



That all may
know the Savior

Spring 2017

SISTERS OF THE DIVINE SAVIOR Salvatorian News

*Walk
with us*



In this issue, we share how our Salvatorian internationality dovetails with UNANIMA International's reason for being. As a member of UNANIMA, we join our hearts and minds with Catholic Sisters from around the world to become one voice for people living in poverty and oppression.

In 2017, we begin a five-year "family celebration" of Salvatorian presence in the U.S. We're calling it *Years on Fire*. Each year through 2021, we'll lift up historical milestones for our congregation, Salvatorian priests and brothers, and our Lay Salvatorian sisters and brothers. Our Q&A with Sr. Carol Thresher on Page 6 gets at the roots of our "family tree."

As if that's not enough to celebrate, six of our sisters will observe Jubilees in 2017, including one Golden Jubilee. Peek at Page 5 to see who you know.

With each new year, we make a fresh start with a clean slate. But some things will not change in 2017, including our gratitude for your trust to walk with us in mission.

Holding you in prayer,

A. Beverly Heitke, S.D.S.

Sister Beverly Heitke, SDS
Provincial Leader

UNANIMA International finds strength in numbers

Who could argue with working together to *achieve a more just world*? Those last six words in the mission statement of UNANIMA International are pretty simple. Living out the mission is much more complex. This multicultural coalition of Catholic Sisters commonly known as simply UNANIMA includes our Sisters of the Divine Savior Congregation.

UNANIMA is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that advocates for women and children, immigrants and refugees, and the welfare of our planet. The NGO focuses particularly on those who are living in poverty or are victims of human trafficking. Much of UNANIMA's work takes place at the United Nations in New York City.

The NGO name begins with UN to represent the United Nations. It also derives from the Latin word *anima*, meaning feminine spirit. With members from 21 women religious congregations around the world, UNANIMA certainly brings feminine spirit to the table. It also brings to mind the word *unanimous*, i.e.,

acting with one heart and mind, and the sisters live up to it.

UNANIMA incorporated in 2002 with seven women religious congregations. The Sisters of the Divine Savior joined in 2009. As a member of UNANIMA, we commit ongoing financial support and provide a board member from our congregation. U.S. Salvatorian Sister Ellen Sinclair has served in that role since our congregation became a member. She currently serves as vice president on the UNANIMA board of directors.

Sr. Ellen says her work with UNANIMA has deepened her understanding of the challenges our international sisters face in their home countries. Systemic change does not happen quickly, but she points to progress, especially in the area of anti-human trafficking.

"When UNANIMA first started its 'Stop the Demand' campaign, that aspect of human trafficking was in the shadows. The campaign helped to open eyes and

continued on page 3—>

"UNANIMA allows us to become a bridge between people we serve and people who have power to create systemic change — hopefully for the good. We can share the stories of people our sisters work with, to put a human face on statistics."

— Sr. Ellen Sinclair, SDS, U.S.





Companions in Mission

Digna M. of Bronx, N.Y. credits her mom and Catholic grade school education for connecting her with God and the saints through prayer. While Digna describes herself as “pretty Catholic,” she doesn’t want to come across as holier-than-thou. She says simply, “My mom instilled in us to pray and give thanks for all our blessings.”

Digna says, “I am blessed with a great mother who has shown me that sharing is truly caring. My mother is my role model. She is strong, independent and altruistic.” Role model indeed. Digna began supporting the Sisters of the Divine Savior after reading about our international missions on a flyer posted at her parish.

“What moved me about your mission was women helping women . . . helping girls with their education and women with vocational training, and facilitating health care.

I am not a wealthy woman,” Digna shares, “but God has blessed me with many riches including, my health, my children’s health, my ability to persevere and overcome obstacles, but most importantly, my blind faith in God’s desire for me to live a full life.”

Digna also holds a deep belief that God listens to our prayers and will guide us if only we let ourselves be led. She ties her belief to the Salvatorian Sisters’ Apostolate of Prayer ministry, saying, “I have a team of devoted friends praying for me and with me for a particular need I’m struggling with.” Digna is forthright about life’s struggles.

