



the *Associate*

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A WORD FROM NACAR *Board of Directors*

"Lent is the time of quiet to hear the call of God to service"

Father James Martin, Society of Jesus

Jesuit Father James Martin described the life of Jesus as "very busy with preaching, healing and meeting huge crowds and disorganized mobs." As a result, Jesus would withdraw in prayer since he needed "one-on-one time with the Father." Martin continued the description that even for Jesus, his prayer is what connected him to God. Therefore, as we prepare for this Lenten season, Martin urges us to see that "Lent is the time of quiet to hear the call of God to service."

NACAR members as associate directors, leadership team members, committee chairs and otherwise active are very busy people, similar to Jesus. We may not interact with 'disorganized mobs' but we get overwhelmed with emails, Zoom calls, deadlines and the daily personal routines of our lives. Thus, it is essential that our times of prayer be that time of quiet, to hear the call of God to each of us.

As we read the news items and reflections in this issue of *The Associate*, we are informed of the many daily social actions, prayer and dialog opportunities and celebrations that reflect our choices to hear the call of God to service. Built on the foundation of our congregational charisms, each associate and religious has the heritage to guide us, as well as the current presence of people of faith. However, the challenges of crowded days, diminishing numbers, insufficient funds and ever-present pressing social issues surround us. Sometimes we need time during Lent and throughout the year to withdraw and spend one-on-one time to hear God's call yet again.

Our hope is that NACAR through this online publication, Creative Conversations via Zoom, the leadership manual, VLCFF in collaboration with the University of Dayton, and our social media efforts on the website and Facebook provide information and communication tools to assist us in answering God's call.



Associate Conni Dubick, Dominican Sisters of Peace, NACAR board member

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MISSION

The North American Conference of Associates and Religious (NACAR) is a membership organization that acts as a catalyst to serve, empower and promote the associate-religious relationship.

VISION STATEMENT

A vibrant, viable organization that collaborates with regional partners to promote association in all its forms.

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Abide in the Word

Your Word—
Jesus, the Christ
dwells in me...
an awesome thought!

Be...dwell...abide
in the deep loving presence
of my God
who whispers

I am absorbed
into Holy Mystery,
where soul lingering
keeps vigil.

You are my temple,
my treasure,
my word to others.
Didn't you know?

Suddenly,
there are no more important words
for me to say—but
to simply be...

Sister Barbara McMullen, Sisters of Divine Providence
Written at retreat, June 10, 2016

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The next issue of *The Associate* in November 2019 will have a special section focused on the ways that associates and religious name and claim the presence of associates with the congregation. Does your associate name provide a lasting identity? Or, does it need updating to meet contemporary understanding of your congregation and who associates are? Do we need new names for a new reality?

Please tell us your response to:

"What's in a name?" by e-mailing info@nacar.org

ASSOCIATE
OBLATE
AFFILIATE
COJOURNER
COMPANION

A RARE OPPORTUNITY

Touching Lives in Storm Lake

Associate Geneva Brungardt, Dominican Sisters of Peace

Living in rural Storm Lake, Iowa, has taught me more about diversity and respect for differences than any book could ever do. Here is a glance at the incredibly unique town in which I live and work.



The parish in Storm Lake celebrates many diverse cultures with events and celebrations.

Storm Lake has a population of around 10,000, with cultural diversity that is unparalleled in any city of this size in the United States. Our chief of police travels to cities across the country to talk about what we have going here, why it works, and how it came to be a community with people from 35 countries, with a school system that has students speaking 65 different languages. If that weren't enough, some of the cultures, such as the Micronesians, have as many as 57 different dialects, which adds to the multilingual environment that is common in our town. Statistics show that approximately 80 percent of the population are citizens.

There are not pockets of any particular nationality in any one area of town. On my street we have Hispanics, Anglos, Vietnamese, Laotian, many Micronesians, and, next door to me, there are Cubans in one-half of the duplex we own, and a family from Ethiopia in the other half. Both are excellent neighbors. Here is a heartwarming story about them.

On the Fourth of July I went out on my front deck and saw these two families, sitting out by the road, in the drizzling rain, to cheer on the runners that were doing a Ride Run Race around the lake. They had two small American flags stuck into flowerpots sitting on the lawn on either side of their chairs. Their patriotism and thankfulness for being in a country in which they are new residents was obvious. Later that day, they came to my door with a plate of food and then went to other neighbors with the same gracious gesture.

