD teacher at St. John Parish in West Chester. Later ministries included assisting with the St. Ursula Villa pre-school class and after school care program and volunteering at Mercy St. Theresa.

A quiet place near the ocean is what she envisioned as her ideal and her motto was: “Have no fear for what tomorrow will bring. The same loving God who cares for me today will take care of me tomorrow and every day.”

Sr. Ruth Anne and her sister (Sister Mary Lawrence) were inseparable in life. She died at St. Margaret Hall, Cincinnati, Ohio on July 5, 2017, at the age of 87, after 68 years of religious profession.

Sister Mary Germaine (Mary Frances) Thorburn

Mary Frances was born on March 21, 1940, in Cincinnati, Ohio, to John and Alice Wessels Thorburn. She was baptized at St. Elizabeth Church in Norwood, where she attended grade school, made her first Communion and was confirmed. While still in grade school, she attended summer sewing classes at St. Ursula. It was at this time that she developed a love for the Ursulines.

Mary came to St. Ursula Academy for high school. Her love and devotion to the sisters continued to grow while she was a student at the Academy. Mary was an only child. The friendliness, warmth and small size of the community of the Sisters of St. Ursula appealed to her. She entered St. Ursula Convent on Aug. 28, 1957, just prior to her senior year of high school. On Aug. 17, 1958, she was received into the community and chose the name Mary Germaine due to her devotion to St. Germaine.

Following high school and her year as a postulant she made her temporary profession on Aug. 17, 1960, and her final profession on August 17, 1963. She graduated from Our Lady of Cincinnati College and received her degree in mathematics and Latin. In 1964, she was awarded an NSF grant to attend Catholic University of America, where she received an MTS degree in mathematics. She also attended Fordham University, where she earned a master’s degree in theology.

Sr. Mary Germaine was known in the U.S. and Canada as a pioneer in the study of St. Angela Merici’s spirituality, especially on the staff of the inter-Ursuline Angela Institute for many years.

Through the years Sr. Mary Germaine taught mathematics and religion at St. Ursula Academy and mathematics at McNicholas High School and Ursuline Academy in Springfield, Ill. She was also a GED teacher for welfare recipients at the Terrace Guild in Winton Terrace. This led to eight years at the Hamilton County Justice Center, where she was a deputy sheriff and prepared inmates for their GED. She was a teacher in the Permanent Deacon Program of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, giving retreats to deacon-candidates and their wives in preparation for their ordination. In addition, she was a spiritual director for the Cursillo Movement. She taught a course in spirituality at the Athenaeum of Ohio and served as a spiritual director to seminarians.

In her free time, she enjoyed calligraphy, making posters and signs, sketching pictures and floral designs. Her last years were spent at Mercy Franciscan West Park, where she served as Resident Council President for several terms.

Sr. Mary Germaine died at the age of 77 on Aug. 17, after 59 years of religious life, on the anniversary of her profession of vows.

News from the Cincinnati Ursulines, continued
From the Company of St. Ursula of Toronto

Happy Resurrection to everyone!

A hearty welcome from Toronto. May the spring of new life be a sign of Risen life waiting to spring up within us. It bought three enjoyable occasions. Three of our sisters from the Philippines and one from Saskatoon came to visit us. Elsie Tajon, Rosalinda Magbago, my youngest sister, Machie Pacis. Bernice Doratha from Saskatoon was also with us the month of April enjoying the weather, sightseeing, and travelling to different places.

Jacqueline Morin (1925 – 2017) who planted the Company of St. Ursula of Canada died June 5, “in a great calm,” according to Therese Bolduc, her faithful successor in leading the Company of St. Ursula in Canada.

Our sympathy and prayers to all those who knew her and to her family and friends. We all share the sorrow of losing someone who has been a significant person in our life. We owe her our own opportunity to follow our vocation in the Company of St. Ursula in Canada.

Thanksgiving – A beautiful time of the year when we think with grateful hearts of our families and friends, a time when we, especially, appreciate our many blessings and give thanks. Hopefully everyone will be able to relax a little and take the time to thank God for the many gifts. We pray that all peoples will use wisely the things God so generously gives to renew the face of the earth.

October 21 – Feast of St. Ursula. We join each of you in prayer for our members and in joyous celebration of her heart, mindful of St. Angela’s message “Let your first refuge be to have recourse to Jesus Christ.” We need him in a special way so that many decisions and changes need to be considered and made in our aging members, she assures us too, that “He will never abandon this Company till the end of time.” So in joyful hope and trust, we can look forward to our new spring, new life, and new growth.

