129 Sisters Join IHM Assembly-Via Zoom

One hundred and twenty-nine sisters participated at the IHM Assembly via Zoom, our first totally online Assembly, on July 25, 2020. The Assembly meeting can be viewed at: https://tinyurl.com/yxkunrwe The following is a summary of the meeting.

The meeting began with prayer focused on “Meeting to consider where we stand and who we are.” The prayer was prepared by Sister Denise Lyon, IHM.

At 9:30 a.m., Advisory Board chair, Sister Jane Snyder, welcomed all participants, including the Sisters of St. Casimir leadership team.

President’s Address

Sister Ellen Maroney addressed those present and viewing via live stream and closed circuit. Welcoming everyone and the Sisters of St. Casimir leadership team she expressed gratitude for many blessings received, challenges from the Mid-Term report, and the recommendations for changes to our constitutions. She thanked the Sisters of St. Casimir for their presence and for their report to the assembly, those who planned the meeting, and the tech committee. She noted that an affirmation will be sought for the elected members of the preliminary chapter planning committee later in the day. Sister Ellen also reminded us that our deceased sisters from this past...
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year would be remembered with a special prayer at the conclusion of the meeting.

Sister Ellen shared the poem, Blessing for Those Who Have Far to Travel, by Jan Richardson:

If you could see the journey whole, you might never undertake it, might never dare the first step that propels you from the place you have known toward the place you know not.

Call it one of the mercies of the road:
that we see it only by stages as it opens before us, as it comes into our keeping step by step. . .
Be faithful to the next step; rely on more than the map; heed the signposts of intuition and dream;
press on beyond distractions, beyond fatigue . . .
Offer the gift most needed – the gift that only you can give.

Sister Ellen related this poem to the first steps of our founders and to us today and how each of us offers the gift most needed – the gift of ourselves, with many examples noted in the Mid-Term report and so many more unrecorded there. She spoke of the present threat of the coronavirus that has forced us to adapt to a new normal. She quoted graffiti on a wall in Hong Kong that read, “We can’t return to normal because the normal we had was precisely the problem,” indicating the present social unrest rooted in racism. She asked, “So what is the message and meaning of this time of suffering and upheaval for us as individuals and as a congregation of religious women?” Sister Ellen offered, “I don’t have answers, just more questions about the deeper meaning and impact of this pandemic and the social unrest due to our failure as a nation to address the root cause of our systemic racism. I do think that we need to understand our responsibility to help heal our communities, to help heal one another. Our faith and our experiences of individual and congregational darkness give us the light we need to be signs of hope and peace and to begin to break down barriers to understanding and communication. Our witness is critically needed today and we need to find ways to expand our efforts. If we can’t attend meetings or be a public voice, then by phone calls, letters, texts, poetry, art, and music. Our voice, our presence, our participation with and for others in whatever ways we can is necessary. People look to and for us to stand with them. We cannot be silent or stand on the sidelines. We need to claim our place as leaderful women religious wherever we are and whatever we do.”

Sister Ellen concluded with this encouragement: “Perhaps Jan Richardson’s words about the journey forward into that unknown future can help us navigate these uncertain next steps: Be faithful to the next step . . . rely on more than the map . . . heed the signposts of intuition and dream . . . press on beyond distractions, beyond fatigue . . . offer the gift most needed . . . the gift that only you can give. Theresa Maxis shared her passion and action, her soul, so that others would have a better life. Let us not do less, for the world needs us, all of us, each of us, today more than ever.”

Mid Term Report

Sister Mary Ellen Higgins introduced the Mid Term Report discussion. She noted that the leadership team used the IHM Direction Statement as a foundation for the report on the congregation's initiatives, planning, and decision making these past two years. She remarked that these times call us to be whole and holy and that the world and national events of the pandemic, racism, and social division impel us to question and to grow both personally and as a congregation.

Questions for small group discussion:
1) In responding to this report, what enlightens/challenges-guides our journey to the future life of the congregation?
2) In these next two years, where and how might we “join with others in seeing and being the light that shines through the cracks of broken hearts”?

Participants broke into small groups for discussion. A summary of these discussions will be posted to the sisters’ webpage.

Task Force 1 Revisions to IHM Constitutions and Supplement

Sister Anne Munley addressed the work of Task Force 1 (Sisters Kathryn Clauss, Margaret Gannon, Janet Milan, Anne Munley, Judy O’Brien, and Mary Reap). She noted:

• We all recognized that this portion of our Constitutions (Our Call and Our Mission) is foundational to our IHM identity, shared mission and collective meaning.

• So, before we began to write we had several Zoom meetings in which we explored our IHM Call and Mission in the context of our Alphonsian heritage and the theology of mission.

• We realized that we have grown in our understanding of mission and of the vital balance between contemplation and action.

• We resonated with the Alphonsian spirit of God’s lavish and generous gifts.
unconditional love and wondered together about what this love impels us to be and do now and into the future.

- We talked about the enduring value of being a presence of love in all that we are and do.
- We shared what touches our hearts and gives meaning to our call as IHM sisters.

And we agreed that we would approach our writing task through the lens of the following concepts and values:

- Love as the meaning of our lives
- The power of presence
- The call to be contemplative missionaries
- The call to communion
- The call to prophetic engagement with the redemptive mission of Jesus
- The values of relationship, partnership, collaboration and interconnectedness with God’s people and all of creation.

