



Border Presence Epitomizes MSC Mission

“We have experienced God’s love, and are called to share it through our being, in our actions, in all circumstances, at all times.” (Fr. Hubert Linckens, MSC)

Upon witnessing the recent challenges of immigrants at our U.S. Mexico border, three MSC Sisters responded on behalf of their entire congregation and in fulfilment of their mission as MSC Sisters when invited by the Leadership Council of Women Religious and Catholic Charities to assist with the care of migrants at the U.S. Mexican border. These three MSC Sisters were – Sisters Dorothy Fabritze, Mary Saponara, and Lisa Valentini.



Sr. DOROTHY served in San Antonio, TX at the Freeman Coliseum April 22 through May 3 of 2021 as a monitor and companion among more than 1,000 teen boys. She accompanied smaller groups of boys to destinations including the medical tent and meals, she led them outdoors to participate in soccer games, and she assisted them with ESL lessons.

Sr. Dorothy’s own words tell her story best: “I was struck by the mutuality of the entities providing services for the boys. Government, for-profit subcontractors, and Catholic

Charities all worked together to care for the children which resulted ultimately in my witness of at least 50 boys leaving the facility on their way to their supporting families. Various religious congregations of women supported this effort with

volunteers, needed supplies, and monetary donations. This truly humanitarian effort was empowered by the Love of God and neighbor.

One of my most poignant memories was when a staff member approached me asking if I was a sister. When I said yes she told me a teen was asking for a padre, so I agreed to talk with him since no priests were available. I spoke with the teen for some time using the staff person as a translator and then the teen and I prayed. Before I left for the day, I shared with the Catholic Charities staff the teen’s desire to speak with a priest. They informed me that a priest comes every Sunday to celebrate Mass in person and afterward he visits with the teens, especially those requesting such a visit. Providentially, I had written down the teen’s name, pod number, and bed number and I was happy to find out later that the priest had visited the teen. This genuine interaction and result made me feel very productive and useful as a volunteer.

On another occasion, I was in the medical tent waiting to return a teen to his pod when another boy came in on a stretcher. Once the medical team was able to get him stable, the translator approached me to say that the boy was asking to talk with me since he surmised that I was a sister. I was fortunate to spend time with him and to pray. Once I returned to my escorting duties and the boy was being rolled on his stretcher to another tent, he turned to me with a smile, thanking me nonverbally. Again, my presence was appreciated and affirmed.

continued on page 3

My Time in Georgia

Sr. Barbara Daniels, MSC
June 29, 2021

In August 2012, I began my ministry at the Catholic Center at the University of Georgia in Athens as a campus minister. My job description included an all-encompassing list. It mentioned wedding preparation paperwork, RCIA coordination, preparation of parents for the baptism of their children, coordinating funeral Masses, leading a collegiate women’s bible study group and visiting the sick and infirmed! Where and how to begin? With the first home football game of the year??!

To me and most of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart not ministering in Georgia, Athens meant St. Mary’s Hospital, home-health nursing, Highland Hills continuum of care center, St. Joseph School, and religious instruction to children in nearby mission churches. But to the rest of the country, Athens referred to UGA Bulldogs – the famous SEC football team with faithful alumni throughout the USA following each Saturday gameday – all so new to me.

continued on page 5

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Dear Friends.....	2	In Memoriam.....	6
Mission Update	2	Stephen’s Place Transition	6
Lay MSC Gathering	3	Donor Tributes.....	7
God Incidents.....	5	MSC Oktoberfet.....	8

Want to “Be Green?”
To receive Connections in email format only,
contact: cwhitmoyer@mscreading.org

Dear Friends,

It is with a heavy heart that the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in conjunction with the Board of Directors made the difficult decision to close Sacred Heart Villa. After several years of exploration and numerous negotiations, we were unable to find a solution to avoid closure. This decision was not the outcome we wanted, but it has become unavoidable.



Operations at Sacred Heart Villa ceased October 16, 2021. In order to provide as much support to our residents and their families as possible, we partnered with Senior Living Consultants of York LLC to assist us, and all of our residents are in their new homes.

Twelve of our MSC Sisters continue to live at Sacred Heart Villa, now renamed St. Michael's Convent, and will do so for the time being as we continue our efforts to sell our building and sections of our property.

We are grateful and honored to have cared for so many lay residents for these many years. We have formed countless relationships and hold many cherished memories of all who have passed through our doors. Thank you for your continued support and prayers.

