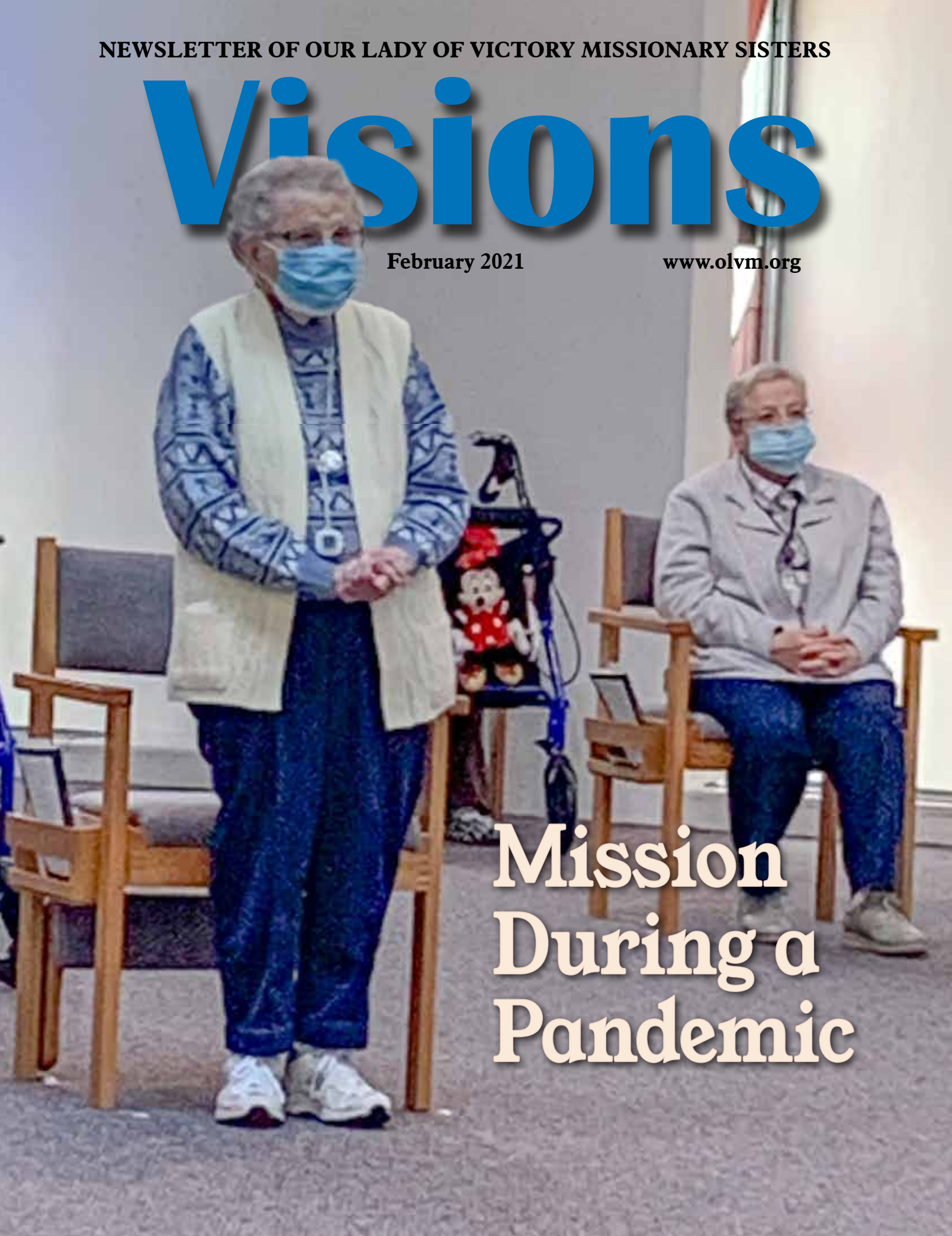


Visions

February 2021

www.olvm.org



Mission
During a
Pandemic



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 those living in poverty and oppression
- Foster justice
- Promote the development of leaders

WHAT'S INSIDE

3 **Another moving day**
The time has come for downsizing at Victory Noll

4 **Adapting to the times**
Sisters find ways to continue mission during the pandemic

10 **Pathway to recovery**
Stable community key to success of program

14 **Mind, body & spirit**
Proper health care long a focus for OLVM Sisters

ON THE COVER

Sisters Alma Bill and Rose Zita Rosonke attend a socially-distanced Mass in the Archbishop Noll Memorial Chapel at Victory Noll.