Company of St. Ursula of Toronto
Secular Institute of St. Angela Merici
Eugenia Viernes
Directress

Happy Thanksgiving
from the Company of St. Ursula of Toronto!
Canada – October 9          USA – November 23

The Company of Toronto celebrated the 50th anniversary of its “mother Company” of Canada: May 23, 1967 - May 23, 2017. Sabina Abiaka (right) and Bernice Daratha (center) participated in the festivities in Quebec City August 24 - 26.
From the Company of St. Ursula of Toronto, continued

• Sr. Geraldine Kennedy participated in the Intercommunity Legal Conference at Bon Secour Retreat Center in Maryland held over Labor Day weekend. Geraldine is on the Steering Committee of the Conference.

• Congratulations to Sr. Anne Therese Dillen whose art was part of the exhibit, Creation, sponsored by the Kanner-Kurzon Gallery at Beth-El Synagogue. The exhibit ran through October 15, 2017.

• Sr. Anne Harte-Barry and Sr. Anne Marie Dixon, our Sisters from Ireland, visited the Eastern Province from September 18 through September 27th. They visited the Academy of Mt. St. Ursula and the Serviam building projects, toured the College of New Rochelle campus, visited with the Sisters at Andrus-on-Hudson, toured the Ursuline School, attended our Province meeting and visited with friends in New York City. It was a very enriching visit.

Ursuline Sisters of the Roman Union, Eastern Province

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Insieme. Together. We work as one and we become Life together.

(Hymn written by Julia Vigue Waterville, ME)

As the delegates to the 2017 Ursuline Education Conference sang the hymn, the words became reality. Ursuline educators from sixteen countries – Insieme. Together. Becoming aware that we do work together. Despite being separated by oceans and continents, we are joined by our common dedication and commitment to the charism of St. Angela. In this common mission, we find Life for ourselves and with our colleagues in our communities bring Life to our students.

Brescia House School, Johannesburg, South Africa was the host for this second Ursuline Global Education Conference, July 31-August 4, 2017. The theme of the conference: Ursuline Educators in the Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace was evident in those who presented, in the discussions, both formal and informal, and in the other activities included in the conference schedule.

Bishop Kevin Dowling delivered the keynote address Monday morning to open the conference. His presentation was entitled A Global Perspective of Working in the Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace. i.e. servant leadership with an educational perspective.

Drawing on the social teachings of the Church, Bishop Dowling used the experience of South Africa merging from decades of apartheid to show how reconciliation, justice and peace are difficult, but not impossible to achieve. What begins as a search for the Truth must end in justice for the victims, ensuring that they benefit from the resources of the earth or nation, able to live a life of dignity and decency as befits them as being created in the image of God.

The Bishop remarked: “I truly believe that the mystery of relationship is at the heart of all we are and do - relationships between individual people, in families, in schools, in communities, nations and - just as important – the relationship between all of us and the creation, the environment, the planet. And it is when relationship breaks down at any level that we see what seems to be happening increasingly in our world: violence in all its forms, wars, atrocities, genocide, unimaginable suffering for the vulnerable of our world, and destruction of the environment.”

A panel of Ursulines serving in South Africa and other African countries reflected on their experiences in working for justice and peace. The participants met in national groups to reflect on the Sisters’ messages and to give voice to what is happening in their own countries and to post comments onto the world map.

The title of Maureen Welch, OSU’s presentation was “Listening to the Signs of the Times: the UN’s agenda 2030 – A Pathway to Peace.” Drawing on her experience of working at the UN as a member of UNANIMA, Sister Maureen described the United Nation’s sustainable goals for the next decade and their connections to the Social Teachings of the Church.

She cited many statistics to illustrate the different worlds people inhabit on our planet. Some have access and use the vast majority of the world’s resources while others lack the basic necessities of life.

Sister also cited the results of a UN global survey, which sought input from people around the world on what they needed in order to live a better life. They could choose from 17 possible answers. The number one response was education, followed by health care. One person gave a reason for her choices: “Education allows you to dream, and it’s the only thing no one can take away from you because it is completely in your mind.”

She challenged the group to get involved in works of Social Justice, based on the teachings of the Church over many years and most recently by Pope Francis. “Think globally. Act locally” sums up our obligation as Christians and members of a global society. Sister ended her presentation with a familiar quote from St. Angela: Do something. Get moving. Risk new things.

Thursday morning the conference was held at St. Ursula’s School in Krugersdorp. Students and faculty extended a warm welcome to all proudly sharing their school with the group. Here too students joined the participants for morning tea giving us the opportunity to talk with them about their education and plans for the future.

Following a presentation on how schools and teachers can incorporate the message of reconciliation, justice and peace into established curricula, participants were given
When the new retirement home called Trinity Manor opened in Saskatoon in October 2014 many members of religious communities, which had diminished in numbers, along with other seniors, single or married, decided to make this their home.

