Weaving Cultures—Entrelazando Culturas by Mary Elaine Anderson, IHM

On September 8-10, Sisters Mary Ellen Higgins, Giovana Fuentes Bendivez, Elvia Mata Ortega and I participated in the fourth and final session of Weaving Cultures—Entrelazando Culturas. The two-year mentorship program was offered by the Mexican American Catholic College (MACC) to seven international communities of women religious who desire to embrace the call to live interculturally. Usually the residential sessions are held in San Antonio, Texas; however, due to the pandemic, the three-day program took place via Zoom.

The theme of the first two days was “I Can’t Breathe.” In a roundtable panel, persons of color gave their personal testimony and engaged participants in reflection on the impact of the pandemic and critical conversation on “how systemic violence is as silently accepted as the air we breathe.”

On the third day, Sister Mercedes Casas Sanchez, who is the former president of CLAR (Confederation of Latin American Religious) and who currently works in Rome with CICLSAL (Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life), addressed us on the topic of interculturality. Mercedes’ presentation was profound and thought-provoking. She invited us to reflect on the following:

- Multiculturality is a fact; interculturality is a choice.
- Consecrated life’s mission is interculturality.
- The Trinity is the foundation for interculturality. Trinitarian love is inclusive.
- Dialogue is the way to interculturality. Sometimes it implies death and conversion.
- The culture of each person enriches the charism of the congregation.

As a culmination of our two-year participation in Weaving Cultures / Entrelazando Culturas, Sisters Mary Ellen, Giovana, Elvia and I have proposed this new initiative:

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live streamed, and a link will be sent to all IHM sisters and associates as well as Giovana’s family and friends. It is our hope that whether you are present physically or virtually, you will celebrate this momentous occasion with Giovana and pray with and for her.

Giovana began her initial formation in Peru where she lived and ministered with our IHM sisters in Sicuani. During her first ten months of candidacy, she worked at Casa Nazaret, a home for children with special needs, counseled young girls residing in the IHM House of Studies, and volunteered with the prelature’s Office of Social Justice and with Allin Kawsay, an organization that provides conflict resolution programs for students and families.

Giovana arrived in the United States in September 2017 to continue her initial formation. During the remainder of her candidacy she lived with the sisters of Holy Trinity Community at the IHM Center. She studied in Marywood University’s Intensive English Program and participated in inter-community formation classes and IHM congregational activities.

Giovana was received into the novitiate on September 20, 2018. During her canonical novitiate, Giovana resided in the IHM Formation House (also known as McCarty Hall) on the campus of Marywood University. She spent six months of her apostolic novitiate with our sisters at Cathedral Convent. As a novice, Giovana studied Alphonsian spirituality and the history of the IHM Congregation. Through volunteer service at St. Joseph’s Center (Trinity Daycare) and Friends of the Poor (Jackson Terrace), she embraced more fully and grew in her understanding of the IHM charism, core values and mission.

We rejoice with Giovana as she takes this next step and commits herself to God and all of God’s creation. Giovana, we stand with you; we pray for you, and we look forward to welcoming you as a member of our IHM Congregation!

Weaving Cultures continued from page 1

That we as a congregation create an Interculturality Committee to motivate us to grow in appreciation and awareness of the richness inherent in the many areas of diversity among us.

We have come to the realization that living interculturally as a congregation is a long and complex journey but one to which we need to commit ourselves at this moment in time for the common good of the global community. Our world is hungering deeply for justice and meaning regarding issues of race, immigration, and general fear of the “other.” It is our hope that this initiative brings us to live more fully the “radical interdependence,” of which we speak so eloquently in our IHM Direction Statement 2018-2022.

IHM Team: Sisters Mary Ellen Higgins, Mary Elaine Anderson, Elvia Mata Ortega and Giovana Fuentes Bendívez, participate with religious from six other congregations in Weaving Cultures—Entrelazando Culturas.

Announcements!

Evening of Prayer for November Cancelled

Our evening of prayer for November 11 is cancelled because we will celebrate Founders Day in a special way this year with the first profession of Sister Giovana on November 10.

2020 Sister Jubilarian Celebration

The IHM Leadership Team took a poll among our 2020 sister jubilarians and the majority of them voted to celebrate their congregational jubilee together with the sisters celebrating in 2021. We all look forward to having the opportunity to join all of our 2020 and 2021 jubilarians for a celebration on Sunday, July 25, 2020 following the Assembly.
Advisory Board Meets

On September 19, 2020 the IHM Advisory Board held a virtual meeting that was open to all members of the congregation. In the registration process, participants were invited to share their hopes for the world and the congregation which were woven into the opening prayer entitled, “Called to Co-Creation.”

Approximately 25 sisters joined the 15-person board on Zoom for the 2 ½ hour meeting, while others watched the meeting via livestream. The board members met for an additional two hours in the afternoon to discuss what they heard at the open meeting and to conduct other board business.

In the open meeting, the participants met twice in breakout sessions to discuss the following:

- How do you understand the relationship of the mission circles to the advisory board? Name two potential next steps you would recommend to further the understanding of the role of the mission circles within the congregation.
- How have recent emerging trends impacted your vision of our shared future? What are three bold ideas that we should be reflecting upon as we prepare for Assembly 2021?

In its session, the board considered the question: "How might the key learnings and insights we share shape our next steps as an advisory board?"

Some clear concerns and ideas emerged from all of these conversations that the board feels will significantly shape its future work.

1. Communications. Clear and frequent communications are essential for the life of the congregation. The board heard often that sisters would benefit by enhancing communication among the sisters (i.e., sharing ideas from mission circle to mission circle, from the sisters to the advisory board, and from the advisory board to the sisters).

