LIFE LONG EDUCATORS
ADVANCE THE MISSION

See article page 4

“Do whatever he tells you.”
Mary at Cana
(John 2:5)
My dear friends of Notre Dame,

Persons are holy from the start. Parents sense something of the holiness and mystery of human life while waiting for the birth of their child. At birth, believers gaze upon and hold the delicate and fragile incarnation of their newborn gift from God, who is the Source of all goodness and holiness. For some infants development and growth is a relatively smooth course through the stages of life; for others the course is traumatic. For many people, disadvantages, limitations and even abusive treatment threaten natural growth and the affirmation of holiness.

The stories in this issue of Good Works allow readers to gaze lovingly on ministers and recipients who are engaged in mutual encounters with holiness. As each author shares her story, we see that “persons matter in ways that cannot be measured.” It is my hope and prayer that what started in holiness will evolve in holiness and contribute to our wholeness and integrity in creation.

Thank you for your presence in the world and your commitment and contribution to “what is holy from the start.” Thank you for promoting and supporting the dignity and worth of each human being.

In God’s goodness,

Teresita Weind, SNDdeN
Congregational Leader

SNDdeN in Ministry

SNDdeN in Ministry

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At Notre Dame Educational Bridge Center, students Barbara Adjei and Vida Sarpong move towards their professional goals in health care with the expertise of their tutor, Sr. Karen Coakley, SNDdeN.

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Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur

EDUCATION FOR LIFE

LIFELONG EDUCATORS ADVANCE THE MISSION

By Pamela Reidy, Director of Mission and Communication:
Notre Dame Health Care Center

St. Julie Billiart’s mission to educate for life is alive in the workplace at Notre Dame Health Care Center (NDHCC) in Worcester, MA. For the past ten years, more than 3,000 students have been educated in life and work skills. In 2004, collaborating with Katherine Lemay, current Chief Executive Officer of NDHCC, the Leadership Teams of the Boston, Connecticut and Ipswich Provinces (as corporate members of NHCCC), founded and named Notre Dame Educational Bridge Center (NDEBC). They envisioned a lasting culture of learning and growth for health care and nursing personnel, assisted by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in the resident community and within the long-term care community.

UNIQUE PROGRAM

Today, through educational programming, NDEBC provides quality courses on a realistic schedule for long-term care workers at our ND Center and at ten nursing care facilities in the Worcester area. Many students are immigrants from Africa and Latin America. Most work multiple jobs to support their families. Our education center reaches out to provide critical support to some of the most vulnerable people in our society. The program is unique and amazing through the tutoring or teaching of the Sisters who work or reside at the Notre Dame Centers. These Sisters welcome the opportunity to continue as experienced, lifelong teachers. Some Sisters live in the community with laity at this Assisted Living facility, which they lovingly call “the Lake” (named Notre Dame du Lac, for the property’s early origins near Lake Quinsigamond). Currently, thirteen Sisters are involved at NDEBC: five serve in various ways in the health care programs and eight are residents at the Assisted Living facility. These Sisters tutor or teach at the education center.

YEARS OF GROWTH

For the past ten years, the curriculum has been adapted to student needs and industry requirements. Offerings at the Center include adult basic education, with English as a second language and graduate education courses (ESOL & GED), pre-college math and English classes, and other prerequisites for the Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) program. The Center partners with a local college, Quinsigamond Community College (QCC), in offering an LPN evening program.

In 2008, the Center launched the Sister Helen Wright Citizenship Program to prepare staff for citizenship and started another program in 2010 to educate licensed nurses and clinical nursing assistants in end of life care, providing courses...
required for certification in hospice and palliative care. In 2013, the addition of an eight-hour class enables nurses and other practitioners to apply for certification as Alzheimer’s & Dementia care specialists. Now, there are also other offerings in ServSafe food-manager certification for dietary workers, as well as help for disadvantaged groups working on the front lines in geriatric care. This population may otherwise never receive educational and emotional support necessary for undertaking formal academic training, and enabling them to achieve career advancement and family-sustaining wages.