Photo by Hannah Peters

Life for all of us has been altered in a most abrupt fashion. The pandemic has created new daily routines that involve masks, hand sanitizer and keeping our distance from others. We haven't been able to gather with family or friends, and we've had to considerably reduce trips to restaurants or stores and a myriad of other places that had been part of our regular routines. It's been an emotional time, as we have seen people close to us fall ill or even be taken from us because of COVID. Many of us have had our own struggles after contracting the virus.

PERSPECTIVES ALONG THE JOURNEY

Despite the challenges, our lives have not been put on hold. We have all found new ways of accomplishing our daily tasks and getting done the work that needs to be done.

Throughout this issue, we take a look at how the Victory Noll Sisters, using a core value of adaptability, have been able to keep a focus on their mission, creating and embracing new opportunities and methods to reach out to others in need, call for justice, and to continue to spread the Good News. ❖

MAILING ADDRESS NOTICE

The official mailing address for Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters no longer includes post office box #109, and any correspondence using that PO Box will be returned to the sender. All future correspondence, including to individual Sisters, must include the street address:

Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters
1900 W. Park Drive
Huntington, IN 46750-8957

The email address is: info@olvm.org

OLVM LEADERSHIP TEAM

Sister Mary Jo Nelson
Sister Lucille Martiny *Sister Ginger Downey*

Visions is published three times a year by Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters.

Editor: Paul Siegfried, OLVM Communications Coordinator
Leadership Team Liaison: Sr. Ginger Downey





Victory Noll Archives

In the 1940s, the congregation of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters grew rapidly. A former Army barracks was relocated to Victory Noll, later to be named the Sacred Heart Building. In this photo from 1949, postulants and novices prepare to move into their new living quarters.

Decades later, another moving day

By 1948, the Victory Noll campus was bursting at the seams.

The main Our Lady of Victory Building housed the postulants. The St. Joseph Building, erected in 1937 for use as classrooms, had its third floor converted into dorms for novices. The Chapel became so crowded that two Masses were scheduled each day.

To help ease the situation, Bishop John Francis Noll purchased an Army barracks building that had been sitting empty at Fort Wayne's Baer Field since the end of World War II. The two-story structure was dismantled, transported to Huntington, and reconstructed above a concrete basement just to the west of the OLV Building.

Sister Effie McConnell, who had handled all the maintenance needs at Victory Noll since 1938, personally laid all 12,000 square feet of asphalt tile on the floors. Sister Cecilia Schmitt, who would later become Superior General, painted all the walls and ceilings. By early 1949, even before the brick facade could be put in place, postulants moved into the second floor and novices into the third floor of what became the Sacred Heart Building. The bottom floor held a kitchen and dining room, and a tunnel connected it to the OLV Building.

Twelve years later, a new infirmary and chapel were completed on the east side of the campus, and a new dining room eventually added on. The Victory Noll

Center moved into the bottom floor of the Sacred Heart Building in 2000.

Since then, the living quarters have gradually emptied as Sisters moved into the health care facility. The third floor of the OLV Building had long been empty, only used for visitors. The second floor of OLV housed congregational and leadership offices.

Victory Noll Center closed in 2018, and with OLV and Sacred Heart mostly in disuse, it was decided to look to sell the buildings. In 2020, Huntington County agreed to purchase the buildings, with the Corrections Department planning to convert them into a transitional facility for low-level drug offenders, offering rehabilitation services.

Plans were made for the few Sisters remaining in Sacred Heart to move into either the St. Joseph residence or into health care at St. Anne Communities at Victory Noll. The remaining offices in OLV were scheduled to move into converted bedrooms on the second floor of the St. Joseph Building.

