



# *Actions of Mercy*

2016 Stewardship Report



School Sisters of Notre Dame  
*Atlantic-Midwest Province*



# Be merciful, even as God is merciful.

Luke 6:36

On December 8, 2015—midway through the Atlantic-Midwest Province's 2015-2016 fiscal year covered in this issue of the Stewardship Report—Pope Francis opened the Holy Doors of St. Peter's Basilica to the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, a year devoted to rediscovering mercy in our own lives. In dedicating the year to mercy, Pope Francis called upon every Catholic to walk through their own symbolic doors to mercy and justice making and, in doing so, to live anew the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.



*Let us rediscover these corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. And let us not forget the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences, bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead.*

*Pope Francis, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy*

In this look back over the past fiscal year of the Atlantic-Midwest Province, we focus on some of the actions of mercy taken by sisters, associates, sponsored ministries, staff, and partners in mission.

Although the Year of Mercy concluded on November 20, 2016, we continue to pray that we all remain vigilant that our doors of mercy never close and that our merciful actions continue.

*The name of God is mercy.*



The Holy Door is the northernmost entrance of Saint Peter's Basilica in the Vatican. It is cemented shut and only opened for Jubilee Years.



## A note from our Provincial Leader

January 2017

Dear Friends,

**O**n April 10, 2015, Pope Francis announced an Extraordinary Jubilee focusing on the mercy of God. It began December 8, 2015, and ended November 20, 2016, the Feast of Christ the King. During this Holy Year of Mercy, we were challenged to “Be merciful, even as God is merciful.” (Luke 6:36).

This Stewardship Report you have received is more than just a statistical reporting of financial figures. It is a snapshot of the fruit of your generosity. It is a glimpse of the multitude of expressions of the gospel lived and proclaimed in the many ministries of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. “Mercy,” says Pope Francis, is “the beating heart of the Gospel.” This annual report abounds with signs of mercy. As you read through it, you will see the many ways the School Sisters of Notre Dame of the Atlantic-Midwest Province reach out to so many in need of God’s mercy and love. Because of your generosity we are able to be the face of Christ to our retired sisters, to the many who come to us through our sponsored and co-sponsored ministries, to our

***“Trust in God and walk in his ways;  
then he will also be with you—  
the infinitely good and merciful God.”***

**Blessed Mary Theresa Gerhardinger, SSND Foundress**

associates and volunteers, and to the many we touch in our province commitments of water, immigration, human trafficking, and Haiti.

In July 2016, our province experienced a leadership team transition. Through the process of discernment, delegates of our province elected a new leadership team of seven to serve for the next four years. As you read through these pages you will meet these gifted and talented sisters who have come together to help lead our province into the future.

All who are associated with us in ministry—leaders, donors, volunteers, friends who pray for us, and those who minister side by side with us—are witnesses of God’s mercy in our world. Together may we embrace the future with hope, continuing to give ourselves unreservedly to a world so desperately in need of God’s transforming love and mercy, knowing that, through us, the heartbeat of God makes all things new. Your generosity and love give us hope that “God can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.” (Ephesians 3:20)

We pray for you with love and gratitude.

In Notre Dame,

Charmaine Krohe, SSND

Provincial Leader, School Sisters of Notre Dame, Atlantic-Midwest Province

# We are called...

*Our mission is to proclaim the good news as School Sisters of Notre Dame, directing our entire lives toward that oneness for which Jesus Christ was sent. As he was sent to show the Father's love to the world, we are sent to make Christ visible by our very being, by sharing our love, faith, and hope.*

— SSND Constitution

**In March 2016, seven sisters answered the call to serve a four-year term on our province council.**



Our 2016–2020 SSND Atlantic-Midwest Provincial Council includes (sitting from left) Celeste Reinhart, Charmaine Krohe, Maria Iannuccillo, (standing from left) Sharon Kanis, Jane Forni, Deborah Cerullo, and Virginia Bobrowski.

