

## ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE

# Sisters continue to care for the Earth

Stewardship of the Earth's natural resources has long been a part of the mission of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters, and recent events at Victory Noll serve as an example of how the Sisters have drawn on their past conservation efforts with an eye always on the future.



**MORE STORIES**  
Pages 4-7

For the past 40 years, Victory Noll has celebrated Earth Day and Arbor Day with blessings of their grounds and with planting of new trees around the 150-acre campus. Each year, students from Huntington Catholic School are

invited to take part in the event, and each student takes home a sapling tree to plant at their own home. This year's program was held on April 30, with students and Sisters celebrating with songs and prayers.

On the same day, the Victory Noll Sisters took another step to maintain the health of their grounds with the installation of a windmill. The windmill was positioned next to Lake Kateri, a pond that is home to a variety of wildlife and includes a small wetlands area supporting various waterfowl. The windmill harnesses the forces of nature to help aerate the pond and improve the ecosystem for fish, frogs, turtles and other animals using the pond.



Sr. Mary Joan Ginsterblum, OLVM (right) hands out tree saplings to students from Huntington Catholic School during the Arbor/Earth Day celebration at Victory Noll on April 30. The celebration has been an annual event at Victory Noll for the past 40 years.

EN ESPAÑOL

## Las Hermanas continua cuidar de la Tierra

Mayordomía de los recursos naturales han sido por mucho tiempo, parte de la misión de las Hermanas de Nuestra Señora de la Victoria. Eventos recientes en Victory Noll sirven de ejemplo de cómo las Hermanas han trazado línea en los esfuerzos de conservación, con los ojos puestos en el futuro.

## 75th-Year Jubilarians Jubilarias de 75 Años



**Sister Rosario Lara** BIRTHPLACE: San Diego, Calif. ENTERED OLVM: September 28, 1935

MISSION HISTORY: Salt Lake City, Utah; Elko, Nev.;

Los Angeles, San Pedro, Calexico, San Diego, Montclair, Calif.

MISSION WORK: Catechetical; diocesan CCD offices; pastoral associate; jail ministry.



**Sister Mary Josephine Miller** BIRTHPLACE: Detroit, Mich. ENTERED OLVM: February 9, 1935

MISSION HISTORY: Azusa, Tulare, Brawley, San Pedro, Los Banos, Pacoima, Calif.; Salt Lake City, Utah; San Pierre, Ind.; Richmond, Ky.; San Antonio, El Paso, New Braunfels, Texas; Hightstown, South Bound Brook, N.J.; Imlay City, Detroit, Mich.; Paulding, Ohio.

MISSION WORK: Catechetical; homemaker, supervisor of volunteers.



**Sister Gabrielle Skupien** BIRTHPLACE: Chicago, Ill. ENTERED OLVM: February 4, 1935

MISSION HISTORY: Grants, N.M.; Ely, Nev.; Tulare, Calif.; Grove Hill, Ala.; Ida, Mich.; Montrose, Colo.; Elsberry, Mo.; Miami, Coral Springs, St. Petersburg, Fla.

MISSION WORK: Catechetical; co-director of social services; pastoral ministry; liturgy; music; art.

## 70th-Year Jubilarians Jubilarias de 70 Años



**Sister Mary Edna Butler** BIRTHPLACE: Louisville, Ky. ENTERED OLVM: October 30, 1940

MISSION HISTORY: St. Louis, Mo; El Paso, Tex.; Miami, Fla.; Oruro, Bolivia.

MISSION WORK: Catechetical; public school religion teacher; jail ministry.



**Sister Patricia Knapp** BIRTHPLACE: South Haven, Mich. ENTERED OLVM: October 30, 1940

MISSION HISTORY: Ida, Garden, Mich.; Rocky Ford, Brighton, Colo.; San Pedro, Redlands, Calif.; Kennett, Mo.; East Chicago, Hammond, Ind.; Brigham City, Utah; Coral Springs, Fla.

MISSION WORK: Catechetical; CCD personnel formation; hospital visitation; hospital chaplain; pastoral ministry; discussion groups.



**Sister Betty Lorenz** BIRTHPLACE: Hopkins, Minn. ENTERED OLVM: October 29, 1940

MISSION HISTORY: Ida, Mich.; Salt Lake City, Utah; Santa Fe, N.M.; Kennett, Mo.; Redlands, Santa Paula, Calif.; Brighton, Colo.; Wheatland, Cheyenne, Green River, Wyo.; Victory Noll.