Moving day came on November 11. With the help of a moving crew, the contents of eight offices were transported to their new locations in one day.

Until Huntington County Corrections moves in its operations, the hallways and rooms of the once-bustling Sacred Heart and OLV buildings stand quiet, with only the echoes and memories of hundreds of Victory Noll Sisters who once walked the floors. ❖

Adapting to the times

Sisters find ways to engage during COVID reality

By Paul Siegfried
OLVM Communications Coordinator

In the past year, it has been easy to become distracted.

Who wouldn't be?

The global pandemic of COVID-19 has loomed large in everyone's minds since early 2020. At the very least, lives have been disrupted with masks, social distancing, quarantines and isolation. At the very worst, lives have been lost as family, friends, neighbors have succumbed to the virus. Shutdowns and business limitations have caused mass unemployment and economic hardships.

Racial strife boiled over during the year. Unprecedented political and cultural division were amped up in a highly-contentious election season, which led to threats against American democracy.

❖ Read OLVM Sisters' reflections on Mission During a Pandemic, Pages 6-9

It has been a stressful time with no standard playbook in which to refer to ease the physical and mental challenges. At such times, people often turn to their faith leaders for answers, or at least some comfort. But those faith leaders are also human beings, searching as well for light in the dark.

Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters have spent their lives lending aid and comfort to those who are suffering, to those who have been marginalized by society, working to make sure all people have the basics of shelter, food, and health care. But the circumstances of 2020 made that difficult.

And at Victory Noll, there was another level of uncertainty.

OLVM is in the middle of a major transition. An aging community is diminishing in numbers, and the maintenance of a large campus becoming more problematic. More Sisters were entering full or part time health care in the Saint Anne Communities at Victory Noll, leaving fewer members physically able to take on demanding leadership roles.



Photo by Hannah Peters

Sr. Christopher Rudell often found herself quarantined in her room at St. Anne Community at Victory Noll. But when restrictions were lifted, she was able to take daily walks around campus, even on chilly winter days.

Over the last year, decisions were made to downsize with the pending sale of multiple buildings and to recommend to Rome a commissary to lead the community starting in 2022. Sisters moved out of the Sacred Heart Building, and congregational offices vacated the OLV Building into new quarters in the St. Joseph Building.

Staying focused on mission has been a test for the Victory Noll Sisters, but one of their core values is adaptability, and they have answered the call.

"It has been a terribly hard year on so many levels. We have had to change the way we live, work, interact with each other, how we pray and how we say good-bye," says OLVM President Sr. Mary Jo Nelson. "Our

Sisters living at Saint Anne Communities, have had a huge challenge as they have had to quarantine in their rooms several times, for weeks at a time. They were understanding, patient, and prayed for their care givers and our world. They have kept attentive to the issues of our country and world.”

Nine Sisters died in 2020 (not of COVID), and even funerals had to be adjusted. Most Sisters and families could not attend in person. Some services were live-streamed to give some comfort.

“Their mission of presence and prayer has deepened as they carried the grief and loss of the Sisters who have died during this time. They could not attend the prayer service or burial for our Sisters—Sisters who were their daily companions for months or years. There was no closure—an experience they have shared with thousands of other persons,” says Sr. Mary Jo.

In past years there have been numerous annual gatherings at Victory Noll where Sisters could reunite in person to not only address community matters, but have a time of fellowship. Those times have been replaced by far-more-sterile videoconferencing. An outside facilitator keeps the proceedings moving, but now has also been charged with guiding the community through the mental challenges with a focus on mission goals.

“Zoom became our go-to place for community assemblies, conversation groups, meetings within and beyond the congregation, as well as our community retreat,” says Sr. Mary Jo. “Our assemblies have meant learning Zoom; however it has also made it easier to gather for meetings. Our facilitator has done a great job helping us to move through our community agendas, that has included prayer, input, large group and small group conversation, as well as discernment. Our small group conversation groups have also made it possible to be in more diverse groups across the congregation — again because no travel was necessary. I suspect that Zoom or some virtual platform will become part of how we gather and meet in the future.”