Gratefully,

Barbara Coffin

SHV Board President

Sr. Rosemarie Sommers, MSC

Provincial Superior

Mission Update: Namibian Project

The following June 24, 2021 letter sent from MSC Sisters of the Namibian Province to their Sisters in the U.S. Province details the Sisters' progress in Namibia. MSC Sisters of the U.S. Province thanks our many MISSION DONORS of the Mission Cooperative Plan for their generosity. You make a profound difference in the lives of many who need us.

Dear Sisters,

On behalf of the entire province of Namibia I would like to sincerely thank you for your generous contribution towards our project. Today I am happy to share with you that our first phase of Omakuva building project is completed. We are very much grateful that US Mission Office provided us with \$90,000 towards the construction of the sister's house in Namibia. The 1st phase which is the sisters' house is completed. We have many



The first phase of the Omakuva building project is completed: the sister's house includes a small chapel, office rooms, kitchen and dining room.

reasons to thank God for allowing all this to happen in the past 8 months and to you our dear sisters for the financial assistance towards this project. Your contribution and support are invaluable to us as a province and without you we could not be able to do anything of this kind.

We are grateful that everything went very well up to the end and thank you once more for your willingness to support our efforts and together we will make a difference in people's life in this part of our country by spreading the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Our sincere gratitude once more again for your generous support towards our project at Omakuva. We are and will forever be grateful.

May the good Lord bless you and keep you safe and be assured of our prayers.

May God reward you a hundredfold. With deepest gratitude and warmest wishes.

Sr. Letitia Andowa, MSC, Province Leader, Namibian Province



Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus extends many thanks to the hundreds of people who have welcomed Sr. Dorothy Fabritze into their parishes and responded so generously to her call for donations for the many MSC overseas missions through the Mission Cooperative Plan.

Since May of this year Sr. Dorothy has visited parishes personally and virtually so that MSC Sisters may continue to invite U.S. Catholics to support the lives of women, children and families in 20 foreign countries. This support has enabled our Sisters worldwide to build schools, orphanages, convents, and elder care facilities and to provide much-needed human services to people in need.

God has gifted us with life and our gift to God is the love we show for others. May each of us continue to do what we can to share the love of the Heart of Christ with all God's people through our partnerships with one another. ✚

While volunteering at the border, I witnessed Christ in various vignettes: I saw Christ weeping over Jerusalem in the teen kneeling at his cot and crying; I saw Christ rejoicing in the teens who whistled, clapped, and cheered each time another of them was escorted from the Coliseum on the way to their ultimate destination; I saw Christ in the teens sincerely trying to learn English; I saw Christ in the prayerfulness of the boys when kneeling at the Our Lady of Guadalupe statue Catholic Charities had placed in the dormitory area; I heard Christ speak through an older boy who asked, 'Do you have anything like a little job for me here where I could help. I have been working since I was 13 years old. I really do not know how to play.'

My volunteer experiences at the border are powerful for me because they demonstrate that one's presence, one's lived values, and one's openness to the spirit of the moment are the stuff of God's way – of showing His love for all. Per my vocation as an MSC Sister, I remain fortunate and blessed to have been a loving presence for people very much in need of compassionate listening and kind support."



SR. MARY SAPONARA served in San Diego, CA from April 15 to April 30 of 2021 in a warehouse that provided food and supplies for those crossing the border. Run by Catholic charities and Jewish Family Services, volunteer tasks included packing and sorting clothing and filling 800 to 1,000 bags of breakfast, lunch, and dinner daily. Once sorted according to hotel and floor, volunteers delivered the bins to the migrants in their rooms. Additionally,

Sr. Mary picked up medicine at pharmacies, worked in the hotel resource room, and accompanied families to the bus station or airport for their flights to their final destinations.

Sr. Mary shares the following stories of connection during her volunteer mission: "My heart was touched deeply when I met Manuel the young father of a family from Honduras. Our conversation began when he asked for shoes with laces, a luxury for most migrants. While I searched for a pair of shoes, he told me about his life in Honduras with his wife Myriam and his two young sons. The drug cartel in his town forced him to pay a third of his meager wage as a construction worker if he wanted to live. Week to week, this left Manuel without enough money to feed his family. When he tried to push back against the cartel, they killed his father and mother — Manuel knew they had to leave to save his family. When I found shoes for him, Manuel ran to his wife and children with sheer joy! Had I only been able to snap a photo of his priceless smile! I now pray for Manuel and Myriam and for all migrants in search of peace and freedom.

