



Images

Summer
2023

A Newsletter for friends of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine

Collaborating, Changing, Growing



We often quote our Sr. Mary Patricia Barrett when she said, "We have never done it alone." This has been a true reality, not only for the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine (CSA), but for all religious communities. CSA has been blessed by the many talented, compassionate co-ministers who serve with us. In this edition of *Images*, we welcome two leaders of our Foundation ministries. Enjoy getting to know Marisa and Donna; they have led in a time of transition with the retirement of their predecessors, who departed after many years of loving service. What would any of us do without our staff, who have been carriers of our vision these 172 years?

A good example of the spirit of collaboration is Regina Health Center (RHC), which will be celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. Its very inception was an act of working with one another. Together, CSA and the Conference of Religious Leadership of the Diocese of Cleveland (CORL) identified the need to care for our aging religious. From that need, RHC became one of the first intercongregational nursing facilities in the United States.

And we are still collaborating. CSA is embarking on the Women Religious Archives Collaborative project (WRAC) along with several other congregations. This shared archives will ensure that the stories and legacies of women religious will be preserved as an integral part of the multi-state history of the Catholic Church. As of May 2023, fourteen congregations have signed on to co-sponsor this ministry.

And we are still changing. As we lived through the painful process of closing inpatient services at St. Vincent Charity Medical Center, a new collaborative is being implemented: the St. Vincent Charity Health Care Campus. New initiatives are being developed that will provide the surrounding neighborhood with services designed to meet and elevate the social determinants of health.

And we are still together. On April 15th, 2023, Mt. Augustine hosted over 140 Sisters from congregations across the Diocese of Cleveland. These women assembled under the sponsorship of CORL, and gathered to hear Sr. Mary Jo Nelson, OLVN. She shared her congregation's transformation story, and together we discussed the realities of religious life today. The enthusiasm of those present was palpable: the joy at coming together; the excitement at the opportunities for collaboration in our lives, leadership, and ministries; the celebration in our legacies and diverse histories. Stay tuned... There is more to come, guided by the Holy Spirit.

So to you, our friends, we give thanks for what has been, and look forward to what will be. "We have never done it alone." We give thanks to God for you and the blessings you are to CSA!

Sr. Evelyn Flowers, CSA (left) and Sr. Cheryl Keehner, CSA (right) during one of the bimonthly prayer gatherings at Mt. Augustine

Sr. Judith Ann Karam, CSA



“We have never done it alone.”

- Sr. Mary Patricia Barrett, CSA

CSA Foundations Celebrate New Leadership

Last summer, both of the Sisters of Charity Foundations in Canton and South Carolina transitioned into new leadership. Marisa Rohn replaced Joni Close as the Foundation’s president in Canton, and Donna Waites followed Tom Keith as the president in South Carolina. Both of these women demonstrate a profound sense of service, responsibility, and love for God’s people. As they approach one year in this ministry, they reflect on their continuing journey:



“As a lifelong member of the Stark County community, and someone who started her career in the nonprofit sector, I have always been moved by the work of the Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton. Early on in my career, I benefited from the Foundation’s work to build the capacity of our local nonprofit agencies... As I transitioned to my next career in higher education, my predecessor, Joni Close, invited me to be one of the community leaders... on the Stark County Capital Campaigns Committee. When I learned of the opportunity to potentially lead this amazing organization, I just couldn’t pass up the chance to give back to a Foundation that had given so much to me and my community. My nonprofit heart led me in this direction, and I am so grateful that it did!

The most fulfilling part of my role as president... is hearing the stories of the lives our funding has touched and the impact we have been able to make on our community. I have made a point of visiting the various organizations we have funded... I saw the smiles on the faces of my team who had a hand in funding and working with the organizations, and I heard the stories from those who are boots on the ground. These were stories of hope and through each story shared, I learned how much our Foundation made a difference in the lives of those touched.

I hope that our work on behalf of the Sisters of St. Augustine truly touches the poor and underserved in a way that provides *them* hope and resources. I hope that our team is fueled by their passion for the work to get even more involved in community issues that could benefit from our skills and expertise. Ultimately and overwhelmingly, I am hopeful. I know we have the right Board of Directors, the right staff, the right collaborative partners, and the right guidance to allow our work to continue to impact Stark and surrounding counties for decades to come.”

