



School Sisters of Notre Dame

*Education*  
wakes up  
**the world**

Thanking God for Consecrated Life

Atlantic  
Midwest  
Province

**STEWARDSHIP  
REPORT**



January 2016

Dear Friends,

On December 8, Pope Francis opened the Holy Door of Mercy at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome and throughout all dioceses in the world Holy Doors have been opened. What about the holy doors we use each day? Consider the doors we use to enter our homes, schools, work places and our gathering places. By recognizing these as Holy Doors we are reminded to reflect upon how we enter these places and what happens once we cross the threshold. We are called to be credible witnesses of God's mercy each day wherever we are and whatever we are doing.

We, as SSNDs, strive to respond to this call by proclaiming the good news – “making Christ visible by our very being, and by sharing our love, faith and hope”. Like Mother Theresa, our foundress, “we educate with the conviction that the world can be changed through the transformation of persons” (Constitution C4, 22). It is education that transforms by opening the doors to possibilities for each woman or young person to reach her potential and to assist her world community in becoming a better place for all.

In this Stewardship Report, knowing the importance of understanding the world situation and of having connections with others, we share with you ways we continue to educate, to learn, reflect and act. One story describes how through technology we connect students in our province to students in Hungary and how a classroom enjoys a story-telling session with a sister miles away. The stories on our SHALOM network and our province commitments tell how we continue to respond to world needs while updates on our sponsored ministries show how we meet the needs of women and children in cities. I am very grateful for your support which helps us to continue to meet the needs of our times.

The stories you read in this Stewardship Report tell of the many “holy doors” we enter each day striving to witness to God's love and mercy for all. Jesus calls us to “proclaim the year of the Lord's favour” which is what Pope Francis calls us to when he says: “...this is what the Lord proclaimed and this is what we wish to live now...” (Misericordiae Vultus 16).

Thank you for reading and reflecting on this report, for being partners with us and for your prayers. I promise prayers for each of you and your families. May we all continue to pray for peace in our world!

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Cornell SSND".

Kathleen Cornell, SSND, Ph.D., Provincial Leader

.....  
**We are called to be credible  
witnesses of God's mercy  
each day wherever we are  
and whatever we are doing.**  
.....





**Sister Cathy Bonfield  
in Sarasota uses Skype  
to converse on a regular  
basis with Sister Dominika  
Varga, a physics teacher  
in Mako, Hungary.**

## Education wakes up the world!

**W**herever they serve and whatever their ministries, School Sisters of Notre Dame transform the world through education.

### **It was true 183 years ago.**

In 1833, Blessed Theresa was compelled to found a congregation of women religious who would answer the call to educate.

### **It is true today.**

And they continue to do so with gratitude, passion, and hope.

We give thanks to God for the consecrated life and for those who continue to meet the urgent needs of the time and wake the world through education.

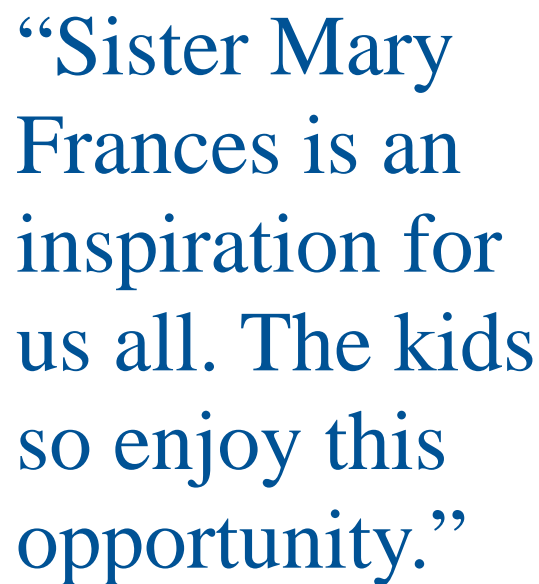


## Lifelong education

**School Sisters of Notre Dame have long understood the power of education to transform and in doing so embrace new tools.** Technology advances provide them with the ability to extend their reach as never before. They use technology to bridge geographical distances and physical limitations and, most importantly, to extend their charism.