After Mass one Sunday, I approached the Deacon to speak with him and later met his friend Libia who asked how she might help those seeking asylum. I was able to put her in touch with Marco, Director of Immigration Services at Catholic Charities. I learned later that Libia, who works for a Spanish language radio station, agreed to make announcements for Catholic Charities free of charge! God is good! We Sisters cannot do everything, but we can commit to prayer and advocacy for our sisters and brothers in Christ even in an unexpected moment that can bring a God-inspired gift to those in a desperate situation.

continued on page 4

Lay MSC Gathering — We Came to Share our Stories

by Rosemarie Sandman, LMSC

We had spent more than one year apart when the Lay MSC Associates finally met together as a group on Saturday, August 5, 2021 at St. Columbkil Church, the home of our Boyertown Lay Associates. Separated by COVID, we had missed our gatherings and were overjoyed to be with one another and to share our stories. Sister Lorraine Molchanow, MSC our spiritual advisor, recalled the familiar story of the first MSC Martyrs, a

tragic, faith-filled story of mission which occurred in the Baining Mountains of Papua New Guinea. In 1904 when five young MSC Sisters, four MSC fathers and brothers, and one Trappist died at the hands of natives. Immediately following this tragedy, the founder,



Fr. Linckens, MSC sent word to Germany to "send replacements immediately". In her summary, Sr. Lorraine emphasized that these martyrs who died as witnesses to their missionary vocation were called to witness to God's love, just as we are called to do in our everyday lives as Lay MSC Missionaries.

Following Sr. Lorraine's presentation, group discussions then centered on what it meant at that time and what it means today to say "send replacements immediately". Many Lay MSC's found it remarkable that replacements found inspiration after the tragedy and eagerly signed up to travel to PNG to make known the love of God revealed in Jesus — they did not hesitate; in fact, many had to be turned down because there weren't enough resources for all who signed up. This realization led some to draw the connection to the present-day responses of those in the service industry amidst the pandemic. As a missionary, a priest, a fire fighter, a nurse, a doctor, a police officer etc., individuals pushed forward knowing that God would assist in the battle. Stories we shared of our individual challenges and triumphs of the past year validated our struggles and strengthened our relationships as missionaries and with each other.

When our discussions concluded, we sang the hymn "Song of the Body of Christ" and repeated the refrain "We come to share our story, we come to break the bread, we come to know our rising from the dead". As Lay Missionaries, and certainly as MSC Sisters, we are called to share the story of Jesus Christ not only in word but also in deed. During the past sixteen months, the pandemic has challenged us to do this in various ways. While some of us are responding as nurses, some as care givers, some as aids to neighbors and friends, some as providers of food and basic necessities, etc., we all — as Lay Missionaries — are living Jules Chevalier's vision of working together to offer the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to others. In the face of continuing challenges, we strive to respond with the heart of a missionary — one who lays down her life so that others may know the love and friendship of Christ. †

***Interested in joining us as a Lay MSC Associate?
Contact Sr. Lorraine: LorraineMolchanow@gmail.com.***

My volunteerism also provided me unique glimpses of Christ in action: Jorge, a driver for Catholic Charities, shared his life experience with me when he came to the U.S. as a small child from Mexico. Now a U. S. citizen, he has a family and is grateful to live in San Diego and to help others as a driver for Catholic Charities; Maria, a logistics person at the warehouse, told me about coming to the U.S. as a refugee with her infant son and her very sick daughter. She left a hopeless, abusive situation in Mexico. The judge who heard her case for asylum was so moved that he wrote a personal check for her daughter's much needed surgery. What a beautiful story of sharing the love of Christ.

I saw the face of Christ in 12-year-old Carmen when she received a rosary. As I blessed her with the Lord's peace and love and Our Lady's protection and guidance, tears of joy streamed down her face. She didn't see my tears of joy and gratitude when I noticed that a very long line of girls and boys were awaiting my blessing and a rosary.

Every day of my volunteer journey, I fixed my heart on God and God's grace helped me to see God's love and generosity in all the people I met. Even creation — the San Diego sun and the stars at night — spoke to me of God's goodness. My response was to give hope when people had only known desperation and to give a faithful response of loving kindness. It was my privilege to give a few weeks of service at the border on behalf of our MSC Sisters. My heart is filled with gratefulness."