**Charmaine Krohe**, SSND, our new Provincial Leader, celebrates 50 years as a School Sister of Notre Dame. Her deep love and compassion for people who are poor, underserved, and marginalized have been the focus of her religious life. After teaching in Pittsburgh and southeast District of Columbia, she began her ministry at St. Ambrose Parish in northwest Baltimore, where, for 34 years she lived and served the African-American community as teacher, pastoral associate, hospital chaplain, and founder of St. Ambrose Outreach Center. It serves more than 40,000 families, guests and clients each year through its soup kitchen, food pantry, adult literacy program, job training and placement outreach, after-school, summer camp, and Head Start programs. She envisioned and brought to reality the Cottage Avenue Transitional Housing Program transforming a dangerous, drug-invested section of the surrounding neighborhood into renovated transitional housing units for struggling families with children. This revitalization effort included a state-of-the-art children's playground and park.

Ten years ago, Sister Charmaine became president of Mother Seton Academy, a tuition-free, independent Catholic school for at-risk middle school students in Baltimore City. During her tenure as president, she raised more than \$7 million which was used to renovate and establish a permanent home for the school.

Her community achievements include: first woman president of the board of directors of the St. Vincent de Paul Society for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, member of the board of trustees for Notre Dame of Maryland University, recipient of the Kathy Hughes Humanitarian Award from U.S. Congressman Elijah Cummings, "Public Citizen of the Year" award from the National Association of Social Workers, the President's Medal from Notre Dame of Maryland University, the Loyola University Milch Award from Loyola University, and induction into the Woman's Hall of Fame.



# and we are sent.

**Celeste Reinhart**, SSND continues with a second term on the council and currently serves as vicar. She says her formation for living the SSND constitution, *You Are Sent*, and her training for leadership has been deeply influenced by her Canadian background.

After seven years teaching, she served 10 years in Bolivia working in youth and pastoral ministry. Back in Canada, she represented the congregation in ecumenical coalitions for economic justice, human rights in Latin America and the World Council of Churches. She organized settlement services for immigrants and refugees in Toronto, Ontario and formed a coalition of organizations to stop human trafficking along highway 403 in Ontario.

She possesses education degrees from both Ontario and Saskatchewan, Canada and learned the educational method of Paolo Freire of Brazil to effect the transformation of persons to find their rightful place as citizens of the world.

**Maria Iannucillo**, SSND also has begun her second term as councilmember. A born-and-bred New Englander, she attended Bristol, Rhode Island, public schools through fifth grade before attending and graduating from St. Mary Academy, Bay View. She received her BA in sociology and religious

studies from Regis College in Massachusetts and her master's in religious studies from Sacred Heart University in Connecticut.

In 1990, one year after graduating from college, she entered SSND. Since entering, she has worked with learning disabled children in Teaneck, New Jersey; in an inner-city parish in Bridgeport, Connecticut; and in high school campus ministry at both St. Saviour's in Brooklyn, New York, and St. Joseph High School in Trumbull, Connecticut. She also served in vocation ministry in the former Wilton Province and the Atlantic-Midwest Province.

She helped coordinate and participated in a tertian (SSND renewal) program in Nairobi, Kenya.

She has served on the board of Caroline House, in Bridgeport. She currently serves on the National Religious Vocation Conference national board.

**Deborah M. Cerullo**, SSND, JD, JCL received her bachelor's degree in her home state from the University of Rhode Island, her Juris Doctorate from Boston University, and her Licentiate in Canon law from the University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome, Italy.

Sister Deborah taught law at the University of Notre Dame and Boston College. Before that she was a staff attorney for secular and faith-based poverty law clinics where she assisted clients with housing and immigration matters. After her time at Notre Dame she was the executive director of a law center for low-income clients in Hartford, Connecticut, co-sponsored by several religious institutions.

In 2003, she opened a private practice in Providence, Rhode Island, representing Catholic organizations throughout the country. Sister Deborah has also published a book on Catholic school governance, has written numerous articles on Catholic organizations, and has lectured extensively on issues relating to religious life, including "Religious Workers and Immigration Law."

**Jane C. Forni**, SSND, MS, EdD, born and reared in New York, converted to Catholicism when she was 16 years old. She received her BS in science education from Cornell University. She earned her MS in administration from State University of New York and her second MS in Art Therapy from Mount Mary University in Milwaukee, WI. She earned her doctorate from the Teachers College at Columbia and has completed graduate-level coursework in journalism and communications.