Feedback from small group discussion will be sent to Sister Kathryn Clauss.

Following a lunch break, Sister Kathleen Lunsmann of the Assembly planning committee facilitated the afternoon session of the meeting. Sister Kathleen thanked Sister Dora Vizcarra for translating into Spanish the revised Constitution and Supplement sections.

2020 IHM Jubilarians

Sister Ellen Maroney asked sisters to support the events for the virtual annual St. Joseph’s Center fundraiser.

She then introduced a video in celebration of IHM Jubilarians. The show can be viewed at: https://animoto.com/play/thi0FogbzmlkD8qZnlhf7g

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Task Force 3 Revisions to IHM Constitutions and Supplement

Sister Jean Louise Bachetti addressed the work of Task Force 3 (Sisters Mary Elaine Anderson, Jean Louise Bachetti, Christine Miheilich, Susan Hadzima, Mary Ellen Higgins, Kathryn Kurdziel, Mindy Welding, and Kieran Williams). She began with a breath prayer noting that each meeting of the Task Force began with breath prayer. In part Sister Jean Louise noted:

Task Force 3 was charged with the task of revising the sections in both the Constitutions and the Supplement called "Our Growth." The title, "Our Growth," was the hook that took this task force in pursuit of articulating what the journey of growth and personal and communal transformation really means in this evolutionary time. The very first sentence of the Constitutions begins, "Our religious formation is a process which is personal and lifelong." We chose the new title for these sections of our revised Constitutions and Supplement, "Call to Transformation."

She continued, “It is our hope that the work we have done with the Constitutions evidences a more holistic approach while at the same time respecting the legal aspect of adhering to canon law.”

Sister Jean Louise reviewed the sections of the Constitutions noting the Task Force’s proposed revisions while citing justifications for the changes. She remarked that advice from Sister Sharon Holland, IHM, our canon law consultant, was sought and heeded.

She continued with an explanation of their work on the related sections of the Supplement. She concluded that it is hoped that the revisions describe and elaborate on key concepts of our lived reality and offer us an aspirational invitation to engage in our personal and collective ongoing transformation toward wholeness, interconnectedness, welcoming new members, expansion of our charism through our relationships and emerging consciousness.

Small group discussion followed.

Comments and recommendations from small groups will be sent to Sister Mindy Welding.

Election of the Preliminary Chapter Planning Committee

Sister Rose DiFluri, chair of the Election Committee, announced the election of the members of the Preliminary Chapter Planning Committee: Sisters Mary Elaine Anderson, Kathleen Burns, Nancy Hawkins, Angela Kim, Kathleen Lunsmann, and Grace Surdovel.

Sister Rose asked for an affirmation of these elected members by Assembly participants. All affirmed.

Presentations by Sisters of St. Casmir Leadership Team

Sister Regina Dubickas, SSC

The SSC Chapter theme continues to resonate in the hearts of the sisters and pervade many of the decisions we make. “Together for a great love, love for God, love for one another, and love for the world.”

We are blessed to have some of our IHM Sisters with us on our committees:

- Ellen Maroney, Terri Jordan, and Nancy DeCesare serve as trustees on our SSC Trust.
- Mary Persico serves on our committee overseeing the Catholic

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identity and mission of Holy Cross Hospital/Sinai Health System.
• Fran Fasolka serves on the board of the Mother Maria Kaupas Center in Mount Carmel, PA, Mother Maria’s first mission.
• Ann Monica Bubser has served on the board of Villa Joseph Marie High School these past 10 years.

Sister Elizabeth Ann Yocius, SSC

“Hold on to me as we go. As we roll down this unfamiliar road. Just know you’re not alone. Cause I’m going to make this place your home.” This refrain from the song, “HOME,” sung by Phillip Phillips, describes what we, as a community have been working on with and for our Sisters living at Franciscan Village for the past six years. Our Quality of Life Committee had been meeting monthly prior to the lockdown, to share experiences and ideas for how to respond to the needs of our sisters and to help make the Village more like home.

The months of isolation have become harder for our Sisters at the Village, especially for those in Assisted Living and in Skilled Care. Sisters and visitors have become creative with visits outside their apartment windows, celebrating birthdays with gatherings on the lawn, balloons, yard posters, songs, and blessing. Of course, our Sister Johanne Marie was ready with her sign that read: “Please release me, let me go.”

As a way of expressing our gratitude to the staff at the Village and at Holy Cross Hospital, we delivered delicious pastries to them. After several months of box lunches alone in their rooms, we had surprise restaurant meals delivered to all our sisters at the Village.

Little reminders of love and support are very meaningful because in the words of Philip Phillips, “we are not alone, we are all making this place (the Village) our home.”

Sister Margaret Zalot, SSC

"Strengthened by our life of prayer and supported by our sisters in community, we journey toward the gospel vision of a peaceful, loving and just world." This excerpt from our mission statement continues to provide direction for us during these challenging times. One aspect of journeying toward this Gospel vision is to address the unconscious racism that is a part of our lives and the lives of those around us. We have been trying to do so over the years, but there is so much more to be done.

• In the late 80’s when “white flight” took place in the area in which we live, we made the conscious decision to remain in our neighborhood. Our Motherhouse, high school and hospital remained and continue to be a stabilizing presence in the community.

• Life here is not without its challenges. In fact, this summer the headquarters for the Southwest Organization Project, SWOP, the neighborhood organization to which we belong, was vandalized and small businesses were destroyed.