“I have basically been a single parent to both of my sons. I have overcome many challenges with the support of my family, strong work ethic and faith. I’ve lived in an urban setting all my life and the city streets can be mean.” Those mean streets led Digna to turn to St. Michael the Archangel, mentioned in her prayer requests to the sisters.

“The intention to help your brother or sister through prayer is very powerful. The sisters’ Apostolate of Prayer ministry means that I have a team of devoted friends praying for me and with me.”

— Digna M., Bronx, N.Y.



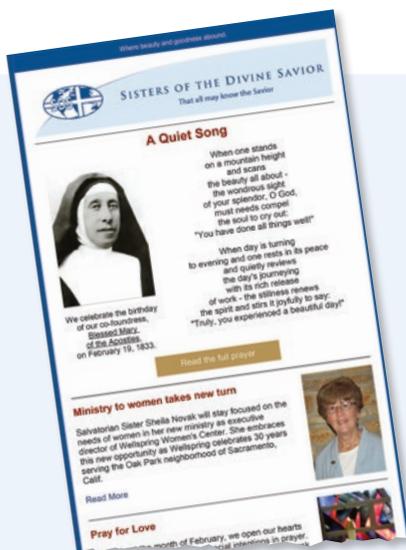
“In a few months I’ll be 50 years old. Every day I grow more confident in knowing that even when we mess up there is something to gain from that experience. I’m learning to let go a little more every day and deposit my worries in God’s hands because He can handle anything.”



Our gift to you

When you ask for prayers for special intentions, we share your request with all of our sisters throughout the U.S. Our Apostolate of Prayer ministry is our sacred gift offered in gratitude for your friendship. We offer prayers in thanksgiving for blessings received or for special needs for you and your loved ones. Share your prayer requests one of four ways:

Online sistersofthedivinesavior.org/requestprayer
Email missionadvancement@salvatoriansisters.org
Mail to Mission Advancement Office,
 4311 N. 100th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53222-1393
Call (414) 466-7414



Easy reading

Every month, our eNews includes a timely prayer, and makes it easy to send your special intentions for our Apostolate of Prayer Ministry. We also feature news tidbits and share photos or videos about our Sisters.

View a sample and sign up for our eNews at sistersofthedivinesavior.org/news

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minds. Today, more people understand how *demand* drives the crime of human trafficking, whether it's to exploit women and children for prostitution or slave labor, or to harvest their organs."

A second meaningful way we support the goals of UNANIMA is by sending Salvatorian Sisters from various countries to serve as interns. Typically, their internship with UNANIMA is for three months.

Sister Maria Deyanira (Deya) Garcia M, SDS from Colombia reflects on her intern experience in fall 2016:

"Before coming to the UN, I was thinking that more or less, we have information through the news about what is happening in the world. But it is superficial knowledge. Now I can see how many people want to be the voice of millions of people worldwide who don't have a voice. Also, I understand better that without cooperation and responsibility from each government and country we cannot have solutions. This opportunity gave me a holistic vision of the world.

"In our Salvatorian Charism, we have the command: 'Go over the world, to all people, all races, all nations and help for all kind of needs which God's love inspires you.' I know I can't go everywhere, but in my mission I can help people be aware of all kinds of needs."

Sister Eloisa Holdiem, SDS, Philippines, calls her UNANIMA internship in 2013 a special gift.



"I also saw myself exploring the world with my encounters at the UN. I have been introduced to different cultures unfamiliar to me, and re-educated on the real importance of geography and history."

— Sr. Eloisa Holdiem, SDS, Philippines

"Years ago, UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld said, 'The UN was not created to take mankind to heaven, but to save humanity from hell.' That is the UN's mission. It is our mission, too. We are all responsible for our future. We are all challenged to empower the powerless, to be their voice, and to be their hope."

— Sr. Amila Rodrigo, SDS, Sri Lanka



escape just such a situation. It hit home for her as she engaged in UNANIMA's work toward a systemic solution to stop the crime of human trafficking.

Salvatorian Sister Amila Rodrigo from Sri Lanka had a similar experience with UNANIMA in 2015. As an intern, she saw important UN bodies in action, including the Security Council, General Assembly, UN Committee sessions and many NGO meetings.