Sr. LISA served from June 26 to August 6 of 2021 at Casa Alitas, a hotel turned into a welcome center in the Diocese of Tucson, Arizona run by Catholic Social Services and Catholic Charities. Her duties were varied and often included caring for Covid positive immigrants and families.

Sr. Lisa shares many stories of hardship and of great joy: "I actually lived on-site' at the Hyatt Place Hotel. I worked on average about 14 hours each day and was on-call overnight so during the

course of six weeks, I had a few all-nighters. I went to Tucson knowing that I only had six weeks to offer — so I went with the intention of giving my all.

One of my jobs was to give out breakfast bags to our guests and their families who had tested positive for Covid 19. I visited our Covid positive guests, taking temperatures, pulse oxygen levels and heart rates, and checking to see if they had any needs. In the middle of doing that, I would turn on the food warmer in

the kitchen and an hour later load it up with dinners — one per guest from morning until at least 9 pm or later.

Guests assigned to Casa Alitas are told how to contact their sponsors and asked to make travel arrangements. Another of my jobs was to make, confirm, explain and, way too often, re-book these travel plans. Most often, sponsors are family members who take responsibility for providing transportation (usually airline tickets) and sharing their homes with their relatives/friends who are seeking to provide a better life for themselves and their children. While working in this role, I was basically a travel agent — looking at every airline to find the best deals as well as flight times that would allow us to get people to the airport and through security with just the clothes on their backs. A bounty of amazing volunteers, many from Brazil, served as escorts at the airport aiding our guests who could not speak English.

Witnessing family reunions was one of the most impactful experiences of my volunteer journey at the border. I met a single Mom whose three children had come to the U.S. as unaccompanied minors. Her ten-year-old boy had been charged with caring for and keeping safe his two younger sisters, ages six and three, and they had been placed in foster care in Phoenix. When their mom and one-year-old brother arrived several months later, I was asked to drive them to Phoenix so that the agency could reunite them. As soon as they saw their mother, the children ran out the door and they all ended up in a jumble on the ground, smiling and hugging. It was a wonderful sight to behold, and I was grateful to be a part of it. The ride back to Tucson was just as joyful listening to the newly reunited children telling their Mom all about their experiences in school and trying to teach her all of the English words they had learned.

Jesus was very present in so many ways during my time at Casa Alitas: the volunteers and workers at Casa Alitas were witnesses to the Corporal Works of Mercy — truly living up to the call of Jesus to 'Love your neighbor as yourself'; two girls and their moms from West Virginia did a little bit of everything. They gave out toys, took out the garbage, made brownies and banana cake — just because they wanted to lend a hand and always with a smile; various folks from home, including my fellow MSC Sisters, mailed gift cards and supplies for the immigrant families who came with nothing so generously helping to ease some of their pain and the monotony of quarantine.

Our MSC charism calls us 'to be the heart of God on earth.' In Tucson, we dealt with so many people — not just our guests and co-workers, but the people on staff at the hotel; volunteers who came in to serve meals and distribute clothing; bus drivers who transported groups to the airport; various sponsors; airline personnel and TSA officers — all excelled at being the 'Heart of God on earth' by sharing kind and caring patience with every person they met." †

\$10,000 Heart of God Raffle Winner

***Congratulations to
Marvin Lubas & Mary Jo Bonner,
the winners of our 2021 \$10,000 Raffle!***

***Thank you to everyone who played! YOU helped us
raise more than \$40,000 for the MSC Sisters and
their mission to love with the Heart of Christ.***

Congratulations to our June 2021 Spring Sweepstakes Winners!

***Eugene Nealon, Anita Schade, Victor Silimperi, Gary Seibert,
Anna Deutsch, Carol Blue, Mike Ferraro, Edward Pohl, Sr.,
Mary Marino, Br. Bernard Seif, Stephen Marsch,
Robert M. Ciervo, Christine Wimpenny, Barbara Saltern,
Carolyn J. DiFilippo, and Susan Middleton***

***Many thanks to all who played — you helped net more than
\$17,000 for our retired MSC Sisters!***

God Incidents Complete Family Puzzle

An abridged version as told by Steffi's daughter Joyce Spainhower

My mother's sacred story took a lifetime to write. My journey to understand the framework of her journey has taken over 45 years. I am thankful for the God-incident that brought Sister Mary Ann Bigos, MSC and me together, thereby helping to locate the missing piece of my mother's "puzzling" life story.