All of this took place just 4 blocks from where we live. There is an underlying cry in our city and in our nation to face the unconscious racism that pervades.

• Our very diverse area of the city is also home for Maria High School, Holy Cross Hospital, and Catholic Charities at the St. Casimir Center. Needless to say, we are proud of the way these three institutions continue to serve the people in our neighborhood and are walking the talk of peace and justice.

Since mid-April, we connect with our sisters, associates, and coworkers via Zoom for a contemplative dialogue using the weekly reflections offered by LCWR. In the context of prayer we share the impact of both the coronavirus pandemic and racism.

Sister Immacula Wendt, SSC

Looking back over this past year we can see that the first half was filled with ordinary daily work along with our planning for life-giving events for our sisters. Then when the pandemic hit – one by one – daily norms almost came to a stop.

Our sisters in Lithuania were preparing to celebrate their 100th anniversary in September. Some of us from the States were to attend. Sister Margaret Petcavage was even planning to meet with Dr. Ambrosi, our postulator in Rome for Mother Maria’s cause. He has been doing the research about a possible miracle of a little girl in Lithuania. All postponed to a later time! EWTN’s programming about future saints, including our beloved Mother Maria, has been slowed, and our archive project also has been put on hold.

The 5th anniversary of the Mother Maria Kaupas Center in Mt. Carmel, Mother Maria’s and the SSC’s first Assembly cont. from page 3
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mission, has also been postponed. But the biggest disappointment was that we were also planning to visit with you, our dear sisters in Scranton and our SSCM cousins in Danville at that same time. All had to be cancelled.

Our special plans for the year were to provide presentations that would inform and inspire our lives. Sister Anne Munley’s presentation on ‘Aging as a Transformative Journey’ was the perfect way to begin in February. And then - plans for the other assemblies had to be postponed. Beth Collins, Clinical Care Coordinator for the Sisters of Providence, was to help us ‘Walk Each Other Home.’ Sister Mary Pellegrino’s presentation at your Assembly last year was so meaningful and powerful. She was coming to help us also relate our life’s experiences, especially today, to the Paschal Mystery. How we miss our gatherings together and look forward to when we can be together again.

Remembrance of Deceased

A slide show with reflections was prepared by Sister Denise Montagne, IHM, in remembrance of the IHM and SSC sisters and IHM Associates who have died this past year:

This remembrance prayer can be viewed at: https://video.ibm.com/recorded/127387970
Start at 1:24

Advisory Board Elections

Sister Jane Snyder announced the election of:

- Sister Maryalice Jacquinot – chair of the Advisory Board
- Sister Kathryn Clausse – Advisory Board Planning Committee
- Sister Rachel Terry – Advisory Board Planning Committee

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

Virtual Classrooms for Vocation Directors

Twice a year new vocation directors gather together to form a cohort of support and to gain the immediate knowledge they need in order to feel confident in their new beginnings. The National Religious Vocation Conference is where they begin to feel at home. The training can last 5 days to 4 weeks, depending on the vocation directors needs and time. This year there were 4 weeks of training held – not in Chicago, as usual, but all around the world, virtually!

Sister Mindy Welding was one of four presenters for the orientation program that NRVC provides. Sister Mindy joined Sister Deborah Borneman, SSCM, Father Adam McDonald, SVD and Brother Christopher Patiño, FSC. The topics Sister Mindy presented were Demographics of Religious Life and Vocations to consider when inviting candidates, Professional Behavior of the Vocation Director, Professional Boundaries, Faith Assessment, Admission Process and Policies, Behavioral Assessment of Candidates, Ethics in Vocation Ministry, Case Studies, Social Media Use, and Resiliency and Wellness of the Vocation Director. The classes were held for 4 ½ days, 8 hours a day, with two breaks and an extended lunch break. There were 35 participants from 14 states and Canada and there was a diversity of participants from different parts of Africa, India, Vietnam, Peru, and Mexico who live in the United States ministering for their congregations.

The pleasure of meeting new people and assisting them in their orientation is a delightful way of being present to their needs as we continue to support one another in ministry.

Sister Mindy also participated in one of the classes held the following week entitled, "Is it Generational, Cultural, Personality or Pathology?" This class focused on helping the vocation and formation directors (65 present for this virtual workshop) to ascertain where there may be mis-communication or a lack of communication, and misunderstanding when confronted with behavior that can be difficult to explain and where vocation and formation directors may have their own biases when communicating with inquirers, candidates or others within their communities. The presenters were Brother Sean Sammon, FMS, Dr. Crystal Taylor-Dietz, PsyD (St. Luke’s Institute) and Sister Donna Del Santo, SSJ.
Elected to IHM Chapter Planning Committee

The following six sisters were elected to the Chapter 2022 Planning Committee and will serve along with Sister Ellen Maroney and Chapter facilitator, Sister Patricia Kozak, CSJ.

From the Office of the Archives

We’ve gone from red to yellow to green! It’s time to tell our stories.

Every sister has a story, every community, village, city has a story. Be part of the telling of the IHM story for this 2019-2020 year.

Storytelling links us to our past, provides a glimpse into our future, and connects us to our humanity.

Will you be the 3rd or the 13th to submit your AN-NALS to the Archives this year?

Help us say: Annals, Annals! Read all about 2019-2020 in the Annals!

