



# AM Associates News

Spring 2016

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Front row: Sister Betty Rosser, Associate Melvina DeMoss, Jubilarian  
Back: Area Coordinators: Sister Mary Beth Buettner, Associates Pat Etienne, Mary Lou Fish



## Baltimore Jubilarian Celebrates by Peggy Ann Russell

Sisters and associates gathered at Melvina DeMoss' skilled nursing care residence to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her First Covenant in Baltimore. In addition to those pictured, Associates Suzy Blackburn and Peggy Ann Russell, Director of Associates, were present.

On a cold January day in 1990, Associate Melvina DeMoss signed her First Covenant with SSND with Sister Christine Mulcahy, Provincial Leader of the then Baltimore Province, looking on.

The associate relationship had been a dream for many until that day, the first time Baltimore received associates. Sister Mary Agnes Klug was her companion. Melvina now resides in Annapolis, close to family members and Associate Suzy Blackburn who visits and keeps her informed and engaged.

She attended the Institute of Notre Dame for twelve years and the Notre Dame College for two years. Following the death of her father she left school to work to help support her family.

Two years later, she "married her childhood sweetheart" and began the career of Homemaker for her family of three sons and one daughter.

On the application to become an associate, Melvina described herself as "...willing to help where needed. Don't mind doing 'nitty-gritty' work." She proved those words to be true over the years as she participated at many meetings and events.

Her radiant smile welcomed the visitors to celebrate her 25<sup>th</sup> Jubilee and she watched on as others did the "nitty-gritty" work of serving and clearing refreshments.

## The MAP Experience by Suzanne Blackburn

There is a framed print in the chapel of the SSND residence in Douglas, Arizona. Our Lady of Guadalupe kneels over the skeletal remains of a migrant in the desert. When friends ask me, "How was your trip to the border?" I find myself returning to two words that might well describe the image in the chapel: haunting and inspiring.

I am haunted by the story of Silvestre, silent and stunned, carrying two backpacks, as he walked into the Migrant Center in Agua Prieta, the city in Mexico that borders Douglas. The night before, his wife Elsa had died suddenly within hours of jumping the fence to the US. Theirs was a common law union, so he could not travel with her remains to Tucson. I am haunted by the discarded belongings I saw in the desert: a child's shoe, a baby doll.

I am inspired by Hermila, a single mother of three, who works nine hour shifts in a seat belt factory standing all day. On Saturday, she rises early to cook breakfast for the guests at the shelter in Agua Prieta. Afterwards she volunteers at the Migrant Center. Saturday, she says, is her day to do something for God. I am inspired by Gail, a kindergarten teacher from Tucson, who with a group called "Samaritans" walks for miles in the desert on her days off to drop off water jugs for passing migrants. It's not easy. She suffers from a form of lupus, but, she says, "It hurts just as much sitting at home."

## Saskatchewan Associate Attends Human Trafficking Presentation

Dianne Poitras, associate from Saskatchewan, attended a talk on human trafficking by Joy Smith, a Manitoba Member of Parliament.

Joy Smith has worked for many years in this area helping victims to start a new life as survivors and bringing

## Are You Smarter Than an Archivist?

How much do you know about SSND?  
Test yourself and find out!

1. How old was Mother Theresa when she took her first vows? 38 or 27
2. What king was very helpful to Mother Theresa in the early days of the congregation? King Louis or King Frederick
3. In what year did Mother Theresa first accompany Sisters to America? 1847 or 1849

Answers found on page 6.

The opportunity to experience the mission of the School Sisters of Notre Dame at the border came through a program called "Mission Awareness Process" or MAP. MAP was initiated by the sisters of the Central Pacific Province to offer a "transformative" experience to "participants and all they encounter bringing all to a fresh awareness through prayer, community and ministry of our oneness, our interconnectedness and our interdependence."

Now MAP is extended to members of the Atlantic Midwest Province. Interested sisters, associates, and others are asked to fill out an application and, if accepted, are placed in contact with a sister at the chosen venue. My contact in Douglas was Sister Judy Bourg. We corresponded through e-mail, she answered my many questions, and sent articles, podcasts, and video links that helped to prepare me for what I was going to see and experience. I went to Arizona by myself, but the sisters are prepared to accommodate small groups. The SSND community at Douglas, Sisters Judy, Lucy Nigh, and Helen Jones, could not have been more welcoming and helpful. I treasure the time I spent with them.

One day Sister Lucy took me to Café Justo (Just Coffee) a coffee co-operative in Agua Prieta. She translated as Pedro explained the roasting process. I can't speak Spanish, but I recognized three words. "Somos una familia," Pedro said. I couldn't help but think how those words captured the spirit of the mission of MAP.

laws into effect for punishment of perpetrators.

