



MSC Sisters Install New Leadership Team

On August 6, 2022 at St. Michael Convent, the Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus (MSC) joyfully celebrated the installation of a new Leadership Team for their United States Province. This team, which will serve for the next four years, includes the Province Leader and three councilors who take responsibility for fostering life and unity within the community and coordinating the talents and gifts of the Sisters in the service of others and the mission of the congregation. Sister Dorothy Fabritze has taken on the role of Province Leader and her councilors include Sister Raymond Gazo (First Councilor) Sister Mary Anne Bigos and Sister Patrice Cosgrove.

As Province Leader, Sr. Dorothy says that she hopes

to “live in the awareness that God is Love, to continue our MSC mission of being sent to all to make known the love and kindness of God, and to support our sisters as they do the same.”

As promised in the Ceremony of Installation, Sr. Dorothy and her councilors trust in the love and guidance of God by praying: “O God, you are the light of the world. Your Son has been our light since our baptism. Fill us anew with your light, your wisdom, and your love so that following the example of your Son and guided by your Holy Spirit, our ministry of leadership may be one of true service.”

Joining the celebration which included Mass and a luncheon were members of the Chevalier Family: MSC Sisters; Fr. Mike Camilli, MSC; and our MSC Lay Missionaries.

continued on page 2



Introducing the new Leadership Team of the Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus (left to right): Sister Dorothy Fabritze, Province Leader, and her councilors Sister Patrice Cosgrove, Sister Raymond Gazo (First Councilor), and Sister Mary Anne Bigos.

MSC Homecoming

By Sister Lorraine Molchanow, MSC

What happens when kindred spirits gather for a day -- women who in their formative years shared an experience as aspiring young Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart along with veteran MSC Sisters? We call it a “homecoming”.

A “homecoming” took place at Saint Michael Convent when women who once considered being MSC Sisters and then chose another path, gathered at Saint Michael Convent on July 23 with the present-day Missionary Sisters. Amid genuine



affection and respect for each other, in prayer and thanksgiving, it was an experience of coming home for all. All agreed with Father Michael Camilli, MSC who in his homily during the day’s Mass, spoke of a “shared spiritual DNA” among us. It did not seem to matter whether those attending were members of the religious congregation or those who were called to follow another way of life. Each woman remains faithful to a life-long, God-given call “to be the heart of God in the world.”

continued on page 3

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

A Posthumous Gift.....	2	General Chapter.....	6
LMSC 30th Anniversary	3	Posit! To Oktoberfest!.....	7
In Memoriam.....	4	Giving Thanks	8
Mission Updates.....	5		

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A Posthumous Gift from a Treasured Friend

By Sr. Mary Ann Bigos, MSC

When Sacred Heart Villa opened in June of 2004, Bill Bentz and his mother, Mary, moved in and became two of our earliest residents.

Bill was always very attentive to the needs of his mother and as her wheelchair driver he made sure she could participate in the various activities at SHV

starting with breakfast and followed by 9:00 Mass each morning. Arriving at SHV shortly after he retired as one of the ground keepers at the Reading Hospital, Bill enjoyed his own original activities which included looking after the flowers and shrubbery, tidying up around the property, and even washing windows. Almost every sunny day, Bill could be found outside tending to the roses and keeping the weeds at bay. He was proud of his work and everyone at SHV was very proud of Bill.



Property Manager Michael Yeager demonstrates the new tractor gifted from the estate of Bill Bentz to the MSC Sisters.

In March of 2022 after Bill entered into eternal life, the Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus learned that Bill had remembered them in his will and before long the Sisters had a need which Bill's legacy gift was able to fulfill – the purchase of a brand new garden tractor! After many years of hard use and various repairs, the old motorized tractor could be fixed no more. Bill's estate gift will continue to tend the grounds he so lovely tended while he was with us. Now when we see our maintenance man Mike Yeager zipping over our lawns on the mower, we remember Bill with love and heartfelt gratitude. †

New Leadership Team *continued from page 1*

MSC Sisters invite the participation of all who believe in our mission in the form of vocation, prayer, volunteerism, and/or financial support.