Submission due date is August 30, 2020 by email (in Word or pdf) to archives@sistersofihm.org

Don’t forget to include photos with complete identifications (people, event, and year).

See website for Guide and Form: Sisters Login/Documents.

For questions call 570-330-0206 or write: archives@sistersofihm.org

We look forward to hearing from you!

Elizabeth DeMerchant participates in the Life Commitment Program

From July 6 to 11, 2020, our Sister Elizabeth DeMerchant participated in the Life Commitment Program sponsored by the National Religious Formation Conference. There were twenty-four women and men religious from various parts of the world who gathered virtually for the program. Participants attending were from Japan, Kenya, and Australia, to name only a few places, so attendees had to be up and dressed at all hours of the night and day to connect to the program. Elizabeth was one of four IHMs attending the program this year. Sister Audra attended from Monroe and Sisters Kathryn, and Christina attended from Immaculata.

All the participants were thrilled to have various presenters during the week. Presentations included Sister Charlene Diorka, SSJ on Religious Life as a Prophetic Enterprise, Sister Carole Riley, CDP on the Vow of Obedience, Sister Mary Pat Garvin, RSM on the Vow of Celibacy and Brother John Barker, OFM on the Vow of Poverty. Sister Connie Schoen, OP, was the final presenter, and she spoke to the group on Community as Living Witness to the Incarnation. After each presentation, there were small group conversations that, according to Elizabeth, were full of richness due to the diversity of experiences and cultural backgrounds of those attending. There was also a sister from a monastic community that offered another perspective to their conversations.

The program's goal was to create an atmosphere to deepen the discernment process regarding each participant's desire and freedom to choose a lifelong vowed commitment. At the end of the week, Elizabeth found herself grateful for the gift of the group. She said it was a refreshing blessing to be able to share with others who are also approaching this very significant decision in their lives. Elizabeth's only regret was that the program had to be offered via technology due to Covid-19 since she felt that one loses the opportunity for the conversations that take place at meals and in the evenings. Elizabeth shared that she would highly recommend the program for future sisters preparing for their final vows.
Happy Independence Day, South Korea!

August 15th is the day that South Korea celebrates its independence! IHM Sisters Cecilia Yeon Tji and Angela Kim share with us their cultural pride and their hopes and dreams for the people of South Korea.

Sister Angela Kim, IHM:
South Korean culture is deeply rooted in Confucian principles of respect for elders, family, friendship, ancestors and tradition. On 2020 Independence Day of the Republic of Korea, I dream that everyone will have an equal standing in society: access to education, employment, housing, health care and social welfare programs.

Sister Cecilia Yeon Tji, IHM
It has taken the people of Korea 5000 years to become who they are. After World War II brought independence from Japan, I saw and experienced Korea's struggles and turmoil. Since the Korean War (1950), South Korea has become an independent and economically prosperous nation: Samsung, LG, Kia, Hyundai, K-pop and an academy award in the arts! I am very proud of South Korea’s culture and achievements.

"Freedom with responsibility" has helped South Korea be one of the leading countries to address the Covid-19 pandemic! Collaboration with the global community is the fuel of the future, and the way to keep South Korea alive is to keep God in our lives.

Don’t miss the Animoto of South Korea with photos of our Sisters Cecilia and Angela on August 15th! It will be made available through the IHM list.

The Power of Love: An Irrepressible Urgency Toward Wholeness
Liz Sweeney, SSJ–October 2-4

"It is the attraction of the whole that has set everything in motion for me, has animated and given organic form to everything. It is because I feel the whole and love it passionately that I believe in the primacy of being… nothing in the world is intelligible except in and starting from the whole."
- Teilhard de Chardin

"There is in all visible things an invisible fecundity, a dimmed light, a hidden wholeness, a meek namelessness… a mysterious unity and integrity…. It rises up in wordless gentleness and flows out from the unseen roots of all created being…."
- Thomas Merton

Today thinkers from the fields of neuro-science, psychology, integral philosophy, science and theology are in conversation to discover how humanity can embody a new kind of wisdom grounded in the wholeness of the cosmos and rooted in a Love that presses us to stretch beyond ourselves for the sake of the Whole. Despite the tragic brokenness and division of these months, again and again we’ve witnessed in ways large and small, Love’s dynamic power at work in people fostering greater hope, healing and wholeness throughout our nation and world. As a community that chose wholeness as a core value, we will explore how even in the midst of chaos and uncertainty, we can consciously engage this power of Love to choose to become more whole within ourselves individually, together as a community, and in all our relationships—human and beyond human.

Sisters and Associates planning to join this retreat via Zoom, please register at communications@sistersofihm.org

Contact Person and Treasurer

Sisters, if you live with other sisters, contact the Communications Office at communications@sistersofihm.org and report the names of your contact person and treasurer to be listed in the IHM Directory and for the IHM Business Office. Please do this before Monday, August 31.
175 Pints for 175 Years

We work together every day to do important work. But now we want to accomplish something even more meaningful. The Red Cross has to collect 15,000 blood donations every day to have enough blood to help patients in 2,700 hospitals and transfusion centers across the country. That’s a lot of patients in need and all of us, coming together, can help ensure patients receive lifesaving blood.

So Sleeves Up and help us reach our goal. Make and keep an appointment to give blood to the American Red Cross. Make an appointment at https://sleevesup.redcrossblood.org/campaign/175-pints-for-175-years/

The Sisters of IHM are celebrating 175 years of joyful, loving hospitable service with God’s people. In honor of this anniversary, a virtual blood drive is being hosted, 175 pints for 175 years. Please join us in the lifesaving ministry by rolling your sleeves up. Drive ends November 10, 2021.