MISSION WORK: Catechetical; visitation; caregiver; pastoral ministry; cosmetologist.



**Sister Dorothy McMannon** BIRTHPLACE: Louisville, Ky. ENTERED OLVM: October 30, 1940

MISSION HISTORY: Paulding, Ohio; Los Angeles, Redlands, Calif.; Salt Lake City, Utah; South Bend, Ind.; Detroit, Reed City, Lakeview, Mich.; Columbia, Ky.

MISSION WORK: Catechetical; pastoral associate; community organizer.



**Sister Margaret Urhausen** BIRTHPLACE: Chicago, Ill. ENTERED OLVM: October 30, 1940

MISSION HISTORY: East Chicago, East Gary, South Bend, Ind.; Cheyenne, Upton, Wyo.; Detroit, Mich.; Azusa, Monterey, Pacoima, Montclair, Calif; Montrose, Colo.; Las Vegas, N.M.; Victory Noll.

MISSION WORK: Catechetical; homemaker; director of religious education; pastoral ministry; prayer ministry.

## 60th-Year Jubilarians Jubilarias de 60 Años



**Sister Marjorie Curran** BIRTHPLACE: Brooklyn, Iowa ENTERED OLVM: September 6, 1950

**MISSION HISTORY:** Salt Lake City, Utah; Montrose, Calif.; Abilene, San Antonio, Pecos, Lubbock, Texas; Elko, Nev.; Nogales, Tucson, Clifton, Ariz.; East Chicago, Ill.; Victory Noll.

**MISSION WORK:** Catechetical; social services; Victory Noll General Secretary.



**Sister Joseph Ann Kostka** BIRTHPLACE: Arlington Heights, Ill. ENTERED OLVM: October 5, 1950

**MISSION HISTORY:** Elko, Nev.; Brigham City, Utah; Montrose, Colo.; Los Angeles, Pacoima, Brawley, Azusa, Norwalk, Calif.

**MISSION WORK:** Catechetical.



**Sister Mary Josephine Maes** BIRTHPLACE: Santa Fe, N.M. ENTERED OLVM: September 6, 1950

**MISSION HISTORY:** Los Angeles, Los Banos, Indio, Coachella, El Centro, San Diego, Calif.; Las Vegas, Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Penasco, N.M.; Clifton, Ariz.; Fabens, El Paso, Texas.

**MISSION WORK:** Catechetical; Newman work; pastoral/campus/youth ministry; adult religious education.



**Sister Marlene Wolf** BIRTHPLACE: Wadena, Minn. ENTERED OLVM: September 6, 1950

**MISSION HISTORY:** Brawley, Los Banos, Azusa, Los Angeles, Calif.; Salt Lake City, East Carbon City, Moab, Utah; San Angelo, Texas; Denver, Arva, Broomfield, Colo.; Chicago, Ill.; Victory Noll.

**MISSION WORK:** Catechetical; director of religious education; Headstart program.



**Sister Dorothy Louise Wortmann** BIRTHPLACE: Racine, Wisc. ENTERED OLVM: September 9, 1950

**MISSION HISTORY:** Middlesex, N.J.; Cape Cod, Mass.; San Pedro, Ontario, Willows, Pacoima, Los Angeles, Calif.

**MISSION WORK:** Catechetical; diocesan CCD office; community administration; pastoral associate; evangelization RCIA; peace and justice educator.

## 50th-Year Jubilarians Jubilarias de 50 Años



**Sister Rose Ann Kaiser** BIRTHPLACE: Jefferson City, Mo. ENTERED OLVM: September 6, 1960

**MISSION HISTORY:** West Harwich, North Easton, Mass.; Coachella, Calif.; Detroit, Mich.; El Paso, Texas; Odgen, East Carbon City, Utah, Las Vegas, N.M.; Jefferson City, Mo.; East Chicago, Gary, Ind.; Chicago, Ill.

**MISSION WORK:** Catechetical; pastoral ministry; co-director of Gary Community Arts Outreach; caretaker; director of religious education; vocations director; covenant associate director.



**Sister Melanie Persche** BIRTHPLACE: Altlag Gottschee, Yugoslavia ENTERED OLVM: Sept. 4, 1960

**MISSION HISTORY:** East Chicago, Ill.; Redlands, Calif.; Eagle Pass, Texas; Abiquiu, N.M.; Buena Vista, Cochabamba, Bolivia.