"My experience with UNANIMA International has helped me feel closer to millions of people who struggle to live a dignified life in spite of all the destructive forces that surround them. I am proud that my religious congregation is a member of UNANIMA. I met many dedicated people who selflessly serve the most needy and vulnerable. Participating in the UN Third Committee, I experienced the reality of our world — its brokenness and its hopes.

"'Leaving no one behind.' Those words touched my heart because I know there are many people who have been left behind. As I go back to Sri Lanka, I will live and work with many victims of the last tsunami. They have been given houses, but the houses do not belong to them. They do not have property rights. Uprooted from their lands, unemployed, they live in extreme material, psychological and spiritual poverty. Disintegration and hopelessness is their reality. They feel left behind. I will do all I can to make 'Leaving no one behind' come true for my people."

Counting Your Blessings

You help reveal God's presence

More than ever, we've felt you walking with us as we've shared about our Salvatorian Sisters who embrace the sacred privilege of pastoral care. Your generosity during the 2016 Christmas season will help support their day-to-day costs of living as they offer spiritual care to people who are hurting.

From late November through mid-January, your donations grew by nearly 20 percent compared to that period in 2015. Your average gift amount also increased by 18 percent. But your blessings are not in the numbers. Your blessings are unwavering faith in our mission and trust in us. Your prayers and gifts carry our Salvatorian Sisters who comfort the sick, offer grief support, and pray with prisoners. Thank you for helping them reveal God's presence by opening your hearts once again.



We celebrate x3

Three of our sponsored ministries celebrate milestone anniversaries in 2017. Each institute is separately incorporated and governed by its own board of directors, but we collaborate with their lay leadership to preserve Catholic identity, vitality of our mission, and our Salvatorian core values.



125 Years

Milwaukee's Divine Savior Holy Angels High School (DSHA) traces its roots to 1892 when Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary founded Holy Angels Academy for girls. It grew and thrived into the 20th Century. In 1926 Salvatorian Sisters established Divine Savior as a convent school and in 1948 opened its doors to all girls in the local area. Since both schools affiliated in 1970, DSHA continues the tradition of educating young women of faith, heart and intellect.



100 Years

Sisters of the Divine Savior founded 20-bed St. Savior's Hospital in Portage, Wis. in 1917. It became Divine Savior Hospital & Nursing Home in the 1950s and we welcomed our first lay administrator in 1967. Since 1999 Divine Savior Healthcare has expanded its reach through community health services and education programs. Today, Tivoli at DSH offers assisted living and memory care. State-of-the-art La Vita fitness center promotes health and wellness to the entire community.



25 Years

This year, we celebrate 25 years since Little Sisters of the Poor transferred religious sponsorship of the oldest Catholic nursing home in the Milwaukee Archdiocese to the Salvatorian Sisters. Today, St. Anne's Salvatorian Campus provides long-term skilled care, assisted living, short-term respite care and rehabilitation, and memory care. Through Salvatorian sponsorship, St. Anne's Salvatorian Campus residents and caregivers witness to the motto, *Faith is the Heart of our Home*.

Our Mission As Sisters of the Divine Savior

Make known the goodness and kindness of Jesus, Savior of the world, and foster awareness of a loving God among peoples in whatever place and by whatever means the Spirit of God inspires.

As women of faith striving to be given over to the Father and open to all peoples, we collaborate to promote justice and improve quality of life in our world with a preferential option for the poor.



Supporting the Sisters of the Divine Savior with an online gift just got a bit easier, thanks to PayPal's latest changes. One thing that hasn't changed: you don't need a PayPal account to make a gift using your credit or debit card. And, donating online really is more secure than sending an account number through the mail. Give it a try at

sistersofthedivinesavior.org/donate

Have questions? Call Lori Land at (414) 466-7414.

Celebrating 2017 Jubilarians



Sister Rita Barman, SDS

Sr. Rita Barman (Sr. Rosalima) has felt God leading her, and she quietly shares God's presence with others in her ministries. As a teacher, she loved being creative to instill excitement about learning. Her work behind the scenes for Catholic Charities outreach programs helped to improve fragile lives. Sr. Rita's words capture the essence of her vocation. "I'm just an ordinary person living an ordinary life, and doing ordinary work for an extraordinary person, Jesus."