Please send number of pints donated to 175pints@sistersofihm.org if not donating through this website: https://sleevesup.redcrossblood.org/campaign/175-pints-for-175-years/

Japanese Soufflé Pancakes

Submitted by Sister Maureen Schrimpe

Fluffiest ever Japanese Soufflé Pancakes are easier to make than you’d think! Whip these up for breakfast today and you’ll understand just why everyone is raving about these super delicious pancakes! Prep time 15 minutes; cook time 15 minutes.

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups flour spooned and leveled
- 3 tablespoons powdered sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/4 cups dairy milk
- 4 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
- 1 large egg yolk, plus 3 large egg whites
- 1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar
- Syrup and powdered sugar for serving

Instructions:

1. In a medium bowl whisk together flour, powdered sugar, baking powder, and salt.
2. In a second bowl stir together milk, melted butter, vanilla or almond extract, and the egg yolk.
3. In a third bowl whip the egg whites and cream of tartar 3-4 minutes until stiff peaks form.
4. Stir milk mixture into dry ingredients until just combined (a few lumps are fine).
5. Gently fold whipped egg whites into the batter until just incorporated (do not overmix).
6. Preheat a deep skillet with a lid over low heat and spray the inside of a 3-inch baking ring (I used three rings at a time) with nonstick spray and place in the preheating pan.
7. Fill each ring halfway full with batter. Place lid on the pan and allow batter to cook for 5 minutes.
8. Slide a spatula underneath to lift the pancake and ring and use tongs to quickly flip it over.
9. Allow to cook another 2-3 minutes until golden. Repeat with remaining batter.
10. Serve immediately topped with syrup and powdered sugar.

Celebrating July 4th with Song

IHM sisters and friends gathered on July 4th in the Our Lady of Peace Residence courtyards to sing patriotic songs with the sister residents.
Marywood addresses the sin of racism

Days after the death of George Floyd, when protests raged across the country, students, alumni, and faculty called for a statement in the name of the Marywood University community. Two members of the faculty, in conversation with the Director of Equity and Inclusion, drafted a statement that was posted on the website and published on a full page of the Scranton Times-Tribune. The statement reads in part: "In this time of national turmoil, pain, and grief, Marywood University stands in solidarity with our Black brothers and sisters across the country. Together we mourn the loss of George Floyd and countless other men and women of color whose lives have been taken by the epidemic of racism. Together we call on our elected representatives to enact laws that genuinely reflect the ideals of justice and equality for all. Together we proclaim with one voice that Black lives matter."

In difficult moments such as these, it is especially important to remember that Jesus’s central message is “to love one another, as I have loved you.” But we must also acknowledge that God’s love is more than a gift, it is a call to action. It is in this spirit of radical love that we reaffirm Marywood’s commitment to the pursuit of social justice rooted in the dignity and humanity of every human being.

In mid-June, a cohort of 18 Marywood faculty members, staff and several IHM sisters attended a virtual conference hosted by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). In recent months, Marywood was one of thirteen schools out of 100 to be awarded the Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation (TRHT) grant from the AAC&U this year. As a recipient, Marywood was invited to participate in the 3-day TRHT Summer Institute. In addition, the $20,000 grant is provided for the creation of a TRHT Campus Center at Marywood.

The TRHT Center will be a physical space on campus; the Center will provide monthly racial healing training to students, faculty, staff and administration beginning in fall 2020, and will host a series of workshops and guest lectures and/or symposiums from professionals and scholars in the field.

The hanging of the Black Lives Matter banner pictured here has evoked many emotions in those who have seen it. Many of the reactions point to the reality that much work lies ahead of us on the journey toward dismantling racism in our society.

New at Photos by Jan

Our ministry is to provide a way to reach out to persons longing for comfort, hope, and companionship, and of course, sharing joyous occasions. During the past four months the “Studio Store” down in the library at the IHM Center has created a new “Terrace Gallery” found in the hallways outside the studio. The 16 x 20 pictures are printed on canvas, stretched over canvas frames, and are ready to hang, no frames needed. While those displayed are scenic photos by Sister Jan Marie Kalyan, your photos of family can also be printed on canvas. Jan will scan personal photos and create the layout for printing on canvas. Send photos to photosbyjan@sistersofihm.org or drop off original photos to Jan's studio at the IHM Center. There are also brochures describing current cards that are sold singly or in packages of 6 or 12. When in-person visits were curtailed at the beginning of the pandemic, a special idea was inspired: the card packages of “Thinking of You” and “In My Thoughts.” These are a special way to “reach out and touch someone!” Orders are available via in-house delivery to IHM Center and OLP, the US mail, or “Curb Side Pickup!”
An Introduction to Podcasts by Sister Patt Walsh, IHM

Covid-19, shelter in place and social distancing are new words in my pandemic vocabulary. Here at OLP it feels like we’ll be in a red…sometimes pink zone until there’s a vaccine. So, I have more time but less energy to fill it and in the news – many more overwhelming crises are reported daily. It’s a time of stress, anxiety and fear. It doesn’t seem to be a time to review a particular book. Instead, I’ve decided to explore a relatively new form of entertainment information—the Podcast.