2. New initiative process. The process for bringing forth a new initiative needs strengthening and clarification. Members mentioned several times that they do not yet have a clear understanding of what happens to an initiative once it is received by the Advisory Board. The board also noted that it would be beneficial to receive periodic updates on the progress being made to address initiatives that are sent forward by the board. These updates could also be communicated to the congregation at large. It was also noted that we should try to better align the submission of new initiatives that have financial implications with the congregation’s budget cycle.

3. Technology. Many concerns were voiced about the sisters’ access and capacity to use technology. Regardless of when the pandemic ends, we believe that we will be making more use of technology for meetings and communications. We would like to work toward providing as much access as possible to any sister who wishes to use technology, while at the same time remaining mindful of our changing financial realities due to the economic impact of the pandemic.

4. Transition to new governance. The transition from the former governance structure of the congregation to this new structure remains a challenge for both the board and the members. We all need to come to a better understanding of the new structure.

5. Shared leadership. Shared leadership remains a concept that sisters would like to explore more fully; they believe it has the potential to help us all be more engaged in the life of the congregation.

6. Critical issues. Sisters continue to want to see the congregation address the four critical issues named by the board as well as the issue of racism. The board also noted that some of these issues may be better addressed in a more collaborative way with other congregations of women religious.

7. Exercising our voice. The various means by which members can voice their ideas and suggestions (mission circles, dialogue groups, and other informal groupings of sisters) provide important ways for the members to shape our assemblies and chapters. How can sisters facilitate and strengthen their use of these various means and take more initiative in bringing forth their concerns?

Other business of the board included an analysis of what was shared in the meeting notes of four mission circles and one dialogue group that had submitted notes since January 2020 and a review of the congregation’s updated sexual misconduct policy.

Due to time constraints, the board postponed its discussion of two new initiatives to a later date, which we hope will be within the next few weeks.

More specific information on all of these discussions will be available in the advisory board minutes.
St. Paul’s Last Nun Retires excerpted
from the Sun Journal, September 12, by Bill Hand

A giant oak tree grows on the St. Paul’s Catholic Church campus, right next to the former convent building where Sister Monique Dissen spent her first years here. There’s a little story to the tree, she says.

A man used to stop by the tree every day after work. He would get out of his car, then go and touch the tree, almost as if giving it a blessing. Then he climbed back into his car and drove home. Seeing this happening over a period of time, someone finally asked him what was up?

“I have a difficult job,” he said. “I come out with a lot of tension and worries. So, I stop at this tree every day and touch it to leave all my work problems there. Then I go home refreshed to my family.”

Sister Monique gives a little smile. She came to St. Paul’s in 1998, already a 60-year-old woman who had spent her last 38 years teaching in Catholic schools. Now she was switching her career to one of ministry in CarolinaEast, with homebound sick and at prisons. She says she thought of all the sickness and sadness she would see day in and day out and wondered how she would deal with it. In the end, before she retired in the evenings at the convent, she went over and touched the tree.

At one time there were several Sisters at the St. Paul’s campus, all of them but Sister Monique teaching at the St. Paul’s or St. Joseph’s schools. They had been regularly provided, since 1926, by the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) in Scranton, PA.

But she is the last one remaining. And, at 84, she is ready to retire. She was honored for her 22 years of service on Sunday, September 13, for a drop-in “Photo Art Show” featuring the pictures she has taken as a devoted hobby while here. She refers to them as, “God winks.”

It was in 1998 when orders came for three Sisters to go to New Bern to fill openings there. She said that she knew she would be working with the sick when she arrived, although all the other New Bern sisters were at St. Paul’s school.

She quickly wondered if she was in over her head. “Father Ernest took me to someone’s home – she had her leg amputated. She was very big, and I knew I could not pick her up and help her. That first night I thought this is not going to work. But the next day a parishioner nurse agreed to help. From then, other parishioners came to help in the nursing aspect,” she said. “It has worked that way.”

She has spent much of her time visiting the sick at CarolinaEast and at homes offering comfort and encouragement; serving communion. At the hospital she works under Hospital Chaplain Michael Bostian.

Hospital CEO Ray Leggett spoke of his experience with Sister Monique. “She had the gift to smile, not only with her mouth, but also with her eyes,” he said. “She and I would often bump into each other early mornings in the Chapel at CEMC. She is such a wonderful, sincere person.”

Her work, she said, “is fundamentally a ministry of prayer and appreciation. Prayer and appreciation are the tools you use, and it includes wonder.

“No matter how sick they are, no matter what happened, they have just made me feel that nothing is impossible. God is always with you, no matter how dark a day you have. Look around. I know that God has made me a different person.”

But, she said, at 84 it’s time to go. “I still feel like a kid inside,” she said, “but my body is just like the people I visit.”

She will visit CarolinaEast and touch that oak tree for the last time on September 27th.

Leggett said she will be missed – and added that, in retrospect, he should have relied on her more while she was there: “Looking back now, I should have asked her to pray with me to start all of my mornings.... I am confident that I would have had fewer headaches and less heartburn. There is absolutely no question in my mind, that Sister Monique will hear these words one day, ‘well done’!”

Read full article: https://tinyurl.com/y6qtaja4
Epiphany School in the News
excerpted from the Morning Times, September 22

Under the leadership of Sister Kathleen Kelly, IHM, Epiphany School of Sayre, PA, celebrated its fourth week of in-person instruction with an ice cream treat from Johnny D’s Ice Cream Express. The ice cream was generously donated by the Lincoln family. Epiphany students continued to practice social distancing even during this fun event. Students spaced themselves on the lawn six feet apart before removing masks and eating their treat.