Sr. Mary Jo, who has facilitated assemblies for other communities, says the Sisters have been resilient through all of the challenges. One of the OLVN values is adaptability, and the Sisters have mostly responded, seizing the moment as an opportunity to find new ways to expand their individual ministries.

“For some life slowed down and became a lonely time. For others it seemed to get busier,” says Sr. Mary Jo. “For many it was a time to become more knowledgeable and conscious of the deeper issues

A SONG OF LIFE

“Peace on earth,” the angel hosts sang
While human fears pierced the aisles of pain;
COVID spread rampant among the throng,
While FAITH’S strong force upheld the weak.

Days of darkness and doubt traveled on
While strains of silence and fear lay ‘round;
Protective masks obscured life’s delights
But HOPE immortal lay life-giving nearby.

Then, redeemed anew by the light of God’s LOVE
HOPE sprang up, enlivened by community’s glow;
MISSION prevailed as the life-enhancing goal
And Christ’s abiding LOVE the crown embracing all.

Sister Alma Bill

When Victory Noll Sisters were asked for their reflections on the past year, Sister Alma Bill, who will turn 100 in March, offered this poem.

within the pandemic, systemic racism, the political crisis, and the environmental crisis. We have had time to think about a future Church. We have had time for more quiet time and prayer. And like so many others, we have had an opportunity to claim once again what is really important.”

She thinks that will serve the Sisters well once there is a return to something closer to normal, and they will look back to this as a time of growth.

“We all long for the in-person meetings, gatherings and assemblies, visits with family, and getting together with friends,” she says. “We long to celebrate the lives of all our Sisters who have died during this time. The meaning and value of relationships has deepened. The loss and grief has deepened as well as its accompanying gratitude for all our gifts and blessings. The normal and sometimes consuming ways of living are changing. We will never go back, only forward with our deeper, more conscious selves and with a deeper commitment for the common good. Hopefully, we will go forward with more adaptability, more centeredness and insight, and more vision and imagination.” ❖



We are all siblings called to be in solidarity with each other

By Sr. Teresa Aparicio, OLVM

At this difficult and sad time of the pandemic I have experienced suffering, frustration, and physical pain in my personal communal life. At the same time, I and the community have experienced the need of being creative and together find alternatives to continue with the mission here at Casa de las Comunidades in Albuquerque.

Problems and needs of families and our homeless women and men have increased, but so too has financial support from the circle of friends of Casa and local markets. As a direct response and result of this:

- We fenced the parking lot.
- The food distribution has been moved outside.
- Our support groups continue via WhatsApp, telephone and Google Meet.
- I lead our weekly prayer group and connect people willing to share with families in need.
- Helping with rent and bills.
- The request for prayers and to bring consolation to those hurt by the pandemic, demanded that Leticia Carreon, a board member of Casa, start the group Divina Mercy. This service is to journey with those who have lost family members here in USA or in Mexico to COVID. She started with two members, and now we are up to 40. The group prays devotions (Rosary, Chaplet of Divine Mercy) and share the daily gospel readings.

These responses by Casa de las Comunidades is a picture of Jesus standing outside a door, when we, I and volunteers of Casa open our doors we make our best to respond to whatever assistance is requested.

Victory Noll Sisters were asked to reflect on the past year and write about how they embraced the many challenges.

COVID 19 has been a challenge as some of the ability to help others has been difficult and challenging. I have had to speak to groups by social media, via Zoom and visiting a friend in a nursing home outside and in a heated tent. I was able to visit a shelter that we had built 30 years ago only to find that the space was inadequate because of social distancing. We needed to have a long heated plastic tent for women and children to wait until dinner could be served.

Ingenuity and modern media made it possible for ministry to continue but lacked the personal contact of working directly with the poor.

Sister Mary Alice Murphy



This year has been a time of my moving through the adjustments of changing from St. Joseph's Building to St. Anne's assisted living.

A time of moving through the constant vigilance, limitations, sufferings and concerns for self and others with the threatening pandemic.

It is an intense time of finding our way through all the uncertainties and dangers amidst the political and social upheavals in our troubled country and world.