Though I don’t want to confuse you by getting into the “technology terminology synonyms soup,” there are some key terms/concepts that are essential to know. First, the term “podcast” originated at the beginning of the 21st century. Think about it as a re-emergence of the golden age of radio. It includes talks, interviews, conversations, concerts, reading of novels/bedtime stories. In short it is a diversity of listening experiences. After live music, we moved from records to radio to cassettes to CDs. Cassette and CD players included an option to play radio. But then Apple created a stand-alone product—an iPod. It only played music. The term “Podcast” is a combination of the words “Pod” and “Broadcast.” Podcasts are relatively inexpensive to create. The Monroe IHMs have created their own called “A Nun’s Life.” Our Sister Mindy Welding has been a recent guest. AMERICA magazine has created almost 10 different podcasts! The Podcast is the show and it comes in episodes. To create one you need equipment; a host where you upload your podcast, and a listing in a broadcast directory. Listeners need a computer app or a podcast player like Spotify, Pocket Casts, Apple & Google Podcasts, and you can listen to them on your computer, smartphone, and even your car radio. Most of the players have a free version, though the price of freedom may involve listening to commercials. Many devices come with a player pre-installed including the Google Search Engine (bookmark your sites) or you “follow” a program in the app or download an episode if you want to listen while you are outside “socially distancing” by walking alone using earphones (one earphone for safety!).

There are so many podcasts! Explore and pick one or two to start. Here are some of my recommendations:

- Brené Brown’s (the world’s expert on vulnerability) “Unlocking Us” – She interviews popular authors on topics of her interest – e.g. Ibram X. Kendi - Being Antiracist
- The New York Times (Pulitzer Prize-winning) – “1619” – the story of the arrival and initial experiences of people enslaved.
- TEDTalk’s “PinDrop” – geographic location tours – Oberammergau’s my favorite so far. Having been spared the Black Plague 400 years ago, the entire town presents a passion play every decade – 2020’s is now 2022!
- “The Next Right Thing” – fascinating topics – “Thinking for Slow Processers” and “How to Pray When You’re Sad!”
- “Ologies” – each episode studies a particular “ology” – for example, “Agnology” is the study of ignorance!
- “Everything is Alive” – An Inanimate Object tells its story.
- The Hidden Brain & TED’s Radio Hour from NPR.

Podcast Players include directories. 1. Browse in Google: (Title or “Podcasts”); 2. Sample Episodes; 3. Bookmark or “Follow” in a player app.

Have extra alone time or going on a long trip? Stressed, anxious or looking for a substitute therapist? Interested in something on politics, to have a laugh or expand your prayer life? There’s a Podcast out there for you. Enjoy!
Meet the Neighbors!

In our July EarthCARE update, we focused on the human visitors who have been appreciating and contributing to our IHM land. This month we choose to highlight some of our winged (and other) friends and neighbors, accompanied by the exquisite photography of Carol Elliot, a visitor from Dunmore.

We’re reminded that one of the hoped for outcomes of our original IHM land renewal plan was to restore the natural habitat that would usher in the return of bees, butterflies, and birds. Our hopes have been realized and we’re delighted that our winged neighbors have responded so extravagantly to our invitation.

Reflections and observations from EarthCARE members reveal the diversity of feathered visitors—including the ubiquitous chickadees—who are enjoying the hospitality of the Welcoming Space these days:

“Walking this morning, I saw again the red-tailed hawk patiently looking over the menu of the frenzied birds watching him.”

“Anyone who is walking these days is certainly aware of the bees and so many birds. In addition to the hawks, I’ve seen many red-winged blackbirds, wrens, sparrows, robins, and, for me, the return of the eastern blue bird is a joy! The recent plantings are also a tremendous addition to sustaining the birds through the winter.”

Time given over to visiting our Welcoming Space also underscores our desire to promote a culture of contemplative consciousness:

“On my walk today, I couldn’t help but ponder not only the birds and wildlife but also the ever-changing vegetation and flowers. It’s so amazing how the landscape changes in response to what the animals and birds need. When one species of flower or berry dies, another starts to bloom. I was reminded of how God provides for our every need and of His constant presence and love.”

In “Another Voice” in Earth Gospel, Scott Hoezee might very well have been walking our IHM land when he noted, “Perhaps in God’s ears, all of this world’s sounds are really songs of praise—and what a chorus it is! Conservative estimates say that in North America alone there are as many as six billion land birds. So let us be conservative and say that on any given day in the spring…each of these birds sings its song about ten thousand times. That would be, in North America alone, sixty trillion songs in just one day.”

Our EarthCARE committee invites all to come and enjoy an amazing everyday occurrence: a choir of winged neighbors offering songs of praise and gladness right here in our Welcoming Space.
Sisters of IHM Virtual Celebration a Success!
The first of its kind virtual IHM Sisters Celebration was a huge success! This special event, hosted by the Sisters of IHM Foundation, helped to raise important funds for the Sisters of IHM Retirement Fund. This financial support will directly impact the daily lives of our dear retired sisters. To view the event that was shared on Electric City Television’s YouTube Channel, please visit www.sistersofihm.org.

Silver Circle
Current sellers: If you haven’t received your 2020-2021 sellers’ packets, or if you or anyone you know is interested in becoming a seller, please call the development office at 570 346-5431 or email armbrustl@sistersofihm.org. We are always looking for new sellers to help support the ongoing needs of our retired sisters.