My mother Stephanie Goldstücker was born in 1913 in Halle an der Salle, Germany and came to live in Pottsville, Pennsylvania as a young woman in 1936. Following her death in 1983, my family and I determined that we would collect the missing pieces of her life story which she had rarely volunteered to share — how she came safely to the U.S. and how she was enabled to remain. Fortunately, we found papers

she considered meaningful after her death; without them the puzzle pieces would have remained missing.

First found in my mother's will, was her request that \$2,000 be given to "the nursing Sisters of Pennsylvania". The mystery of researching this puzzle piece remained on my "to-do" list for several years and once I had time to research, I began by using old, translated letters typed on thin carbon paper my mother had saved. Among these I found the address of her hospital of employment near Reading, Pennsylvania.

Many phone calls eventually led me to the first God-incident that finally connected me with Sister Mary Ann Bigos, MSC in 2020 and made the missing piece of the puzzle fall into place. The Sisters recently had celebrated their 100th anniversary and researched their history, so Sister Mary Ann kindly sent me an historical booklet about the Missionary Sisters of The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus of Hiltrup, Germany. We learned that when my mother needed to be sent out of Germany, there were about 5,000 MSC Sisters living and working in Germany and that as a Doctor Friedrich would have had contact with some of these "nursing Sisters". We also found among Mom's papers a letter signed by Felix Chas Fink, Rector of St. Bartholomew's Church Brockton, Pennsylvania which stated that "Stephanie Goldstücker is a willing and anxious worker and well-liked by the patients as well as the administration." From this we surmised that the MSC Sisters had sponsored Steffi so that she could stay in the U.S. We also came to the conclusion that this Dr. Freidrich — who was my grandfather and Steffi's father — perhaps had arranged the partnership with the Sisters at the outset. Sr. Mary Ann Bigos, MSC, explained that since her order existed all over the world, they had been able to get some young girls out of Germany as "nursing sisters".

Because Steffi and her family were registered as having Jewish blood, Hitler's ideology was a great threat to them. In fact, Steffi's Aryan boyfriend was ordered to stop seeing her. It shocked me to learn that if my mother had married that serious boyfriend and they had started a family right away, I would have been one of many four-year-old girls dragged to a concentration camp along with my mother and asphyxiated in the gas "showers".

By the early 1930's Steffi had followed in her father's footsteps and begun medical school to become a nurse only to learn that Hitler had determined that Jewish people could

continued on page 7

My Time in Georgia *continued from page 1*

I quickly learned how integrated the two were. St. Mary's ambulance was present at every home game to transport an injured football player to the room reserved for this purpose. It was rumored that a sister-fan would accompany the ambulance as an avid spectator!

The Catholic Center complex was three blocks from the stadium; hence, home games directly affected our Saturday ministries. Nothing could be scheduled at the 500-seat chapel; the noise and cheers blocked out all other sounds; the parking spaces were rented and proceeds used for the Center programs for the students and outreach programs to the local community. Sunday Masses were filled to capacity and faces seen on TV could be recognized among the assembly. Truly, all were welcome.

As the eight years of my ministry at the Catholic Center continued to evolve, so did my relationship with this dynamic



faith community. The Franciscan friars and their spirituality imbued this community, ministry and growth for sixty-two years. It was "church" at its best: multicultural, missionary, welcoming, compassionate, reconciling, healing and nourishing body-spirit-intellect. The gifts of individual members

(university staff, neighbors, students, immigrants, and retirees) freely offered in service, allowed the Spirit to build up the Body of Christ to full stature in our midst.

Even though we no longer staff St. Mary's Hospital, St. Joseph School, or the Catholic Center, the impact of the spirit, presence, and ministry of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart since 1938 has taken root in the heart of the Athens community. The latest example is the renovation of Sacred Heart Convent on the grounds of Highland Hills. The family of Benjamin Stephens set up a foundation in his memory; one of the projects will be to renovate our former convent. It will now become a guest house for families who need housing while visiting a loved one in hospice or at the hospital.

Archbishop Gregory J. Hartmayer, OFM Conv. wrote at the notification that the MSC Sisters will no longer minister in the Atlanta Archdiocese:

The Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus have played an integral role in the history of this blessed local church, and even as your numbers declined, you have maintained a meaningful presence here. There is simply no way to put in words the contribution you have made in building up the Kingdom of God in North and Central Georgia.

I am filled with love and gratitude for my time of service in Athens and for all the sisters who served before and with me in Georgia. †

Advance the Missionary work of the MSC Sisters beyond your own lifetime...