60 years



Sister Pauline Feiner, SDS

Sr. Pauline Feiner (Sr. Mary Neil) has taught and served as principal in Wisconsin, Maryland and Minnesota schools. She also ministered as director of religious education in several parishes for 20 years. She nurtured her gift of leadership on the SDS Province leadership team, and as a parish director for the Diocese of Green Bay in Wisconsin. Sr. Pauline finds great fulfillment in parish ministry and says, "The parish is the place where our faith is shared, nurtured and celebrated."



Sister Beverly Heitke, SDS

Growing up on a Wisconsin farm, **Sr. Beverly Heitke** (Sr. Mary Clarence) never could have known the places she'd go as a Salvatorian Sister. She earned her nursing degree in Rome, Italy and went back there years later to serve in international leadership. In between, she became a dentist and an assistant dean at Milwaukee's Marquette University Dental School. Her latest call to serve as Provincial Leader in the U.S. has already taken her to Colombia and Guatemala. Her journey continues.



Sister Virginia Honish, SDS

Our Salvatorian core value "to improve quality of life" inspired **Sr. Virginia Honish** (Sr. Francis de Sales) in her ministry as a school administrator and teacher, both in the U.S. and Africa. Likewise, while serving in provincial leadership, sponsorship, and now as coordinator at Salvatorian Sisters Residence. "Who knows what the next chapter of my life will be? I hope to keep improving the quality of life – my own, as well as the lives of others."



Sister Ana Maria Gomez, SDS

Sr. Ana Maria Gomez came to the U.S. from her native Colombia in 1948 to enter the Sisters of the Divine Savior. For many years, she cared for sick and elderly patients as a licensed practical nurse. In her last 25 years of active ministry, she fulfilled her true passion inside Arizona prisons. "I loved that ministry," Sr. Ana Maria says today. "I went to the prisons to find Jesus, and I saw Him in each prisoner's eyes."

65 years



50 years



She held
their hands
and touched
their hearts

Sister Kathleen Dooley entered the Sisters of the Divine Savior the same year the Second Vatican Council was drawing to a close. It was 1964. Her struggles and joys discerning life as a Salvatorian Sister coincided with renewal in the Catholic Church.

In 1967 Sr. Kathleen made first vows. She began an 11-year ministry doing secretarial work for the SDS Province in Milwaukee. It was a natural fit. She had worked as a secretary for 16 years after graduating from high school.

In the late 1970s, Sr. Kathleen answered God's call to pastoral ministry. She spent a year at the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, Calif., and then a year in a clinical pastoral education program at Bon Secours Hospital in Massachusetts. When Sr. Kathleen returned to Milwaukee in 1980, she became the first full-time Christian chaplain at Mount Sinai Medical Center. She cherishes her five years there, where she served patients and their family members from diverse faith traditions.

In 1985, Sr. Kathleen began her 14-year ministry as chaplain at Divine Savior Hospital and Nursing Home in Portage, Wis. She didn't want to leave Mount Sinai, but she knows she made the right move. The opportunity to work in a Salvatorian institution was one reason. Caring for nursing home residents along with hospital patients was another. Most of all, she loved the family feeling in the small town of Portage. She says, "There, life was one piece; patients and staff were also my neighbors."

Sr. Kathleen now lives at Salvatorian Sisters Residence in Milwaukee, which provides assisted living services. She says her pastoral care ministry was about entering into the joys and sorrows of others. "Not so much *doing* something, but being truly present." Just as she did in her ministry, she depends on the presence of God in her life to sustain her day to day.

Read more about our Jubilarians: sistersofthedivinesavior.org/2017jubilee



You can send Jubilee greetings c/o:

Mission Advancement Office, 4311 N. 100th St., Milwaukee, WI 53222 or missionadvancement@salvatoriansisters.org

A gift to support our mission is a meaningful way to honor a jubilarian. You can mail your donation to the address above, or donate online: sistersofthedivinesavior.org/donate

2017 launches five-year celebration of Salvatorian presence in the U.S.



