

NEWSLETTER OF OUR LADY OF VICTORY MISSIONARY SISTERS

Visions

SPRING 2014

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The Next Level

Unique ministry takes a personal approach to the faith journey



Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters is a community of women religious founded in 1922 by Father John Joseph Sigstein. The Victory Noll Motherhouse is located in Huntington, Indiana.

Victory Noll Sisters:

- Proclaim the Word of God
- Stand in solidarity with the poor
- Foster justice
- Promote the development of leaders

WHAT'S INSIDE

3 New way of walking the faith journey

Sr. Regina Marie Morrissey partners at a personal level

4 2014 Jubilarians at Victory Noll

OLVM Sisters celebrating anniversaries this year

5 Native American students get support

Associate Mary Jane Partee provides tutoring

7 Finding injustice in criminal justice system

Victory Noll prison ministry prompts questions

In the latest edition of "Visions," we spoke of the importance of partnering with those beyond the congregation in living God's mission. At the heart of mission is each person's faith journey. Partnering with one another and supporting one another in this journey of faith is central to our life as Jesus' disciples. The Easter story of Emmaus is a wonderful example of how Jesus walked with his disciples after the Resurrection and continues to walk with each

PERSPECTIVES ALONG THE JOURNEY

of us personally and as a community. Together, guided by the Holy Spirit, we explore the meaning of the Scriptures for today and how they call us to live.

Throughout Jesus' earthly life, he called others to be with him as friends, companions, and in the work of building the Reign of God. Jesus continues to be with us, as we work together for justice and share our faith. We trust fully in his promise: "And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of times." ❖

OLVM LEADERSHIP TEAM

Sister Beatrice Haines *Sister Judith Ann Turnock*
Sr. Leora Linnenkugel *Sister Ginger Downey*

Visions is published two 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 welcomed but must be signed. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit all written contributions.

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Walking the faith journey together

Sr. Regina Marie Morrissey's unique ministry tailors plan to the individual

By Paul Siegfried
OLVM Communications Coordinator

When she retired as Director of Religious Education for St. Gerard Parish in Lima, Ohio, OLVM Sister Regina Marie Morrissey was presented with a plaque that included a quote from the French philosopher Albert Camus:

"Don't walk in front of me. I may not follow. Don't walk behind me. I may not lead. Walk beside me and just be my friend."

The phrase summed up the approach she would take as she entered into the next phase of her mission work.

"I felt called to continue my catechetical ministry in a new way for me," says Sr. Regina. "It is the study of Scripture and spirituality which reflects the needs and experiences of people in a more highly-individualized approach."

Drawing on the charism of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters and their history of religious education and formation, and tailoring a plan that also recalled the thoughts of Camus, Sr. Regina developed her unique adult ministry.

She does not lead as a teacher, nor does she follow as a mentor. She walks alongside as a partner in a faith journey. Each person's journey is different, which brings in the personal partnership to walk along each individual's spiritual path.

"I had the realization of the old adage 'One size does not fit all,'" says Sr. Regina. "As they delve more deeply into their spirituality, the process and focus is determined by the companions on the journey."

The individuals do come together in small weekly study groups as part of their prepa-

ration and incentive for their participation in the parish ministries in which they are involved. The groups are also specifically tailored to reflect the spiritual needs and experience of the individual, which vary in the depth of content, study and discussion.

"It's a lot of study and learning about our Bible and our faith, but also it's a family connection with the people who gathered together," says Shirley Houston. "Sometimes if there is something happening in our lives, we just talk. We don't necessarily do the Scriptures. And Sister is always there to help guide us."

Many of those with whom Sr. Regina partners talk of reaching new levels of their personal faith. Some have gone on to become more involved in the St. Gerard Parish as teachers or Eucharistic ministers, such as Chris Diaz.