It is a time of reaching out for the grasp of the hand of Jesus

and listening for His promising words: “I am with you always.”

Sister Rose Zita Rosonke



During the pandemic my daily routine did not change. I was able to work in my office and continue my ministry of leadership. What did change was the importance of my morning and evening walks. These allowed me to breathe without a mask, to feel the fresh air on my face and to remember how fortunate I am to live in a place where I can walk, see wildlife and hear the birds sing their songs. I am most grateful for the beauty of Victory Noll and that we were able to offer our lovely grounds for others to experience the beauty of God’s creation, amidst the darkness of the pandemic.

Sr. Ginger Downey



During this experience God brought me closer to him by touching my heart deeply and making me more aware of the needs of others.

God decided to tell me to choose life in whatever way you can.

This was a difficult time in life on many levels, having to eat three meals in our room when we were quarantined.

Sr. Sharon Rose Eshleman



“ A letter from the Leadership Team reminded me that prayer is our best ministry. Keeping in my daily prayer all those infected by coronavirus, (and their family and friends, doctors and medical staff, leaders of countries, volunteers who help those who cannot help themselves, families who need to bury loved ones, and those who are afraid and alone), made me more aware of suffering of so many people whose lives were linked to it. As hard as isolation and being unable to gather for Liturgy and other activities was, it seemed little compared to others losses, such as loss of employment, being without food, or being unable to go out for necessities without risk of being exposed to virus. Since I live far away from family, I was grateful I was able to keep in touch and even participate in the streaming of funerals for four family members, one who died from COVID 19. ”

Sr. Kathleen Cummings

I am blessed and grateful for my life, my community, God, family, friends, and many other persons in my sacred journey of life. Making time for contemplation, scripture reflective reading, community prayer, being connected with each other through zoom, being committed to social justice issues, and so much more is life-giving and essential.

During this time of “being in place,” I am being called anew to listen with my heart, to be sensitive, to be aware, and to be understanding of each other.

God has first loved us ... having hope and being in love with God, all “things” are possible.

Sr. Helen Rodriguez-Marin



One way I coped with the pain of 2020 was to be more careful about how I took care of myself. I rested and walked more. I was faithful to regular personal and communal prayer including the Wednesday contemplative prayer together with other OLVN Sisters for the needs of the world. I continued to immerse myself in the scriptures and in the rhythm of the church year. I also focused on praying, studying and advocating for justice over the issues in our church and world.

Sr. Judy Turnock

Music and poetry, deep reflection and regular prayer, especially praying the news, have been sustaining practices for me this past year.

I've also welcomed tears when they came spontaneously to help me grieve, to be grateful, to be overwhelmed, to pray. I've stayed connected with family and friends, with people I know who were in need of a listening heart and a quiet, reassuring prayer, by phone, Zoom, email, text, snailmail . . . and a very few in person, socially-distanced, of course.

Sr. Rite Musante



These months of pandemic have led me to reflect often on the fact of the connectedness of all peoples regardless of country, race, creed, social status or age and the need to reach out to others with compassionate care. Even as we shelter in place or live isolated from others, our mission remains the same. Using letters, cards, phone and internet, we adapt and remain in touch and in relationship with others, to share grace in uncertainty, hope while waiting, and healing, comfort and peace in moments of grief and longing.

Sr. Mary Lou Rowney



This has been a time to reflect and nurture my contemplative perspective of life and the world. My hope is that as a global community we continue growing in accepting that regardless of culture, language, skin



color, or living in an specific geographical place in the world, we are one human community. We have a duty to care for one another and build a world of healthy human relationships. On my calendar I read a message by Henry Miller: "One's destination is never a place, but a new way of seeing things."

Sr. Francisca Olvera



In the COVID pandemic I have experienced a heightened awareness of the environmental crisis, the socio-economic disparity among us, the brokenness and division of our country, the systemic racism that calls for national healing and conversion, with the accompanying personal and social grief. I also have experienced God in varied ways. . . in my vulnerability, in my powerlessness, in my prayer for the world, in the cries and joys of our shared humanity, and in the call into an unknown future.

