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Vocation Voice - April 2022

1 message

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April 2022

North American Vocation Team (NAVt)

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Messengers of hope and joy

Dear Carol,

"The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy!" These are words from the Responsorial Psalm for the Fifth Sunday of Lent. By the time you receive this publication, we will already have heard the Palm Sunday Procession Gospel too: *"...the whole multitude of his disciples began to praise God aloud with joy for all the mighty deeds they had seen."* In the midst of our solidarity with many suffering parts of the world community, being messengers of hope and joy continues to be our call.

This is ever true in the ministry of vocations. On March 9, we held our third "Joyful and Alive" conversation with young adults via Zoom. Reflecting with videos of SSND Foundation Day anniversaries and sharing about our integration of prayer, community, and ministry, a very insightful and energetic conversation brought a sense of deep gratitude to our discerners and joy to our team. You will also see, through the following articles, other experiences of being invited and finding ways to share the joy of living our vocational call.

As we journey into the Easter season, may Blessed Theresa's words remind us of our call from the One who has captured our hearts, has done great things for us and lives among us: *"Those who are free in God will always remain joyful and alive."* (Letter #2)

Sister Carol Jean

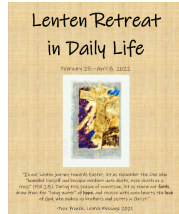
Did you know...

...that we continually discern the meaning of our vocation? Fr. Ronald Rohlheiser, OMI, writes, *"...discerning your vocation is not a matter of asking what you expect from life but rather what*

life expects from you.” It is a voice inside speaking for our talents, temperament, unique circumstances in life, religious sensitivities and even our wounds. Including insights from such personalities as Columnist David Brooks and Jungian therapist James Hollis, Fr. Rohlheiser succinctly reflects on “[The Notion of a Vocation.](#)” You’ll enjoy reading the article [here](#).

Marquette University Lenten Retreat in Daily Life

by Sister Stephanie Spandl



For six weeks (February 28-April 8), Sister Mary Swanson and I were each graced to accompany two students as part of Marquette University’s Lenten Retreat in Daily Life. The students, both undergraduate and graduate, committed to daily prayer and weekly spiritual direction. Sister Mary returned to meeting in-person for the retreat this year, while happily some students preferred to meet by Zoom, allowing me to once again participate by offering accompaniment from a distance.

Students were offered a theme and the option to experience a different prayer style each week, such as the Examen, Lectio Divina, informal conversation with God, and imaginative prayer with scripture. In getting a taste of spiritual direction, students not only received support in their current spiritual journeys, but also hopefully were opened to the spiritual support that it might offer them once they graduate and continue to mature in their faith.

Accompanying young women over an extended period of weeks like this is one of my favorite aspects of vocation ministry as it offers an opportunity to go deeper. As Sister Mary notes, “It’s a privilege to walk with them. I am amazed how the Spirit works in both our lives as I have been journeying through Lent with them.”

St. Clair Faith Formation

by Sister Jill Laszewski



For more than five years, 7th grade faith formation students from Immaculate Conception Church in St. Clair, Minnesota, have connected with our sisters from the Mankato campus, either at their school, or some years, in-person on campus. This year, the group also included 8th graders, who were unable to come last year due to the pandemic.

Because the format needed to be virtual this year, Sister Mary Kay Ash requested assistance from the vocation team with planning and facilitating the evening. Sister Stephanie and I were happy to help connect the students with sisters via Zoom.

In the span of an hour, sisters touched on a number of topics about SSND life and history. Through our sharing, we managed to address at least some of the questions students had submitted ahead of time. Afterward, the faith formation contact, Nancy, commented, “I truly appreciate your help in teaching the kids about ‘the people of faith.’ ”

Our thanks to all who collaborated on this event, sharing about our SSND life through thoughtful presentations and personal stories: Sisters Mary Kay Ash, Rita Wollschlager, Rita Ann Kipka, Bernie Welter, and Luann Jacobs!