"I'm a convert to the Church, and I went through the RCIA journey and got the basics, then got the advanced with things like church doctrine," says Diaz. "But now it's getting into the Scriptures, and it's giving me a deeper meaning personally. Every place that I am spiritually, I attribute it to Sister. I wouldn't be where I am today without her."

Sr. Regina's own sister, Maureen, is a former member of the Immaculate Heart of Mary community. She often sits in on the group meetings.

"Every time that I come to her class, I'm exceptionally impressed by the people, and with her dealing with them," says Maureen. "Not only does she deal with them on a deeply spiritual level, but she's their friend. She's there for them for whatever they need, whenever they need it."



Sr. Regina Marie Morrissey (fourth from right) meets with a group at her home in Lima, Ohio.

Sometimes, what might have been a study session turns into a time just for spiritual renewal.

"Our get together Friday is so important to me," says Vince Koza. "I don't allow myself prayer time like I should, so by seeing her it guarantees me a positive hour in my life, which is so needed in a negative world we live in."

Vickie Carter says that having Sr. Regina walk along with her on her individual faith journey has been life-changing.

"Rewarding" doesn't seem like a strong-enough word. I would say it's been enriching to introduce us to some of the authors that we have been reading," says Carter. "She always encourages us to go deeper, to have a closer relationship with God, and to be seekers."

Sr. Regina's unique ministry is also expanding, as people she has worked with are creating their own ministries.

"It's been quite a journey for me, and the inspiration I get from her, to the point where I started my own women's group. I was thinking of the ripple effect, because it's going on and on," says Margarita Pina. "My husband, Elias, is a deacon at St. Gerard Parish, and he uses a lot of this when he goes to the prison and talks to the prisoners. So it is also spreading in this way."

The spiritual benefits of her work have been two-fold, as Sr. Regina receives as much as she gives.

"Each session is a learning experience for me as well," she says. "Each little group is different. The sharing is open, comfortable, and in each group a unique spirit has developed. That is one of the results of companionship with one another long-term." ❖

80 years



Sister Dorothy Anne Lengerich

BIRTHPLACE: Decatur, Indiana

ENTERED OLVM: September 29, 1934

MISSION HISTORY: California (Monterey, Redlands), Texas (Lubbock, San Angelo, El Paso), Michigan (Detroit, Garden, Ida, Richmond), Indiana (East Chicago, Victory Noll), Nevada (Winnemucca, Elko, Ely), Massachusetts (Bedford), Utah (Salt Lake City), Ohio (Paulding), Iowa (Delhi), Colorado (Brighton), New Jersey (South Bound Brook).

MISSION WORK: Catechetics, home visitation, choir work, music/liturgy.

75 years



Sister Millicent Peaslee

BIRTHPLACE: Gary, Indiana

ENTERED OLVM: October 28, 1939

MISSION HISTORY: Michigan (Ida), Indiana (Indiana Harbor, East Chicago, Victory Noll), New Mexico (Las Vegas, Santa Fe), Arizona (Flagstaff, Tucson), Texas (San Angelo), California (San Diego, Chula Vista, San Pedro, Los Angeles, Redlands, Pacoima, Azusa, Alpine).

MISSION WORK: Catechetics, House of Prayer coordinator, Spiritual Renewal Center coordinator, pastoral assistant, diocesan religious education office.

60 years



Sister Elizabeth Anderson

BIRTHPLACE: New York, New York

ENTERED OLVM: September 6, 1954

MISSION HISTORY: Florida (Sebring, Belle Glade), California (Los Angeles, Brawley, San Luis Obispo, Holtville, El Centro), Texas (San Antonio, Mathis), Massachusetts (New Bedford), Indiana (Victory Noll).

MISSION WORK: Catechetics, social services, chaplaincy, OLVM Leadership Team.



Sister Rose Ann Trudell

BIRTHPLACE: Enosburg, Vermont

ENTERED OLVM: September 6, 1954

MISSION HISTORY: Michigan (Ida), California (Indio, Tulare), Indiana (Gary, Victory Noll), Missouri (Kansas City).