Some began seeking volunteer jobs as a way of still being of service. For myself, an Ursuline of Bruno who had had experience in both school and parish ministry, working with families was still the priority.

Various needs soon became evident: Hospitals in the city had asked for Spiritual Care volunteers. This was an opportunity to minister to the sick and their families during various stages of physical, spiritual and mental needs in their lives.

Saskatoon also has a centre called Global Gathering Place where many immigrants and refugees arrive from various countries. They are often afraid, not having established new roots yet. They need people to befriend and assist them. Among other programs, Global Gathering Place offers a program called Bright Start where moms and pre-school children can gather. They play together, eat together, and form social groups which gives them a feeling of belonging and welcome. They begin to feel less lonely in a new country. Adults, apart from the children at separate times, receive English classes.

A third place of service is L’Arche Homes for the Handicapped. L’Arche welcomes many young people from various countries who want a GAP year between high school and university. Having had experience in accompanying people and also in living with handicapped people I was asked to take on that role for the young helpers. It is mutually beneficial.

The main part of retirement is to remain open, to continue to grow into one’s best self, to dwell in a GOD space where deeper than surface things can happen.

I describe my growth as moving from a “Chicken with its head cut off” action mode to a quiet “Beside still waters” mode. This comes from intention to deepen one’s way of living, often referred to as awakening.

Ursuline Education Conference 2017 in South Africa, continued

the opportunity to participate in a Lekogotia (an African term for a meeting place for village assemblies, court cases, and meetings of village leaders) and share what is currently happening in their respective schools. Notes from this discussion can be found on the UEN website as can most of the presentations given at the conference.

Friday morning before everyone departed, some for home, others to visit other attractions in South Africa, the closing prayer service brought together in celebration the experiences of the week. The delegation from each country was given its country’s flag to take home with them as a reminder of the conference. The American flag is making a tour of the schools who sent delegates to the conference: St. Ursula Academy, Cincinnati; Ursuline Academy of Dallas; Ursuline Academy, New Orleans; Ursuline Academy, St. Louis; Ursuline Academy, Wilmington; The Ursuline School, New Rochelle; and Sister Maureen Welch, OSU, Eastern Province.

Anne Robertson, Director of Technology at Ursuline Academy of Dallas had this comment after returning home from the conference, “I thoroughly enjoyed the conference, especially as it was in South Africa. It was well organized, spiritually enriching and thought provoking. It reinforced the need for us to help each other within the network. I am grateful for being given the opportunity to attend and for new friendships.”

Allison Hinkel, Theatre Director at St. Ursula Academy, Cincinnati said, “Attending the Global Conference was an experience that I’ll never forget. Representing my Ursuline school among Ursuline schools across the globe was a once in a life time experience. Hearing from representatives from Ursuline schools around the world not only opened my eyes to the differences in the issues we face as educators but also the similarities. Experiencing all South Africa had to offer, culturally & educationally, energized me for the next school year. I could hardly wait to share all my experiences with my colleagues and students.”

The next Ursuline Global Education Conference will be in 2020. The place is still to be determined.
Brescia University dedicated its renovated Moore Center for students on Sept. 8, 2017, which included comments by the man whose donation bears his name.

But Father Larry Hostetter, president of Brescia and an Ursuline Associate, also spoke of a different group of pioneers who had the vision in 1988 to build a student center at Brescia, even though the future was uncertain for the Catholic college.

“They took a leap of faith and raised the money to build this building,” Father Larry said before a large crowd. Among those pioneers whom he asked to stand were Ursuline Sister Ruth Gehres, who was president at the time, and her successor, Ursuline Sister Vivian Bowles. He also recognized Ursuline Sister Sharon Sullivan for her role in the master plan for the student center.

“We say we have one foot in the past and one in the future,” Father Larry said. “Saint Angela Merici and the Ursuline Sisters are our past. The vision of Saint Angela and the Ursuline spirit continues to inspire us.”

Among the speakers was Joe Moore, a 1974 Brescia alumnus who donated $1 million in 2014 for renovation of the campus center, and secured another $1 million in 2015 from the Martin Foundation in Nashville. Moore is semi-retired but still lends his expertise as a CPA to Martin Ventures, a Nashville-based venture capital firm. The Moore Center is named for Moore’s parents, Parvin and Mildred Moore.

“My parents stressed education and doing the right thing for other people,” Moore said. The words they lived by, from Proverbs 16:3, are printed on the plaque bearing their name in the Moore Center: “Entrust your works to the Lord and your plans will succeed.”

The Moore Center offers a dining hall, a place for students to relax, a gym, walking track and weight room, and a spirit shop.