On a rainy fall morning on the East Coast, Sister Mary Frances Angermaier, sits comfortably at her computer and reads to a second grade class. The children listen attentively and raise their hands to ask and answer questions. Her excitement of being in the classroom with young children is clear. Not surprisingly, the children are thoroughly engaged as they listen to this enthusiastic and experienced storyteller. What is remarkable is that the children are in sunny Florida 1,000 miles away, linked by technology. Industrious sisters such as Sister Mary Frances enthusiastically embrace technology as a way to extend their ministries. Similarly, Sister Cathy Bonfield in Sarasota, Florida uses Skype to converse with Sister Dominika Varga, a physics teacher in Mako, Hungary on a regular basis. It enables Sister Dominika to hone her English language skills and strengthens the sisters' bond of community. •





Sister Mary Frances Angermaier (center) enthusiastically embraces technology as a way to extend her ministry.



- Volunteer at an SSND-sponsored institution or a school served by SSND.
- Use the attached envelope to make a monetary contribution to SSND education ministries.
- Pray for the success of our ministries.





# *Educating with* **Passion**



**“Being with women eager to improve their education has moved that knowledge from my head to my heart. My respect for women who make tremendous sacrifices to accomplish this deepens each day.”**

Sister Catherine Feeney, executive director, SSND Educational Center

**I**t is this spirit that animates all School Sisters of Notre Dame ministries. School Sisters of Notre Dame are known for their zeal and dedication that continues throughout life. They tutor, prepare food for the homeless, crochet clothing for impoverished infants, and create handmade items to be sold in support of a ministry. They give a willing hand to those who are less able or are ailing. They help other sisters attend medical appointments; they are present at sickbeds. Always, they educate.

## Notre Dame Learning Center

In response to urgent needs, Notre Dame Learning Center in Rochester, NY began a literacy program for those learning conversational English and writing. The center's executive director, Sister Evelyn Breslin is unequivocally passionate about the center's programs and cares deeply about the children and adults whose lives are enriched by the work of the center.

She is amazed when she stops long enough in her busy day to realize that she has been serving for 47 years in Rochester where she began as a high school teacher. She is proud that SSND established the learning center in Rochester as it is rated the lowest performing school district in New York state yet does not provide tutoring programs.

As a result, if the center were not in the City of Rochester, many children would not have the one-to-one tutoring they need and adults would not have a resource for high school equivalency preparation. Students, adults, and parents who are truly motivated to acquire a good education seek the center's services.

## Caroline Center

As its executive director, Sister Patricia McLaughlin has led the Caroline Center since its beginning. Her zest for the center shows through whether touring the building with a prospective donor, introducing an employer to the center, or (her favorite) convincing a trainee that she has what it takes to complete the program.

Located in Baltimore, the center is where economically disadvantaged women receive job training as nurse's aides and pharmacy technicians. Fifteen-week programs include employment readiness assistance and tutoring for the high

school equivalency examination. In carrying forward the vision, Caroline Center now offers its program at a second site in west Baltimore, an area that has great need. The new location welcomed its first class of nursing assistants in January, 2016. The tremendous support the center has received validates the impact of its mission and gives credence to their belief that if you want an urban renaissance, start with the women.



"Most of all, I now have a spiritual awareness where before my spirituality was non-existent. I now feel God's presence..."

**Deirdre, SisterHouse**

## SisterHouse

When Deirdre arrived homeless and drug addicted, the program director at SisterHouse saw potential. After spending a day with Rochelle, Deirdre realized that she was willing to do whatever was asked because "I wanted what SisterHouse had to offer." For the past year, she has participated every day in morning meditation, an intensive outreach program, and an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting. She is now employed and with the support and training she has acquired from SisterHouse, she has begun to build better personal and professional relationships. "Most of all, I now have a spiritual awareness where before my spirituality was non-existent. I now feel God's presence. SisterHouse has helped me remove my fears and step out on faith," she says. As she embarks upon her final phase at SisterHouse, Deirdre looks forward to continuing to put into practice everything she has learned at SisterHouse. •