Epiphany School reopened its doors for in-person, five day a week instruction on August 25th. Faculty worked over the summer to prepare their classrooms for social distancing needs and create outdoor learning spaces for mask breaks. Epiphany School received a grant of $8,500 to purchase supplies to meet the challenges of Covid-19. Epiphany used this funding to purchase programs like Seesaw for Schools. With Seesaw, students use creative tools to take pictures, draw, record videos, and capture their learning in digital portfolios.

Epiphany School also used their Covid-19 grant funding to increase their one-to-one student devices. One-to-one student devices are an important part of Epiphany's Health and Safety Plan, because they limit the sharing of materials between students during the school day. Sixth to fourth grade students now have individual Chromebooks. Third grade to kindergarten students have individual iPads. Even Epiphany's preschool classes for three- and four-year olds have one-to-one student iPads. As part of this new technology infrastructure, Epiphany is providing all students and teachers with technology instruction in the event of another school closure.

The Diocese of Scranton has purchased an upgrade to Google Enterprise for all its Catholic schools. Google Enterprise provides Epiphany faculty and students with additional security and privacy features when using their Google school accounts.

Epiphany School's grant funding, bottle return fundraiser, and donations from parents have been used to purchase numerous cleaning supplies to sanitize the school.

![Image of students eating ice cream](image1.png)

Students at Epiphany School got an ice cream treat from Johnny D’s as the school celebrated its fourth week of in-person instruction.

News from the UN

October 2—International Day of Nonviolence marks the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi. The day is an opportunity to reaffirm the universal relevance of the principle of nonviolence and the desire to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding, and nonviolence.

October 11—International Day of the Girl Child is celebrated annually to highlight issues concerning the gender inequality facing girls and focus attention on the need to address the challenges girls face and to promote empowerment of girls and the fulfilment of their human rights.

October 16—World Food Day 2020 will focus on the impact of COVID-19 on achieving #Zero Hunger by 2030. Zero hunger means working together to ensure everyone, everywhere has access to the safe, healthy, and nutritious food they need.

October 17—International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2020 will address the challenge of achieving social and environmental justice for all. The growing recognition of the multi-dimensionality of poverty means that social and environmental justice are inseparably intertwined. Social justice cannot be fully realized without aggressively rectifying environmental injustices at the same time.

October 24—United Nations Day 2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the signing in 1945 of the United Nations Charter. With the ratification of this founding document by the majority of its signatories, including the five permanent members of the Security Council, the United Nations officially came into being.
Hello, Sister!

Last week while Liz McGill was walking across the campus of Academy of the Holy Names in Tampa, Florida, she passed a first-grade class eating lunch outside. The moderator gave her a little wave and said “Hello, Sister.” Liz immediately heard a small voice excitedly say, “Is that your sister?” As Liz walked away with a smile on her face, she thought, “Good luck explaining what a Catholic religious sister is to a first grader!”

Although she was relieved that she did not have to take on that task, a week later Liz found herself facing an auditorium filled with high school students trying to unpack the complex topics of vocation and religious life.

The Mission and Ministry Team at the school where she is doing her formative activity asked Liz to give a brief reflection on her own call and journey in life.

Here are a few of Liz’s thoughts that, while pertinent for high school teens, also may serve us who have been living religious life for quite some time.

• Each of us has a purpose and through the grace of God, we come to discover our own unique path in life.
• Our purpose here on earth evolves and passes through many stages. All of those parts of our past make us who we are today.
• Throughout life we are always discerning the question: How do we want to be in this world? When we bring this question to prayer, we discover where our hearts are being pulled, how we can best offer our gifts and talents to the world and become our most authentic selves.
• Let us pay attention to the gentle nudges of God that do not go away. Confident that God will give us the grace and courage that we need, let us walk boldly in the direction that makes our hearts come alive.

Friends of the Poor Update

On Wednesday, September 23, Friends of the Poor was honored to be represented in a segment on NBC’S TODAY Show, entitled, “Misery on Main Street.” NBC News senior legal and investigative journalist, Cynthia McFadden, interviewed Meghan Loftus as part of the program focusing on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy of Scranton. The full segment and related story can be found at https://tinyurl.com/y6bhnboc.

As we welcome fall, we turn our attention to the annual Thanksgiving holiday celebrations. Friends of the Poor and the Family to Family Food Basket Program will announce plans for the 44th Annual Thanksgiving Community Program on Tuesday, October 6. Our long-standing traditions of the Interfaith Prayer Service, Thanksgiving Community Dinner and Family to Family Thanksgiving Food Basket program will be held, with changes reflecting COVID-19 restrictions and safety precautions. A virtual prayer service will be held on Friday, November 20. The drive-through dinner pick-up is scheduled for Tuesday, November 24, and a drive-through Family to Family Thanksgiving Food distribution will be conducted on Wednesday, November 25.

To date, we have conducted 20 drive-through food distributions throughout Lackawanna County.

We ask for your continued prayers as we support our community through the Thanksgiving season in the loving traditions set forth by Sister Adrian.
Beware of the Ballot-Box Stuffers
Extreme Precautions Necessary to Baffle Them
They’re well drilled in the art

Is this a headline from a 2020 newspaper? No, it is from the Scranton paper, The Scranton Free Press, of October 28, 1900! The sub headline reads: “The Republican Primaries Proved That a Unique System of Ballot Box Stuffing Was Worked Successfully and it May be Attempted on Election Day.”