We have events in the park during the summer where all the different nationalities have booths to sell their food and lots of ethnic music is played. Our parish has three multilingual mass celebrations each year, the Easter vigil, midnight mass and a Savor St. Mary's festival on August 15. We have participation



Events in the park during the summer include ethnic music and many different kinds of food as a celebration of diversity.

A RARE OPPORTUNITY ... CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

by the Sudanese, Laotians, Vietnamese, Micronesians, Hispanics and our adult English choir, as we have been assigned the task of anchoring it and pulling it all together “seamlessly,” of course! And then there’s our pastor’s German heritage; so there’s always some German thrown into the mix!



Diversity is a part of life in Storm Lake, Iowa, where the author tells how residents supports and celebrate one another.

Since I work in my family’s residential rental business, I have opportunity to communicate with so many different people, many new to our town. We often use phone translation apps and interpreters to communicate, but anyone who actually speaks enough English to carry on a conversation gets a plethora of questions from me. I ask them about how they came to the United States and then to Iowa. I love to hear the incredible tales of their journey that led them to this place. It never takes much prodding; they are always eager

to tell their story. I am humbled, saddened, sometimes angered and appalled, and overwhelmed with the determination and strength they have to survive some of the circumstances that they have endured. I am left forever grateful for the blessings I have that often seem commonplace or normal.

When a new tenant moves in and their total list of belongings is one change of clothes in a duffel bag, it puts the reality of their life into perspective. The most powerful story yet was from a young man who had no family; he had not made many friends, only a few work acquaintances, and walked into his one-room apartment and started to chant (in his very broken English), “My house, my house, you give me house, my house, good house, I love my house.” As he danced around the living room in soulful delight, I stood spellbound, and then he offered me the biggest hug and fell to his knees, saying, “Thank you lady, thank you.”

I love my town and the job I do. If it were just a job, I might not like it at all, but I truly believe my work is a ministry, my personal opportunity to be the hands and feet of Christ to the people for whom I am given to care. I am blessed beyond measure to stumble through each encounter and just do my best and practice patience and love when I face a difficult situation. I know that God has given me a rare opportunity to touch many lives. My prayer is that I honor the sacredness of each soul and be mindful of the respect and dignity of every person regardless of his/her income, color, language, shortcomings, education, cultural background or any of the other things that make us all individuals with the same desires and needs shared by us all.



ADAPTED FROM MARY OLIVER'S *Everyone Forgets*

National Catholic Reporter column originally published on June 28, 2018.

Written and revised by Associate Mark Piper, director of association, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Midwest West Community

It was a summer day when I realized there's nothing recorded of Jesus between the ages of 12 and 30. We go straight from childhood innocence to developed adult. No awkward and acne-filled teenage years with teenage angst and impulses; no month-long early teenage romances of hand-holding and note-writing passion.

I heard one of the best-worst jokes when I was around 14, and I found the joke carried a twinge of truth that resonated more than the punch line. It went something like this: Kids, do not complain about getting grounded. Jesus was 12 when he got lost in the temple; after Mary and Joseph found him we don't hear anything until he's 30. Think about it: Jesus was lost and caught praying and got grounded by the Mother of Mercy for 18 years. So don't complain about getting grounded for the weekend.

I kept thinking about that groaner of a joke for the remainder of the day. I thought about all those CCD classes and how the nuns presented the Bible as a guide for life, containing all the answers. But how could it be a guide for me, a teenager, when there's literally nothing mentioned about the life and trials of the protagonist in his teenage years? As of this June, I've lived every year from 12 to 30, those missing years of Jesus' life.

Sometime between that joke about Jesus being grounded and realizing the Bible was oddly silent on his young adult development, I read Mary Oliver's poem "The Summer Day," and then I heard it again and again. I heard it ad nauseam: high school graduation, college graduation, throughout my year of service with a Catholic Volunteer Network organization (I chose Amate House – my wife chose Mercy Volunteer Corps), retreat opportunities and facilitated gatherings. You cannot escape that blessed poem any more than you can escape the Gospels when you're an engaged young Catholic.

In point of fact, no one can escape its final 14 words. The preceding 85 percent of the poem seems to get forgotten in most re-tellings. What people repeat is this big question: What is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?

However, I don't think that does justice to the whole poem, which begins:

Who made the world?