Remember the MSC Sisters when making or changing your Will.

Provide your attorney our official title and address:
Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Inc.
2811 Moyers Lane, Reading, PA 19605

Inquiries may be directed to Carrie at cwhitmoyer@mscreading.org.

IN MEMORIAM



Sister Rosemarie Mullen, MSC (Cecelia Marie Mullen)

1934 – 2021

Sister Rosemarie was born and grew up in York, PA, in a family of 10 children. It was a family centered on their Catholic faith where early morning Mass was part of their daily routine. Three of the 8 girls entered religious life, each to

a different congregation: the Carmelites, the Sisters of St. Joseph, and the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart.

Sr. Rosemarie first came to know our Sisters because several of her sisters trained as nurses at Sacred Heart Hospital. She entered as a candidate on September 4, 1954 and began her journey as an MSC Sister.

In her early years of ministry, Sr. Rosemarie taught at St. Peter's in Coplay and St. Cyril and Methodius in Reading. She also spent 6 years as a teacher and housemother at Sacred Heart Home in Coopersburg. After studying for her LPN (Licensed Practical Nursing) degree she returned to Sacred Heart Home for another year. In the following years, Sr. Rosemarie continued her caring ministry as a nurse at St. Joseph Health Resort, Wedron, Illinois; Sacred Heart Hospital, Norristown; Mt. Trexler Convalescent Home, Limeport; Sacred Heart Hospital, Allentown; Holy Family Villa, Bethlehem; and our Motherhouse Infirmary where she extended her loving care to our sick and elderly Sisters.

In 1984, while Sr. Rosemarie was in ministry at Our Lady of Hungary in Northampton, she was diagnosed with an eye inflammation that eventually led to total blindness. At first, she still had some peripheral vision and was able to continue in ministry at Holy Family Manor nursing home and as a receptionist at St. Michael Convent.

Shortly after this part of her life's journey began (her years without sight), Sr. Rosemarie wrote a letter to her MSC Sisters. She said that when she first received the diagnosis she felt "totally drained, anxious, alone, angry and insecure." Eventually she realized:

"Through my blindness, Jesus has shown me that only one thing is necessary in life: Him and Him ALONE! I have come to see people on a deeper level – it is not how they look or the work they do but who they are: A GIFT FROM GOD! I again surrendered myself to Him totally that He may use me as a channel of His Love to others."

Even with the handicap of blindness, Sr. Rosemarie continued to reach out in support of the sick and the dying with her music ministry. She learned to play the harp and shared the comfort of this soothing music in nursing homes, hospice centers and at funeral services including those of her MSC Sisters. For several years she also offered her services to Heartland Hospice by calling families who lost a loved one through death.

Since 2019 Sr. Rosemarie has resided at St. Joseph Villa, the retirement home of the Bernardine Sisters. Friday evening, she was taken by ambulance to St. Joseph Hospital where she suffered a heart attack in the emergency room and never regained consciousness. In surgery the doctor discovered that she had serious heart problems. She died peacefully shortly before midnight. †

"How can we love too much when the model we have to follow is infinite love!" – Fr. Jules Chevalier, MSC



Sister Janice Marie Yust, MSC (Janice Elizabeth Yust)

1952 – 2021

Sister Janice was born in Philadelphia and grew up in a warm and loving family with her younger sister Darlene. She first met our Sisters when she attended Little Flower High School. Her desire to enter our community grew quickly and

she was received as a postulant in January 1971. When asked why she wanted to be an MSC Sister, Janice replied: "I want to dedicate my whole being to God, to grow in His love, and to bring this love to others."

After her First Profession Sr. Janice began the studies that would prepare her for a life of service to the sick and suffering, especially those who are on their final journey to God. Sr. Janice received a degree as a Registered Nurse from St. Joseph School of Nursing and then continued her education at Villanova University where she graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing. During those years she worked at Sacred Heart Hospital in Norristown

and Mercy Medical Center, Philadelphia. Sr. Janice also received a Master's Degree in Nursing at Gwynedd Mercy University with a specialty in Oncology.

In 1994 Sr. Janice began working for Holy Redeemer Health System as a visiting hospice nurse. She traveled every day throughout Philadelphia, often in poor and sometimes dangerous areas of the city, to reach her patients and offer them compassionate care. Sr. Janice was passionate about her ministry of care and service. She was totally dedicated to her patients and committed to providing them with the best medical treatment and any comfort measures to improve their quality of life. During this time of the Covid pandemic Sr. Janice continued to care for her patients while taking the necessary safety precautions. She would not let anything, including a world-wide pandemic, deter her from offering comfort and care to her patients. She was truly "the Heart of God" for them and one of "the Heroes" of this pandemic.