Each year through 2021 we'll lift up Salvatorian historical milestones, starting with the *Passion for Mercy Year* in 2017. It marks the 125th anniversary of arrival by priests and brothers of the Society of the Divine Savior. Our five-year celebration planning team includes one member each from the Society, Sisters of the Divine Savior Congregation, and the Lay Salvatorians. Representation from all three branches of the Salvatorian Family is meaningful. It reflects Founder Father Francis Jordan's vision for religious and lay women and men to evangelize the world as equals. This Q & A session with Salvatorian Sister Carol Thresher shares a bit about that vision. Sr. Carol devotes her ministry to research, writing and program development in the area of Salvatorian ongoing formation and history, since completing two terms as leader of the North American Province in 2015.

Q Was Fr. Jordan's vision for religious and lay women and men to evangelize the world as equals a radical concept in 19th Century Europe?

A Sr. Carol: I'm sure Father Jordan never thought of himself as *radical* so I hesitate to use that word. What I do see is his profound obedience to an inner call: to form an apostolic group within the Church that was on fire with desire to make God known throughout the world. Now, Jordan had no clear sense of how to structure such a group. He simply wanted to bring together anyone willing to commit to being a full-time apostle — no matter status, nationality, gender or any other difference. People often viewed his early proposals as naïve, however, we do see the Holy Spirit at work in Fr. Jordan and others at this time in history. There was a growing awareness that everyone — including lay people — is called to holiness and evangelization. But it would be many years later before the Church would clearly express this insight in documents of the Second Vatican Council.

Q If Fr. Jordan's ideas were shunned by church hierarchy of his day, how did our present-day Salvatorian Family come about?

A At first, many people he met, including Pope Leo XIII encouraged Fr. Jordan's apostolic enthusiasm. However, our Founder's first attempts to sketch out a simple structure for his vision soon ran into difficulty. His loose and rather naïve approach didn't fit into structures already in place in the official Church. Those who reviewed his promotional pamphlets were unable to imagine a Church group configured outside traditional structures. Because Fr. Jordan deeply desired official Church approval, he shifted his energies to founding two more traditional communities of women and men religious early in 1883.

Now fast forward to the mid-1960s. Vatican Council II urged all vowed religious to return to the original spirit of their founders and adapt to the changing times. Salvatorians took this call for renewal seriously. We began an earnest study of the earliest documents that had been gathering dust in the archives of our men's and women's religious communities. As Fr. Jordan's original vision emerged, it laid the foundation for the Salvatorian Family collaboration we have today.

Q How are Lay Salvatorians different from what many religious orders call associates?

A Our post-Vatican II research into early Salvatorian documents clearly revealed that lay apostles were as central to Fr. Jordan's original vision as vowed religious. As a result, the unique vocation of the Lay Salvatorian began to emerge. Explanations and rules written by or under Fr. Jordan's guidance between 1880-1883 strongly echoed the Vatican Council's universal call to holiness. Fueled by this insight, lay people drawn to the Salvatorian spirituality worked to articulate their place in a 21st Century understanding of what is now known as the Salvatorian Family.

And, the early documents were clear: Lay Salvatorians are not simply "associated" with the women and men religious Salvatorian congregations. Today, the Lay Salvatorian vocation is understood as a unique call to be lived in equality and complementarity within the Salvatorian Family.

Q How will the Salvatorian Family collaborate in the five-year celebration?

A Leaders from all three branches appointed our three-person committee to oversee plans for the *Years on Fire* celebration. Already, we've produced a commemorative perpetual calendar with inspiring quotes from our early documents, and established themes for each of the next four years that dovetail with *2017 Passion for Mercy Year*:

2018 *Passion for Remembering*
(100th anniversary of Father Jordan's death)

2019 *Passion for Collaboration*
(planning for our future as a family)

2020 *Passion for Mission*
(125th Anniversary of Salvatorian Sisters arriving in the U.S.)

2021 *Passion for Ministry*
(50th Anniversary of the Lay Salvatorians in the U.S.)

Other plans include retreats to enhance Salvatorians' understanding of Fr. Jordan's *Spiritual Diary*, and updating materials to promote awareness about the life of Fr. Jordan among our sponsored ministries and other interested groups.



Watch for more about *Years on Fire* in future issues of the *Salvatorian News*, in our monthly eNews, and on our website at sistersofthedivinesavior.org