Who made the swan, and the black bear?

Who made the grasshopper?

The poem continues with a profound reflection on the grasshopper, which you can read in its entirety here.

I'm not sure if associates are stuck living with the angst of transitioning from newness after 30-plus years, or if we've matured to full-fledged existential dread as we assume leadership, as our numbers steady and the vowed

EVERYONE FORGETS ... CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

presence that brought us into being diminishes. “What is it I plan to do with my one wild and precious life?” should turn into an examen with the modified questions for all associates:

What have I done with my covenant? What have I done with the charism, mission, and ministries of the congregation? What have I done that has had purpose, which has helped others or created value (material or immaterial), or brought, discovered or created joy and beauty in light of my covenant? What have I done with the time and wisdom that mentors, guides, friends and family have provided me with thus far? What have I done with my faith? Have I heard the word and kept it? How integral are the beatitudes in my life?

Not unlike the fully-human Christ going from 12 to 30 in the Bible, we know that neither he nor we are on auto pilot for those 18 years; we’re creating and re-creating what we want for our lives in that curious and quixotic phase of life.

Religion dies in silence. Before some folks come at me with pitchforks, I’m not saying there isn’t sacred silence, or that one’s quiet faith is a spiritual death sentence. It’s not. You can pray, as Jesus instructed, in silence, but if you don’t converse about your faith it dies. I think St. Mary’s Press has elucidated that point quite well in the book *Going, Going, Gone: The Dynamics of Disaffiliation in Young Catholics*. The average age that someone reports leaving the Catholic faith is now 13 years old. Many folks who are now ex-Catholics or non-practicing Catholics report that when they left the church none of their close friends were Catholic or religion wasn’t important to them. You talk with friends. If faith — your faith — is not shared by your friends, you’re not going to talk about it and it will wither like

summer grass in a field beset by days of unyielding heat without rain.

Therefore, there’s a strange irony about the silence of Christ’s life between 12 and 30. After all, at 30 Jesus begins his public ministry as an itinerant rabbi or preacher. His faith, spirituality and the development of his Jewish religious beliefs were clearly a part of those silent years. For those of us young adults still in the pews, those years were full of faith development, formation and encounter.

Unfortunately, for many — perhaps most —

Catholics my age, those years were not spent that way and now their faith has fallen silent.

Now at 30, having recently passed through those silent years, I think of Mary Oliver on these summer days. I think often of the enormity of her first question, “Who made the world?” and the last, “What am I doing with my life?” but I am trying now to think

about the littleness in between, the blades of grass in a field, a grasshopper and her mandible, wings and eyes. Those enormous and complicated eyes of the grasshopper, they’re about the size of a mustard seed, of which Jesus told a short parable. And I try to be idle and blessed because as Mary Oliver asked and Jesus lived, everything dies at last and too soon. I pray that perhaps I can pay attention, fall down into the grass and be idle enough to hear from the grasshopper what Elijah heard at the entrance of the cave, a light silent sound — God.

Mary Oliver, R.I.P.
(September 10, 1935, to January 17, 2019)





Virtual Learning Community For Faith Formation

VLCFF COURSES

What I Learned

Associate Carla Rush, Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati,
NACAR board member

As an associate for the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, I am always looking for ways to connect spiritually with other people and to deepen my connection with God. When I learned about VLCFF (Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation) from NACAR, I was intrigued to find out more about it. VLCFF is an internet distance-learning program to support catechist and adult faith formation in the church. VLCFF began at the University of Dayton and the program was test piloted in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. The mission of VLCFF is to mobilize the resources of the University of Dayton for partnerships with the church that create and implement innovative pastoral initiatives designed to meet the needs of the church and to articulate faith within the context of contemporary culture.

After looking over the many class offerings, I decided to register for introduction into prayer as my first course. The course blended traditional class readings, articles, and typed questions and answers with online discussion forums and reflections. Over the course of five weeks, we studied different forms of prayer (vocal, meditative and contemplative), examined the relationship between personal and communal liturgical prayer, looked to saints as models of prayer, developed an appreciation of prayer as a response to God's love, and explored common reasons for difficulty in prayer and aids in overcoming obstacles in prayer.