Before she entered our community, Sr. Janice was asked if she had any hobbies. She replied: "Yes, music and dancing." Her love of music was a great gift to our community. She played the guitar and for several years led our Sisters' choir and prepared the music for many special occasions. †

Stephen's Place Transition



Sr. Virginia welcomes Jenny Duval to Stephen's Place.

Sr. Virginia Longcope is legend in the area of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania where for 30 years she has served as the Executive Director and Founder of Stephen's Place, a halfway house where newly paroled men receive the help and spiritual direction they need to transition back to the community as productive citizens. Her efforts to assist this population of nonviolent offenders to conquer substance abuse and to develop personal life skills has been her life's mission and joy. Sr. Virginia has been a guiding force for hundreds of people, both residents of Stephen's House and others who have helped the ministry succeed.

Recognizing the passage of time and the challenges of aging, Sr. Virginia began the process of searching for her successor at Stephen's Place a couple years ago. Her search eventually led her to Mrs. Jenny Duval, MC a long-time supporter of Stephen's Place and a Bilingual Case Manager at Treatment Continuum Alternative to Prison of Northampton County. Having known each other for several years, *continued on page 8*

Donor Tributes

As our benefactor, YOU enable the wonderful stories shared in this newsletter to happen; YOU are the key to the MSC Sisters accomplishing our mission to be the Heart of Christ for others. Please continue your generous relationship with us so that we may continue to positively impact peoples' lives with the love of Christ.

My mother graduated nursing school with Sister Rosemarie and cared for the nuns in the early 80's. I also cared for the nuns around 2006, 3rd shift. It was the best and most gratifying experience of my medical career.

I was there with Sister Canice, I learned a little Slovak to speak with Sister Irene, and I loved sharing stories with Sister Sophie! Sister Sylvia was amazing to me! Such great memories!

— Lisa

Dear Missionary Sisters,

The affection and attention you give people is the love Jesus has for all of us. We are all better people because of the work you are doing. Stay safe from the virus. It is always good to hear from you.

Sincerely,
Cheryl

Happy Mother's Day to Sr. Antoinette Martinko, Sister Jane and all the MSC Sisters who cared for me and my siblings and all of us who were waiting to be adopted. We were border babies in 1944, 1947 and 1953 and these Sisters nurtured us or we would not have thrived. A special hug to Sr. Mary McCarty, my father's younger sibling who advocated for my parents and was instrumental in getting my parents and the social worker together. When we went to school, MSC Sisters were our teachers. Many of those Sisters have been called home but they are not forgotten. Thank you!

—Rosanne

I was a nursing student at Sacred Heart Hospital in Allentown, PA in the mid 60's and studied pediatrics with Sr. Marie Janesch. She was wonderful!! Very caring and kind – truly an inspiration to me! Please give her my love. Thank her for me and tell her I think of her often.

— JoAnn

God Incidents continued from page 5

no longer take their board exams. Although we found copies of a letter Friedrich had written the government asking them to allow Steffi to take the exam, we also found the rejection letter that came back only two weeks later. My mother quietly had kept these two letters her entire life.

By 1936 Friedrich had the foresight and connections to send his oldest child Steffi out of the country with plans for the rest of the family to flee Germany later. We believe that through his gynecology practice, Friedrich fortuitously had met and worked with MSC Sisters. Letters we found written in code invited Steffi to come to the U.S. to visit a certain family, and so she followed Germany's rules of travel — she bought a round trip ticket and took few clothes and no money.

Steffi arrived in America unable to speak any English. She had begun working as a nurse's aide at Good Samaritan hospital and living with the MSC Sisters in Pottsville, Pennsylvania when a letter from Hitler arrived reminding her strongly of her patriotic duty to return to Germany. The only way for Steffi to stay in the U.S. would be for her to find a credible sponsor; thank God the MSC Sisters decided to sponsor her. It frightens me to realize how easily the Germans could track her down. I still wonder how her father knew it was time to get her out when some of our family members and other Jewish people waited too long or didn't have the means.