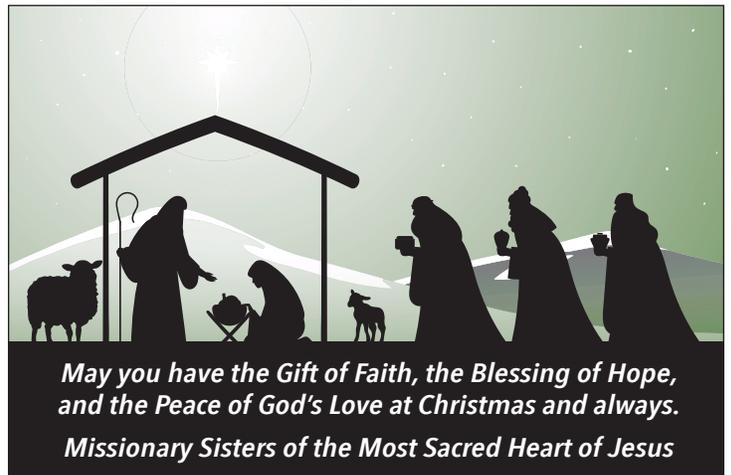
Men and women also can join the Sisters in their prayer and ministry by becoming Lay Missionaries. To learn more about the MSC mission and the ways you can join, please visit www.mscreading.org. †



Lay MSC and MSC Sisters processed out of chapel following the Installation of the new leadership team.



As part of the celebration, the Lay MSC hosted a game called "Name that Hymn" which pitted Sr. Rosemarie Sommers (right), outgoing Provincial, against Sr. Dorothy Fabritze (left), incoming Provincial in a test of song trivia that created lots of laughter and fun for the whole group.



*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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beyond your own lifetime...**

**Remember the MSC Sisters
when making or changing your Will.**

Provide your attorney our official title and address:
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2811 Moyers Lane, Reading, PA 19605

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

Lay Missionaries 30th Anniversary Retreat & Celebration

By Rosemarie Sullivan Sandman, LMSC

On October 1, 2022, our MSC Lay Missionaries celebrated their 30th anniversary with a wonderful retreat and a renewal of commitments during Mass. The retreat, facilitated by Fr. Kevin Nadolski, OSFS focused on Pope Francis' *Laudato Si, mi Signore*. Translated as "Praise be to you, my Lord", it is the second encyclical of Pope Francis' and is subtitled "care for our common home".

Fr. Kevin spoke about using our imagination, as it is the seed bed of our lives: "We are stewards of imagination so be a good steward to your imagination. As Pope



Several Lay MSC members renewed their vows during their 30th anniversary celebration.

the cry of the earth, the cry of the poor, the adoption of a sustainable lifestyle and a commitment to ecological education and spirituality. He encouraged us to ask our pastors to put content in our bulletins about what we can do as individuals and families to support the spirituality and lifestyle of *Laudato Si* in an effort "to leave a better world for our children and to leave better children for our world."

The celebration of our anniversary was the perfect time to be reminded of our interconnectedness and to renew our commitments to live as members of a universal family and an MSC Family which seek to emulate the love of the Heart of

Christ. To care for one another and for our common home is paramount to our mission as MSC Associates.

According to Province Leader Sr. Dorothy Fabritze, "This gathering truly was a day of praise and thanksgiving, memories and dreams for the future, and sharing our common desire to be a witness to the Love of God to others." †



Retreat facilitator Fr. Kevin Nadolski, OSFS provided spiritual direction for the Lay MSC and the MSC Sisters.

Francis says, instead of viewing humanity as having 'dominion' over the earth, we must see that everything is 'interconnected' and that all of creation is 'a kind of universal family'. Imagine if we did not have enough food to eat or water to drink. Wasted food and wasted water impacts those who don't have it. Imagine if we practiced taking care of the earth the way that we take care of our homes. We would not let our house or apartment get into disrepair, so why do we let our earth get into disrepair?"

