



ND Associate Newsletter

Chardon Province

November 2017 - Volume 11, Issue 1



“Remember, Celebrate and Believe!”

During the weekend of October 20-22, 2017, almost 200 Sisters and Associates from across the country convened in Chardon to celebrate a time of renewal, learning and inspiration at the second Associate National Gathering.

By Chardon Associate Lorna Greicius

What an amazing weekend we experienced! So many blessings! As we welcomed our sister and brother Associates and so many of our beloved Sisters, we certainly did ***“Remember, Celebrate and Believe!”***

Commencing with Sister John Paul’s intuitive explanation of our theme on Friday evening until finally renewing our covenant on Sunday, the hours we spent together unified us, bonded us, and inspired us as we continue on our journey.

Personally, I was so excited to see old friends, some of whom I hadn’t seen since our last Gathering, 11 years ago. I also, as did all of the attendees, make new friends as we shared thoughts and dreams for our Associate relationship. This newsletter is filled with many of our experiences. Through pictures, summaries, quotes, and interviews we hope to document some of the highlights.

We were inspired by Assistant General Sister Mary Ann Culpert and by the wonderful keynote addresses by Superior General Sister Kristin Battles. Sister Sally Huston, on Saturday afternoon, gave a joy-filled presentation concerning the future of SND*USA. And...we are a part of that

Mass in the chapel was wonderful, as it always is, but it was made special with so many Associate touches. Celebrant was Cleveland Bishop Emeritus Roger Gries, OSB.



Bishop Roger Gries blesses the gifts offered during the liturgy by representatives of three provinces: (L) Kathy Kramer, Covington; (Center) Rita Konecki, Toledo; (R) Rosemary Picanso, Florida

Saturday night was filled with laughter as each Province provided a bit of entertainment. Covington stole the show with their rendition of Sister Act, complete with “nun habits” and a visit from Pope Francis!

Afterwards Associates sat around a fire pit outside and enjoyed the conversation that ensued.

A wonderful treat was waiting for us on Sunday! Although I had been schooled numerous times on Sister Aloysia, I had never experienced the captivating explanation of her life, complete with actual quotes delivered by several of our Sisters, as presented by Sister M. Teresita Richards, Toledo Province. We all came away with a new vision, not only of Sister Aloysia’s life, but also what we might accomplish as we strive to live out the SND Charism.

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“Remember, Celebrate, Believe”

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Sunday morning, our Covenant Renewal Blessing was so faith-filled and heart-felt. We watched sunflowers grow on the pillars in our gathering space, from seed, to plant, to flower, just as God intended.

There is so much more I could express; the blessings of all of us together, the beauty of the weather, the work of so many hands to make this a reality. We have much to be grateful for ... but especially for the opportunity to gather and to those who made it all happen. Thank you to these people, most importantly our steering committee: Tina, Suzanne, Ingrid, Arnie, Chris and Dorothy, and of course, our Directors. *God is good ... All the time. All the time ... God is good.*



Two members of the Steering Committee: (L) Arnie Lara, California; and (R) Chris Pinzon, Florida; with Joe Hamamoto, California, in the middle



Chardon Associates and companion (L to R) Mary Postlethwait, Sister Dorothy Luli, Carolyn Sheldon

Editor’s Note: on pages 5-6 of this newsletter is the text of an interview with Sister M. Kristin conducted by Chardon Associate Claudette Matero.

Sister Mary Kristin gives keynote addresses highlighting SND spirituality, mission and structure

By Chardon Associate
JoAnn Welch



Sister M. Kristin

Sister Mary Kristin Battles, SND, Superior General, came from Rome to present two informative keynote talks on SND spirituality and the SND General Chapter and Structure. In her first message, Sister M. Kristin emphasized the importance of our shared charism and how to live it in more relational ways.

We quote from this talk: *Three powerful ways we can incarnate God’s goodness are: to promote the flourishing of life, to mentor and coach, and to express appreciation and gratitude. Four relevant ways we can incarnate the love of our provident God are by: caring for Creation, making family a priority, getting involved in our faith, connecting with neighbors.*

In her second talk, Sister M. Kristin explained the focus and structure of the General Chapter. Every six years the SND international congregation gathers a representative body of sisters from around the world to vote for new international leadership of the Congregation and to plan for renewal.

A Congregation-wide plan is developed by which the provinces develop their six year action plans. The Vision Statement states: Trusting in God who makes all things new, we commit ourselves to: **live** incarnational spirituality; **grow** in life-giving relationships; **be** one in diversity. To implement the Vision Statement, a Chapter Document is written.