One story I do remember Mom telling of her nursing days at Good Samaritan was dear to her and remains dear to our entire family. In those days, as mom would say, nurses had time to talk to their patients, give a back massage, and sit all night with someone



who was dying. Mom said she sat all night with a gentleman and just as he was passing at 5:30 am, she received a telegram that her father had died. I believe that this too was a God incident offering comfort and love to a young woman forced to separate from her father to save her own life.

After the Berlin Wall came down, my husband Gordon and I visited Mom's birthplace and searched out some of

the remaining pieces of the puzzle. We visited Steffi's childhood home and the cemetery where my grandfather Friedrich was buried. I was grateful to learn Friedrich was buried on the Christian side rather than the Jewish side of the cemetery because my mother Steffi had told me that when the whole world was crashing in on them, her non-practicing Jewish parents Friedrich and Lucy had become Christians. Perhaps they also were influenced by the Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart.

Looking back over the events of Mother's life feels like walking down a long corridor of hindsight with rooms on either side. The Holy Spirit has opened a few of the doors through the love and care of others, one being the MSC Sisters. I wonder how many other young women were spared the atrocities of WWII through the kindness of others. Thanks to my grandfather Friedrich Goldstücker and the Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, my family exists as it does today. †

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MSC Oktoberfest Returns in Style



Ein Prosit! Hundreds of people who came outdoors on October 17 to celebrate our 2021 MSC Oktoberfest in the beautiful grove at the Reading Liederkrantz shared this common greeting. The windy afternoon truly welcomed in the fall weather and stirred up lots of dancing and laughter. Together again as an MSC Family after 19 months apart, the occasion reunited old friends, many of whom traveled several hours to attend, and introduced many new folks to the MSC Sisters.

The Hildebrand Cousins, for example, put MSC Oktoberfest on their calendar for a few hours of their family reunion. One cousin traveled from Florida to Georgia where she picked up another cousin and they made their way to the Reading area to unite with cousins from places such as Wyomissing, Virginia and DC. Prior to this Oktoberfest celebration, the Hildebrand Cousins have gathered as a team for our annual NUN RUN since 2012 – our Sisters look forward to welcoming them back for NIN RUN 2022 on April 23, 2022.



Still other Oktoberfest guests ventured an hour or two from New Jersey, Easton, Huntingdon Valley, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Slatington and Northampton while the balance were “locals”. Regardless of travel times, MSC Sisters were overjoyed at welcoming all!

For the hundreds of friends who joined us in spirit by donating to our cause through monetary and in-kind gifts, we extend sincere thanks and the assurance that we remember and appreciate your support. While we wish we could have seen you and welcomed you in person, please know that you are in our hearts and our prayers always.

Each one of you, whether in person or in spirit, helped make MSC Oktoberfest 2021 a resounding success – thank you! Thanks also to the folks at the Reading Liederkrantz who welcomed our German-born Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus with open arms and generous hearts. We look forward to future celebrations together!

Overwhelmingly, we thank our many volunteers and staff members who enabled the success of MSC Oktoberfest 2021: Event Committee Members Andrea Bensusan, Nancy Chaiko, Annmarie Dallao, Janet Decembrino, Sue Kasopsky, Courtney Moody, Carol Noga, Rita Phillips, Carm Sosik, and Barb Spinka; Raffle Sellers Dave Decembrino, Mike Gallagher, Rick Spinka, and Bernie Whitmoyer; and MSC Advancement Director and Assistant Carrie Whitmoyer and Claudia Rudderow.



May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be loved everywhere, now and forever. **Alles Gute!**

One of our guests, Gary Kubovcsak, received special thanks from MSC Sisters for bringing 60 friends to MSC Oktoberfest. Prosit!

For all event pictures/sponsors, visit MSCReading.org.

Stephen's Place *continued from page 6*

Sr. Virginia recognized Mrs. Duval as an expert in the drug and alcohol field and as a dedicated professional. Once Sr. Virginia recommended her to the board, members voted unanimously to hire Mrs. Duval.

On July 1, 2021 the transition was complete: Mrs. Duval began her part-time position as Executive Director of Stephen's Place and Sr. Virginia, who still resides at Stephen's Place, began her tenure as Executive Director Emeritus.

Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart are infinitely proud of Sr. Virginia Longcope. Through her work at Stephen's Place she has changed lives by sharing the love of Christ. She has promoted healing, introspection, and self-respect. Sr. Virginia continues her mission daily and MSC Sisters see many more years of successful outcomes for the men of Stephen's Place. †

May you have the Gift of Faith, the Blessing of Hope, and the Peace of God's Love at Christmas and always.

Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.



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