She started the Joy Smith Foundation to help rehabilitate victims and to educate and create awareness of this crime. Her website is at: [www.joysmithfoundation.com](http://www.joysmithfoundation.com) and her email address is [info@joysmithfoundation.com](mailto:info@joysmithfoundation.com).

**In Memory**



Associate Ruth Goldboss

June 28, 2015

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Associate Dorothy Wachowski

August 11, 2015

## Tri-State Associates' Gathering at Villa Notre Dame in Wilton

By Sister Maureen Fleming

In late August, New York, New Jersey and Massachusetts associates and companion sisters gathered with those in Wilton for their annual weekend of Prayer, Reflection, and Renewal following our chosen theme: *Follow the Star in Your Heart Because Love Cannot Wait.*

Sister Charmaine Krohe challenged us not only to become aware of the myriad of issues calling for our attention as a community of committed Christians but, also, to be-

come more intensely involved with SSND in probing and working towards solutions.

Sister Eileen Reilly presented insight into Pope Francis' newest encyclical letter, *Laudato Si – On Care for Our Common Home.*

Our weekend culminated with Anita Cadella (Sister Mary Ann Bazata's, sister) proclaiming her First Covenant followed by our Associates participating by renewing their Covenant. It was so good to be together for this special time of treasuring and supporting one another in ministry.

## Chicago News



Pictured, from left: Ida and associate Katie Davis.

On September 13, 2015 the Chicago area associates hosted their annual re-covenanting ceremony at Marian Village.

The celebration of the 25th anniversary of Ida Milam's first covenanting made the day even more special.

During the November 7 associate gathering, S. Limeteze Pierre-Gilles spoke eloquently about her native Haiti.

She shared some troubling facts about Haiti:

- It is the poorest country in the Americas and one of the 3 poorest countries in the world



S. Limeteze Pierre-Gilles.



Pictured, from left: S. Kathleen Cornell, Provincial Leader; newly covenanted associate, Barbara Metzinger, and Peggy Ann Russell, Associate Director.

- One out of five children will die before the age of five
- There are no Medicaid, Medicare or National Health Care programs and no food stamps or Social Security

S. Limeteze's presentation was an eye opening experience for everyone in attendance. Each person present became more aware of just how many gifts we receive on a daily basis - gifts not everyone in the world receives.

After S. Limeteze's presentation, Barbara Metzinger pronounced her first covenant in the presence of S. Kathleen Cornell, Associate Director, Peggy Ann Russell.

## Western Canada Associates Celebrate Their History

By: Associate Virg Burant-Plosz

"If the dear God wants to call something into life, He also always gives us the means for that to happen."

Blessed Mother Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger

**ENQUIRING :**Our history began in the spring of 1995 when, after witnessing the Charism of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in action, one lady, led by the Spirit, asked Sister Harriet Schnurr if School Sisters of Notre Dame had Associates in their community. She replied, "Yes, in the East". The lady dared to ask, "Do you think there could be some here in Western Canada?" to which Sr. Harriet commented, "I will look into it."

**SEEDS :** The 'go ahead' was given by the Provincial Council. An interview was conducted, forms filled out, references and personal history submitted. So, in January of 1996 the lady began her Pre-Associate phase. Soon, more interested people were drawn to become Pre-Associates.

**NURTURING:** Sisters Harriet Schnurr, Annella Pek and Valentia Leibel offered to be our Directors, teaching us about the life of Mother Theresa, her Charism, and the history of the SSND as they branched out opening new missions, EVEN reaching Leipzig, Saskatchewan in Western Canada.

As part of the formation program, we were given our own books to ponder, such as "Trust and Dare," "You Are Sent," "Love Cannot Wait," and others.

**HARVESTING:** In June of 1997, the first Western Canadian Associate made her First Covenant and in the fall of that same year eight more followed. We kept grow-

ing until we were eighteen Associates from different areas of Saskatchewan.

**FRUITS :**Many gatherings were held each year dealing with various topics always including a retreat day and Re-Covenanting.

This year on June 20th, at our annual wind-up and BBQ, several Associates and Area Coordinators were able to attend, including Sister Joyce Lorentz. We formed groups of three to revisit our history, collected in four photo albums compiled by the first Associate. Pictures and comments were included from almost every gathering since 1996 to 2015. There was much discussion "re-memberings", laughter and joy. We ended the formal aspect of our day with the Re-Covenanting of an Associate.

A celebration continued outside as we enjoyed the relaxing, scenic view of the beautiful Qu'Appelle Valley, shared our BBQ and potluck meal in each other's company. Deo Gratias!!

*For those who have never been to the valley... a bit of interesting history. Qu'Appelle Valley - legend tells of a young Indian brave canoeing home from a hunting trip one evening when he thought he heard someone calling his name. "Who calls?" he asked aloud.*

There was no reply. "Qu'appelle?" he tried again, this time in French. Then came a reply from the hills on the other side of the placid, moonlit lake: "Qu'appelle?" It was his echo.