Sr. Mary Jo Nelson



Living God's mission of love continues no matter the circumstances and is my source of hope. I have found new ways of doing social justice work on behalf of those who are marginated and neglected; found more time for prayer; tried to respond to the needs of those I live with; and experienced others reaching out to me in such loving support at the time of my sister, Monica's, death.

Sr. Beaty Haines



During this pandemic time, we are most grateful to the Julia Center benefactors. Because of their generosity we have been able to give gift cards of \$20 each to 60 needy families who come to the Center. On a personal level, I usually go to Wisconsin to celebrate with my family during the Holidays. However this year the three of us Sisters who live together in Chicago will be observing all the requirements and stay in.

Sr. Jeanette Halbach



This time of the coronavirus has not been easy for many. From the moment we became aware that the virus was in the United States we lost the security of being safe, but our faith gave us peace and hope knowing that God is with us. When quarantine was declared here in California, we both made a decision to stay inside and not go out unless we had a dire need. As far as the food distribution we only distributed 12 bags. The food bags were loaded at St. Mary's Parish and then we would call the family to make sure they are home. Sr. Adela placed the bags of food on the sidewalk and their caregivers or themselves come out to pick up their bags. We are not going to the hospital or visiting the sick as we used to do.

*Srs. Adela Amoroso and
Maria Luisa Valdez*

I have been praying for people in special need due to the virus as names and situations are made known to me especially through the media and I am reaching out to people I know who are finding it difficult to cope at this time. In doing so I feel supported.

Sister Regina Marie Morrissey



Yes, it's true that 2020 has been a very difficult year in many ways, but one continues in Mission as before in giving oneself to whatever the moment calls for as Victory Noll Missionaries.

One positive aspect of this year has been extra time to enter into prayer, especially Contemplative or Centering Prayer as taught by Thomas Keating and Cynthia Bour-gault especially in and through her book "The Wisdom Jesus." In itself Centering prayer is a movement from inner prayer to action on behalf of the world.

The necessary and most difficult change for me this year has been in learning how to become more involved in social justice issues through greater knowledge and practice of technology.

Sr. Rose Ann Kaiser



Pathway to Recovery

Creating stable community aids success of program

By Richard Fox
Director, Upper Room Recovery Community

The mission of the Upper Room Recovery Community is to provide safe and stable transitional housing to persons in recovery from addiction from drugs and alcohol and to assist them in moving toward a productive and independent life.

The program, which opened in South Bend, Indiana in 1982, has a long respected history and reputation. Our target population is men and women, who despite their history of addictions, have achieved a minimum of 30 days clean time, are committed to their recovery and are striving to return to independent and self-directed living. We opened our Women's Home in a renovated historical South Bend home in September of 2019. We currently have 16 beds for women and 30 beds for men, which are almost always full with a waiting list. The URRC is a certified INARR Level III Recovery Residence.



Upper Room Recovery Communities is a temporary supportive home for people who are in recovery from addiction. Our program connects holistically with other recovery programs as well as the local spiritual community and judicial system to provide a safe, encouraging, and welcoming environment for people to continue their recovery.



Photos provided

Above, a group of residents at Upper Room Recovery Community did a community service project this fall with the construction of a memory bench in honor of students from a local middle school lost to gun violence. Below, Women's Home residents were able to spend a beautiful fall weekend at a retreat at Camp Eberhardt in Michigan. It was a wonderful weekend of outdoor activity, crafting, bonding, and spirituality.



We are committed to empowering women and men to stay substance-free and become self-sufficient and physically, emotionally and spiritually healthy. We believe that recovery comes from living a self-directed life in a healthy community. The things that persons in recovery need to live a full life are no different from what everyone needs — positive relationships, work/purposeful activity and somewhere safe and secure to live. We view recovery as a person-driven, holistic and lifelong process. Our goal is to offer a physically and emotionally safe, secure and respectful environment, while fostering

mutually supportive relationships between residents and staff. We strive to empower our residents to become healthy so they can effectively share their gifts in their families and the local community.