This newspaper appeared again in 1971 after the Motherhouse fire. When the Strong Box (time capsule) from the Cornerstone was opened on November 10, 1971, Mother Beata and her team found this newspaper among other newspapers and items of IHM heritage which Mother Crescentia Foster and the sisters considered treasures of IHM. Are you asking: what else was in the time capsule? Was anything damaged? Of what was the strong box made? Here is a partial list of what our sisters chose to send to the future: coins (cash); a list of the 206 IHM sisters living in 1900; a statue of the Sacred Heart; a copy of the contract for construction of the Motherhouse.

Can you imagine what else was there? Send us your thoughts: we’ll see how your list matches the contents. Does history repeat itself? What do you think is in the cornerstone of the IHM Center building dedicated in 1962?

If we IHMs were to construct a new building in 2021, what items of our heritage would we put in a time capsule of today? Send us your suggestions to archives@sistersofihm.org

Jigsaw Puzzle of the month: Can you beat the time of five minutes in constructing the log cabin?
https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=31f3b1a587c3

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

Please send the number of pints donated to 175pints@sistersofihm.org if not donating through this website:
https://sleevesup.redcrossblood.org/campaign/175-pints-for-175-years/
Drive ends November 10, 2021.

Old Prayer Books
Wanted

If you have any used "Christian Prayer: The Liturgy of the Hours," "Gregorian Chant," "St. Pius X Hymnals" or similar books that you are not using, please let me know. I will sell them on eBay with profit going for our IHM retirement fund. Thank you,
Sister Mary Rassley
570-496-8864 or 570-357-5379
Cinquains

In our September Evening of Prayer, we reflected on the inspiring words of our founders and our living and deceased IHM sisters. Participants were invited to write a personal cinquain that captured their reflection and the message resonating in their hearts. Thank you to everyone who shared their cinquains with us. As we promised, we will be publishing them in our Newsletter and on our IHM Facebook page. View the September prayer at: https://video.ibm.com/recorded/127821483

How to Write a Cinquain

A cinquain (SIN-cain) is an unrhymed poem consisting of five lines arranged in a special way. A cinquain is an example of shape poetry. Because of the exact number of words required for each line of this poem, a unique, symmetrical shape is created from interesting, descriptive words. The word cinquain comes from the Latin root for “five.” Notice that the cinquain has five lines that follow this sequence:

Line A: One word subject or topic
Line B: Two vivid adjectives that describe the topic
Line C: Three interesting "-ing" action verbs that fit the topic
Line D: Four-word phrase that captures feeling about the topic
Line E: One word that explains or is related to Line A

IHM Receives SOAR! Award

Sister Ann Marie Pierce, IHM, was one of three SOAR! honorees at the 34th Annual New York Awards Gala held on September 16, 2020.

Sister Ann Marie received the Father Victor Yanitelli, SJ Award at the virtual gathering. Noted in the award citation, Sister Ann Marie Pierce has been a member of the Sisters of IHM for nearly 65 years. She has served as an administrator, teacher and mentor in Catholic education for more 40 years, serving as an educator and principal in numerous Catholic schools in NY, NJ, and PA. After serving in Catholic education, Sister Ann Marie, with her outgoing personality and love for life, chose to follow God’s call in another way—to serve God’s people as a hospital chaplain. In 1998, she enrolled in the chaplaincy internship program at Williamsport Hospital Medical Center.

Upon completion of that two-year internship, Sister Ann Marie returned to her native Long Island, where she had attended St. Mary’s School in Manhasset as a child, and began her ministry as a hospital chaplain at Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center in West Islip. On a daily basis, she ministers to and seeks to meet the spiritual needs of patients and their families. In her work, Sister reaches out to the smallest of children and to families struggling with the illnesses of loved ones or at the time of the loss of a family member. With her loving and comforting smile, Sister Ann Marie Pierce is there supporting patients, young and old, and their families and loved ones who seek Jesus’ love and counsel during what can be a very difficult time in their lives.

View the virtual celebration at https://app.mobilecause.com/e/ppdo4g?vid=e1jy1
Celebrating Sister Romaine's 107th!

The IHM Sisters celebrated the life of our Sister Romaine Krug who turned 107 years old on September 12. She in turn wrote, "Sisters, thank you for the prayers, flowers, expressions of kindness and good wishes you showered on me for my birthday. I am grateful to God and hold each of you in prayer. - Sister Romaine

Amish Apple Fritter Bread

submitted by Maureen Schrimpe, IHM

Makes 1 loaf
350 degrees
Bake 60-70 minutes

1/3 cup brown sugar
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 cup (1 stick) butter softened
2/3 cup sugar
2 tsp. vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups flour
2 tsp baking powder
1/2 cup milk
1 1/2 cups diced apples (about 4 medium, mixed with a little cinnamon and sugar to coat them)

Powdered Sugar Glaze (optional)
1/2 cup powdered sugar
1/2 tsp butter, softened
2 tbls milk
1/4 tsp vanilla extract

Spray loaf pan with nonstick cooking spray
Mix first two ingredients, the brown sugar and cinnamon, together and set aside.
In a large mixing bowl, beat together the sugar and butter until smooth. Beat in the eggs and vanilla.
In a medium bowl stir together the flour and baking powder. Add this mixture to the other and stir until well blended.
Pour the milk into the batter and blend until smooth. Pour half the batter into the loaf pan. Then add half of your chopped apple mixture. Pour the rest of the batter on top of the apples.
Top with remaining apples and pat them slightly into the batter. Sprinkle with the brown sugar and cinnamon mixture you set aside.

Powdered Sugar Glaze (optional)
Blend the powdered sugar and butter together until smooth. Mix in the milk and vanilla until smooth glaze consistency.
Let the bread cool about 30 minutes before pouring the glaze on the top.