Her professional experience includes academic administration, institutional research and fundraising in Catholic colleges and

universities in New York, Maryland, and Wisconsin. Sister Jane's social services positions include direct service to disadvantaged and marginalized persons, conducting prayer services in nursing homes, volunteering as art therapist in a retirement and health care setting, working with the rural poor,

community organizing in minority neighborhoods, being a case manager for homeless women, home hospice visits, and mental health assessments for dual-diagnoses clients.

**Sharon Kanis**, SSND, PhD, began her relationship with SSND in 1950 when she was in first grade at Blessed Sacrament School in Baltimore and has been deeply attached ever since.

She holds a BA in chemistry and an MA and PhD in theology and spirituality. Since entering in 1964, her primary ministry has been as teacher, most recently as a professor at Notre Dame of Maryland University where she has taught for 29 years. She is a certified spiritual director and leads retreats for women religious, school faculties, students and parish groups.

She appreciates her experiences living in communities ranging from as few as two to more than 30 members and has had the joy of joining sisters for brief experiences in Ghana, Nigeria, Guatemala, and El Salvador. For fun, she enjoys making music and art.

**Virginia Bobrowski**, SSND recently returned from training teachers in a village in South Sudan. Previously, she worked as a pastoral associate at the Immaculate Conception Parish in Malden, Massachusetts, and for eight years she served as president of Academy of the Holy Angels, a sponsored SSND ministry in Demarest, New Jersey, as well as a wealth of previous positions in teaching and as a principal. She holds graduate degrees in both chemistry and theology. Sister Ginny, as she prefers to be called, is looking forward to serving with the "talented and generous sisters" on the council and serving the province with trust in God to face the challenges the future will bring.

*We are sent to make  
Christ visible by our very  
being, by sharing our love,  
faith, and hope.*

# Make Christ visibly present



## Prayer and presence

...Our encounter with God in prayer sustains and nurtures our consecrated life, both as individuals and as community. Realizing this, we participate in the Eucharist each day if possible, and pray the morning and evening prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours as our communal prayer...

— SSND Constitution

At the heart of our consecration is prayer. Prayer impels us to love and inspires us to service. Prayer, community life, and ministry flow from and into one another. It provides the steady rhythm for our daily life and brings our whole religious life into focus. Prayer is our continuing response to God's continuing call to mission.



### Called to Love; Sent to Serve

**Limèteze Pierre-Gilles**, SSND made her perpetual profession of vows as a School Sister of Notre Dame this past year on June 18 in Baltimore. Born and raised in Haiti, Sister Limèteze started thinking about religious life at a very young age.

After joining her family in Florida, she met SSNDs who were working with homeless men and women. That encounter, combined with her curiosity about an image she had seen of the SSND foundress with two girls, influenced her to start thinking again about religious life. "I am very excited to take this 'forever' step in dedicating my entire life to God," she said.

*Blessed Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger, who, longing for the oneness of all in God, grounded the congregation in Eucharist, anchored it in poverty, and dedicated it to Mary...*

— SSND Constitution

The extraordinary, God-given graces of our foundress, Blessed Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger are at the core of our being. Through these spiritual gifts from God, SSNDs are called to transform the world by making Christ visibly present through our ministry as educators. For 183 years, SSNDs have taught in schools and universities, tutored immigrant women and children, counseled the ill and the dying in hospices and hospitals, and worked tirelessly for justice and peace.



### Create sacred spaces for all God's children

Mary Dooley, SSND and Kate Kinnally, SSND educated children for many years in Indiantown, Florida and became increasingly aware of the parents' great need for education. Most families came from Guatemala, Mexico, and Haiti where education opportunities were limited. The sisters responded to God's call with KinDoo Family Center where the lives of entire families are mercifully transformed.



*Be the blessing...  
respond with a tender word and a soft embrace...  
work tirelessly for justice and peace.*



Alison Freeland / WSHU

Manal, a widowed refugee from Syria, with the sewing machine she has on loan. She hopes to earn money for herself and her five children by making pillows and curtains.

### Open our homes to immigrants and refugees

In partnership with the local interfaith community in Wilton, Connecticut, the province welcomed Manal, a Syrian refugee widow, and her five children to live on our campus. Daily, SSNDs tutor the newcomers in English, help them navigate a new culture, and respond to their inevitable anxious moments with a tender word and soft embrace. In similar fashion, SSNDs in Canada are collaborating with the local faith community in support of Syrian refugees there.