**MISSION WORK:** Catechetical; pastoral ministry; formation director in Bolivia; Victory Noll Leadership Team.



**Sister Judith Ann Turnock** BIRTHPLACE: Mishawaka, Ind. ENTERED OLVM: September 6, 1960

**MISSION HISTORY:** Flemington, N.J.; Willows, Calif.; Wheatfield, East Chicago, Fort Wayne, Ind.; Victory Noll; Denver, Colo.; Muskegon Heights, Mich.; Salt Lake City, Utah; San Bernardino, Calif.

**MISSION WORK:** Catechetical; chaplain; formation; pastoral minister; director of Victory Noll Associates; pastoral care associate; Victory Noll lay ministry program.

## Cherish the Earth committee sets the course

Since they arrived in Huntington in 1925, the Victory Noll Sisters have cared for their grounds, which sit on a hill overlooking the Wabash River Valley. The area once was maintained as farmland, and it also included orchards. The Sisters took part in the harvest, and even took care of their own bee colony that helped to pollinate the fruit trees. Flowers and other flora are in bloom with ever-changing colors throughout the seasons, culminating with a spectacular final burst of color in the fall.

The Sisters created the Cherish the Earth Committee, which guides the course for the community's efforts in taking care of the grounds. Sr. Mary Joan Ginsterblum was part of the initial efforts in the conservation and environmental efforts, and even now at 90 years old, she still takes an active role in maintaining the grounds and directing efforts for new initiatives.

"It's a really special place here be-



The sun rises over the Conservation Reserve Wildlife Habitat on the Victory Noll campus. Native prairie grass grows in the field and provides habitat for many birds and animals.

cause of the variety of what we have, and how we've taken care of it. We've tried to keep it beautiful," says Sr. Mary Joan, who joined OLVM in 1939. "It brings you close to God. God gave

us all this. I find it real hard to sit in the chapel and think of God, but if I walk outside, there's no end to it. I can praise God for so much. He's given us so much beauty here."



Sr. Paula Wellnitz, OLVM, adds to the compost pile at her home in Orangeville, Utah. In addition to using her own vegetation, Sr. Paula gets outdated fruits and vegetables from a local supermarket to create the natural fertilizer for her own flower and vegetable gardens.

## Easy way to help renew the Earth

By Sr. Paula Wellnitz, OLVM

Whatever part of the world one lives in, the soil can use some refreshing, especially if a garden is to grow. Not many cities or individuals have realized that one good way to do that is to compost vegetation.

Today, there are containers made for families to use for their composting. But it can be done in the open on the land.

Besides putting in your pile vegetation materials generated by cutting grass, collecting leaves, meal scraps and such, local grocers are a good source for composting materials. Everyday — and more on some days — fruits and vegetables have to be culled off the shelf in the fresh food section of a market of whatever size. Since the deteriorating

items are just thrown in the trash, the manager will be glad if you take them off his or her hands.

Much of the soil where I live in Orangeville, Utah, contains much clay. In some places there is an alkali subsoil. To enliven the clay and counteract the alkali, I bring spoiling fruits and vegetables from the local grocery, known as Food Ranch, and add them to my compost pile.

This is only one part of the process, as other materials are added, such as grass clippings, leaves and manure and the whole mass is turned at times. The resulting composted soil added to what is on site originally does not have the negative effect for the environment that spreading commercial fertilizers has.

The farmland has been replaced by areas of native prairie grasses supporting numerous bird species and other wildlife. There are wooded areas that are home to deer. On the southern end of campus, a hillside was turned into a wildlife corridor as a variety of tree species were planted to not only stabilize the hillside but to provide habitat for animals and birds. Sr. Mary Joan maintains more than a dozen bird-houses on the grounds.

“When I was a younger Sister, one of the other Sisters got me interested in birds,” says Sr. Mary Joan. “She gave me this great big book and told me to study the birds. I didn’t have any binoculars or know anything about birds, so I went out and looked in all the bushes, and I could see these little sparrows and their nests. For years, I’ve kept charts to keep track of the birds I see and I check it every week.”

## Tree tags honor Sisters

A number of trees across campus include tags identifying the species of tree, and also include the name of a Victory Noll Sister. Each Sister, past and present, has a tree dedicated in her honor, now totaling more than 350 trees.