Though we are not a treatment facility we partner with many agencies in the recovery community to create comprehensive services to our residents. The community views our program as a very important piece in the recovery process. While living in a safe and stable environment, all of our clients are required to obtain substance abuse treatment thru our local community mental health/addiction services provider, Oaklawn Addiction Services.

During 2020, we served 142 clients, 129 (91 percent) of which were indigent upon entry to our program. Most come from being incarcerated or from other inpatient treatment facilities and are unemployed or underemployed. Because of generous donors such as the John Joseph Sigstein Foundation, we are able to accept those without ability to pay fees until they can, up to 60 days. Our normal fees are \$400 per month, which includes rent, food, and all services.

The URRC obtains referrals from other community agencies such as Drug Court, Adult Probation and treatment providers such as Oaklawn and Recovery Matters.

Each resident is required to attend daily 12-step meetings for the first 90 days and three meetings a week thereafter. All residents are also required to receive a mental health/addictions assessment through Oaklawn and must agree to abide by any recommendations for further treatment or therapy. Resi-



Photos provided

Above, the URRC Women's Home facility (foreground) is located in the former parsonage of the First United Methodist Church (background), which houses the Men's Home.

Left, a great fall day offered the opportunity for the residents to clean up outside the Women's Home and prepare for winter.

dents are also required to fulfill community service requirements within First United Methodist Church, where the men's program is housed. The typical length of stay for successful residents is approximately 12 months, although longer stays are allowed, depending on goals and progress of the individual.

Case management is provided to every resident. One-on-one individualized care is a priority and we view this as a crucial piece in the recovery process. This consists of meeting weekly for goal setting, evaluation of progress of these goals and accountability

for all program requirements. Case manager and resident work together on an ongoing recovery plan which offers support and resources. Case managers or trained volunteers offer valuable life skills coaching, job or vocational readiness placement coaching and guidance in financial management. In addition, several residents, including our resident assistants, have been trained as peer mentors as part of our recovery-based model.

Our recovery housing program has provided historical success. During 2020, 36 of the 96 clients who left our program went with



URRC partners with Healthlinc, a local not-for-profit health care provider, to provide on-site monthly rapid COVID testing for staff and residents. In addition, they have provided testing for all incoming residents, all at no cost. Below, Christmas was somewhat subdued this year due to the virus, but URRC was still able to decorate and have a quiet meal and celebration. Pictured are dedicated volunteers Deb and Cheryl. Bottom, dormitory style living in the Men's Home doesn't provide much privacy, but enhances community living.

Photos provided

continuous sobriety, a recovery plan in place, a support network in place, any criminal justice issued managed or resolved, and with a safe place to go.

The past several months of the pandemic have presented a unique set of challenges for us. Many factors have contributed to a dramatic national increase in substance use relapse and in overdoses. Most of our treatment partners and 12-step groups have transitioned to virtual meetings which are not nearly as effective. And we have endured a number of quarantines due to positive COVID tests, so our clients need us now more than ever. Our fund raising has been limited as has been our residents' ability to pay because of employment issues related to the pandemic. We are fortunate that we are a part of a very generous community and that we have been able to continue to provide full services and to keep all of our residents housed, regardless of their ability to pay their fees. Our donors have been very generous thru all of this, and we thank God for our ability to carry on. ❖

Upper Room Recovery Community website:
upperroomrecovery.org

***NOTE:** Upper Room Recovery Community is one of the agencies receiving grants from OLV's John Joseph Sigstein Foundation.*



SUPPORTING OUR MISSION

IN GRATITUDE TO OUR BENEFACTORS

Contributions from September 1, 2019 to August 31, 2020

Through your generous contributions, you support Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters in their mission to proclaim the Word of God, to stand in solidarity with those living in poverty and oppression, to foster justice and to promote the development of leaders. The Victory Noll Sisters thank you and continue to keep all of you in our prayers.