Enjoy... after all, it is fall apple season!

Our Lady of Grace Spiritual Center
Manhasset, NY
https://www.olgretreat.com/

A Space for Grace
with Sister Ann Barbara DeSiano, IHM
Tuesdays through November 17
10:00 - 11:00 am via Zoom
During our time together each week we will practice Lectio Divina, a form of praying God's word through scripture. Each week we will use the gospel of the upcoming Sunday. This prayer is read with "the ear of the heart." Prayer is different than reading the bible for study or analysis. We read the living word of God so that He can speak directly to our hearts. It involves four steps: reading, reflecting, responding and resting. We engage God in a conversation and listen for His word to us.
*Once we receive your registration information you will receive an email with Zoom information and handouts.
Free Will Donation
FROM THE IHM BUSINESS OFFICE

Vehicles
Insurance cards for all congregation owned vehicles have been mailed. Insurance coverage is effective 9/1/20 to 9/1/21. Should you need a replacement insurance card, please contact Linda Pochis at 570-346-5494 or pochisl@sistersofihm.org.

Central Accounting
Monday, August 31, 2020 marked the end of another fiscal year for the congregation. The Business Office requests all Central Accounting paperwork through August 31, 2020 be sent to the Business Office no later than October 9, 2020.

Medical/Dental and Mandatory Health Insurance Notices
Important information regarding the IHM congregation’s sponsored medical and dental insurance benefits as well as mandatory health insurance notices for the plan year 2020-2021 are available on the Congregation’s website at www.sistersofihm.org/Sisters Login /Business Office Online/ Business Matters/Medical and Dental-Aetna.

- Summary of Benefit Coverage–Aetna Manage Choice Plan 2020-2021
- Summary of Benefit Coverage–Aetna Traditional Choice Plan 2020-2021

As required by law, the following information is available under Medical and Dental-Mandatory Notices. Please note that no action is required by you.
- Certificate of Creditable Coverage for Medicare D Purposes

This information does not apply to and may be disregarded by Aetna plan members that are currently not eligible for Medicare.

- Health Insurance Exchange Notice-The Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary has provided a health plan at no cost to its members. This coverage exceeds the minimum coverage thresholds as outlined by the Affordable Care Act, and therefore there is no benefit to be gained by shopping for plans offered in the Marketplace.
- HIPAA-Notice of Privacy Practices
- The Newborns’ and Mothers’ Health Protection Act
- Notice of HIPAA Special Enrollment Rights
- Patient Protection Disclosure
- Premium Assistance and CHIP Notice
- Women’s Health and Cancer Rights Act-This notice outlines provisions for breast cancer treatment and reconstructive surgery in connection with a mastectomy.

Address Changes – Aetna and Delta Dental
The IHM Center Business Office will update addresses for all sisters enrolled in the IHM Congregation’s sponsored Aetna and Delta Dental plans.

Social Security, Medicare, State Pharmacy or Medicare Prescription Drug Plans
For sisters on mission and receiving Social Security benefits and/or enrolled in Medicare, address changes should be made by contacting the Social Security Administration. A “My Social Security” account can be created online at www.ssa.gov or call 1-800-772-1213 between 7:00 A.M. and 7:00 P.M. or contact the local Social Security office in their new area.

To change the address with State Pharmacy plans or Medicare prescription drug plans, call the telephone number on the back of the card.

For sisters moving to the IHM Center or Our Lady of Peace Residence and receiving Social Security benefits, enrolled in Medicare and/or State Pharmacy or Medicare prescription drug plans, the Business Office will assist the sister with address changes.

This information is also available on the congregation’s website www.sistersofihm.org /Sisters Login/Business Matters/General Information/Change of Address.

Direct Deposit
Direct Deposit is a safe and timely method for your stipend/wages to be sent to the congregation. The funds are electronically transmitted into the congregation's account on your regular pay date. A pay advice is then given to the sister advising her of the payment into the account. Please inquire at your place of ministry/employment for the availability of this feature.

Sisters who are currently enrolled in direct deposit are reminded to send their deposit advices upon receipt to the Business Office via mail or electronically to IHMfinance@sistersofihm.org
Pandemic Adventures in Sicuani, Perú  by Sister Eileen Egan, IHM

Recently, the Peruvian National Conference of Religious invited Father Raul Pariamache, SSCC, to give a conference via social media on the experience of the Pandemia. He offered Five Challenges of COVID-19 and his thoughts seem to touch upon everything, especially our experiences in Sicuani.

1. A Time of Radical Choices: Opting for the most important life values: protecting ourselves while being concerned for the most needy in our society. In order to reduce the crowd at the large farmers’ market downtown, the municipality asked the various neighborhoods to set up their own market. Where we live in San Felipe, the people were a little nervous to open the abandoned market across from our House of Studies. The land had previously been a cemetery, and although human remains had been relocated, there was fear that a few lost souls would haunt them. The Board of Directors asked Eileen if she could bless the market before attempting to re-open it. She made copies of Psalm 23 in Quechua, the native tongue. They all sang the psalm together (all had masks and observed social distancing!) and then Eileen told them to paste the prayer on their stand and pray it every day before beginning work. Then she blessed each stand with Holy Water, with the Board members following her around to make sure no space was missed. Closing with the Our Father, everyone seemed content. So far, no phantoms have been detected. Donations in gratitude for the blessing were used to prepare a food basket for a needy family.