### Needlework skills remain life skills

Mother Theresa was aware of the importance of needlework in educating young women. Today, SSNDs throughout our congregation keep the tradition and needlecraft continues to provide a way to become self-sustaining.



### Open up dialogue and healing

A Canadian School Sister of Notre Dame, **Barbara Paleczny**, PhD, SThD has lived in South Sudan for the past eight years as a member of Solidarity with South Sudan which was founded by religious communities who send sisters, brothers and priests from around the world to live and work together there.

Her ministry includes teaching at Solidarity Teachers' Colleges and teaching others to give workshops in healing from trauma and providing psychosocial support.

Barbara paints mostly from her prayer and dreams as a way to stay healthy. Expressing these, to her surprise, has opened up dialogue and healing for others as well.

Art in these pages: *Galaxies*, watercolor (below) and *Enlarge the Space of Your Tent* (Isaiah 54:2, 10), watercolor (page 15)



*Galaxies* by Barbara Paleczny, SSND

# Education that transforms



At the time of Mother Theresa's death in 1879, more than 2,500 sisters were living religious life according to her spirit. They met the needs of their time by educating girls, principally in elementary schools but also in orphanages, day nurseries, and industrial schools. They trained future teachers and pioneered in the development of kindergartens. For girls who were factory workers, they established homes and provided night schools where these girls could receive basic education.

— SSND Constitution

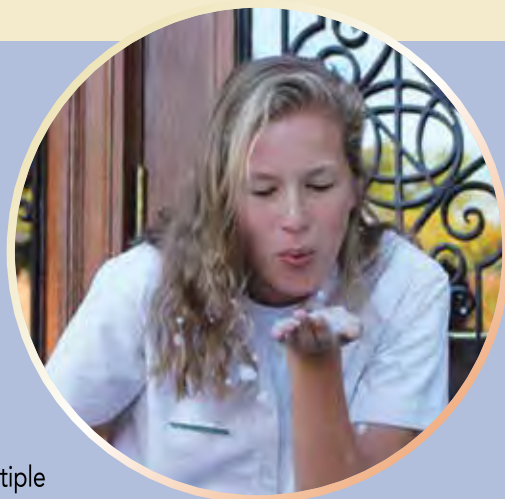
**A**s SSNDs, we direct our entire being to the proclamation of the kingdom, particularly to the poor, and specifically through education. We provide an enriching Catholic education to our elementary, middle, and high school students. Our ministry leaders, staff, sisters, associates, and volunteers work side-by-side to carry out the mission of Jesus Christ while fulfilling our belief that the world can be transformed through education to become a more merciful world.

## Breaking Out of the Bubble

**U**ntil high school, I attended private elementary schools where almost everyone was just like me: white, middle class, and Catholic. Though my parents exposed me to other walks of life, I lived in a bubble.

I had several options that would provide me with a continuation of my middle school experiences—a rolling green campus and many suburban girls just like me—but I wanted to strike out on my own. I became intrigued with the Institute of Notre Dame (IND), an all-girls' school in the heart of Baltimore City. This was a school way out of my comfort zone, way out of the norm and way out of my bubble. Friends thought I had lost my mind, but I knew it was perfect.

Throughout my four years there, I was exposed to and experienced more knowledge, friendship, faith, and diversity than I had in all of my life before high school. My classmates, my friends, hail from 75 zip codes, six counties, two states, and multiple countries. I gained an appreciation and respect for countless cultural, economic, and religious backgrounds. Through my service work within the city, I learned what it means to be an empowered, responsible citizen and to make a difference with the blessings and opportunities afforded me. Through the Catholic values instilled in me by the School Sisters of Notre Dame, I have gained a moral self and a deeper Christian conscience. Yes, I would make the same decision a hundred times over.



Because I chose to challenge myself, I am able to continue to grow and learn in a rapidly changing world. I know what it means to be independent and to lead the way in a world where it is so easy to sit back and go with the crowd. I accept myself and others as people of dignity and worth, no matter who they are or where they come from. I popped my own bubble and won't ever go back.