With funding from the Boston, Ipswich and Connecticut Provinces and astute assistance from many SNDdeN, who have served on the NDHCC Board and Advisory Council, the Center has steadily developed and grown as an educational center. With valuable tutoring by the Sisters, different programs enable entry level employees to obtain a General Educational Development (GED), learn English and prepare for application to local LPN programs, and pursue other academic goals. Workshops in various areas provide skills training to form well-rounded employees. Education empowers and enables choices leading to increased income and to substantial life changes for students, their families and the community.

**Availability of Lifelong Educators**

Notre Dame Health Care Center has always recognized the need to support students psychologically and financially, as they face social and academic challenges. The Sisters in this ministry are a true gift to adult workers as they pursue academic achievement. They are readily available for helping students to overcome barriers experienced in navigating systems such as American higher education, transferring credits from other countries or compiling resumes and materials necessary for visa applications. Tutoring staff strengthens the Sisters’ connections and models intergenerational cooperation, with mutual benefits for students and tutors. NDEBC is a “safe and welcoming” atmosphere for some students who did not succeed in past educational pursuits and now fear the traditional classroom setting.

Sisters of Notre Dame are enthusiastic tutors, continuing “a strong educational tradition, taking a stand with poor people, especially women… and educating for life.” SNDdeN Chapter Calls, 2008

They keep alive their ministry within the workplace at this Notre Dame sponsored facility. Sisters, no longer involved in full-time ministry at this time in their lives, responding to Mary’s words at Cana, “Do whatever he tells you,” are making known God’s goodness by using effectively their gifts, education and experience for another generation. Celebrating our tenth anniversary at NDEBC, our staff, students, tutors and visitors proclaim with the Sisters: “Ah, qu’il est bon, le bon Dieu!”

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**Do whatever he tells you.”**  Mary at Cana (John 2:5)
Emmaus House is a home in Saginaw, Michigan for homeless women in recovery. About 50 women in our 14 homes have a chance for a new and better life. Many women, usually alcohol and drug addicted, do not have families; they are un-churched, and have little hope for their future. Life at Emmaus House is a total change, and for some a 100% turn-around from their former lives of crime and drugs. Three current residents spent 20 years in prison. Now they are doing familiar things, like “ordinary” women, in cooking, cleaning, going to church, school, work, and appointments. They celebrate and re-unite with their children and families. The staff, house managers, multiple volunteers and many nearby agencies strive to provide for their physical, psychological, and spiritual needs.

Our women even dream, plan and hope. Realizing their own needs, they are grateful for all assistance. Most know that they would be dead, back in prison, on the streets or living under bridges, even in sub-zero weather. Since we opened Emmaus House in 1987, about 40 former young residents have died: about 4 at Emmaus House and some others on the streets.

Outreach to the Community. Located on the “poor” side of town, Emmaus House does community outreach. The local community donated help and contributed funds to build Morrow Center four years ago for half the original estimated cost, and this community continues to give generously. The facility has a meeting room for weekly gatherings, a large free thrift shop, a room for counseling and prayer, an office, utility room, and public restroom. Staff also meet in this busy place! We host regular meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA), open to the public. In good weather, the free thrift shop welcomes 70 to 80 customers a day. Some street people come for a change of clothing. In January 2014, our Center was one site for the local community to do a count of all the homeless in Saginaw. On that same day, five more homeless persons came to tell us that they had nowhere to sleep that night. Homelessness is a growing challenge in most U.S. communities, except for people who live on the “other side” of town and may not even know it exists. Personally, I consider myself as benefiting most from Emmaus House. Sr. Shirley Orand, S.S., co-founder (d.’93), used to say, “You know, Sr. Marietta, God had us start this program to save us. We just get to help a few others (more than 1000, as of today) along the way.” This is true! Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, my life at Emmaus House has been a continuous and true encounter with God. I have seen God’s work and recognized God in the vulnerable, addicted, hungry and homeless. I have seen and know forgiveness. At Emmaus, we encounter the holy in so many individuals who bring God’s goodness to one another.

Refuge for Vulnerable Women in Michigan

By Sister Marietta Fritz, SNDdeN, Co-Founder and Director

Emmaus House

Mission Statement:
“We believe that each person is good, a unique expression of God. Our hope is to provide an environment in which each woman can come to realize her own goodness, hence the goodness of God.” Our residents testify to our Emmaus Mission:

“I have struggled with drugs and alcohol since I was 12 years old. I am 27 years old now and this is the longest period of sobriety I have ever had. Just for today!”
Emily B. (House #12)

“I have no doubt... that without the love and support from... Emmaus House, counselors, volunteers and my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I would not have made it through the holidays, drug and alcohol free.”
E. B.