MISSION WORK: Catechetics, nurse's aide.



Sister Lucy Marie Vega

BIRTHPLACE: Mason City, Iowa

ENTERED OLVM: January 6, 1955

MISSION HISTORY: Texas (Lubbock, El Paso, Brownsville), Ohio (Paulding), Arizona (Tucson), Wyoming (Cheyenne), Indiana (Victory Noll).

MISSION WORK: Catechetics, pastoral ministry, community administration, pastoral life planning, development program director, OLVM archivist.

50 years



Sister Lucille Martinez

BIRTHPLACE: Española, New Mexico

ENTERED OLVM: September 8, 1964

MISSION HISTORY: California (Azusa, Montclair, Los Angeles, San Bernardino), Indiana (Victory Noll), Texas (San Antonio), Arizona (Tucson), New Mexico (Carlsbad, Meadow Lake).

MISSION WORK: Catechetics, pastoral ministry, preschool program, co-director of vocations, home visitation, Leadership Team, parish pastoral coordinator.

Mary Jane Partee shares her heritage

By Mary Alice Bramming
OLVM Covenant Associate

Associate Mary Jane Partee of Northglenn, Colorado, is currently a tutor at a Title VII tutoring/cultural enrichment program for Native American children in her local school district. This federal program is available to school districts across the country with the long-term goal of increasing the high school graduation rate of Native American students. Native American graduation rates are very dismal.

An average of 10 students attend each week. They are from the Navajos, Arapahoes, Cheyenne, Sioux, Kiowa, and Choctaw tribes. Although the program is open to all grades, the students in Mary Jane's class are kindergartners to middle school students.

Mary Jane is an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation. She has a B.A. and M.A. in Education and is a certified Montessori preschool teacher.

Mary Jane's program meets two evenings a week for two hours. The first hour she devotes to assisting the students with their homework. She makes a small presentation on a subject and includes Navajo words to describe some aspect of the subject. The second half of the evening is spent in culture enrichment. Mary Jane tells stories about how the Navajos used to live and still do in some places on the reservation, like the seasonal migrations with their sheep. She tells coyote stories which are traditional stories told in winter to teach moral lessons. Native Americans living in urban settings are losing these stories as they lose their language. She also teaches moccasin games. One such game is to line up everyone's moccasins and then hide a rock in one and one by one the participants guess which moccasin contains the rock.

The strength of this program is the participation of the parents of the students. The parents belong to the American Indian Parent Advisory Council. Their purpose is to advise the school district on what cultural learning they want for their children. They also raise money for activities and supplies. This semester they staged their fifth annual pow pow which both raised money and showcased



Photo by Mary Alice Bramming

Victory Noll Associate Mary Jane Partee (center) tutors students in Northglenn, Colo., as part of a federal program to help increase high school graduation rates of Native American students.

Native dances. The parents of all of the students attend each session. Mary Jane feels that there are many ways that the parents can enlarge their vision of transmitting their cultural heritage to their children through the federal monies being made available.

Mary Jane invited one of the father's to share his Kiowa heritage through Kiowa dances and stories.

Next year Mary Jane hopes to add some self-esteem building programs especially for high school students. She used basketball as a tool when she was teaching in Salt Lake City. She would like to add more art and native dance lessons for the younger children.

Mary Jane believes that the student is both teacher and learner and that the school provides the materials and environment for them to explore and grow. ❖



Photo provided

Focus for Utah Associate is helping toddlers

Kathi Kearney Reaves, a registered nurse and Victory Noll Associate, has been working with infants and toddlers with developmental delays for many years.

She began working with people with disabilities as a VISTA volunteer in Oklahoma in the 1970's and her love for this population has continued throughout her career. She is currently providing in-home services for fam-

ilies of infants and toddlers with developmental delays in a three-county area of rural Utah.