**“...the School Sisters of Notre Dame make a difference in the world and I want to be part of it. I want to change the world like they changed mine.”**

*Peggy Ann Russell, associate*

**141**  
women and  
men serve as  
associates

Our vibrant associates program is another example of how we are holding the mission of SSND and ensuring its continuance. In a spirit of joy, hope and reconciliation, sisters and associates together make Christ visible. Numbering 141 women and men, associates are individuals who covenant with the School Sisters of Notre Dame to share in faith, prayer, and spiritual growth. Associates live in the spirit of SSND and further the mission of proclaiming the good news by directing her/his life toward the oneness for which Jesus Christ was sent.

After a period of study and discernment, the associate enters into a covenant relationship to live the spirit and

mission of the School Sisters of Notre Dame through the deepening of personal and communal prayer; participating in SSND spiritual, educational, and social activities; extending the spirit of SSND in her/his respective ministry/lifestyle; and sharing one's gifts, faith life, and lived experiences with other associates and with sisters.

Together associates support and challenge one another in living the mission of Jesus Christ; gather regularly for mutual sharing of faith, prayer, and reflection on SSND spirituality; attend SSND events and gatherings; and enrich each other's lives through mutual respect and caring relationships. •

## Why I Give

The reasons I became an associate

“**S**ister Mary Burke taught me compassion. She was my first grade teacher and she consoled me every afternoon, as it was the first time I had been separated from my mother. Even though she had a full classroom of 70 children, she knelt beside my chair and put her arm around me while she explained that when the big hand of the clock was there and the little one was there, my mommy would be waiting across the street for me. Until then, we were going to do some fun things. In the photo shown, she created this card for me—and one for each of my classmates—to offer our First Communion for our parents. My mother kept this and now I keep it as a reminder of the impact the sisters have had upon my life.

In second grade, Sister Angela helped us get in touch with reality as the studies became harder. Sister Philomena taught us about the global world as our studies broadened. Sister Alfred, who later became a dear friend, introduced poetry and taught us to use it for calming and slipping into another world. Sister Maria Goretti brought music to our little mountain school by playing piano and sharing her love of music. Sister Mary Frances Angermaier, my very dear and important companion sister in the associates program, has nurtured me since I became an associate 25 years ago.” •

**Peggy Ann Russell is the Atlantic-Midwest Province associates program director.**





Peggy Ann Russell, associates director holds a card that was made for her by Sister Mary Burke.

**SSND associates are integral to the mission and for them SSND are grateful.**



# Holding the mission with Gratitude

School Sisters of Notre Dame's charism, traditions, culture and rich history of more than 183 years of educational services are integral parts of our sponsored organizations and continuum of care centers.



Above: Gathered together are the committee members who planned the 2015 "Claiming the Fire Within Retreat" held in Malvern, PA. Right: In attendance were representatives from sponsored and co-sponsored institutions along with provincial staff.



SSND values permeate discussions and decision making at each sponsored organization. Lay colleagues teach and administer in SSND sponsored organizations and others. In classrooms, SSND values support curricula and inspire students to be actively engaged in outreach service. SSND's spirit extends to family members, friends, donors, and associate members.

## Ministry formation program

This past fiscal year, the province implemented a formal two-year ministry formation program to bring an even deeper level of understanding and appreciation of SSND's spirit, traditions and history to its lay colleagues.

Core to the ministry formation program, are four two-to-three day sessions which take place over the course of two years. Participants learn about the

foundation of the congregation, its growth in Europe, the life and writings of its foundress, Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger, and the establishment of the congregation in North America through the efforts of Mother Caroline Friess. They also learn about the influence of Vatican Council II and how congregations were encouraged to renew and return to their charism. Additionally, participants explore SSND's educational vision and how it applies to their ministries, the defining characteristics of SSND ministry, the con-

gregation's directional statement, and Catholic identity. The fourth session describes the School Sisters of Notre Dame's commitment to justice, peace, and the integrity of creation and defines Catholic social teaching as it applies to SSND life and all ministries.