“Emmaus House provided me with the proper resources to “feel human” again... I am genuinely grateful for this amazing program. I can live my life as Jesus intended and pay it forward.”
Laura F. (House #2)

New life in the garden is symbolic of the growth visible in the women at Emmaus House.

e-mail: sr.marietta@emmaushouse-saginaw.com • www.emmaushouse-saginaw.com
Human trafficking: A long history

Today, human beings are still bought and sold like merchandise. With false promises, big promotions in so-called “supermarkets” draw young women on weekends to be transported to male work areas and sold for moments of sexual pleasure, at bargain sales with differing prices for specific beauty criteria. A highly organized, deceptive and almost invisible criminal network uses mostly women and children, and men also, in generating an annual profit of 32 billion US dollars. Traffickers exploit individuals living in poverty who dream of a better life. Traffickers pay airfare, promise work in another country, create a system of debts, confiscate passports limiting an individual’s freedom and tragically sell human beings for sexual pleasure, night after night. When individuals are no longer useful as sex objects, this coercive network sells their body organs.

Action through networks

Women and men religious form networks to share experiences and understandings of trafficking. Often we are surprised by the following experiences of trafficking:

- A mother approached in a shopping mall by a man who offered to buy her daughter;
- A teacher whose adolescent students sent provocative photos to Facebook;
- A young man from the interior brought to the city to do construction for the World Cup and offered by his supervisor a weekend of imported sexual entertainment;
- A young woman whose sister, leaving everything to marry the prince of her dreams, found herself alone in a brothel in Spain.

We realize gradually that trafficking is not far from our life experience. The buying and selling of human persons, especially women and children is a growing reality in our world. Our group sharing builds on what we already know, and challenges us to do something about trafficking. Building support systems through networking is a necessary strategy!
DENOUNCE HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur

BRAZILIAN SISTERS Speak and Act

Sr. Josineide Maria da Silva, SNDdeN is a member of the Group Grito pela Vida in Belém, State of Para. When asked about the existence of trafficking there, Sr. Josi replied, “Most certainly… Belém is a city with many vulnerable communities on the outskirts, in low-income areas where vulnerability is a strong factor making trafficking a reality in our midst.” Sr. Josi added: “We do work at prevention; we go to the public plazas to alert the population about the existence of trafficking in our state. We also inform them of hotlines to denounce cases of trafficking.”

Sr. Maria Tecla da Silva Gaia, SNDdeN contributes also by preparing audio visual presentations to educate youth in Belém about trafficking.

The Human Rights Secretariat coordinates a national program against the sexual exploitation of children. Joseleno Viera dos Santos says: “We’re worried sexual exploitation will increase in the host cities and around them…with the actions for the World Cup…we hope to implement long-lasting programs in the future.”

Sisters of Notre Dame in Brazil are collaborating with others to build networks, nurture existing ones, organize and share our gifts as educators in counteracting the evils of trafficking. In networking with our Sisters in Africa, we learned that a nationally organized campaign and community prayer were significant preparation for the World Cup in South Africa. Religious congregations organized groups to distribute materials in various languages denouncing trafficking for fans arriving at the airport for the World Cup in South Africa. In Brazil, we hear the cries of the most vulnerable in the most unexpected places. We take courage and have confidence that God is with us in these complicated times.

NETWORK DYNAMIC

Using a ball of string, we form a circle. A person holding the ball of string, gives her/his name, shares a concern or experience related to trafficking and throws the ball to another person who repeats a similar sharing. The process continues. Some add reasons for participating. Together, we create a visual network in which we learn each person’s experience with trafficking. Communicating through tugging the string; the group moves forward together by securing, loosening or tightening the string. We learn how the network changes when a person drops her piece. If we do not have enough string, we tie a knot. We experience strength in personal sharing and value in networking together against human trafficking.

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur have gone social...

