

# Joy in Living the Gospel

## Women Religious in the Diocese of Covington

Fall 2024

**from Sister Marla Monahan, SND, Vicar for Religious**

It was wonderful to be together on Friday, June 7 for our **annual picnic for women religious** hosted by the diocese and Serra Club. There were over 100 of us in attendance for our beautiful and fun day together. We enjoyed the great music, delicious lunch, Bingo and prizes, gift bags, and the beautiful day on the river.

**Celebration of 2024 Jubilarians on Saturday, October 12**, Noon lunch with Bishop Iffert. This luncheon is for sisters celebrating 25, 50, 60, or 70 years of religious profession. Lunch will be at the Metropolitan Club. Our religious superiors will also join us. Pictures of our 2024 jubilarians can be found on the Covington Diocese website on the Office of Vicar for Religious page.

<https://covdio.org/vicar-for-religious/>

**World Day of Consecrated Life on Saturday, February 1**, 10:00 am Mass at the Cathedral with Bishop Iffert. Reception to follow at Bishop Howard Memorial Hall. All are welcome.

**United in Prayer** This prayer for peace occurs every other month at 6:00 pm in Covington's Main Strasse at the Bell Tower. The dates for this year are: October 14, December 4, February 4, April 1, and June 3. All are welcome. The prayer is live-streamed if you can't be there in person.

Pope Francis' prayer intention for August 2024 is timely for us in this election season: "that political leaders be at the service of their own people, working for integral human development and the common good, taking caring of those who have lost their jobs and giving priority to the poorest." The video for this prayer intention on the USCCB website can be a good reflection for us during this election season:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Asvx-GE8Y&t=12s>

---

*"LOOK TO THE PAST WITH GRATITUDE... LIVE THE PRESENT WITH PASSION...  
EMBRACE THE FUTURE WITH HOPE..."*

*~POPE FRANCIS*

**The Season of Creation**, September 1 through October 4, offers “individual believers and communities a fitting opportunity to reaffirm their personal vocation to be stewards of creation, to thank God for the wonderful handiwork which he has entrusted to our care, and to implore his help for the protection of creation as well as his pardon for the sins committed against the world in which we live.”

*-Pope Francis*

## SJW



Some of the Sisters of St Joseph the Worker participated in the National Eucharistic Congress this summer. It was a grace-filled

week. The sisters attended conferences, talked to many people about religious life, and enjoyed being together in Indianapolis.



Left: Sr. Patricia Jean;  
Right: Annie, Mother Christina Marie, Sr. Patricia Jean, Sr. Mary Faustina



The highlight for everyone was the Eucharistic procession in downtown Indianapolis. It was a beautiful expression of our faith. 60,000 people attended the Congress.

Our postulant, Annie, was accepted into the Novitiate on August 15th. The religious name she chose is Sister Philomena Marie. She is now in her canonical novitiate year.

The new school year has begun at St Joseph Academy. This year we have one or two new students in each classroom. We also have some new teachers, and we welcomed our new pastor, Father Eric Andriot.



*Like burning incense,  
our prayers rise up to You,  
O Lord*

## OSB



Sisters Cathy Bauer and Dorothy Schuette spoke to the parishioners of St. Aloysius Gonzaga, St. Antoninus, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Martin of Tours and Our Lady of Lourdes in Cincinnati, OH June 22 and 23 to raise awareness of and support for missions of Benedictines and Cistercians around the world. Specifically, they invited their audiences to participate in the missionary efforts through AIM, the Alliance for International Monasticism.

Sr. Cathy shared her experience of going to Tanzania several years ago with an AIM mission group. Sr. Dorothy related how our U.S. communities have been assisting the Ukrainian Benedictines in these turbulent times. Both sisters were warmly received by the gracious and generous people who heard them.

June 3, 2024 marked the start of the celebration of 165 years since our foundation in Covington. On July 11, Feast of St. Benedict, many of our oblates joined us for Mass and dinner.





Bishop John Iffert and the Serra Club hosted the women religious of the diocese on a BB Riverboat on this wonderfully cool June day.

### Pies in July Sale

The Fourth of July Red, White and Blue pie sale was a success. We were able to donate \$900 to the Emergency Shelter of Northern Kentucky. Many sisters were involved in the project, including apple peelers, crust crimpers and pie assembly. It was a great community event for us. We will have another pie sale on November 26 for Thanksgiving.



Sr. Kimberly Porter attended Vision for the Journey: Living into Our Emerging Future, a gathering of Benedictine sisters



55 & under from the United States and Mexico at Sacred Heart Monastery in Yankton, SD.



Sr. Cathy Bauer attended the Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis, IN. She shared a booth with the Benedictine sisters from Beech Grove, Indiana. They enjoyed interacting with those attending the Congress and sharing stories of their experiences of the Eucharist.



Our Benedictine Jubilarians celebrating 70 years, left to right: Sister Ann Middendorf, Sister Rosemary McCormack, Sr. Denise Gough (who died on August 25), and Sister Martha Walther.

Standing: Sister Aileen Bankemper, Prioress and Bishop John Iffert.

## CDP

The Sisters of Divine Providence have had a busy and meaningful summer. In June we had the great blessing of honoring our Sister jubilarians. Celebrating 70 years were Sisters Francis Margaret Maag, Judith McMahan, Viola “Micki” Martin, and John Margaret Walsh. Celebrating 60 Years were Sisters Mary Bezold, Alice Gerdeman, Stephanie Killeen, and Margaret Stallmeyer. We celebrated with a Mass, a beautiful sharing from each jubilarian, and a delicious meal. We also featured each one in a video in which they reflect on the gift of their religious life and share some wisdom too. You can watch these videos on our Facebook page and on our YouTube channel, CDP-TV.