Respected SSND historians and educators lead the ministry formation program and dedicated lay colleagues help ensure that the charism, values, and traditions of our 183-year congregation remain central in our ministries. •







## SHALOM NETWORK

A group of faculty and students from Notre Dame of Maryland University join the delegation of School Sisters of Notre Dame at the meeting of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.

# 3,500+

**sisters, associates  
and friends  
makeup the Shalom  
Network**

### Then, much like today

The congregation traces its beginning to October 24, 1833, when Caroline Gerhardinger (later Blessed Mother Theresa), Barbara Weinzierl, and Maria Blass began a common religious life in Neunburg vorm Wald, Bavaria, Germany.

Early in the 19th century, political and social upheaval in Bavaria had brought about widespread poverty. Destitute young women were often single parents with no means of support. Hunger and illiteracy were common. Christian values and beliefs were being abandoned in the modern, enlightened world.

The new community believed that the renewal of society depended upon the Christian family in which the mother, the first educator, had a key role. They decided that they would provide the vital service of a Christian education to girls.

Along with Blessed Mother Theresa, Sister Caroline Friess, SSND, also from Bavaria, emigrated to North America where she, along with the sisters who subsequently joined her, built and staffed schools. They opened more than 200 schools for settlers and pioneers, boys and girls mainly of immigrant families. The sisters continue to believe that immigrants are vital contributors to the U.S. and Canadian society.

### New Beginnings

In 1992, the international congregation approved founding what has come to be called the International Shalom Network. Shalom is the Hebrew word for peace and implies restoring all things to their right order or original integrity. More than 3,500 sisters, associates, friends of SSND, and others across five continents make up the Shalom Network.

**How  
you can  
help**

For current news and to support the Shalom Network go to [www.ssnd.org](http://www.ssnd.org).

Actions take place through Shalom that lead to reconciliation, solidarity with the oppressed, the promotion of human dignity, and collaboration with ecological movements to safeguard the earth. In addition, Shalom is making a difference at the United Nations through SSND's involvement as a non-governmental organization (NGO).

While the need is great in many areas, in the past several years the Atlantic-Midwest Province has concentrated its efforts in four critical areas: human trafficking, immigration, water, and Haiti. •

# Then & NOW

Mother Theresa encountered human trafficking in her time. In 1858 when the congregation was 25 years old, she wrote to the Royal Government of Upper Bavaria:

“Approximately three years ago, African children were brought here to Bavaria in order to teach them Christianity, win them for the reign of God, and save their souls. We agreed to accept seven girls. A short time later they arrived in the most pitiful condition. Fr. Oliviere bought them at a slave market in Cairo in order to help them save their immortal souls. He bought approximately 40 slaves in all... The children came from various parts of Africa, including Darfur...”



## HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is not new to SSND, who has a tradition of responding to urgent needs. In 1858, a missionary who had purchased seven young girls from Sudan at a slave market in Cairo asked our foundress, Blessed Theresa of Jesus to receive the girls, give them safe shelter, and assist them in their recovery. They were welcomed at the Motherhouse in Munich where they were given the physical and spiritual attention which their human dignity deserved.

SSND op-eds have been published on the “push factors” of migration, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership Trade agreement which SSND contends is limited in its capacity to prevent human rights violations, such as human trafficking and worker exploitation. This year, the province continues to work on



**Sister Arlene Flaherty, OP, Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation director for the Atlantic-Midwest Province lectures on human trafficking at Lifeway Network, a non-profit organization geared towards collaborating with agencies and social service providers to find a new way of life for women trafficking survivors.**

ending modern day slavery and exploitation by focusing in the U.S. on ending labor trafficking and in Canada on sex trafficking and exploitation. In the effort to end labor trafficking in the U.S. the province is committed to increasing awareness of how everyday items we use including foods may have exploited individuals in the supply chain. As a result, the province is collaborating with food services staff in Villa Assumpta in Baltimore and Villa Notre Dame in Wilton to determine how to approach the work and implementation of “Fair Foods” in these dining halls.