2. A Time of Anguish: 61 % of Peruvians are experiencing economic hardship during the pandemic, along with reduced funding in parishes from closed churches (none are open as of yet). Although many wage earners have been furloughed, we were able to pay the young woman in charge of the IHM House of Studies, even though no girls are present as of July, thanks to donations from the US and our partner parish in Weiher, Germany. A man and his stepson were hired to paint the church because his home was going to be foreclosed by the bank. A community of 5 Jesuit priests in another town decided to take turns cooking for themselves and sharing left overs with the poor in their neighborhood.

3. A Time of Agenda Adjustments: Mission activity has lessened and liturgy is on the internet. Recently, one of our neighbors, driving his tractor, was killed by a drunken driver. His family began to experience strange noises in and around the house and felt that he hadn’t been properly buried, lacking a church funeral. Always masked Father Justo and Eileen consented to bless the home and pray for the deceased. Some family members gathered in their yard and Father celebrated the Word of God with them, which included a table draped in

continued on page 13
During the lockdown and stay-at-home orders brought about by the advent of COVID-19, many of us have come to appreciate in new and grateful ways the healing power of the natural world. Nature has offered us an arena of safety and protection, wonder and beauty, all invitations for healing and renewal.

On October 4, we mark the close of the Season of Creation and also celebrate the feast day of one of the world's most beloved saints, Francis of Assisi, who made it his mission to re-teach all things their loveliness. In this excerpt from "St. Francis and the Sow," Galway Kinnell describes what happens when someone affirms our own beauty and worth:

“The bud stands for all things, even for those things that don’t flower, for everything flowers, from within, of self-blessing; though sometimes it is necessary to reteach a thing its loveliness, to put a hand on its brow of the flower and retell it in words and in touch it is lovely until it flowers again from within, of self-blessing; as Saint Francis put his hand on the creased forehead of the sow…”

So this month, our EarthCARE committee asked a number of sisters and associates who have spent some time visiting or working in the Welcoming Space of our IHM Land Plan to reflect on how, during this time of the pandemic, nature has helped to re-teach them their own loveliness, how nature has in some way been healing and renewing for them.

We thank them for sharing their reflections with us:
“Being on the land is so grounding, so refreshing for my soul! Everywhere I look is a celebration of life’s diversity. I like to just stop, be still, and listen. In those moments I can sense the aliveness of Sacred Presence permeating everywhere.”

“Many afternoons I leave my office (in the Center) with tense shoulders and bleary eyes, having worked intensely on a project requiring concentration and persistent endurance. Going to my car I glance over at the Land Project which immediately brings me to another world of peace and calm. The varying shades of greens, a yellow bunch of buttercups, maybe a small white butterfly passing by the butterfly bench release the tension and I am almost aware of my body sighing into a ‘Thank you, God.’”

“Recently, I have spent some time in the hermitage. There was a special awakening or freedom to have that first cup of coffee outside, listening to the sounds of nature, especially the birds. The birds have the freedom to fly about and discover food, water, mates, nesting places, etc. As I watched the birds, especially the cardinals, I felt a sense of freedom and independence. I had the opportunity to let God open my heart to feel God’s love, freedom and peace. For these gifts I am most grateful.”

“To me the Welcoming Space is a place of beauty, peace and renewal. I am reminded of how well God cares for us and how wonderfully He provides for our every need. The delicate ecosystem is a powerful reminder of how reliant we are on each other and on God’s blessings. I am fascinated with the ever-changing landscape, how some plants die, new ones bloom, etc. It’s a movie I never tire of. This is a place where people care what happens to our earth, inspiring me to care more, too.”

Our EarthCARE committee invites all to enter into the healing beauty of the IHM Welcoming Space or the healing beauty of Nature wherever we may find ourselves. May we discover in these encounters a deeper knowing of the sacredness of all creation and of our place and worth in the universe.
Fall Appeal
During September, the fall direct mail appeal was sent to family and friends. Sister Margaret Gannon, IHM, was featured in the IHM letter of support that selected a legacy theme. Sister Margaret’s social justice initiatives, including her recent activities with the African Sisters Education Collaborative, were highlighted. Sister Margaret is an inspiration to all of us. Please remember to pray for all of our supporters.

Silver Circle
Thank you to all of the IHM sisters and friends who have been busy selling Silver Circle memberships for our 2020-21 membership year! We would appreciate all sellers reaching out to additional donors to keep the program going strong. If you are not already a seller, please contact the development office at 570 346-5431. We are always looking for new sellers to help support the ongoing needs of our retired sisters.

Drawings are held on the third Wednesday of every month from October through June. Sellers, please send your completed memberships and checks to the development office as soon as possible. This year’s first Silver Circle drawing will be on Wednesday, October 21. Thank you!

Remain in Our Love
October’s Remain in Our Love liturgy is for locations in the Dioceses of Florida, Mississippi, Georgia, Peru, Puerto Rico, and Guatemala where IHM sisters have ministered but are no longer present. Mass will be celebrated on October 28 at 8 a.m. at the IHM Center Chapel.

Sicuani continued from page 11
black, holding a picture of the deceased. Holy water was copiously splashed around the yard and upon everyone present. Peace was the gift of that visit.

Sister Norma was scheduled to study in Lima for her Master’s but she is still in Sicuani taking her classes via internet this year. Thank God, since we elders aren’t supposed to go out much and she’s taking care of the shopping.

4. A Time of Charism and Prophecy: We are called to awaken our original charism which has always included the arts. Recently Ancilla noticed that the wall murals outside a small public school were defaced and plaster had fallen off. She asked the principal if she could repair and re-paint it and he was delighted. Each day a little more was done and while working she had the opportunity to greet all the folks walking by who expressed gratitude for the project. Now the smiling faces of children on the mural will be welcoming the children when they return to school.