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Judith Yasunaga

Mind, body & spirit

Sisters made sure all had access to proper health care

By Jeff Hoffman
OLVM Archivist

Bishop Charles F. Buddy of the Diocese of San Diego saw firsthand the work that was being done in the well-baby clinic by the Victory Noll Sisters at Our Lady of Guadalupe parish in San Bernardino. He envisioned something similar to that in San Diego. He was able to have the Victory Noll Sisters take over the oversight of the Guadalupe Clinic in September of 1948.

The Guadalupe Clinic's purpose was to provide medical, dental and social service aid to patients who had no way to meeting their medical expenses. The clinic had a working relationship with Mercy Hospital, which was run by the Sisters of Mercy. This allowed the clinic's patients to receive advanced medical care at little or no cost to themselves. Sr. Aurelia Jane McMahon was the executive director of the Guadalupe Clinic, and was assisted by many other Sisters through the years. The



Victory Noll Archives

Sr. Aurelia Jane McMahon comforts a young patient at the St. Elizabeth of Hungary Clinic in Tucson, Arizona.

staff included Sisters who filled many of the responsibilities of the clinic. These included nurses, a trained medical social worker, lab technicians, and receptionist. There were over 150 doctors and dentists who volunteered their time to serve those patients who

needed their help.

In time the neighborhood of the clinic fell victim to the urban renewal that was transforming the inner city landscape across the nation in the 1950's and 1960's. At this time there were seven Sisters staffing the Guadalupe Clinic. When the clinic was forced to close, its services were to be picked up by Mercy Hospital.

Due to the success of the clinic in San Diego, there were many communities in the Southwest trying to organize to develop clinics that these Sisters could staff.

EDITOR'S NOTE: As Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters approach their 100th anniversary in 2022, we will be taking a look back at the history of the community in a series of articles, researched and written by OLVM archivist Jeff Hoffman. In this article he continues his look at the role of Victory Noll Sisters in health care.

Sr. Aurelia Jane and other Sisters went on to open St. Elizabeth of Hungary Clinic in Tucson, Arizona, in 1961. The Sisters served the same function that they did in San Diego as nurses, lab technicians, receptionist and social worker. The Sisters did not provide just immediate medical assistance to the patients, but also provided their patients with direction to better home conditions in order to lessen possible future medical problems.

Sr. Aurelia Jane stepped down as Director of the St. Elizabeth of Hungary Clinic in 1970. She was followed in this position by Sr. John Francis Radler, who had followed Sr. Aurelia Jane to Tucson from San Diego. A Victory Noll presence would remain at this



Victory Noll Archives

Sr. Mary Elise Allmaras assists in the Holy Family infirmary after she returned to Huntington.

clinic until 1989.

Victory Noll Sisters have been involved in health care throughout their history. As part of their training at Victory Noll, Fr. Sigstein had medical officials from the Huntington area teach the

Catechists Home Health Care that they might need in the missions.

Over time as the number of Catechists/Sisters grew, this allowed some mission centers to begin health clinics.

There were some who women entered the order already having training in a hospital setting, including a nursing degree. Sr. Mary Elise Allmaras was one of the Sisters who was asked to obtain a degree in nursing.

After obtaining a Bachelor's degree, she spent time working as the infirmarian at Victory Noll, and taught the postulants and novices Home Health Care. In 1956 she worked with Sr. Aurelia Jane at Our Lady of Guadalupe Clinic in San Diego and later the Elizabeth of Hungary Clinic in Tucson.

During the 1970's she continued her training to become a Nurse Practitioner. Like many other Sisters who became nurses, she came back to Victory Noll and assisted other Sisters residing at Holy Family. ❖



Victory Noll Archives

Catechists Pauline Wapiennik and Gabrielle Skupien (behind) look on as the doctor tends to a young patient at the Guadalupe Clinic in San Diego.



OUR LADY OF VICTORY
MISSIONARY SISTERS
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Visions FROM THE VICTORY NOLL ARCHIVES



During the pandemic, teachers have had to find new ways of delivering lessons to students, teaching by video to students at home or dealing with distancing for those in the school building. Victory Noll Sisters teaching catechism often had to improvise when traditional facilities were not available. In this photo, Sr. Pat Knapp created a classroom from a roomy, 1950's sedan. ❖