Fr. Kevin further challenged us to consider our response to



Sisters Dorothy Fabritze and Bernard Overkamp, with LMSC Kathy Toth, congratulate the Lay MSC Associates on their 30th anniversary.

Interested in joining us as a Lay MSC Associate?

Contact Sr. Lorraine: LorraineMolchanow@gmail.com.

MSC Hoecoming *continued from page 1*

The day began with a warm and lively arrival in the convent foyer followed by a meaningful Eucharistic Celebration in the beautiful convent chapel, a place which itself holds many precious memories for everyone. Following a group photo, all gathered in the social hall for a delicious lunch provided by our lay guests. Around tastefully decorated tables, we shared stories, memories, happy and painful updates as well as an abundance of photos. Folks lingered or moved around the room eager to speak with all who were present,



including the three guests who visited by way of Zoom.

This was the fourth homecoming of former and current Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart in Reading, PA. The most recent reunions were organized by Michelle P. Olivier with the ready help of both laity and religious. The 2022 gathering brought together thirty-eight persons and everyone is already looking forward to the next homecoming event. In the meantime we remain in contact with each other and hold each other in prayer. †

IN MEMORIAM



Sr. Sylvia Mattoon, MSC (Sr. Mary Louis)

1937 – 2022

Sister Sylvia was born on New Year's Day in Charleston, South Carolina, the only child of her parents. Her close and loving family were Southern Baptists with a deep Christian faith. Sr. Sylvia met our Sisters when she began

working as an X-ray Technician at St. Mary's Hospital in Athens, Georgia. Inspired by the witness of our Sisters, she converted to the Catholic faith and was baptized on November 18, 1961, in St. Mary's Hospital chapel. She immediately became an active member of St. Joseph Parish and also attended daily Mass in our convent chapel where she played the organ.

As Sister Sylvia came to know our Sisters she felt more and more that God was calling her to be a Missionary Sister of the Sacred Heart. She was received as a candidate in September, 1963. After her profession of vows in 1965 she was assigned as a Nurse's Aide in our Motherhouse Infirmary where she helped care for our sick and elderly Sisters.

Sister Sylvia was a very dedicated and competent X-ray Technician. She served in that capacity in Sacred Heart Hospital, Norris-

town; Good Samaritan Hospital, Pottsville; and St. Mary's Hospital in Athens, Georgia. Often she was given the very challenging cases that required her expertise.

For several years Sr. Sylvia took care of her aged and infirm Mother and a dear Aunt. Her father died when she was young and as an only child she accepted this responsibility, responding to the call to "Honor your Mother and your Father."

Sr. Sylvia developed several health issues over the years and joined the Motherhouse community in 1995. For many years she served as the sacristan where she could display her special talent for decorating. She was always happy to help where needed in the community.

When Sister Sylvia needed more care than could be provided at Sacred Heart Villa she moved to a nursing home nearby. There she shared a room with our Sr. Catherine Crilly. As her health continued to decline Sr. Sylvia began hospice care.

On Wednesday afternoon the music minister from hospice played her guitar and sang many of Sr. Sylvia's beloved hymns. With Sr. Theresa Molchanow and Sr. Catherine Crilly praying at her bedside Sr. Sylvia died peacefully around 2:30 p.m.

For the epitaph on her tombstone Sr. Sylvia chose: *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall want for nothing.* May Jesus the Good Shepherd hold her close to his heart and lead her home. †

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



Sister M. Bernice Domitrovitz, MSC (Stella Domitrovitz)

1927 – 2022

Sister Bernice was born and raised in Nazareth, PA with her younger brother Joseph and sister Helen. Her parents had emigrated from the Burgenland in Austria and were members of Holy

Family Parish, an MSC parish and the only Catholic church in Nazareth. Sr. Bernice was taught by our Sisters in the parish school. Sr. Bernice entered our community on September 7th, 1946. She made her First Profession of Vows on August 19th, 1948 and, shortly after that, began her ministry of loving service to her sisters in community and to everyone who crossed her path wherever she was stationed.