5. A Time of Systemic Change: This question needs asking: What is a non-systemic vision? Does it mean thinking outside the box? One thing that’s happened here in Sicuani is that adults are stopping in asking if they can sign up for sacraments. Since we are reflecting on St. Matthew’s gospel using a booklet we prepared for the Sunday readings, the late comers need to do some recuperation of the previous readings, but since no date has been decreed for opening the churches, all participants will be welcomed as the crisis subsides because the Word of God has been their guide.

IHM Associate Commissioning: https://video.ibm.com/channel/ihm-tv
Sharon Durham video presentation: https://video.ibm.com/channel/kEBjspYxdJk
Funerals for Deceased IHM Sisters: https://video.ibm.com/channel/ihm-tv
Task Force Revisions to Constitutions: https://sw.sistersofihm.org/index.php/communications-resources/
Sisters of IHM Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/sistersofihm
Sister Marionette Coll, IHM  by Sister Patt Walsh, IHM

I recently discovered I was writing a profile for the Newsletter of the very IHM Sister who created this publication! Could this series ever be complete without including hers?

Sister Marionette was born in Pittsburgh on November 17, 1921 (she’ll be 99 this year!) and baptized Marjorie. She’s the middle child of the nine children of Francis (“FrankX”) and Mary Broderick Coll (pronounced “Call”). Marjorie went to St. Rosalia’s Grade School and High School.

Sister Josephine Brennan, IHM, was not only her sponsor but seemed to “orchestrate” her entrance process in 1939! While Marjorie was wondering if she was worthy, Sister Josephine was buying the train ticket and arranging with her own father to pick Marjorie up at the train station. However, once Marjorie met Sister Anasyia and experienced her kindness and IHM hospitality, she knew she belonged and soon became Sister Marionette.

Marionette spent one year teaching primary and two years in intermediate classrooms. Though English was her favorite subject, it was decided that Marionette should attend Fordham for a math degree. Thus Marionette spent the next eighteen years teaching high school math and science. She has fond memories of her decade at Immaculata High School in NYC. This was also a time when her extracurricular assignments included the newspaper, yearbook, speech and debate.

In 1964 she came to Marywood and was soon on the road with the outside company the college had hired to do fundraising for a capitol campaign. Recognizing her skills in this area, Marionette was appointed director of development and she formalized the college’s fundraising programs. In 1968, Marywood went through a re-structuring and Marionette becoming Marywood’s vice president for development. Her term in office included both the year of the Marywood Motherhouse fire and its aftermath.

In 1978, Marywood’s V.P. for Academic Affairs, Sister Michel Keenan, became IHM Congregation general superior. She invited Sister Marionette to join her. Sister Marionette suggested her skills would be best used in public relations. Thus, the Office of Communications was established and Sister Marionette was appointed its first director. The IHM Newsletter replaced the general superior’s periodic letters to the sisters. Marionette established a committee to create Journey. Returning to her office after a conversation with Sister Michel about the need to formalize fundraising efforts to meet growing retirement needs, Marionette found herself singing the line, "When your hair has turned to Silver.” Soon she sketched out what continues to this day as the Silver Circle Retirement Fund Fundraising Program. At 98, Marionette is still a seller!

At 73, Sister Marionette became an office assistant at St. Agnes School in Baltimore. Happily, she was reunited with her dear friend, Sister Maureen Schrimpe. They’d met in the 70s when Maureen was in charge of the kitchen at the IHM Center. Maureen and Marionette have been best friends for 40+ years. Maureen shared a poem that describes their relationship: “Why we need best friends... continued on page 15
God’s covenant has been fulfilled

Sister M. Janice Barry, IHM
September 22, 2020
in the 72nd year of her religious profession

Marionette continued from page 14

because they laugh at the same silly things we do….because they give us honest advice…. because they will be there for us - even if they are thousands of miles away... because they celebrate with us when we are at our best, but still love us at our worst.”

At 84, Marionette returned to Scranton to “retire” but ended up living at the IHM Center and spending hours during the week at OLP as a Telespond volunteer!

In 2012, she came to live at OLP—her “true retirement.” She’s written her own obituary and longs for the end of this pandemic so she and Maureen can continue their “vacation adventures.” A life well-lived!

Sister Marionette in Boston while on vacation with her friend, Sister Maureen.

IHM Congregation Vitae
as of September 29, 2020
Final Profession - 297
Temp. Professed - 1
Novices - 2
Candidates - 0
Associates - 172

Sisters of St. Casimir
Congregation Vitae
Final Profession - 43

Sister's Poem Published

Sister Denise Lyon's poem, Come and See, was published in the St. John's School of Theology and Seminary, Collegeville, Minnesota, publication, Obscula, a publication of noteworthy student writings. Substantial theological reflection for the vitality of the Church is a primary goal of the school.

Notes of Gratitude

Sister Joan Bastress and the entire Bastress family wish to extend their deepest thanks to all who sent masses, prayer enrollments, sympathy cards and wishes to them on the occasion of their brother, Msgr. Arthur Bastress' entry into eternity. Your love and caring has truly been spectacular during this time of sorrow. May Jesus, our Redeemer, reward each of you as only He can, in time and eternity.

The family of Henry Albrittain, brother of Sister Jeanne, and her entire family extend sincere gratitude to everyone for the prayers, masses and loving concern during this sad time in our lives.

Lovingly, Jeanne Albrittain, IHM

I would like to thank all the sisters who sent me cards, visited and called me, and for all the prayers while I am still recuperating from my shoulder fracture. I deeply appreciate all of it. Take care, stay safe, God bless.