*Anna Spears, class of 2016,  
Institute of Notre Dame*



*We direct our entire being to the proclamation of the kingdom... specifically through education.*

## Atlantic-Midwest Province ministries



### Undergraduate / Graduate Programs

#### **Notre Dame of Maryland University**

Est. 1895—Baltimore, Maryland

The first Catholic college for women to award the baccalaureate degree offers graduate and PhD degrees.



### Learning / Career Centers

#### **Caroline Friess Center**

Est. 1996—Baltimore, Maryland

Economically disadvantaged women receive job training as nurse's aides and pharmacy technicians. The 15-week programs include employment-readiness assistance and high school-equivalency tutoring, where necessary.

#### **Caroline House**

Est. 1995—Bridgeport, Connecticut

This resource center provides instruction in English, computer use, and social skills to help low-income, mostly Latino women improve their lives and those of their children.

#### **Corazón a Corazón**

Est. 2002—Chicago, Illinois

Individualized instruction in English is offered to Hispanic adults and after-school tutoring is available to children.

#### **Notre Dame Learning Center**

Est. 2004—Rochester, New York

Individualized after-school and summertime tutoring in math, reading, language arts, and technology are offered to elementary-age children. A program to help prepare adults for the high school equivalency examination is also offered.

#### **SSND Educational Center**

Est. 2004—Woodhaven, New York

High school-equivalency preparation and life skills are shared with women in southeast Queens in a safe and welcoming environment in which to educate and nurture the whole person.



#### **College Preparatory Schools for Young Women**

##### **Academy of the Holy Angels**

Est. 1879—Demarest, New Jersey

The college prep school for girls in grades 9-12 attracts students from far and wide with its global curriculum and focus on empowerment.



#### **Institute of Notre Dame**

Est. 1847—Baltimore, Maryland

The college prep school for girls in grades 9-12, the oldest SSND-founded institution in North America, educates students to be active leaders and responsible world citizens.

#### **Notre Dame Preparatory School**

Est. 1873—Towson, Maryland

The college prep school serves girls in grades 6-12. Its reputation for academic excellence, spiritual growth, and the practice of justice is widespread. New this school year, the school unveiled an innovation lab designed for middle school students to delve into hands-on, interdisciplinary studies.

#### **Middle Schools for Students from Low-income Families**

##### **Mother Seton Academy\***

Est. 1993—Baltimore, Maryland

The all-scholarship middle school for low-income girls and boys in grades 6-8 has strict academic standards and an extended-day program.

#### **Sisters Academy of Baltimore\***

Est. 2004—Baltimore, Maryland

The middle school for girls in grades 5-8 from low-income families in southwest Baltimore empowers students to become agents for change in their families and community.

#### **Temporary Homes for Women in Recovery**

##### **Marian House\***

Est. 1982—Baltimore, Maryland

A healing community for women in transition, it offers housing and support services to women who have sustained poverty, addiction, abuse, mental illness, and incarceration.

##### **SisterHouse**

Est. 1982—Chicago, Illinois

Temporary home for women seeking recovery from substance abuse teaches accountability and responsibility and empowers women to contribute to a more merciful society.

\* supported by SSND and other religious congregations



**Were you educated by School Sisters of Notre Dame?**

We would like to hear from you.

Please call Sister Leonora Tucker at (800) 993-7763.

# Mediate God's mercy

*Blessed Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger... a woman of faith, ever seeking God's will, struggled for unity in our international community and responded to urgent needs.*

— SSND Constitution

The sisters of the province mediate God's mercy by responding to the needs of the times. In doing so, we sponsor and co-sponsor organizations. We also partner with an interfaith community network, more than 150 associates and 100 staff members, and thousands of benefactors. We conduct workshops, promote awareness, open our homes to immigrant and refugee families, and educate about the steps necessary to establish a just society.



Photo courtesy of Beyond Borders

Faced with no way to care for them, Elvire, mother of 12-year old twin daughters sent them to live with strangers in exchange for chores and an education. The practice is known as restavèk. Parents do not realize that more often than not, these children are forced to perform household chores from sun up to sun down, are abused and neglected, and are denied basic human rights. Beyond Borders' community education and child protection programs helped bring Natasha (left) and Natalie and other children home and are working to end the restavèk system.