“Another Sister and I went through the woods and made a trail. We wanted to put tags on the trees, but we didn’t know what kinds of trees they were,” says Sr. Mary Joan. “So I would gather up leaves and look them up, and I started making a book of all the trees on our grounds. Then I started on the wildflowers. I would draw them and watercolor them in a book as a catalog to the different kinds here. It’s been very interesting to be here at Victory Noll. I feel that the trees and the flowers are my friends and that they are part of us.”

Sr. Mary Joan has been instrumental in the creation of many of the wildlife areas, including Lake Kateri and the wildlife areas. She also helped create areas for reflection on the campus.

In 1989, a summer storm toppled part of a large blue spruce tree at Vic-



Above, tags on trees honor a Victory Noll Sister and also identify the species of tree. Below, Sr. Mary Joan talks to students about the Miami Peace Pole she carved in 1989.

tory Noll, with only the bottom 10 feet of the tree left intact. Sr. Mary Joan had the bark stripped from the dead tree, and she spent the rest of the summer carving a peace pole. The pole honored the Miami Indians who once lived on the land, and contains many Native American symbols. There is a peace prayer carved in both English and Spanish, along with “pehkokia,” the Miami Indian word for peace.

The peace pole is the centerpiece of the Miami Memorial Peace Garden, also created and still maintained by Sr. Mary Joan.

## Reflection areas at VN

Many other areas take advantage of the natural beauty of the Victory Noll campus.

The Victory Noll Cemetery is surrounded by the land’s original wooded area. The cemetery is the final resting place of many of the Sisters, as well as OLVN founder Father John Joseph Sigstein and Archbishop John Francis Noll, the primary benefactor in bringing the Victory Noll Sisters to Huntington in 1925. Stations of the Cross are built into the natural hillside at Victory



Noll. Most recently, a labyrinth was constructed on top of the hill overlooking the valley. The labyrinth is a popular stop for reflection for those visiting Victory Noll Center.

Sr. Mary Joan says the work will continue to go on.

“We’re putting in a birdbath, and we’re going to put in a new hummingbird feeder in an area where our Sisters who can’t get outside can still enjoy watching out the window,” she says. “We keep thinking of new things to do. God provides.”



## Windmill supports pond ecosystem

The Victory Noll Sisters have added another environmentally-conscious element to the campus with the installation of a windmill near Lake Kateri on April 30.

A crew installed the 30-foot windmill in a couple of hours. Winds as light as five miles per hour spin the blades, which in turn operates a small pump that sends air through a hose underwater and into the middle of the pond. The aeration of the pond helps limit algae growth and it sustains the ecosystem that is home to fish, frogs, turtles and a variety of waterfowl.

# Long live the immigrant woman!

*Rev. Raymond Ritari, a Victory Noll Associate, is pastor of St. Matthew Church in Phoenix, Ariz. He gave this homily May 9 during a prayer service and rally against the recent Arizona immigration bill on the front lawn of the capital building in Phoenix.*

## By Father Raymond J. Ritari

Tonight as we gather and pray, as we have made our May procession in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we remember especially immigrant women. Mary was a migrant with her husband Joseph. With her as our example, in preparation for our May crowning at Mass this Sunday and in preparation for Mother's Day, we focus upon immigrant women and the power, energy, and talent they bring to this society of Arizona and the United States in general.

Over the last two centuries, the migration of people has increased due to economics and its effect especially upon the working poor. Today, the number of people living outside their country of birth is larger than at any other time in the past.

Millions of men and women are either forced or choose to migrate into a completely new space. Women make up almost half of all international migrants throughout the world — 95 million. For many women, migration opens doors to a new world or new space of greater equality, economic empowerment, relief from oppression, and the discrimination that restricts space and freedom in their countries of birth. However, there is the darker side.

Women, who carry their culture within them, find it difficult to cope with the entirely new culture of life in their present living space of the United States, especially here in Arizona. Many times they lose their cultural identity and customs, but they must adopt the culture of this country to survive.

Many women face sexual exploitation, mistreatment, unjust working conditions, lack of health care, education, and poor housing. They are treated by other women (and men) of their adopted country with suspicion, fear, and prejudice. They work

without human rights and often their work is unrecognized. One need only look at the discriminatory laws recently passed by the Arizona legislature to know that both women and men are denied basic human rights.

When these laws discriminate against immigrant women on the basis of their access to health care, educational opportunities and political participation, their potential as human beings is diminished. Not only is their potential diminished but so is that of their children, especially their daughters.

Despite the tremendous pressures that the migrant woman endures, what is apparent is that they define themselves not just as mother or wife but one who is the bread winner, one who is able to bring home a pay check for the family.