Round Three at the Academy of the Holy Angels

by Sister Bridget Waldorf





AHA students gather for a group picture following classroom SSND presentations.

In what is becoming a regularly scheduled request, theology teachers at the Academy of the Holy Angels in Demarest, New Jersey, invited the vocation team to speak to their senior classes via Zoom for a third time this school year. Sister Stephanie Spandl and I presented to two class sections March 4, again offering an overview of religious life and more particularly, the unique charism and mission of the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

In her note of thanks, Kathleen Walsh of the AHA Religious Studies department wrote, “Thank you very much for yet again sharing so generously of your time. The students really enjoyed meeting you and hearing about vocations to religious/consecrated life. All of them commented on the sense of joy you have in your vocation and appreciated that you shared your story and experience with them. Thanks again for coming. It means a lot to all of us to stay connected to the larger SSND community.”

Presentations like these are a treat to do – and while we could stay with the exact content each time, we have been updating material along the way. (Our latest addition was this [Global Sisters Report video](#) which was shared in the February edition of *Vocation Voice*.) The highlight for me as a presenter is always responding to questions – and the students never fail to have something to ask. We are grateful for the opportunity!

Cristo Rey Senior Retreat *by Sister Bridget Waldorf*



CRD retreat leaders after a job well-done.



The CRD Class of 2022 are all smiles as they

Tears, laughter, good food, inspiring words, crummy weather (!) and heartfelt prayers were all a part of the Cristo Rey Dallas (CRD) Senior Retreat. I was privileged to participate in the retreat which took place March 6-9 at Sabine Creek Ranch in Royse City, Texas, about 40 minutes outside of Dallas.

The CRD Class of 2022 spent the days reflecting on “Where Have I/We Been?”, “Where Am I Now and Who Is God?” and finally, “Where Am I Going? What’s Next?”

I think what I appreciated most was the students and faculty who risked being vulnerable to share individual talks with all those present. Even the most once-shy freshmen students shared courageously – and isn’t that what we partly mean when we talk about “transformative education?”

Reflecting on the experience, CRD Campus Minister JP Ideker said, “Sister Bridget was a rich spiritual resource for our seniors and our adult chaperones. I pray that many more retreats feature her and our SSND in Dallas.”

This senior class is the last of the “O.G.s” (Original Group) for CRD – they were the

gather for retreat.

incoming class of freshmen when the first CRD class graduated in 2019!

A Tennessee Treat

by Sisters Urban Molitor and Jo Ann Volk



Sisters Urban Molitor and Jo Ann Volk (standing) shared a vocation presentation with the Confirmation students at St. Regina Catholic Church in Parsons, Tennessee.

On March 20, we had the opportunity to present a program on “What is a Vocation?” to the Confirmation class at St. Regina Catholic Church in Parsons, Tennessee. The program explored the question, “Is a vocation different from a job or a career?” Emphasis was on SSND history, our personal stories as SSND and some information on Franciscan brothers and priests. Before going, we spoke with Sister Carol Jean of the NAVT and received handouts, prayer cards and medals to share with the class. The class was composed of four students: Bryan (11th grader), Carlos (7th grader), Leslie (9th grader), and Marina (7th grader). After the class the pastor asked us to repeat the presentation in April for the Confirmation class at St. Andrew Parish in Lexington, Tennessee. We joyfully accepted!