The 2016 General Chapter chose to focus their mission on a Spirituality which is Trinitarian, Incarnational and Relational. Associates are asked to not only live out the SND charism but to take up the challenge of the Chapter Vision Statement and these three themes. Living a Trinitarian Spirituality essentially means that our personality is our ministry. It is not so much what we do as how we do it. Living the Notre Dame spirit means getting up each day filled with meaning and purpose.

Chardon Province Co-Director “unpacks the theme” of National Gathering



(L to R) Co-Directors Sister M. John Paul Bobak, Chardon, Tina Bernheimer (also a member of Steering Committee), Covington, and Sister Regina Davala, Chardon

**By Chardon Province Co-Director
Sister M. John Paul Bobak**

We remember!

It is much more than just a recall, a recollection. There is a respect, a reverence.....

--- After all, we stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us, we wouldn't be here without them

--- And we are the shoulders on which those who follow us will stand...

--- And we pray: May those who come behind us find us faithful!

We celebrate!

It is the joyful, free, unrestrained “**Still**” not to say “still,” in-spite-of Your death we celebrate, but the “still” that means “Yet,” the continuing---

For You are with us **HERE**

--- in this room

--- in each heart

--- in our 21st century world

You are with us **NOW**

--- or as Joyce Rupp says: “Grace has no expiration date!”

We Believe!

--not only in content, dogma, tenets and doctrines.

*We Believe that we must live in such a way that at the end we will see You when You come in Your Glory, Lord!

However, there are steps to take before then.

We Believe that on this earth

--- we are CALLED to act with Justice, not a punitive justice because that stops short of true justice. It is incomplete. Not enough. We must live restorative justice, both/and, forgiveness and reconciliation.

We Believe

--- we are called to love TENDERLY

--- we can listen to the Trappist monk, Thomas Merton: “God is Mercy within Mercy within Mercy”



Friday prayer ritual

This weekend, may the Spirit of the Living God melt us, mold us, fill us, use us!



*Covington Co-Director
Sister Luann Bender*



California Associates Robyn Castillo and Prudiel Labatique



California Associate Jennifer Coito (L) and Sister Luellen Boeglin arrive in Cleveland eager for gathering to begin



Toledo member of the Steering Committee Dorothy Wodrich with a sunflower halo

*SND*USA 2020 Update:
Embracing a Shared Future*

By Chardon Associate Carole Iseli



*Sister Sally Huston by
the gathering banner*

Sister Sally Huston, SND, provided an informative — and humor-filled — presentation to the National Gathering on the Congregation’s history. She identified current trends and gave insights into what the future may look like for both sisters and associates.

We were reminded of the providential growth of the Sisters of Notre Dame from their arrival in the US on July 4, 1874, forming one province. Eventually they expanded to four provinces, and sent sisters to faraway lands — India, Papua New Guinea, Uganda — to share their experience of God’s goodness and provident care. Foundress Sister Maria Aloysia certainly saw her missionary dreams fulfilled in her daughters.

Just as Sister Maria Aloysia was always looking ahead to identify and meet the needs of her day, so the sisters follow her lead in our world today. As demographics and society have changed, so have the fields in which the sisters and associates are being asked to minister. Out of this discernment came the realization among the US sisters that consolidating each province’s gifts and resources into one province was the way to go. Thus, a new united SND*USA province is the goal by 2020.

What does all this mean for associates? Sister Sally invited us to *Embrace a Shared Future* with the sisters by joining them in prayer, celebration, collaboration, and in living out the 2016 General Chapter vision statement.

*Trusting in God who makes all things new,
we commit ourselves to:*

*live incarnational spirituality
grow in life-giving relationships
be one in diversity*

“Other Voices”

“I never believed this meeting would be so awesome!”

“You can tell this was many days and months in the planning.”

“It is so good to meet Sisters and Associates from the other provinces.”

“It is so beautiful here and I am so thrilled to see Sister Kristin Battles and hear her presentations.”

“Everyone is so friendly!”

“This is a real treasure! This weekend is something I shall always remember.”

“I’m seeing so many old friends.”

“I never knew what was meant by ‘General Chapter’ until I heard it explained by Sister M. Kristin.”

“What perfect weather God gave us for this perfect gathering.”

“This is so well-organized; I am impressed.”

“The Steering Committee did such a good job and they are all such great people.”

“The Sisters’ talks were so informative. The slide presentations added a lot to the talks.”

“This is the best Associate meeting I have ever attended.”



*Florida Associates
Madeline Traore (L) and
Jennifer Hackett*



*Toledo Associate Elizabeth Adjayen (by way
of Nigeria!) and Chardon’s Carole Iseli*

Sister M. Kristin takes time out of a busy schedule to answer interview questions about her work and her relationship with the Associates

By Chardon Associate Claudette Matero

What is the role of the superior general?