I found the readings and articles to be beneficial to my prayer life but I was most struck by the thoughtful, deep and reflective responses from my classmates. We were required to post in the discussion forums each week and I was humbled by the honest and beautiful reflections of each person. Also, reading how they connect to God each day and overcome prayer obstacles was a wonderful learning experience for me. I am grateful for each person who opened their heart and prayer life with our class so we could all grow and learn. Our instructor emailed us prayer quotes every morning to aid us in our reflections and I saved every quote to reflect on in years to come. The entire class was a beautiful and moving experience that will continue to help me grow and deepen my prayer life.

VLCFF checked many boxes for me to fit in my life: it was flexible, easy to access in my home and had a variety of course options and interests to grow spiritually. I highly recommend looking into the VLCFF course offerings and to take advantage of the discounted classes through the partnership of VLCFF and NACAR. I hope all of the NACAR members take this opportunity to grow in our spirituality and knowledge!

CREATIVE CONVERSATIONS

Enhance Director-to-Director Dialogue

Associate Nancy Davis, Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate

Chanin Wilson, director of associates for the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, is new to the job and finds the newest NACAR member benefit, Creative Conversations, to be a big boost. “There is no training program for this ministry,” she notes, “so a good way to learn is talking to others and getting a lot of best practices.”

And that is exactly what we aimed to do,” adds Amy Kulesa, coordinator of NACAR’s member service committee and one of the initiators of Creative Conversations. “We designed this new benefit for associate leadership so Directors could network with each other on topics of interest,” while supporting NACAR’s mission to “serve, empower and promote associate-religious relationships.” She adds that many directors don’t benefit from a local, on-going support group of peers, and regional groups, though very helpful, aren’t present in every part of North America. “We are targeting to have monthly events with meaningful topics which offer on-going support. We chose topics that came out of the CARA study.”

Interaction and idea sharing with other directors, is high on Carrie Hansen’s list as director of associates for the Presentation Sisters of Aberdeen. “It is priceless to connect with others,” she says, “knowing I am not alone dealing with such issues as supporting our aging congregation and helping associates stay connected who live at a distance.”

Carrie notes that “these conversations are valuable that if I got nothing else from NACAR, attending Creative Conversations is enough to continue membership.” She adds, “It feels good when a participant describes something that we also do and are proud of. And it’s such a gift when others offer ideas we haven’t thought about. For example, we have retreats and special gatherings for associates each year, but we hadn’t an intentional plan in place for ongoing formation. I had my team view that conversation and we are in the middle of rethinking how to enhance our gatherings.”

Anne Carey, director of associates for the School Sisters of Notre Dame, sums up the impact Creative Conversations are having on her. “They minimize the isolation you can sometimes feel. We are able to share our successes and frustrations, while learning from others and feeling supported. Zoom is so easy to use and an hour a month is so worth my time.”

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Participants receive a Zoom link when registering for a session. This link is used to log into the conversation, which begins with a brief presentation on the month’s topic by a NACAR member services committee member. Participants are then assigned to small breakout rooms in Zoom to discuss questions and advance the topic. When breakout groups are completed, all participants return to the larger group and reports are given. In total, the sessions are one hour and are recorded and posted, including the reports, on the website for viewing again for any NACAR member.



To sign up for a session, directors receive an e-blast from Mary Jo Mersmann. Once launched, the sessions are posted on NACAR website in the resources section, where they are accessible for any NACAR member.

Begun in 2018, Creative Conversations have had nine sessions. Topics have included financial sustainability, using social media, attracting diversity to the associate relationship, organizational leadership and the future of the associate relationship.



MOVIE REVIEW

Won't You Be My Neighbor

Associate Nancy Davis, Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate

“It’s a beautiful day in this neighborhood. It’s a beautiful day for a neighbor. Won’t you be mine? Won’t you be mine?”

Words that bring back a smile in our heart and soul.

We remember the kind and gentle Mr. Rogers whether we were a youngster ourselves back in 1967 when his television show, *Mr. Roger’s Neighborhood*, started, or we were around children who talked about him.

Fred Rogers is portrayed in this 94-minute documentary for his revolutionary way of approaching children. He addressed every sensitive issue a child could face, yet didn’t use cruel and harsh physical activities common in other children’s shows (pie in the face, supermen, guns, swords and other body-to-body attacks).

He used words, giving messages such as: you made this a special day just for being you; what is essential in life is invisible to the eye; and I like you as you.

He demonstrated universality of the human spirit. When African Americans were being kicked out of swimming pools throughout the country, he set up a toddler’s pool in his television show’s backyard and invited the black mailman to join him in resting his weary feet in the pool.