Anne McDonald, IHM

IHM Directory Update

The online directory at www.sistersofihm.org

Joan Thompson
570-330-0222

Sister Monique Dissen
Our Lady of Peace Residence
cell phone: 252-675-0333

Sister Mary Pio Ferrario
Our Lady of Peace Residence, 4B
cell phone: 570-466-8669
Cycling with the Sisters – 62 miles of biking up hills and around beautiful lakes in Indiana; a chance for a spiritual adventure that combined bike riding with prayer and a connection to a virtual, online community. There were also virtual riders who rode stationary bikes along with the nine riders braving the Indiana elements, three of whom were sisters, and a guest rider, Dan Stockman, of Global Sisters Report. Read article at: https://tinyurl.com/y5tq9s6y. Another ride will take place October 3 on Prince Edward Island, Canada.

Sister Mindy Welding, IHM, joined the Cycling with Sisters event as one of several prayer leaders on the virtual ride. Cycling With Sisters is meant to draw attention to the social justice work of women religious focusing on different areas of concern: human trafficking, poverty, nonviolence, the environment, immigration, and COVID-19. The hours of pedaling are a physical reminder of the real and intense suffering of so many people today. Cycling With Sisters is funded in part by the GHR Foundation and organized in collaboration with Communicators for Women Religious.

All things virtual – Who says retreats have to be done in person? Not on college campuses! Recently, both Robert Morris University in Pittsburgh, PA and Chestnut Hill College in the Philadelphia area had their annual Retreat for Busy Persons. As a member of Pittsburgh Religious Vocation Council and the National Religious Vocation Conference, Sister Mindy was invited to accompany students on the retreat.

Sister Mindy and several other sisters and religious priests gathered via Zoom with Archbishop Perez of Philadelphia to begin a discussion about how to reach out to our Latino brothers and sisters and to invite vocations.

Sister Mindy, Sister Terry Saetta, RSM and Father Joseph Narog, OSA are planning a new online retreat that will invite high school students into a co-educational experience of their call to discipleship and vocation. Sister Ruth Harkins, IHM had developed a day retreat for young women entitled, Gift of Mission, which is still being given across the NRVC Delaware Valley Member Area. This new retreat will use the same notions as Gift of Mission but expand it to both women and men. This new retreat will be done in conjunction with the outreach to Hispanic students in parishes and schools.

Pizza and Prayer – COVID-19 restricts yet one more aspect of life... our monthly Pizza and Prayer evenings with women attending Marywood University! However, despite the restrictions, we will gather! We were able to gather outside on September 25th, taking all precautions with masks and social distancing. Sisters Kieran Williams and Mindy met with six young women from the Delight Prayer and Sharing group. Our next meetings will be virtual via Zoom but pizza or some other treat will be delivered to the girls ahead of time! Thank goodness for Zoom and pizza!
The Season of Creation – The Climate Crisis
Three book reviews by Sister Patt Walsh, IHM

As the California fires rage and we’re into Greek alphabet names for hurricanes, I decided to review a book on the Climate Crisis. I intended to pick only one. In the end, I choose three: Climate Change and You by Emily Raij (for children); Our House is on Fire; Scenes of a Family and a Planet in Crisis by Greta Thunberg and Family (for young adults); The Future We Choose–Surviving the Climate Crisis by Christiana Figueres and Tom Rivett-Carnac (for adults).

Always start with a children’s book! It’s simple and, for IHMs, its pattern links are a powerful example of “Radical Interdependence!” It has a structure of “This happened which caused this which caused this....” All key terms are highlighted and explained. It’s the primer needed and the book to share to get young activists started.

While we’ve heard of Greta Thunberg, this is her family story and its primary narrator is her mother, a world-famous opera singer, Malena Ernman. When you understand their story, Greta’s work as an environmental activist becomes even more incredible. This book was originally written in Swedish and some of its terms and references are Swedish. Malena and her husband, Svante Thunberg (a popular Swedish actor), had a home life that was considerably different from their public one. When Greta (their oldest) was 11 and in fifth grade, she just stopped eating! She developed a form of “mutism” (only speaking at home) and after a long time, she was also diagnosed with Asberger’s Syndrome. At school, she saw a film about plastics polluting the ocean. While her parents searched for a diagnosis and a school that could serve her special needs, Greta became obsessed with learning about the climate crisis and sharing that information at home. Meanwhile, her sister, Beata, started taking to her room. Like her mother, a musical genius, she seemed only able to sing and dance alone. The sister’s two different conditions emerged at pre-puberty and seemed to be hereditary complications of parental behaviors – especially Malena’s ADHD. I single that out because Malena is the primary author’s voice here and the chapters are brief and often have to be anchored in a chronological timeline. Malena continued to perform and did suffer several breakdowns.

The parents, however, supported Greta’s passion for the climate and her own demands – she wouldn’t fly; would only travel in an electric car, and continued to eat only a meatless, restricted diet. She blamed the media for not focusing on the crisis and knew the movement needed a celebrity! As her country was facing an election, she decided she would have a “three week strike for the climate.” She prepared for questions and put together information sheets. She needed to do this alone. Her message is simple: “We’re children. You’re the adults! You owe us a future!” There’s much to learn about what’s happening to the climate here. Remember, Greta and other young adults around the world continue every Friday to strike! I encourage you to read this book mostly because you/all of us may finally, intellectually and emotionally, get the reality that this is a crisis!

If you’re overwhelmed and question what you can do, realizing that even Covid-19 traces its origins to the deforestation in China of bat habitats, turn to the final book, The Future We Choose. Written by the authors of the Paris Climate Agreement, it itemizes what countries and corporations (the main generators of greenhouse gases) can do. Gratefully, it also itemizes simple tasks we each can do to help solve this crisis.