Following our jubilee celebration, we had a Provincial Chapter, and part of that included conversations about hope, mission, sharing our charism, and deepening our connections with each other. It was a grace-filled experience, and God’s Providence was certainly with us. As part of our Chapter, we also elected a new leadership team: Sisters Barbara Rohe, Provincial, Lynn Stenken, Vicar and Councilor, Margaret Stallmeyer, Treasurer and Councilor, Mary Cashman, Councilor, and Leslie Keener, Secretary and Councilor. On August 3rd, we had a lovely prayer service, during which we installed the new team and missioned each sister with the words: “Be a messenger of hope.”

## Newsletter

Leadership Team, Left to right: Sisters Leslie Keener, Margaret Stallmeyer, Barbara Rohe, Mary Cashman, Lynn Stenken



Missioning below



In July, several Sisters and Associates made a retreat with Fr. Timothy Schehr. The retreat, entitled “Listening to God’s Loving Word,” was an exploration of John’s Gospel. The retreatants appreciated this sacred time.

In August, several of the members of our Leadership Team were able to participate in the Leadership Conference of Women Religious Assembly in Orlando, Florida. They appreciated the speakers, the prayers, and the opportunity to connect with other sisters from so many different communities. What a hope-filled, energizing gathering!



We also celebrated the end of summer with a party! At the end of August, the Sisters of Holy Family Home, along with some other sisters and lay coworkers, came together for a festive luau-style party. We all wore Hawaiian leis, enjoyed delicious snacks and drinks, and played games.

Several of us may have been soaked by water balloons, but all’s fair in communal love and luaus. We are so grateful for our clever Holy Family coworkers who planned such a beautiful party.

## SND

Our SND summer was filled with a variety of activities, one of the first being on June 22 when we celebrated our sister Jubilarians.



Jubilee of Grace - 70 Years:

- Sr. Mary Jean Ann Luken
- Sr. Mary Helen Joseph Riehle

Iron Jubilee - 65 Years:

- Sr. Mary Sharron Goller
- Sr. Mary Noella McEntee
- Sr. Mary Joell Overman

Diamond Jubilee - 60 Years:

- Sr. Mary Catheryne Geoppinger
- Sr. Barbara Marie Hurlander
- Sr. Mary Patrycia Sweeney
- Sr. Mary Lourita Warken

Golden Jubilee - 50 Years:

- Sr. Patricia Marie Tyree

Our July Fourth Festival was once more a wonderful time to meet up with family and friends. This year we celebrated our 102<sup>nd</sup> festival at Notre Dame Academy. The fourth of July is our major fundraiser and friend raiser.



On July 15 our sister drivers participated in a driving assessment program through the Christian Brothers' Program. Always a bit stressful and always nice to have it behind us.

Of course, while not only watching the Olympics the sisters at the Heights participated in their own SND Olympics. The four fun events that occurred were Football Toss, Javelin Throw, Swim Relay and Balloon Hit. There were two teams - Red and Blue, with the Blue Team taking the gold while everyone won with lots of laughter and friendly competition!



We celebrated Sister Mary Joenita Schlueter's life and death on August 2. Sister was born on March 27, 1944 and died on July 30, 2024 at Lourdes Hall. Sister Joenita spent her ministerial life serving in health care at St. Charles, St. Claire, and at our Lourdes Hall. Her beautiful smile and gentle person will be missed by all.

On August 4 we celebrated the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of landing in the United States. The first sisters landed in the New York Harbor on the Fourth of July, 1874. At the request of Bishop Toebbe, sisters came to Covington to teach at the German parish of Mother of God. To celebrate the anniversary, Bishop Iffert, Bishop Foys, priests and deacons of the diocese, along with the families and friends of the sisters attended Mass at Mother of God Church followed by a reception at the Heights. It was wonderful seeing so many of you who attended helping us express gratitude to our Good God.



From August 13 to 23 Sr. Christine Syombua and Sr. Therese Marie Nabakka from our East Africa Delegation visited with us in Covington. The Sisters have spent the past month visiting the four SND regions sharing about their ministries in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. The sisters visited some of the schools and parishes in the area. On the evening of August 15, our sisters, associates, and friends of the delegation gathered for a short program outlining all the good work being done in East Africa. Our sisters who helped to found the Ugandan Mission in 1995 were particularly proud of all the good being done.



During the coming months, the last of our sisters will be moving from St Joseph Heights. In 2022 we discerned that our healthcare would move from St. Joseph Heights to our sponsored ministry, St Charles Community. Currently 34 sisters live on the St Charles campus. Of the ten sisters remaining at St Joseph Heights, some will relocate to healthcare settings, and some to the St. Charles Community, living at the lodge. In a collaboration with the Benedictine sisters, some sisters may reside temporarily at St Walburg Monastery until there is sufficient space at St Charles. The sisters expect to be out of the building by the end of October.

The Julie Learning Center will remain at St Joseph Heights for the 2024-25 academic year, while their board considers options for the future. The SND regional offices will move to an as-yet-undetermined new location during the coming year. The St. Charles board is reviewing several feasibility studies and has not yet decided as to their future plans regarding their use of the Heights property.

## CP

Our Passionist Sisters remain in prayer for us, our diocese, and our world.



*Thank you to our Newsletter contributors: Sister Shauna Bankemper, SND,  
Sister Leslie Keener, CDP, Becky Motley for the OSBs, Mother Christina Marie Murray, SJW*