- Marisa Rohn

“Becoming president of the Sisters of Charity Foundation of SC has been, in many ways, a final step in my journey with the CSAs. My journey began in 2000 when I joined the staff of Healthy Learners, a ministry of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine. Several years into my time with Healthy Learners, my role evolved to include working in development for Providence Hospital, which was owned by the Sisters at that time. From Providence, I came to the Foundation in 2015. Back when I first started in 2000, I can’t say that I ever envisioned that this would be where I would be, but I fully believe that it was God’s plan.



On a daily basis, I have the blessing of encountering people who devote their lives to serving South Carolinians. I am thankful to be able to play a small role in supporting nonprofits as they seek to offer opportunities to people in our state that are working to overcome barriers... Our commitment to advancing equity and our anti-poverty work has never been stronger, and our staff and board are 100% committed to doing all that we can to move that needle.

Having been in the CSA family of ministries for nearly half my life, I can say that I am eternally grateful to be where I am today and grateful for all my years of service alongside the CSAs. I have known and loved dozens of CSAs over the years and will always treasure the relationships that I have had with them. Their pure love, selfless dedication, and courageous leadership have inspired me for years. I am honored, yet humbled, that they have trusted me to be a part of carrying out their mission.”

- Donna Waites

"How can I keep from singing?"

- 2022 Jubilee Theme

Congratulations to our 2022 Jubilarians

Sisters, Associates, family, and friends gathered at Mt. Augustine on September 25th, 2022 in support of that year's Jubilarians. Sr. Allan Kenzig celebrated seventy years in religious life, and Sr. Nancy Hendershot celebrated sixty years.



Sr. Nancy Hendershot (left) and Sr. Allan Kenzig (right) during the Jubilee Celebration

The ceremony was held in the Holy Family Chapel. For their theme, the Jubilarians chose "How Can I Keep from Singing?" Truly, the ceremony and reception that followed were a grand celebration of song, gratitude, and exuberant joy.

Congratulations, Sisters! We thank God for these two incredible women, who have dedicated so much of themselves to the service of others.

"How Can I Keep from Singing became the touchpoint of the Jubilee celebration, and of my entire life as a CSA. joyous events included a day of prayer led by Sr. Margaret Mach, SC; my personal retreat with the Poor Clare Sisters in South Carolina; and the Liturgy and reception with our CSA Sisters and Associates at Mt. Augustine. The celebration, presided by my longtime friend Fr. Ned Weist, was enriched by the presence of additional people who have touched me throughout my life--my family, lifelong friends, as well as Fr. Sandy McDonald and the Associates who came from South Carolina. Our diverse gifts serve the mission of a God who is love itself. Because of my community and these beautiful people, I am blessed and continue to grow. Truly, how can I keep from singing?"

- Sr. Nancy Hendershot



Sr. Nancy Hendershot with her family

"I am the person I am today because [CSA] welcomed me, prayed with and for me. They were always there to support me, especially during the many difficult times in my life. I was born into a loving family, many of whom were present with me at the day of Jubilee.

"I want to thank all of you: my co-ministers, the CSA Associates, the many Sisters of Charity with whom I have shared my life, my family, and many friends as I celebrate 70 years as a CSA. I have been truly blessed."

- Sr. Allan Kenzig



Right: Sr. Allan Kenzig with her friends and family members.

“Our ministry is focused on people.”

- CSA Constitution, pg. 24

Regina Health Center Celebrates 30 Years of Service

In 1993, the Sisters' Motherhouse, Mt. Augustine, got a bit of a makeover. At that time, there was a growing concern surrounding the long-term healthcare needs of the aging religious population. The Sisters of Charity responded to this need, and began to develop plans to construct a state-of-the-art nursing facility inside their Motherhouse. It proved to be a \$7.5 million endeavor--close to \$16 million today.

On May 16th, 1993, Regina Health Center (RHC) opened its doors as one of the first intercongregational skilled nursing and assisted living facilities in the United States. This shared home, thirty years later, continues to provide its residents with quality and compassionate care.