Educational workshops have been conducted in the United States and Canada for teachers and students in order to build their capacity to understand and prevent students’ vulnerability to various forms of exploitation and human trafficking. Recently, nine schools, and approximately 100 students and chaplains from the Halton Catholic School District in Canada as well as staff from three schools in the U.S. have participated in these province sponsored trainings and are in the process of implementing in their respective schools what they learned.



## IMMIGRATION REFORM

Last year, the Atlantic-Midwest Province adopted a corporate stance in support of comprehensive immigration reform for the U.S. In the province's efforts to reform U.S. immigration policy, it has collaborated with the D.C. based Catholic social justice lobby, NETWORK, as well as the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops. As members of these and other coalitions, the province has been involved in educating the public and appealing to local legislators in order to advance a federal policy that will address the broken immi-

gration system in the United States. SSND sisters and staff members have continued to participate in the "Nuns on the Bus" initiative which advocates for economic justice as well as justice for immigrants.

## WATER

Water is one of the most essential and most vulnerable global resources. Its purity, access, and sustainability are commitments of the province. As more is learned about the multidimensional meaning of water—including its sacramental aspect—the Atlantic-Midwest Province continues to collaborate with SSND sisters in Africa to build water capacity in one or more of their water-stressed ministries.

## HAITI

Another province priority is exploring partnerships with on-the-ground organizations in Haiti and discerning where and how the SSND charism, resources, and experience can support capacity building in one of the poorest countries in this hemisphere. •



Above: Carole Shinnick, SSND is one of the SSNDs participating in the "Nuns on the Bus" initiative. Left: School children from Haiti enjoy a break during recess.



**W**hile preparing your estate plans, please consider remembering the School Sisters of Notre Dame by means of a legacy gift in your will or living trust. Your decision to include SSND as a beneficiary reflects your belief in our common call to support God's work. Your gift will help ensure the future of our educational ministries – enabling youth, women and men to reach the fullness of their potential.

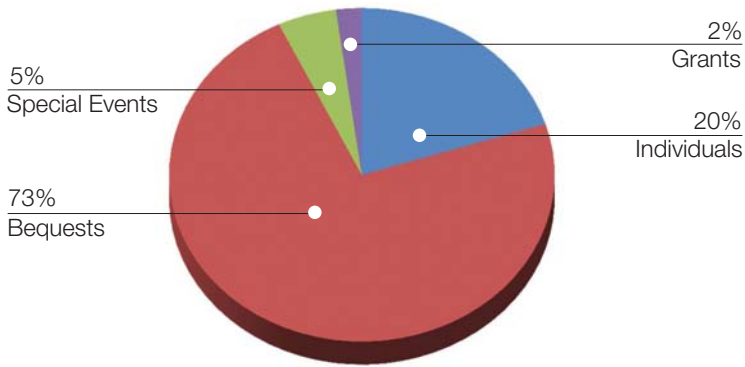
For additional information and for sample language, please contact:

Joy Nazzaro | [jnazzaro@amssnd.org](mailto:jnazzaro@amssnd.org) | (800) 993-7763



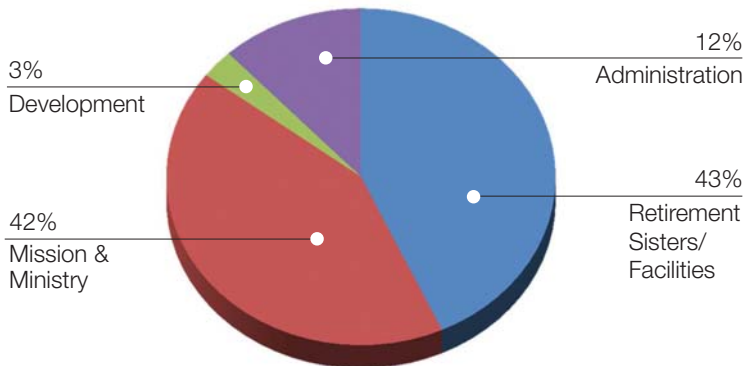
*Leave a legacy of generosity...* **Make a Bequest.**