Sr. Bernice took care of the elderly at Villa St. Elizabeth, Reading, and she also cared for our MSC seminarians in Shelby, Ohio. She was the homemaker for our sisters in St. Cyril and Methodius parish, Reading, and helped prepare meals when she worked in the dietary department at Good Samaritan Hospital, Pottsville. For many years Sr. Bernice was the main receptionist at our Motherhouse. Visitors appreciated seeing Sr. Bernice's smile of

welcome when they walked in the front door of our convent.

For her entire life Sr. Bernice was ready to help wherever needed and loved to be in community with her sisters. Even when she was in a wheelchair she would take herself to chapel and to the dining room and to our development office whenever volunteers were needed to stuff envelopes for mailing.

Sr. Bernice was a kind, generous, quiet soul who loved to laugh, had the most beautiful smile, and was the most even-tempered person I ever met. I never heard her raise her voice in anger or complain about anything, even with the health issues that come with aging. Her baptismal name is "Stella" which means "star" and Sr. Bernice was one of our community "stars" for a long time. How fitting it is that her religious name "Bernice" has the word "nice" in it. That very aptly describes our Sister Bernice.

The day before her 95th birthday Sr. Bernice was called home to Heaven. She died peacefully at St. Joseph Villa, Reading, where she resided with eight of our sisters and the retired Bernardine sisters. The epitaph that Sr. Bernice chose for her tombstone is: *Sacred Heart of Jesus, I Place My Trust In You.* With child-like simplicity and humility Sr. Bernice placed her trust in her beloved Jesus her entire life. May she now rest in His loving embrace. †

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Bible Study with Clowns Part of the Job

Sister Dorothy, an Allentown native, served in circuses

By Rachel Shin The Morning Call

"Many of my best friends are clowns," Sister Dorothy Fabritze earnestly told the crowd at Sacred Heart Church in Bethlehem Township.

On the wall, she projected an old photo of herself, in which she stood grinning next to a man in white makeup and a candy red wig. While clown/nun companionships might seem unlikely, the pairing is more common than one would expect.

Fabritze is part of the Catholic Church's Circus and Traveling Shows Ministry, missionaries who travel with and provide religious services for circus performers. She conducted this pastoral ministry for 20 years, from 2000-2019, with multiple traveling circuses, such as Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey, Roberts Bros. and Circus Vargas.

Fabritze visited Sacred Heart on Wednesday afternoon to speak about her religious work and share photos of her life.

Fabritze had a different job at each circus she traveled with. Sometimes she was a tent crew member, sometimes a nursery teacher. With Ringling Bros., her job was to open and close the curtain for each act — close to 100 times per show.

"I had the best biceps of any sister," Fabritze said.

On top of her official job, she provided a number of religious services for circus employees, including arranging Masses, and leading Bible studies and prayers. Once, she blessed a circus's animals, trapeze and trailers with holy water at the request of the owner's daughter.

Fabritze even got special permission from the Vatican to hold the Communion Services in her trailer.

"I called a sister who was staying in Rome and asked her to go to the Vatican and do the official documentation for us," she said. "Then we were allowed to have the Eucharist on the road."

Fabritze, 74, was born in Allentown and educated at St. Elizabeth's Parish School in Whitehall Township. Called to religious life early, she attended the Aspirancy of the Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus in Reading.

She spent 16 years early in her career in Papua New Guinea, teaching religious education, training women to be nuns and serving as secretary for Archbishop Karl Hesse.

Soon after returning to the U.S., Fabritze was offered the position of traveling with circuses, which she initially turned down. However, after three years, she said "God pursued and convinced [her]." She then raised funds for a truck and trailer, and learned how to operate and maintain the vehicles.