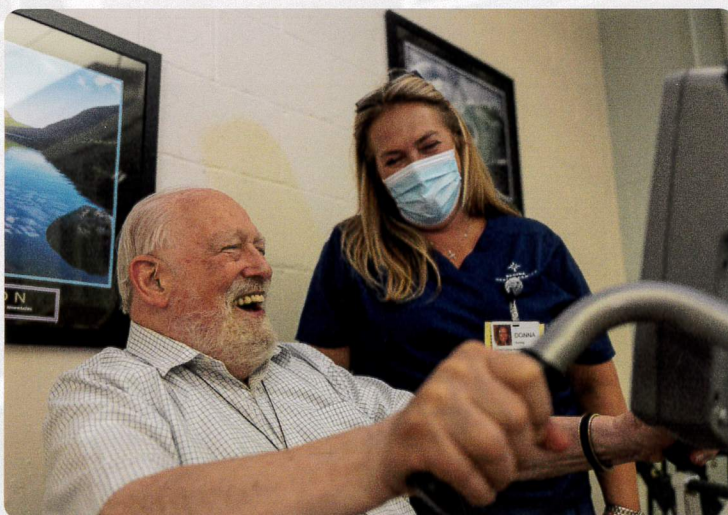
“It’s been a real pleasure being here, and it’s because of the people,” Sr. Mary Lois Phillipp, CSA, said. She has been a resident at RHC for several years. “I’m always impressed at how friendly the staff are. They’re always so willing to help you with whatever you need.”

Since its inception, collaboration has been at the heart of RHC. Twenty-two religious communities collaborated on the development of Regina Health Center and formed the Intercongregational Advisory Board (IAB), which still meets today. These congregations worked together to ensure that the long-term healthcare needs of religious sisters, brothers, priests, and laypeople would be met with high-quality services and loving hearts.

“We’re impacting people,” said Colleen Corrigan Day, RHC’s Director of Mission Support and Donor Relations. “Even in a changing landscape, we are sowing the seeds of kindness. We’re impacting the lives of our residents and their family members. We’re able to really make a difference.”



(l-r) Sr. Joan Gallagher, CSA, Sr. Mary Catherine McNamara SIW and Sr. Maria Kruszewski, CSFN at an IAB meeting, February 1993



Anniversary celebrations were held in early June on the lawn of Mt. Augustine. Sr. Judith Ann Karam, CSA, was honored at the event in recognition for her longtime support and service to RHC’s ministry.

If you would like to make a donation to Regina Health Center, you are invited to contact Corrigan Day at cday@reginahealthcenter.org for more information.

Left: RHC resident, Fr. Paul Bernier, SSS, and longtime staff member Donna Collins, 2022. Photo courtesy of Knox Marketing Inc.

Background: Side view of Mt. Augustine/RHC, 2010

Renew, Refresh, Refocus: 20 Years and Counting

This year marks yet another anniversary: Centering Space, an Interfaith Ministry of CSA, is celebrating its 20th year. Located in Lakewood, OH, Centering Space is an inclusive place of reflection, respite, and spiritual development where “anyone is welcome to listen for God’s voice in the stillness of their heart.”

Co-directors Sr. Carol Kandiko, CSA and Betsy Nero explain, “Individuals on any part of their faith journey and from any background will find acceptance in this unique space.”

This ministry is the culmination of the work of Sisters and laity, who sought to address the unmet spiritual needs of the wider community. Today, with its extensive and diverse offerings, Centering Space fosters introspection, personal development, community and connection. Some of their offerings include reflective prayer, individual and group retreats, spiritual direction, Taizé prayer, and more. Virtual accessibility is a benefit that has come from the challenges of the pandemic. Participants now log in from California, Virginia, New York and beyond.

Anniversary celebrations will take place throughout this year. The first was held on April 23rd, 2023 and included a formal proclamation from Meghan F. George, Mayor of Lakewood. Sisters, Associates, supporters and friends gathered together in love of this special ministry.

Perhaps Ginny Douglas, program participant, put it best when she said, “Centering Space not only opens its doors, but it opens its heart. That is what makes it different.”



Sharon Konkoly, program participant, views 20 years of memories on display at Centering Space's Anniversary event in April

Women Religious Archives Collaborative

The Sisters of Charity are excited to pledge their involvement in the Women Religious Archives Collaborative (WRAC). This project seeks to preserve the history and share the stories of valiant women who have shaped Catholic healthcare, education, social service, and spirituality for generations. WRAC is the result of a strategic planning process undertaken in response to the urgent archival needs of congregations for physical repositories and professional stewardship.