On his return home the following night he discovered the young maiden he was to marry died suddenly the previous evening. With her dying breath, she called out his name.



Area Coordinators and others enjoy a respite from the Gathering in Buffalo, NY.

Seated: Rosemarie Craven (ON), Sister Charmaine, Karen Didier (CH), Jean Fredricks (CT) Standing: Carol Sheldon (SK), Amy Rumano, Executive Director of Mission and Ministry, Faye Helmersson (SK), Peggy Ann Russell, Director of Associates, Hermie Schuster (ON), and Leslie Lopez, Director of Development.

## Associates Welcome New JPIC Member

There is a new addition to the AMSSND JPIC/Shalom office who will be a wonderful resource for the associates! Sister Allyn Horton, SSND, part-time Program Specialist, works in collaboration with the JPIC Director to promote education, advocacy and appropriate action on the part of the sisters, associates, staff, ministry colleagues, and students.

Her support will be critical to the Province's ability to further its efforts to integrate justice, peace, and integrity of creation into our work, and to pursue the four Province commitments flowing from the Acts of the 23rd Chapter.

Sister Allyn brings valuable gifts to this position. She recently ministered with Asylee Women's Enterprise and is currently co-chair of the Human Trafficking Committee. Sister Allyn is based in the Villa Assumpta office and she



presented to the Baltimore Area associates on February 27<sup>th</sup>. Consider inviting her to speak at one of your events during the upcoming year.



(Photos above and right) Florida Area associates and sisters gathered for a day of prayer and re-covenanting for those who were unable to attend the retreat and re-covenanting earlier.



Baltimore Area Coordinator Mary Lou Fish (center) is shown with Sisters Frances Angermaier (left) and Linda Stilling (right) hosting one of the events she organized. Mary Lou has completed her term as area coordinator and her organizational skills will be greatly missed.



Sister Susan Czaplicki, Councilor, embraces the children of the newly covenanted associates in Waterdown, Canada, following the liturgy.



## **“Right Thing To Do” by Peggy Ann Russell, Director of Associates**

As Sisters Carleen Cekal and Mary Oliver drove me to the West Palm Beach Airport to return to Baltimore from the Associate Re-Covenanting Retreat week-end, we heard a small “beep” sound. Carleen asked if we thought the sound came from our vehicle or the one passing very close. We agreed it was from our van. Carleen confirmed it with a glance at the dashboard indicators. We had a flat tire - a very flat tire!

Immediately, Carleen called AAA, explaining that we not only had a flat tire but a passenger who would miss her flight. Having just survived the scare of Hurricane Erika which had lost its strength, we smiled at each other knowing all would be well.

Suddenly, a handsome young Latino man was standing beside us offering his assistance to change the tire and introducing himself as Carlos. We explained that AAA was on the way but the more pressing problem was finding a taxi to take me to the airport. Carlos explained that his brother was in the car and had just left the hospital following an appendectomy. He offered to take me to the airport saying it was not far and his brother would “be ok to do this, also.” As Carlos carried my luggage to his vehicle, we copied his license tag in an effort to be prudent in the midst of gratitude. On the way to the airport, Carlos shared that he works for a hotel as a laundry technician and his brother for a landscaper until he takes courses to learn English. His brother spoke with hand gestures.

This was an affirmation that registering for a Spanish course with Sister Linda Stilling at the University of Notre Dame of Maryland had been a wise decision. Following the words of Sister Mary Maher at the Gathering in Buffalo that everyone should speak two lan-

guages, I had followed up on a desire that had nudged me for years. Perhaps, in the future I would be able to speak a few welcoming words to someone newly arrived.

Carlos refused the money I offered him at the airport saying, “No, right thing to do.” When I pressured him to take it, he again repeated, “No, right thing to do.” I was disappointed that I could not show my appreciation for his generous act. Suddenly a thought occurred to me. I said to Carlos, “This money is for a celebration dinner for you and your brother, to celebrate his coming home from the hospital.” He pondered that thought, looked into the car at the brother resting his head back on the seat and replied, “OK, for celebration, ok.”

And, why am I choosing to share this isolated experience with all of you? Because I believe we are called to share how our lives have been touched and made better by immigrants. The next time a discussion comes up about immigration, please share my story or one of your own because it is the “right thing to do!” Gracias!

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### **Answers to “Are you Smarter Than an Archivist?”**

1. 38

2. King Louis

3. 1847



The prayer bowl was made by Sister Katie Mo of Florida. The names of the sisters, associates, and other prayer intentions for the area are shown on beaded string. Each day a name is pulled and remembered in a special way in prayer. When all names are pulled the names are placed back in the bowl to start anew. Each sister and associate in the area has one and now the Associate Office has one. It will be on display at the annual meeting of area coordinators in Wilton in June.