Migrant women send millions of dollars home to their families. Migrant women contribute to the economic development of this country with their talent and skills, and to their countries of origin through their remittances. Their involvement in the labor force enables them to gain experience in decision making and to bring about change in how they are treated within their families. And so the migrant woman shows considerable power here in this country.

As we prepare to celebrate Mother's Day and as we honor Mary as our Mother and Sister during this month of May, we must be more aware that female immigrants are not simply wives and children of male immigrants. We must incorporate an understanding of women's human rights and of the unique experience of women immigrants themselves. The causes and consequences of migrant women and migrant men are different. We must give migrant women sufficient space for their voices and experiences to be heard!

**Long live the immigrant woman!**

As we get ready to pray the Litany of Our Lady of Latin America, let us remember the role of Mary at the wedding at Cana in the Gospel of John tonight. Mary is not only the Mother of Jesus in the Gospel of John but she is an image of the true believer because of her faith in Jesus.

Acting in a decisive and confident manner, Mary named the need and took the initiative to seek a solution. Because she says, "they have no wine do as he says," Mary is portrayed as a woman who is leader and one who empowers others. Because

she persisted, a bountiful abundance soon flowed among the guests at the wedding. She knows what to do so that the divine kingdom of justice in her Son might be established.

+ Far from silent, Mary speaks! So do immigrant women!

+ Far from being passive to the orders of the men, Mary acts decisively! So do immigrant women of our day!

+ Mary takes charge, organizing matters to bring about benefit to the needs of others. So do immigrant women in this country!

+ Mary knows as both disciple and believer (and not just as a mother) that the Kingdom of God has broken into their world through her Son Jesus. So do immigrant women believe as they gather in their churches to worship!

Mary stands in solidarity with the many immigrant women in this world, with all of you gathered here tonight. She stands with women who struggle for social justice for themselves and their children, especially their daughters.

If you feel there is no wine of life, if you feel there is no wine of justice because you feel your rights, your culture, your political power, your dignity, race or ethnicity is not being respected here in Arizona, follow in the footsteps of Mary, who believed and had faith in her Son as Savior. Renew your faith tonight as believer, as disciple, as women who are strong!

Immigrant women and all of us must turn away from these laws that are being written in this capital building. These laws only cause fear and marginalization. We must pray that all work on behalf of the human family. And we must pray for the conversion of the minds and hearts of those who wish not to share the wine of goodness, justice and respect for all people within our society, and work in non-violent ways to overturn these laws that are discriminatory.

**Long live Mary! Long live the immigrant women! Long live her daughters and sons!**

*\* Please note that Fr. Raymond in preparation for this reflection has used material from Truly Our Sister, by Sister Elizabeth Johnson, eSJ, and from the article by Sister Metti Amirtham, see (Woodstock International Visiting fellow/ September 2009-February 2010), "Crossing the Borders and Redefining Identity: Gender, Body and Space," Woodstock Report, March 2010.*



Fr. Raymond Ritari



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## What's Inside ...

### Page 1...

OLVM Sisters continue to care for the Earth

### Pages 2-3...

Meet the 2010 Jubilarians

### Page 4-5...

Cherish the Earth overseas environmental efforts

### Page 6...

New windmill makes its debut at Victory Noll

### Page 7...

Associate Fr. Ray Ritari speaks on immigration

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**Visions** is published three times a year by Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters. The staff welcomes articles about vowed members, associate members, or volunteers who are committed to the Victory Noll mission. Letters to the editor are also welcome but must be signed. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit all written contributions.

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## Input from readers is appreciated

Thank you to all of our readers who returned our survey from the recent edition of Visions. Your input is valuable to us as we continue our work to bring you the news and information of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters and all of the associates, volunteers and countless others who give their time and talent to support the mission of the Sisters. The Sisters also send a special thank you to all of those Visions readers who sent in generous donations. They are very much appreciated.

In a rapidly-changing world of information technology, the Victory Noll Sisters are reaching out in new ways. You can follow the Sisters on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/VictoryNollSisters](http://www.facebook.com/VictoryNollSisters)) and Twitter (@OLVMSisters). Of course, there is always plenty of news and information at the Victory Noll website at [www.olvm.org](http://www.olvm.org).



## *In Memoriam*

*Sr. Margaret  
Gutierrez, OLVM  
March 18, 2010*

*Sr. Evelyn Marie Davis,  
OLVM  
March 22, 2010*