Grants Awarded
Through the generosity of SOAR! a grant for $25,000 was recently awarded to the IHM Congregation to purchase tables and seating for the dining room at the IHM Center. These new items will improve sisters’ daily comfort and address safety needs for many years to come.

Appropriate seating encourages good posture and support while reducing pain and fatigue. Seating with arms will allow sisters to brace themselves when getting into and out of a chair. Chairs with coaster wheels will make it easier for sisters, especially those who use canes or walkers, to move in/out of the tables. Upholstery that can be cleaned easily will increase the durability of the furniture.

Tables that are smaller in the size will allow sisters who are experiencing hearing loss to better hear and engage in conversations. Smaller tables will also make it easier for sisters to reach and pass items around the table. Round tables prevent or minimize injuries that can happen from bumping into sharp corners.

Remembering Civil Rights Leader, John Lewis
On July 30, IHM sisters and associates gathered at the peace pole at the IHM Center to join with people across the nation to celebrate the life of Congressman John Lewis. People were asked to gather at 11:00 a.m., the time of Lewis’ funeral, to remember, and ring bells for 80 seconds, representing his 80 years of earthly life. Sisters and associates were sent copies of the prayer and invited to join in solidarity from their locations.

The IHM Jubilarians wish to thank their sisters and all those who offered special remembrances and gifts in celebration of their jubilee.

God bless you all.
Sister M. Celesta Sinisi, IHM by Sister Patt Walsh, IHM

“A Spiritual Awakening”

Life at OLP continues to be mostly in the “Red Zone” (with some “shades of Pink”!) One of the greatest sacrifices is the lack of contact with the outside world—both because of travel restrictions and the limitations on visitors. For so many, technology has offered options that can minimize that loss of human contact. And so, I’ve selected to profile my newest Facebook friend, Sister Celesta Sinisi! What sealed this deal for me was her recent call for some computer help. When I arrived at her room, I discovered that she was “streaming” the Mass for the Feast of the Sacred Heart on Facebook and there was some problem with sound!

Sister Celesta, now in her 73rd year of profession, was baptized Sylvia, the fifth of seven siblings. Her parents were Italian immigrants who’d settled in Altoona, PA. Celesta is one of a number of sisters I’ve interviewed who’ve survived or had parents survive the 1918 pandemic, the Great Depression, World Wars I and II and, if you think of the historical timeline, so many other national and international crisis that, just knowing that fact, reminds us that OLP is a “House of Survivors.” In these times, that should give each of us great hope!

Sylvia met the IHM sisters through Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish’s CCD program and was influenced to consider an IHM vocation as she prepared for her first communion with Sister Ann Helene Coyne.

She entered the IHMs in 1944 and she taught all grades from primary to junior high. Our Lady of Mt. Carmel had a strong influence on her life as it’s also the name of her first and favorite mission in Asbury Park, NJ, where she spent 15 years. After 35 years of teaching, Celesta moved into a ministry that is dear to her heart—religious education of children at St. Rocco’s in Pittston where she served for another 15 years. Then, Sister Celesta moved to the IHM Center and served as a tutor in the E.E.I. Special mention should be made of Sasha Power, an African American girl with special learning needs. Sister Celesta worked with her for 19 years! Sasha left the E.E.I. when she was 31!

Celesta hopes when she dies people will remember her “dedication to the Apostolate of the Enthronement of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.” Begun in 1945 as a collaborative effort between the Bishop of Scranton (Hafey), Marywood College and the IHM Congregation, the Apostolate’s Sister Moderator was an IHM. Celesta replaced Sister Eamon O’Neill who replaced Sister Romaine Krug. In this ministry, technology has been a tool to both communicate about and support those engaged in this work.

Last fall, Celesta’s computer stopped working. At that time, her dear friend, Sister Monica Byrne, was dying. One day I stopped in to visit Monica and found Celesta praying at her bedside. I noticed there was a small note attached to Monica’s
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Sister Celesta cont. from page 13

laptop. Monica had left directions that upon her death her laptop was to go to Celesta! Divine Providence?

At OLP, Celesta reaches out to the needs of the sisters by using her technology skills to make cards and banners that make some days for people just a little more special.

Sister Celesta still actively engages in the Enthronement’s ministry and with its current coordinator, Maria Pappa. When Sister Celesta has time, her spiritual reading includes a biblical commentary! So it should come as no surprise that Celesta describes her journey and her life now as a “spiritual awakening” ever evolving as she journeys home.

God’s covenant has been fulfilled

Sister M. Isabel Schratwieser, IHM
July 16, 2020
in the 71st year of her religious profession

Sister Celesta cont. from page 13

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IHM Calendar

Saturday, September 12
White Privilege with Sharon Durham via Zoom and Videostream

Saturday, September 19
Advisory Board Meeting Open to Sisters of IHM via Zoom and Videostream

October 2-4
Retreat with Liz Sweeney, SSJ via Zoom and Videostream

Friday, November 6
Nunsense PAC Marywood (Postponed)

Sunday, November 8
175th Mass PAC Marywood University (Postponed)

IHM Congregation Vitae
as of August 6, 2020
Final Profession - 299
Temp. Professed - 1
Novices - 2
Candidates - 0
Associates - 172

Sisters of St. Casimir Congregation Vitae
Final Profession - 43

Facebook Features
IHM sisters stories and photos wanted to feature on IHM Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Send photos and brief articles to: fasolka@sistersofihm.org
**Notes of Gratitude**

I want to thank all the Sisters who prayed for me for my knee replacement surgery and recovery. I am also grateful for your continued prayerful support for my health. I have a neurological disease called Atypical Parkinson’s that has affected my voice and swallowing. Please do not think I am being rude if I nod my head or wave when I see you. May God continue to bless all of you and keep you safe. - Jan Corbett

The family of John C. Pierce, brother of Sr Ann Marie, and her entire family are very grateful to all for the many kindnesses, prayers, Masses, and support including phone calls, texts, and emails, during this shocking and difficult time. May God continue to sustain all of us.