Traveling was the most difficult part of Fabritze's career as a circus nun, she said.

With smaller circuses, she set up the show, packed up the tent and relocated to a new location every day of the week. With larger circuses like Ringling Bros., she relocated once a week, but each trip could be 200-300 miles.

She slept in a bunk bed — the top bunk — for years, and worked physically demanding jobs.

"If anyone suffers from insomnia, I would highly recommend getting a job at a circus," Fabritze said. "You'll never have trouble sleeping again."

Fabritze, who lives in Reading, is now retired from the circus and is the Province Leader for the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, an international religious congregation based in Muhlenberg Township, Berks County.

She looks back on her travels fondly, calling them deeply rewarding. She said that the most touching moment of her career was when a staunch atheist joined her in prayer on 9/11. †

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MISSION UPDATES

- **Sr. Lisa Valentini** was in Arizona again this summer assisting migrants and attended Fiat Days in the Diocese of Allentown. Currently, she continues mission appeals by speaking at parishes across the country to raise money for MSC Sisters' international missions.
- **Sr. Mary Ann Lawrence**, who volunteers at Holy Guardian Angels School during the school year, also tutored some students during the summer months.

- **Sisters and many friends gathered for a Fireside Chat** on the porch of St. Michael Convent one September evening to recall the days when they were a self-sustaining community, growing crops and raising animals on their land. The lively conversation included stories of harvesting, canning, and much camaraderie among the Sisters. Thank you to our many guests who shared these memories, and many laughs, with us.



Thirteenth MSC General Chapter Summary

By Sister Marie Raymond Gazo, MSC

After two years of postponement due to Covid, our congregation was able to hold its thirteenth General Chapter in the town of Nemi in Rome, Italy from May 3rd through the 27th of 2022. Province and district leaders and elected chapter members arrived from Australia, Germany, India, Korea, Province Latina, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, the USA, and the Philippines. We gathered at Centro Ad Gentes, the conference center of the Society of the Divine Word, which is a beautiful site high on a hill overlooking Lake Nemi.

Father Chris Chaplin, MSC, celebrated our Opening Mass and addressed the theme of *Discernment and Communal Wisdom* with the hope that communal wisdom would guide our process throughout the coming weeks.

Sister Barbara Winkler, MSC and her General Council encouraged us “as women of faith and hope to have the wisdom to draw on our strengths and courage to confront our reality so that we take steps and risks that will lead us to discern new ways of being with hearts ‘Afire for God’s Mission in Today’s World’”. With this in mind, chapter members worked for several weeks considering recommendations from the congregational leadership team and from our Sisters. We also considered other topics related to our Congregation, the Church and the World. We prayed, reflected, discussed and then wrote and rewrote drafts many times until the final documents emerged. These approved chapter directives and recommendations set the goals and direction for our lives as MSC for the next six years.

What is that old saying, “All work and no play . . .”? Well, with Covid precautions in place, we took a bus trip to Orvieto, an ancient city, dating back to the 13th century and perched on a rock cliff with magnificent views over Umbria. We arrived in time for the morning Mass in the Basilica after which we wandered in some shops and through the streets to experience a little of the life of the people. Later that day, we visited our Generalate in Sutri for afternoon tea which was lovingly served by Sister Lucy, MSC a Namibian Sister ministering in Sutri.

Another important task for the chapter members was to elect new congregational leadership to serve the next six years and carry through the new chapter mandates. Throughout the election process, we felt the presence of the Holy Spirit guiding and directing us as we discerned who God was calling to lead our congregation at this time in our history. Congratulations to Sister Bonaventura Kim, MSC who was

electd Congregational Leader and to her four councilors: Sisters Deborah Reho (USA), Letitia Andowa (Namibia), Gratia Kim (Korea) and Sophy Francis (India)!