## Sources of Gift Income



Bequests	\$2,827,293
Individuals	\$778,561
Special Events	\$191,190
Grants	\$83,921
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$3,880,965</b>

## How Gifts Were Used



Retirement Sisters/Facilities	\$1,674,982
Mission & Ministries	\$1,636,535
Administration	\$462,701
Development	\$106,747
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$3,880,965</b>

Fiscal year is July 1 to June 30

**With hearts filled with gratitude  
the School Sisters of Notre Dame  
Thank You!**

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





# THROUGH EDUCATION, 1 PERSON AT A TIME



## Wake the world!

**R**aising awareness, advocating for change, and furthering the charism are examples of how the SSND educates and works against underlying unjust structures, especially as they affect women and youth. Whether in a classroom or in the world community, SSND educates in myriad ways. Sisters pen editorials, meet with members of Congress and collaborate and partner with organizations that share their concerns. The sisters are action-based educators—active, knowledgeable, and confident doers—who teach and influence others by example. In all that they do, they wake the world through education. •

## Education

*Middle schools for low-income students in Baltimore, Md.:*

Mother Seton Academy\*  
Baltimore, Md.

Sisters Academy of Baltimore\*  
Baltimore, Md.

*College preparatory schools for young women:*

Academy of the Holy Angels  
Demarest, N.J.

Institute of Notre Dame  
Baltimore, Md.

Notre Dame Preparatory School  
Towson, Md.

*Undergraduate and graduate programs:*

Notre Dame of Maryland University  
Baltimore, Md.

## Ministries

Caroline Friess Center  
*A learning and career center in Baltimore, Md.*

Caroline House  
*An education center for women and children in Bridgeport, Conn.*

Corazón a Corazón  
*A language and education center in Chicago, Ill.*

Marian House\*  
*A safe haven for homeless women in Baltimore, Md.*

Notre Dame Learning Center  
*A tutoring center for women and children in Rochester, N.Y.*

School Sisters of Notre Dame Educational Center  
*An educational center for women in Queens, N.Y.*

SisterHouse  
*A temporary home for women seeking recovery from substance abuse in Chicago, Ill.*

*\*supported by SSND and other religious institutions*



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

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Baltimore, MD  
Permit No. 1685



<https://www.youtube.com/sistersofnotredame>



[https://twitter.com/school\\_sisters](https://twitter.com/school_sisters)



<https://www.facebook.com/ssnd.northamerica>



We are planning our **SECOND**  
**Chicago Area Multi-School**  
**Reunion & Fundraiser!**

**May 2016**

Watch for email updates and  
your mailbox for more information.

**But don't worry, there is still  
time to volunteer!!**

Reminisce with former  
teachers and classmates,  
renew friendships, enjoy lunch  
and much, much more!

[www.amssnd.org](http://www.amssnd.org)  
(708) 583-2408 x268

## “Educating with a World Vision”



*Dear Friends,*

Blessed Mother Theresa Gerhardinger, foundress of SSND, had a world vision to respond to urgent needs by serving God's people as educators. Although times have changed since our foundation in 1833, our sisters continue making significant contributions to society by responding to the needs of individuals and families who lack vital skills, information and values.

You are our angels. Your prayers and financial support answer Pope Francis' call to make fruitful the mercy of God. Your generosity enables SSND to continue providing quality education and religious guidance to countless children and adults, locally and globally.

*“Make Fruitful  
the Mercy of God”*

In addition to our sisters praying daily for you and your special intentions, we express our gratitude through our responsible stewardship of the gifts you have entrusted to us. Let us pray that the good we do together continues to make significant positive differences for many.

I hope you enjoy this issue of our Stewardship Report as we highlight important SSND programs, including the associates program, ministry formation program and our four justice and peace commitments.

With sincere gratitude,

Leslie A. Lopez, JD CFRE  
Director of Development | [llopez@amssnd.org](mailto:llopez@amssnd.org)