## End human trafficking

According to the U.S. Government Report, *Human Trafficking in America's Schools*, many child victims of human trafficking are students in our school system. We know that no community—urban or rural—school, socioeconomic group, or student demographic—is immune. We believe in the empowerment of education that can reduce vulnerability to abuse or entrapment—an education that reflects the unconditional mercy and love of God because it enables each person to live in the dignity to which they are entitled as a child of God.

Our province provided training to teachers and staff in our sponsored high schools in the U.S. this past year to raise awareness among students of their vulnerability to exploitation and to give them the tools they need to avoid entrapment. Similarly, at the invitation of the SSND Human Trafficking Committee in Canada, a training program for more than 70 Canadian student-leaders of the Halton Catholic School District was held at Notre Dame Convent, Ontario this past year.

## Eliminate modern-day slavery

In our efforts to mediate mercy in the context of slavery in the global supply chain, we co-sponsored a bill, *The Business Supply Chain Transparency on Trafficking and Slavery Act of 2015*, which is making its way toward ratification in Congress. The bill will require businesses with more than \$100 million in global gross receipts to annually disclose to the Securities and Exchange Commission the measures they have implemented to guarantee that there is no slavery or child labor in their supply chain.

## Promote U.S. immigration reform

In light of our province's corporate stance on comprehensive immigration reform for the U.S., we are striving to collaborate with our sponsored and co-sponsored ministries to develop or expand their capacity to provide educational services to immigrants and refugees. We support our sisters who are engaged in their ministerial commitments to immigrants and refugees, and we continue our advocacy to promote comprehensive immigration reform for the U.S.

SSNDs in the U.S. push forward with calls and letters to Congress advocating deferrals on deportation of immigrant children and their parents who have come to the United States to flee the violence of their homelands. We have also mediated mercy through financial support and our advocacy



for family detention centers such as Casa Raices, a shelter alternative to prison for immigrant mothers and children crossing the border into Texas.

## Ensure potable water

Through workshops, we provide education and resources for sisters, associates, and our sponsored ministries that enable them to make informed choices and behavioral changes that will positively impact the health and sustainability of water and human rights. Because of the morally untenable water contamination in the fracking process, the province declined the opportunity to use natural gas on our Wilton, Connecticut, campus. Also, in a collaborative effort with the SSNDs of Homa Bay, Kenya, we are helping to drill for potable water in a draught stricken community where SSNDs serve.

## Support Haiti

SSNDs and associates met in LaGonave, Haiti with representatives from Beyond Borders, an organization whose mission of helping the people of Haiti aligns with our own. The two organizations met with the purpose of identifying how a partnership between the province and Beyond Borders could advance education and livelihood development programs on the Haitian island. Specifically, the objective of SSND's partnership with this nonprofit organization is to support efforts that prevent violence against women and girls and the egregious practice of child domestic labor in Haiti.

# Collaborate with laity



Marie Kathleen Dunham, SSND is with Kathy Sylvester (right) as she signs her first covenant to become an associate in 2016.

## Associate Relationship

*Drawn to SSND's good gifts that flow from God's love, associates commit to live the spirit and mission of SSND.*

Associates are men and women who live the spirit and mission of SSND through deepening personal and communal prayer; participating in SSND spiritual, educational, and social activities; extending the spirit of SSND in the associate's respective ministry and life; and sharing one's gifts, faith life, and lived experiences with other associates and with SSNDs. After personal discernment and preparation, the pre-associate makes a commitment for one year and renews it annually.

Associates are frequently driving efforts in their local communities in Canada and the United States. Associates may serve in drop-in shelters and soup kitchens and help address other needs of the homeless. They collect clothing and books and whatever is needed. Some serve on committees that further the work of the province's commitments on Haiti, immigration, water, and human trafficking and, in doing so, join the efforts of our sisters to transform the world through education. They appeal to law makers to make the world a safer place for all. They tutor, teach, direct, and advise to ensure that each person has the opportunity to become all God created him or her to be.