Passing On the Word

by Sister Carol Jean Dust

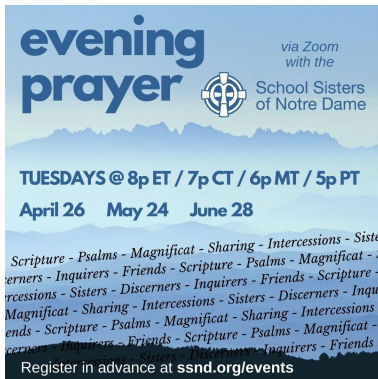


“Chosen – Broken – Forgiven – Decision” was the theme that set the stage for the Diocesan Youth Conference on April 2 in the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau in Missouri. Made aware of this conference by SSND serving in the diocese, Sister Joan Andert and I headed to the event, one of three at locations chosen to accommodate the large geographical expanse of the diocese. Clearly an added joy was the fact that Sister Joan had taught ten years at Notre Dame High School in Cape Girardeau in the very building that now stands on the property of St. Vincent Parish where the event was hosted. (A new school building was built in another location and still bears the Notre Dame name to honor our founding sisters.)

“Walk around and just be present to the youth of our diocese,” was the invitation from Bishop Edward Rice in his letter to religious, priests and deacons. “The important thing is that you are there – there for our youth – simply spending time with them. This is a simple yet powerful way to promote vocations to the priesthood and religious life.” That invitation to simply accompany was the only incentive we needed, and we were given the gift of meeting energetic youth, with committed youth leaders, building new relationships, and sharing informally the joy of being SSND. Thanks, SSND of the Springfield-Cape Girardeau diocese, for passing on the word!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Online evening prayer



Online evening prayer with the NAVT for young adults 18+ continues on the fourth Tuesday of each month through June. Held via Zoom at 8 p.m. Eastern (7 p.m. Central, 6 p.m. Mountain, 5 p.m. Pacific), our monthly online prayer experiences are a good way to support young adults in their spiritual journeys, no matter where they are located.

Sisters are encouraged to invite a young adult they know, and then offer to attend the prayer evening with them in support. Please [share this link](#) to learn more and register.

>[Download a flyer to print and post at your location](#)

>[Submit this announcement to your parish/school:](#)

Online Evening Prayer for Young Adults

Young adults 18+ are invited to pray online together with School Sisters of Notre Dame on the fourth Tuesday of every month from 7-8 p.m. CT. Learn more and register for the Zoom link at ssnd.org/events.

Living our Call as SSND: Transformative Education, Part 3 - Around the Globe



Transformative Education Part 3: Around the Globe

Women ages 18+ are invited to the third of our three-part online series about the SSND call as educators. Part 3 will focus on our SSND educational vision as it relates to ministries around the globe. Sisters Beatriz Martinez-Garcia, Mary Anne Owens, Paulina Raymond and Yvonne Nosal will be live presenters and Sisters Fidelis Nyul, Nentaweh Wakger, Monika Ulrik and Mara Frundt are providing pre-recorded presentations. Learn more about all the presenters [here](#). (View the recording from Parts 1 & 2 [here](#).)

This online event will begin **Tuesday, May 3** at 8 p.m. ET / 7 p.m. CT / 6 p.m. MT / 5 p.m. PT. Please encourage women to learn more and [register here](#) for the Zoom link by May 2. A recording will be made available the following week.

>[Download a flyer to print and post at your location](#)

>[Submit this announcement to your parish/school](#)

Calendar

[NRVC Webinar: Addressing Parental Concerns: Wisdom and Advice](#)

April 21, 2022

8 p.m. ET / 7 p.m. CT

Online (click title to register)

NAVT Discernment Day

April 23, 2022

Pray for all those discerning vocation ministry!

Vocation Fair

April 29, 2022

St. Louis University

St. Louis, MO

[Living Our Call as SSND](#)

May 3, 2022

8 p.m. ET / 7 p.m. CT

Online

[Evening Prayer with the NAVT](#)

[Evening Prayer with the NAVT](#)

April 26, 2022

8 p.m. ET / 7 p.m. CT

Online

May 24, 2022

8 p.m. ET / 7 p.m. CT

Online

Check out **Vocation Reflections** available on our website!

Feel free to share this resource with a potential discerner or anyone who may encounter one.

Visit us at ssnd.org



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