The WRAC center, designed by Bostwick Design Partnership, will be located in the Central neighborhood of downtown Cleveland—an area where CSA has served since 1865. It will be adjacent to the St. Vincent Charity Health Campus and near a plethora of other cultural facilities, such as the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Archives, the Western Reserve Historical Society, and the Cleveland Public Library.



Members of the WRAC Planning Team and Bostwick Design

WRAC's state-of-the-art, climate-controlled facility will feature private areas for each community's records and dynamic spaces open to the public for research, educational internships, professional development opportunities, exhibits, lectures, school field trips, and tours. In addition, WRAC will also be virtually connected with a consortium of three other repositories currently being developed. To date, 14 congregations in Ohio, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and Iowa have chosen WRAC as the future home for their archival collections. CSA is proud to be a part of such a worthy endeavor.

If you would like more information about this unique collaborative project or would like to provide support, please contact WRAC Executive Director, Sr. Susan Durkin, OSU at sdurkin@archivescollaborative.org.

"Our love finds expression in the..."

In Memoriam: Sr. Mary Grace Betzler

Sr. Mary Grace Betzler was born on August 11th, 1946 in Pittsburg, PA. She was one of five children, including a twin sister who died young. Sr. Mary Grace entered the Sisters of Charity in 1967 and pronounced final vows on October 16th, 1976.

Healing and holistic ministries played a large part in her life of service. Her care and devotion to others was perhaps sparked by the needs of her family members, and especially by her relationship with her brother Danny, who enjoyed her steadfast love and care for years.

"Gracie was a woman of love," recalls Sr. Nancy Hendershot. "She reached out to people with openness and a listening heart. She cared very much for others, for her family--and she cared for all CSA Sisters and Associates *as family*."

Sr. Mary Grace held a Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy with a minor in Psychology. She was also a certified Catholic Chaplain. From 1969-1986, Sister worked in the Occupational Therapy Departments of Mt. Augustine, Richfield; St. Vincent Charity Hospital, Cleveland; Parmadale, Parma; St. John Hospital, Westlake; and Timken Mercy Medical Center, Canton. At St. Vincent's, she also served as Chaplain, Patient Visitor, and the intake specialist at Rosary Hall, the hospital's center for addiction treatment.

Sister was an avid gardener and enjoyed being outside. She loved to travel, and especially enjoyed her trips to the Sisters' cottage in South Carolina.

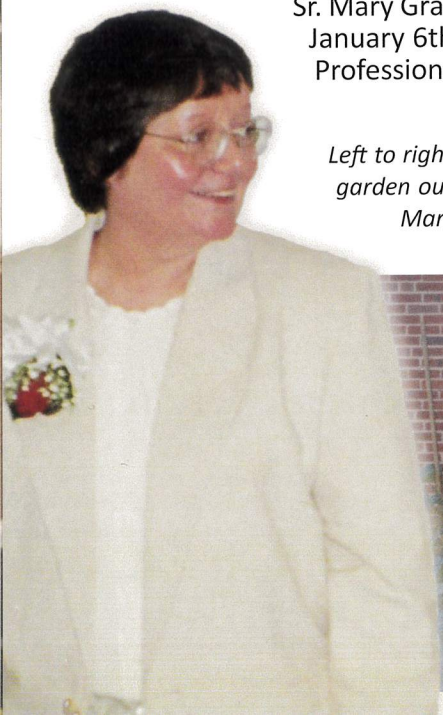
At home, Sr. Mary Grace loved to cook. When she lived at Mt. Augustine, delicious aromas often wafted down the 3A hall. Everyone adored her meals. Sr. Nancy Hendershot remembers how Sr. Mary Grace would invite three to four Sisters at a time, and hosted a different group each week. Sr. Mary Grace went out of her way to ensure that every Sister had a special meal, and that every Sister felt loved.

In addition to cooking for her fellow Mt. Augustine residents, Sr. Mary Grace also provided Reiki treatments for those who desired them. Sister would faithfully visit the other residents, Mary as her own health declined.

"She could always enjoy the little gifts from God. She enjoyed the little things, the simple things, and found beauty in them," Sr. Nancy said.

Sr. Mary Grace loved God faithfully and was joyful to be a Sister of Charity. She went home to God on January 6th, 2023, mouthing the words of the "Suscipe," the traditional hymn of the community's Profession Ceremony, that was being sung by her CSA Sisters at her side.