*"I've always found the sisters to be very inspiring... the strength in their message... when I think about trying to raise my daughters, that's a message I want them to have."*

– Libby Keady (right), grants manager for Marian House, Baltimore, Maryland, associate since 2016, and Debbie, a resident

## Associates extend the spirit of SSND in their ministry and life.



*"The sisters give us a different perspective...they strive for unity and peace and that touches us deeply."*

– Carol and Bruce Sheldon of Regina, Saskatchewan, associates since 1997



# *Our relationships with our SSND associates and lay leaders flow from our desire for that oneness for which Jesus Christ was sent.*

## Ministry Formation Program

*As lay leaders learn about the vision, struggles, and successes of Blessed Mary Theresa and her early companions, many find in her a role model on their journey through life and ministry.*

For several decades there has been an observable trend that fewer people enter religious life and the once strong number of vowed religious continues to decline. This reality has created a growing personnel gap at our sponsored institutions and a necessity to fill vacancies with competent lay people who are inspired to partner with SSND to carry the mission and educational vision forward.

The Ministry Formation Program supports lay leaders of our sponsored institutions, province departments, and continuum of care centers in gaining the necessary knowledge, formation, and skills to fulfill the SSND mission and implement the educational vision. Participation in the program enables lay leaders to further absorb the SSND charism and apply the content of the program to the social and cultural contexts of their respective institutions, and influence the life and spirit at their places of ministry.

Through mentoring, presentations, a retreat, and a heritage pilgrimage, participants learn about SSND's history, mission, values, spirituality, culture, and educational vision. The program's purpose is to ensure that the SSND charism, vision, and values are vibrant and active in the future.

This year marked the successful completion of the inaugural two-year cycle of the program which graduated two lay leaders.



Amy L. Rumano (left), executive director of Mission and Ministry, SSND Atlantic-Midwest Province and Melinda Hanlon (right), president of Academy of the Holy Angels successfully completed the Ministry Formation Program and graduated in 2016.



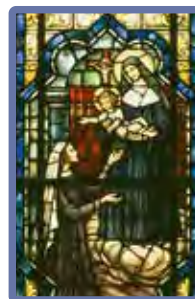
*"I received the gift of gratitude and joy that I am connected with SSND through my ministry..."*

– Sobha Lamontagne, administrator, Lourdes Health Care Center, Wilton, Connecticut, and Ministry Formation Program participant



*"I was reminded of the power of prayer..."*

– Lennette Pointer, executive director, Sister House, Chicago, Illinois, and Ministry Formation Program participant



### SSND Spiritual Heritage Video

Blessed Alix Le Clerc and Saint Peter Fourier greatly influenced Blessed Mary Theresa of Gerardinger, SSND foundress. In this video, Kay O'Connell, SSND, academician and historian tells of Alix, the beautiful young woman who gave up her life

of wealth and that of Peter Fourier, the pastor who inspired her.

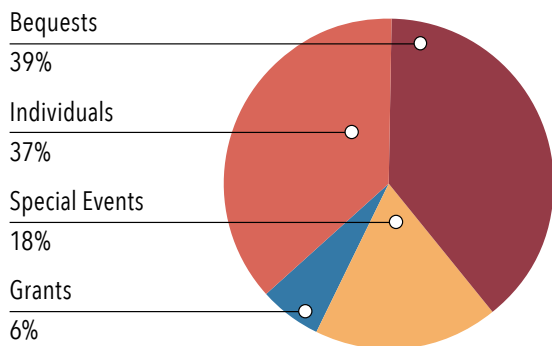
To view, use your QR code reader app to scan the bar code. Or download the free scan app available on IOS, Android, Windows, and more at <https://www.scan.me/>



# Your support helps transform the world!

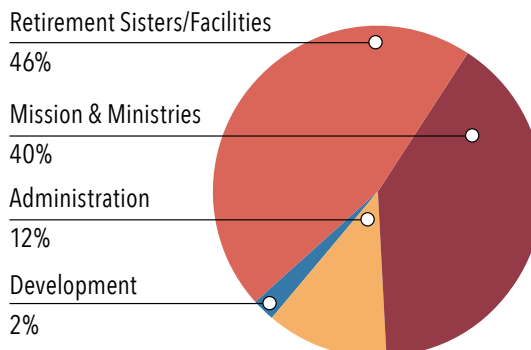
## With hearts filled with gratitude, the School Sisters of Notre Dame Thank you!

### Sources of Income



Bequests	628,345
Individuals	606,401
Special Events	289,852
Grants	100,893
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,625,491</b>

### How Gifts Were Used



Retired Sisters/Facilities	747,726
Mission & Ministries	650,196
Administration	195,059
Development	32,510
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,625,491</b>

The Atlantic-Midwest Province of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, Inc. is a self-funded, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization. A financial audit is conducted annually by an independent auditor, Handwerker, Cardegna, Funkhouser & Lurman, P.A.