I am sure that each of the outgoing U. S. Leadership Team, Sisters Rosemarie Sommers, Deborah Reho and myself, agree that we were privileged to share in this momentous event in the history of our MSC Congregation and are grateful for your prayerful support. †



Members of the new General Council include 4 Councilors and 1 Leader: Sr. Deborah Reho (USA); Sr. Letitia Andowa (Namibia); Sr. Bonaventura Kim, Congregational Leader (Korea); Sr. Gratia Kim (Korea); and Sr. Sophy Francis (India).

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.



Sr. Blanche at Ss. Cyril & Methodius, 195

Given the rate of ‘inflation, I’m sure you can use this donation well.”

— Dan (Ss. Cyril & Methodius, Reading, PA)

“The older I get and look at the world around me, the more I realize what a remarkable accomplishment your order [of religious women] did in educating me and thousands of others.



Sr. Maureen Carroll, MSC has enjoyed joyful ministry among the people of St. Ann’s School and Parish in Naples, Florida for more than twenty years.

“I rejoice when I think of my long friendship with this beautiful, kind, hard working nun [Sr. Maureen Carroll]. What a true blessing she has ben to me. Also St. Ann has been blessed with Sr. Maureen’s 32 years of service here. She is loved by all. — Irma

“St. John the Baptist School and Church, Haycock PA – I remember you with fond memories.” — Jim

Prosit! To Oktoberfest 2022!

October 9, 2022 began with a strong breeze that caused us to relocate our gratitude posters from open air to under the pavilion, but by noon or so the sun took over, we began greeting our many guests, and the celebration was underway. By 2:00 a welcome and toast from Province Leader Sr. Dorothy Fabritze, MSC began the music of the Joe Kroboth Band and the attempt to complete her dance card which was rather full. An excellent basket raffle, delicious Liederkrantz food, and the German garb of many of our guests created a festive atmosphere punctuated by genuine friendship inspired by the MSC mission of love.

Some of our guests came to reminisce and share time with treasured friends while others came for the first time to



meet new friends and enjoy the day. Penny and Mark who attended a Sisters' event for the first time, remarked at how friendly everyone was and accepted a promise of prayers for a special intention from Sr. Dorothy. Kim and Mary Anne brought their children and danced the day away celebrating with their aunt Sr. Marie Janesch, MSC. Deacon Dave Barto and his wife Marilyn introduced new friends to the MSC Sisters by bringing some guests from Mary Gate of Heaven Parish in Myerstown, and the "Arnold Family" once again reunited at this annual event.

By day's end many people headed home with basket raffle prizes, several left with promised prayers, and all were glad they came. †



"We had a wonderful time at the Oktoberfest. The afternoon was perfect. Good food, drink, and company. Nice to reconnect with my sixth grade teacher, Sister Mary Ann Lawrence. A fantastic affair. Thanks for your hard work." – Christine and Carl

Thumbs Up for NUN RUN 2023!



Mark your calendars for
Saturday, April 29, 2023
and get ready to lace up your
walking and running shoes for our



**14th Annual
NUN RUN 5K**
fundraiser to benefit
our MSC Sisters!

*Let's make this our
BEST NUN RUN EVER!*

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to support MSC Sisters.



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We welcome your comments and suggestions.

Giving Thanks Joyfully

MSC Sisters extend a heartfelt thank you to the many sponsors, volunteers, and guests who made Oktoberfest 2022 so joyful! Thank you to Claudia Rudderow and Carrie Whitmoyer of the Mission Advancement Office and their many volunteers who include: Oktoberfest Event Committee members Andrea Bensusan, Nancy Chaiko, Janet Decembrino, Sue Kasopsky, Carol Noga, Rita Phillips, Carm Sosik, and Barb Spinka; and event day volunteers Kathy Blume, David Decembrino, Ellen DiGirolamo, Tony DiGirolamo, Mike Gallagher, Ed Gensemer, Rosemarie Sullivan Sandman, Scott Sandman, Rick Spinka, and Bernie Whitmoyer.

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