Upon retiring from the Southeastern Utah District Health Department, where she was a public health nurse for 29 years, she then began a full-time position for the South East Early Intervention Program with the Center for People with Disabilities through Utah State University.

The South East Early Intervention Program's philosophy is to give parents the tools they will need to speak out for the needs of their child and to guide families to resources in their communities. ❖

Victory Noll Associate Kathi Kearney Reaves, shown with her grandson, works with developmentally delayed toddlers in Utah.

HUNTINGTON, INDIANA

'The Missionary Catechist' publication is now online

Four years ago, the Victory Noll Sisters decided to have the OLVM archivist Jeff Hoffman digitize issues of "The Missionary Catechist," and make them available online. The journal was published by the Sisters from 1924-64 to highlight their ministries.

The issues are now available through the OLVM website at www.olvm.org and by clicking on the banner "Visit the Victory Noll Archives." The issues may be searched by date, or by keyword, which may be a person, event or other search criteria.



The archive department is currently working on digitizing photographs and slides that have been taken documenting the Sisters' lives over the years. Many of the photos have no identification, so a number of slideshow presentations have been held for the Sisters at Victory Noll so that the photos might be identified. Many of the photos have not been seen for years, so the shows have also brought back memories for Sisters and their time in various ministries.

The plan is for many of these photos to be added to the online archive, which will provide a valuable resource for Catholic researchers worldwide and also to anyone who is interested in the history of the Victory Noll Sisters.

Looking ahead

In future issues of "Visions" we will be focusing on how OLVM is partnering in mission by showcasing groups and organizations Victory Noll Sisters are working with as an extension of their mission.

HUNTINGTON, INDIANA

Company chosen to help with Victory Noll planning

The OLVM Leadership Team and the co-coordinators of the stewardship core group interviewed two companies in search of a firm with which to partner in planning for the future of the Victory Noll land and buildings. Hoffman Planning, Design & Construction, Inc. was the company chosen. Hoffman is a company for which there were many recommendations, and that has helped numerous religious congregations with their future planning.

In light of the OLVM charism and mission, these are the goals that Hoffman and the Leadership Team developed to further the planning:

1. Meet OLV Community needs through the use of the buildings and land
2. Meet local community needs through the use of the buildings and land
3. Create a sustainable vision for the property — one guided by the Community's land ethic
4. Use a process to make informed decisions
5. Create a plan that can be supported by our OLV Community. ❖

✚ In Memoriam

*Sr. Carolyn Issenmann, OLVM
December 4, 2013*

*Sr. Grace Golenberke, OLVM
January 13, 2014*

*Sr. Mary Kathleen Rice, OLVM
February 23, 2014*

*Sr. Rose Anthony McClosky, OLVM
December 8, 2013*

*Sr. Mary Helen Rogers, OLVM
January 13, 2014*

*Sr. Mary Paula Fortier, OLVM
March 5, 2014*

*Sr. Carlota Baca, OLVM
December 12, 2013*

*Sr. Mary Margaret Heim, OLVM
February 5, 2014*

*Sr. Helen Carney, OLVM
April 14, 2014*

*Sr. Francene Merkosky, OLVM
December 19, 2013*

*Sr. Rosario Lara, OLVM
February 7, 2014*

*Sr. Virginia Schmitt, OLVM
May 6, 2014*

*Sr. Justine Kiefer, OLVM
January 10, 2014*

*Sr. Martha Wilke, OLVM
February 11, 2014*

Seeing the injustice in the criminal justice system

By Sr. Francesca McGarry, OLVM

Prison Ministry opens your eyes to the blatant injustices of our so-called criminal justice system. It puts real flesh and blood on the stories we hear about countless inmates who are incarcerated unjustly or held in prison long after they have served their sentences. David is one of those men. Let me tell you his story:

I met David in Gary right after he was paroled for the first time after serving 25 years in prison. David was incarcerated at the age of 16 when he was part of a gang that killed a man during an attempted robbery. The other gang members went free after a plea bargain. David admitted his part in the gang activity and was sent to prison.