Left to right: Sr. Mary Grace at her farewell gathering from the Pastoral Care Dept. at St. Vincent's, 2000; Sister's garden outside St. Augustine Academy, n.d.; Srs. Mary Grace, Carole DeCrane, and Nancy Hendershot, 1984; Sr. Mary Grace at the Christian Life Center Workshop, 1991



giving of ourselves."

- CSA Constitution, pg. 20

In Memoriam: Sr. Sharon Anne Yanak

Sr. Sharon Anne Yanak, baptized Marlene Frances Yanak, was born November 8th, 1935 as one of five children. She entered CSA in 1955, and pronounced her final vows on August 22nd, 1963.

From early on, the ministry of education was a top priority in her life. After graduating from St. John College, she taught elementary students at St. Luke School in Lakewood, Assumption School in Brook Park, Holy Family School in Stow, and St. Joseph School in Cuyahoga Falls. She ultimately served as the principal at St. Luke School for seven years. Afterwards, she served as Pastoral Minister and principal of the PSR Program at Holy Family Parish in Stow.

Her leadership skills became even more apparent in 1981, when she was elected to the CSA Council. Sr. Sharon Anne also served on the Board of Trustees of both the St. Ann Foundation and the Board of CSA Health and Human Services.



Sr. Sharon Anne in the Madonna Garden at RHC, 2018

Yet another talent that Sr. Sharon Anne had was gardening. Sr.

Kathy Andrews remembers a time when she and Sr. Sharon Anne were living together in Parma. Sr. Sharon Anne went on a week-long retreat, and left very detailed instructions for the care and watering of each of her plants.

"I followed her instructions perfectly, or so I thought," Sr. Kathy said. "But on her return, the plants were in dire need of care! Sharon Anne never complained. In fact, we both had a good laugh over it!"

Never one to be idle and even when weighed down by health concerns, Sr. Sharon Anne stayed involved. She volunteered at The Open House, Providence House, and Regina Health Center's Pastoral Care department. Sister's love for Earth was apparent in her Ecology Committee membership. She continued to serve the needy as a part of the CSA Gift and Donations committee. She would often sell miscellaneous items and donate the proceeds.

Sr. Sharon Anne passed away on October 12th, 2022. She was dearly loved by her family, her congregation, fellow residents at RHC, and all of her co-ministers. On the day she died, Sr. Sharon Anne met people at Mass, enjoyed the beautiful outdoors and spent time with many friends. She greeted everyone with a smile and an abundance of kindness. God has truly blessed us with a special CSA who continues to be a model of a child of our loving God.

Bottom left: Sr. Sharon Anne with CSA Associates, n.d.; Right: Sr. Sharon Anne at a wildlife preserve, 1981



Sr. Sharon Anne, c. 1957

Requiescat in Pace

Sr. Mary Grace Betzler, CSA
Sr. Xavier Gorman, CSA
Sr. Sharon Anne Yanak, CSA

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Glimpses

The following are just a few snapshots of our Sisters' and Associates' most recent accomplishments. While not an exhaustive list, these highlights can offer you a glimpse into a year with CSA:

- **Sr. Ignatia Gavin, CSA and the Sisters of Charity congregation** received the Ignatian Spirituality Award at the Jesuit Retreat Center's annual Hearts on Fire event on May 12th, 2023.
- In March 2023, seven congregations in the Diocese of Cleveland collaborated to produce a video for National Catholic Sisters Week. Both **Sisters Marian Durkin and Catherine Walsh** were featured. The video is available for viewing on the Diocese's website.
- **Colleen Corrigan Day** was officially accepted as our newest CSA Associate in April, 2023. Colleen has worked with the Sisters for a number of years and is currently the Director of Mission Support and Donor Relations at Regina Health Center.
- **Associate Joan Ross** was appointed President of Ascension Seton Hays (ASH) in Kyle, TX. ASH is a Catholic health ministry dedicated to providing spirituality-centered, holistic care that sustains and improves the health of individuals and communities.
- **Associate Patricia Moore Pastides** will be one of the presenters at "The Peace of Childhood: Introducing Meditation to Children." This event will be held in August, 2023 and is a program of the World Community for Christian Meditation. It will be available virtually throughout the world.



*Our newest Associate,
Colleen Corrigan Day*