**Your IRA  
rollover  
can grow  
peace,  
love,  
and  
mercy.**



### Your support of SSND helps transform the world!

The IRA rollover offers Americans 70 ½ years or older the opportunity to give back to nonprofit causes they support, like SSND! Taxpayers who meet the criteria for making direct charitable distributions from their IRAs may realize a tax benefit by making a contribution before the end of the year.

Here are some key points:

- You must be 70 ½ years or older at the time the distribution is made.
- You must make the donation directly from your IRA custodian to a qualified charity, like SSND!
- Your total IRA gifts to charity can be up to \$100,000 per individual taxpayer.
- The provision applies only to IRAs and Roth IRAs.

Please contact your IRA administrator to make a qualifying transfer. Transfers must be made by December 31, 2017 to be counted for 2017.



**SCHOOL SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME**  
Atlantic-Midwest Province

**Golf Ball Drop**  
& RECEPTION

May 10, 2017

Putting Contest, Silent Auction & much more!

**TOTAL CASH PRIZES \$6,250**

Eagle's Nest Country Club  
Pikesville, Maryland  
For more information (800) 993-7763





Enlarge the Space of Your Tent (Isaiah 54:2, 10) by Barbara Paleczny, SSND

## *Embrace mercy in everyday life.*

- Follow Christ with the witness of your life so that others may see God's love revealed in your actions.
- Invite someone to go to Mass with you this weekend.
- Don't judge, but guide others towards the path of salvation.
- Lend a listening ear to those going through a tough time.
- Let go of grudges.
- Frustrated with someone? Step away from the situation, take a few deep breaths, pray the Our Father, asking God for patience.
- Through prayer, entrust your cares and concerns for those around you to God.
- Make an effort not to waste water. Remember to turn off the water faucet when you are brushing your teeth or washing dishes.
- Try not to purchase more food than you are able to eat. If you notice that you end up throwing groceries away each week, purchase less to eliminate waste and donate the savings to those in need.
- Many homeless shelters need warm blankets for their beds. Donate. If you can knit or sew one, it would be an extra living gift.
- Give blood.
- Volunteer or donate to charities that give Christmas presents to children whose parents are in prison.
- Send a card to someone who has recently lost a loved one.
- Skip the morning latte and donate the money to charity.

*\* With permission from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops*



**School Sisters  
of Notre Dame**  
*Atlantic-Midwest Province*

Development Office  
345 Belden Hill Road  
Wilton, CT 06897-3898

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Sister Kay O'Connell and Leslie Lopez celebrate at the associate covenanting in Connecticut.

*May we all be an instrument of God's work.*

Dear Friends,

"Surely God has chosen you as an instrument in the furthering of His work," wrote Mother Theresa, foundress of SSND, in 1836. We are all God's chosen ones. God calls each person in a special way and He empowers them to do the work.

Your prayers and generosity to SSND are a declaration of your commitment to join with our

sisters in doing God's work. As partners in mission, we reach beyond ourselves and joyfully connect with a world-wide congregation living God's works of mercy each day. Educate, instruct, advise, console, comfort, forgive, and pray are ways we address the urgent needs of today and in doing so transform people's lives.

During the past Jubilee Year of Mercy, I responded to God's call to live more deeply the SSND mission and charism. In August, I became an SSND associate. Now, in addition to being part of our sisters' community, doing God's work is more central to my life.

I hope that you enjoy this issue of our Stewardship Report, where we highlight many of our educational ministries and the people we serve.

Thank you for your support. You make it possible for our sisters and colleagues to continue to respond to God's call. May we all be an instrument of God's work.

With sincere gratitude,

Leslie A. Lopez, JD CFRE  
Director of Development, SSND Associate



## Committed to Mercy

Jane Lebherz (front cover), Notre Dame of Maryland University senior, participates in the Lighting of the Lamp and White Coat ceremony in the Marikle Chapel of the Annunciation. The ceremony recognizes the commitment of nursing students to provide compassionate care as they begin their career of helping others. Ms. Lebherz studies nursing and is expected to graduate in May of 2017.

*Actions of Mercy*

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