Twenty-five years later he returned to the same inner-city housing project where he grew up, but found his mother dying of cancer and his siblings moved out of the state.

Although David had very little support and was burdened with his mother's illness, he managed a successful parole and won an ongoing extension of parole for the



Photo provided

Sisters Francesca McGarry (left) and Rose Ann Kaiser (right) meet with David during one of their prison visits.

next six years. During that time, he found a good job, got married and was living a happy and productive life.

Then one Friday evening on the way home from work he drove through a stop sign and was picked up by the police. Unfortunately, David had stopped for a beer with his buddies to celebrate the close of the work week. For this infraction alone David was sent back to prison where he now continues his incarceration after eight

long years.

In his frequent correspondence with us, David reflects a deep faith and trust in God. He knows that he possesses an inner freedom that cannot be taken away from him. It is this genuine living faith that keeps him going.

Despite the fact that David is a model inmate, has taken advantage of every educational and enrichment course that was available to him over these years, he continues to be held in prison for no reason except the punitive attitude of the parole board. At the last hearing we felt so confident that he would be granted parole that we even had a support team and a halfway house ready to welcome him on his release.

When Sr. Rose Ann Kaiser and I go to visit David we look around at all the other inmates and wonder how many of them are also being held unjustly.

We hear a lot about the effort to keep prisons filled these days because of the profit that derives from this subversive business. Isn't it time to research this whole industry in depth and begin to take the injustice out of our criminal justice system? ❖

Center continues its outreach

By Sue Wilhelm
Victory Noll Center Director

Victory Noll Center encourages, educates and empowers people to grow spiritually, become aware of and respond to social justice issues and develop leadership attitudes from within.

As an extension of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters and keeping in mind that we are all called to mission, we encourage all our visitors to remember "The gift you have received, give as a gift."

Each person on the Center team contributes their gifts to support the ministry. Hospitality is offered with a smile. Programs and trainings are planned with integrity and professionalism. Care is taken in the details and ambience enhanced by gentle touches of beauty displayed.

Sr. Rose Zita and her Matthew 25 crew met weekly and made more than 175 blankets this year that were distributed to local agencies throughout Huntington. Administrative assistant Paula Goff's calendar tells us her story as she greets hosted groups, welcomes visitors, gives tours and keeps our files and logistical pieces all together.

Tena Dellaca-Hedrick joined us in September as the Social Justice Program Coordinator, and has already obtained a grant, given keynote addresses and trainings off-campus. She coordinated two on campus education days on the issue of human trafficking. Both were very well-attended by professionals who were very grateful for the knowledge and insights received.

As director, I just try to keep up with this energetic crew as I continue to lead, offer spiritual direction, prayer times in the Chapel, co-facilitate spiritual formation programs and continue to listen to the Spirit lead the Center into the future. ❖

VESPER PRAYER

○ God of all goodness,
Pierce this shallow heart
With love's enkindling ray
Which instead of death gives life
As sun to night gives day.

○ God of all beauty
Whose hand is seen in sunset,
flower and tree
In crystal stream and thrush's song,
and snowflake's artistry
Transform the pale and jaded spirit
With grace-filled hues of Love's design.

○ God of all truth,
Expose all subtle self-deceit
and cunning masquerade
Which stifle life and love and zeal.
Lead me to know and love and serve
You and the souls you made.

Sr. Delores McGinley, OLVM 1064



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249



Visions FROM THE VICTORY NOLL ARCHIVES



Early Victory Noll Sisters had to make due with whatever facilities they had available to them. Out in the isolated areas of 1920s New Mexico there were few places of worship, so a Sister's one-room dwelling had to serve not only as her bedroom and kitchen, but as a chapel and a classroom for religious education to people of all ages. ❖