The role of the superior general is to promote unity in the congregation.

Articles 121 and 122 of the Constitutions of the Sisters of Notre Dame explain the role of the superior general in detail. Article 121 states the following:

The authority of the superior general extends to all sisters, provinces and delegations and works of the congregation. She governs the congregation in an ordinary manner according to Church law and the Constitutions. She carries out the legal and canonical duties pertaining to her office and in the spirit of collaboration delegates her authority according to need. She takes care: that the conditions for a religious life according to the evangelical counsels are created and sustained; that the spirit of love and unity in the congregation remains vibrant; that the apostolic mission of our congregation is pursued and furthered in keeping with our charism, the requirements of the Church and the needs of the times.

Article 122 continues with further explanation:

The superior general promotes communion with the sisters through correspondence, visitation, occasional visits and other suitable ways, thus acquiring the information necessary for making her decisions with regard to the religious, social and cultural conditions in the provinces and delegations. Every six years the superior general personally, or through a visitor appointed by her, makes the official visitation. This delegated visitor ordinarily is an assistant general.

The superior general convenes meetings of various kinds and facilitates dialogue, discusses matters of common concern and strengthens the bond between the general administration and individual provinces and delegations. She keeps the members well informed about the situation in the entire congregation.



A field of sunflowers very near Cuvilly, Picardy, France – St. Julie Billiart's birthplace

What is the greatest grace of holding the position of superior general?

The greatest grace is getting to know the sisters and being able to travel to the different provinces, delegations and missions of the congregation and seeing the wonderful work the sisters are doing worldwide. We have many holy, hard-working women who are doing amazing things to build the reign of God.

What is the greatest challenge?

The greatest challenge is all the travel. Today there are many inconveniences with long distance travel. Sometimes moving from place to place and sleeping in many different beds is challenging. The weather in some parts of the world is also very challenging.

How do you see the role of Associates and Association currently?

I see the role of Associates to be extending the charism into the home, the workplace and many other venues where the sisters cannot bring it. Associates are partners with the sisters. We encourage and support one another in living out our baptismal commitment.

How do you see it going forward?

I see it growing as a movement in ever more creative ways. The Holy Spirit will inspire the

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Interview questions

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Associates to evolve into a stronger more focused movement as Associates themselves take on more leadership.

What do you see as the greatest grace of having Associates of the Sisters of Notre Dame?

I think the greatest grace is that we become companions on the journey. We can support one another on our faith journey, we can witness to Gospel community, and we can radiate the charism in our world in ever more expansive ways. Associates have been a great blessing to the congregation.

What do you see as the greatest challenge?

It is hard to name any one great challenge. In general I would say any challenge is an opportunity to see things in a new way and to be creative. I have great hope for the whole Associate movement. Wonderful leadership was demonstrated at our national gathering and so I have every confidence that the Associate movement will just keep growing and getting better and better. We will all be surprised to see what the Spirit does in the years to come!

What has been your personal experience of Associates/Association?

My experience as a member of the California Province is that the Associates have brought new life to the province. They are very involved with us on any number of projects and over the years they have added much richness to our province book studies. They are a tremendous help at the time of Jubilee and our annual "Nun Run." I believe that in each of the provinces their love, support and friendship are a true blessing.

Any particular message for us?

Continue to listen to the Holy Spirit and let God's grace work through you so in your daily life you incarnate the love of our good and provident God. Thank you for partnering with us. We love you and are grateful for your love and support.

In Memoriam

We mourn the recent passing of two beloved Associates. May they experience the joy of being in the eternal presence of our good and provident God.

Florida Associate Rose Ann Terry entered eternal life on October 14. She was an active member of Resurrection Church in Winter Garden. Rose Ann made her first covenant in 2013. At the time, she wrote, "I love to help people. God has always been my strength. I don't know how else I would live. I depend on God's love and God's mighty strength." That strength was embodied in her associate friends when Rose Ann was no longer able to leave her home - so they brought faith sharing to her.

Chardon Associate Margaret "Marge" Neforos entered eternal life on October 20. She was an active member of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Cleveland. Marge made her first covenant in 2010 and was a faithful member of the Northwest faith sharing group. At the time of her covenant, Marge wrote, "I am choosing the associate relationship with the Sisters of Notre Dame because I want to give as I have received; to love as I've been loved. I want to embody and convey the charism of trust in God's tender and unfailing goodness."



Photo credits: Sister Lisa Megaffin, SND, Ingrid Kanics, Gail Nanowsky

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