Visit our Website at www.sndden.org and scroll to the bottom of home page to:

- Read our stories
- Share in our hope
- Rejoice in God's goodness

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Internet Replaces Textbooks
Both villages have pre-schools, primary and secondary schools. The secondary school in Kitenda offers three options for learning: general pedagogy, technical course for business and administration, and social technical courses. In Pelende, the secondary school has three different options: general pedagogy, Latin-philosophy and biology-chemistry courses. With the installation of photovoltaic systems, the people have experienced many benefits with electricity, purified water and communication through the World-wide Web. These systems use a network of solar panels, batteries, a water purifier, a satellite dish and wireless connections. Access to the Internet is broadening the education base for children who do not have the luxury of textbooks.

Young people and under-educated adults have discovered, through technology, significant tools for education research and communications. In these two communities, cyber cafés open a world of learning through new information technologies.

The schools, dispensaries and clinics where the Sisters minister are able to improve the lives of many people.

The Sisters of Notre Dame are living into the future with new energy for bringing God’s goodness to others through education and health care.
1924 Invited by the Jesuit Bishop of the Hiroshima Diocese in 1924, the first six Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur arrived in Japan.

Sisters Francis Helena, Aimee Julie, Marie Claire, Agnes St. John, Marie Lucilla and Marie Raymond.

1930 The first Notre Dame School in Okayama grew quickly; the Sisters constructed a new building in 1930.

1940s During World War II in 1942, the American Sisters were sent to a prison camp with other missionaries. Later, they were sent home in exchange for hostages.

Three Japanese Sisters, Marie Ignatius Aoki, Maria Julie Yasuda, Agatha Julie Hoshijima (left to right) remained in charge of the school. Sisters Anna Sugihara and Therese Nagata stayed in the States during the war.

1950s In 1950, Sisters opened a new high school in the city of Hiroshima, which had been destroyed by an atomic bomb in 1945. More young Japanese women joined as Sisters of Notre Dame. Sisters opened a new house in Tokyo for formation and for new missionaries to learn Japanese. Young lives enriched SNDdeN in Japan.

1960s In 1962, there were 39 SNDdeN in Japan. Almost half of them were Japanese. The Vice-Province in Japan became independent. In 1964, the first high school in Okayama moved to Kurashiki, and Niigata Seishin High School opened.

Ninety Years in Japan 1924 ~ 2014

By Sister Masako Miyake, SNDdeN
2014 Today, Sisters in Japan serve mostly in education at all levels.

Our ministries have adapted to our changing society. We welcome migrants and refugees. We make efforts to build a new faith community together with the local church.

Our Japanese Sisters have never forgotten the support for the Japan Mission, since the early days, from the Sisters and people in Massachusetts.

30

On this 90th anniversary, we gather with open eyes, ears, hands and hearts to step into a new era for Sisters of Notre Dame in Japan.

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur Invite You to Support Our Mission

Your donations support and sustain our worldwide Mission on five continents.

The Congregation of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (SNDdeN) is a charitable institution with 501©3 status in the United States. Contributions support our Mission in a variety of ministries across the world.

How to support our Mission?

- Give Charitable Gift Annuities
- Remember Sisters in your will
- Contribute gifts of stocks
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- Contribute online

For more information, please contact:
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Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur Congregational Mission Office
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Website: www.sndden.org
St. Julie’s characteristic phrase:  
“How good is the good God!”

expressed her special gift of unique trust in God. Today Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur on five continents make known God’s goodness.

**SNDdeN Mission**

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, women with hearts as wide as the world, make known God’s goodness and love of the poor through a Gospel way of life, community and prayer.

Continuing a strong educational tradition, we take our stand with poor people, especially women and children, in the most abandoned places.

Each of us commits her one and only life to work with others to create justice and peace for all.

**AFRICA**
Democratic Republic of Congo
Congo
Brazzaville
Kenya
Nigeria
South Africa
South Sudan
Zimbabwe

**EUROPE**
Belgium
France
Italy
United Kingdom

**LATIN AMERICA**
Brazil
Nicaragua
Peru

**NORTH AMERICA**
Haiti
United States (27 states and the District of Columbia)

**ASIA**
Japan

Sisters Susan Raymo and Barbara Beauchamp, SNDdeN, provide a happy learning environment for pre-school children at Notre Dame Children’s Class in Wenham, MA

Come and join us in making known God’s goodness…

Email: vocations@SNDdeN.org
Website: SNDdeN.org

Visit international Web sites of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur at:
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