With love, Sister Ann Marie Pierce, IHM

**St. Mark's Donates to Friends of the Poor**

Sister Liz McGill has been traveling on Wednesdays to Wilmington, DE, to meet with Sister Redempta for a class. Sister Sandy Grieco arranged with Liz a pickup of donated items to be brought back to Scranton for Friends of the Poor. Saint Mark’s High School community filled the van with new school t-shirts, khaki uniform pants, candy, cards, and rosaries for the children served by Friends of the Poor. Pictured L-R: Sisters Redempta Sweeney, Liz McGill, Sandy Grieco, and Pablo Rodarte, who helped pack the van. The pick-up of these school supplies was coordinated through Sister Ann Walsh at Friends of the Poor.
News from the UN

August 9
International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples is a day to promote and protect the rights of the world’s indigenous population and to recognize their achievements and contributions to improve the world and protect the environment.

August 23
International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition is a day of tribute to all those who were enslaved and their resistance and a call to truth, justice, and dialogue among peoples.

August 29
International Day against Nuclear Tests stressing the powerful and negative effects of tests on human life and the health of Earth.

Friends of the Poor

Happy summer! Once again, Friends of the Poor and Keystone College are bringing young students, age 4-14, together in Camp Connections. This year, it is VIRTUAL Camp Connections. More than 50 students are learning remotely via Google Classroom. Students were welcomed with a kickoff parade featuring the Keystone College mascot, the Orange Giant.

Our bi-weekly COVID-19, emergency drive through food giveaways continue with distributions on August 12 at Parker Hill Church and August 26, at Scranton High School. In the off weeks, food is distributed to families in the Lackawanna County Family Housing Developments. To date, our distributions have provided food to more than 60,000 individuals.

At the end of July, our Jesuit Volunteer, Robbie Starkenburg, completed his year of service with Friends of the Poor. Robbie worked alongside Sister Ann Walsh, at the Jackson Terrace Pantry. We thank Robbie for his commitment to the mission of Friends of the Poor and wish him abundant blessings as he seeks new opportunities.

Dear Sisters and Associates,

In the Direction Statement 2018-2022 we committed ourselves to “encourage one another to care for our bodies and spirits by practicing what we each need to be healthy, whole, and available to the world we accompany.” Enclosed in this mailing is a “Conversation Starter” and personal journal created by the Vital Living Committee to support this commitment. The booklet offers a creative way to deepen our awareness of how we are living our IHM story of wholeness expressed through the eight dimensions of health and wellness.

Storytelling has been a key part of our IHM tradition from the beginning, perhaps because creative engagement supports us both individually and communally to express our hopes and dreams, our needs and our challenges. The “Conversation Starter” provides a framework for engaging with others, sharing our story and listening to the stories of others. The journal guides contemplative reflection regarding what we have shared and, perhaps, even moves us to shift our own trajectory and bring forward new possibilities.

During the era of social distancing, we have had opportunities to reevaluate what is important and to reconsider priorities. Many have expressed their deepened sense of gratitude for the gift of health and wellness.

The Vital Living Committee hopes that this booklet (mailed to each sister on June 29) assists you as we “breathe together” along the journey toward wholeness.

Yours truly, The Vital Living Committee
IHM Sisters Participate in Go Jo Ride Along for St. Joseph's Center

Several IHM sisters supported St. Joseph’s Center by participating in the “Go Joe Ride Along” biking event. Because of Covid-19, the usual week long bike ride done by Joe Snediker, local WNEP meteorologist, was transformed into a ride along to bring awareness to and raise funds for St. Joseph's Center. The sisters registered and bought Go Joe 23 shirts, prepared posters, and had a good time visiting various sites. The sisters chose the theme “My Favorite Foods from the Festival” and rode throughout the Marywood campus to the IHM Center, OLP, and St. Joseph’s Center on Sunday, July 19. Donations for St. Joe's are still accepted. Visit https://stjosephscenter.org/

Mother Mary Lange Catholic School Principal Named

Excerpted from the Catholic Review, July 6, article by Christopher Gunty

Alisha Jordan has been named as the new principal of Mother Mary Lange Catholic School, the first new Catholic school in Baltimore City in nearly 60 years. She will begin her work in August to prepare the school for its opening in September 2021.

Jordan said it is a privilege and an honor “to be appointed the first principal of a school named after one of the pioneers in education and to continue her legacy by educating the children of Baltimore. I am deeply committed to the mission of Catholic education and to ensuring that Mother Mary Lange Catholic School will be a beacon of hope for every child who walks through its doors.”

“It’s important that children get to see teachers who look like them and mirror them,” she said. For a school that is expected to have an enrollment that is predominantly African American, seeing an African American woman in leadership will have an impact.

Read full article at: https://tinyurl.com/y4hmxdae