Roger weighed 143 pounds most of his entire life, and chose this number to represent how he approached others: the number one represents the letter I, the number four represents the four letter word love, and three represents the three letter word you - *I love you*.

This film touches on conflict Rogers felt from his adversaries – those who blamed him for encouraging children to see themselves as “special” when not having done anything to “earn it.”

This film takes one on a spiritual journey being moved by his genuineness and transparent authenticity of love toward others: “just the way you are.” A truly Christian message, needed as much today as yesteryear!



Above, panelists discuss immigration during a September lecture at Ohio Dominican University.

UNIVERSITY & CONGREGATION JOIN *to Enliven Justice*

Associate Thomas Winters, Dominican Sisters of Peace

In a lovely glen, on the banks of Alum Creek in Columbus, Ohio, and in the shadow of the motherhouse of the founding congregation of the Dominican Sisters of Peace, Ohio Dominican University kicked off the 2018-19 academic year. As part of its mission and core curriculum each year the sisters and associates join faculty and administration in developing a program to take students through what it means to be human. This year they built a two-series discussion platform with justice as the theme.

The first is a series of seven afternoon lectures with guest lecturers and university faculty on a variety of thought-provoking justice-related subjects. The second series, “Hearts Burning for Justice,” are eight 30-minute lunch topics offered on 11 dates throughout the year. These are led by sisters and associates.

By way of example, I offer a brief synopsis of one lecture: “Justice for Immigrants: I was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me.” Dr. Julie Hart, professor of sociology, peace and justice, moderated a panel discussing the history of immigration law in the United States, including the current types of status available to refugees and immigrants. Theological and biblical teachers outlined the ethical foundation for seeking justice, emphasizing immigration. Finally, a local woman in sanctuary told her real life experience of persecution.

The session began with a folk music prelude by Phil Hart, retired songwriter, evoking immigration themes. Nearly 100 students, faculty, alumni and friends attended the session which was followed by lively questions and answers.

You can view video from this session on [YouTube](#).

Justice for Immigrants: I Was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me

Panelists:

- Julie Hart, Ph.D., associate professor of sociology
- Reverend Joe Mas, immigration attorney
- Austin Kocher, immigration activist
- Edith Espinal, undocumented immigrant

Event date: September 27, 2018

ANCHORED IN CHARISM

Put Out Into the Deep

Associate Jane Schaefer, co-director of the Oldenburg Franciscan Associates

Sister Judy Gomila, Marianite Sisters of the Holy Cross, led members of the Tri-State Association of Leadership in an evening of prayer and conversation, “Anchored in Charism – Then and Now,” followed by a day-long retreat for Tri-State associates. Associate Andy Meyer, director of associates, Sisters of Charity Nazareth, Kentucky, shared, “This session provided the associate leadership from various congregations a chance to get to know one another and to explore how we stand on the ‘edge of tomorrow’ and need to ‘put out into the deep’ to realize our active hope for the future.” He went on to say, “As a relatively new director of associates, it was great participating in faith sharing and gaining practical insights based on the vast experiences of the other associate leaders.”



On Saturday, directors and associates reflected, contemplated, and discussed their roles in living and sharing the charisms of their prospective communities. The metaphor, put out into the deep, based on Luke 5:4-11, served as the theme for the retreat.

Sister Judy began with the concept of charting new waters. Participants talked about sailing and how difficult it is to get a sailboat to go in a straight direction. Associate Kathy Luebke Kemen, Oldenburg Franciscans, reminded the group that the wind, not the skipper, determines the direction the sailboat is going to go. Participants were invited to reflect on what drew them into the associate relationship and what keeps them there.

After reflecting on the viewpoint of charting new waters, we were invited to “set our sails.” Sister Judy shared, “God made us to leave the harbor and sail deep.” This led to reflecting on how we bring prayer, gospel values and community charism together.

The intent and hope of this day of prayer was that participants would put out into their own deep and recast their nets with the desire to deepen the contemplative and prophetic dimensions of life, ministry and congregational charisms. My favorite image of the day was that of leaving fingerprints, not the fingerprints of greasy fingers but the fingerprints of our hearts.

After “setting our sails,” we were encouraged to “put out into the deep.” Sister Judy emphasized the deep as being the place that extends far below the surface, the unknown, uncharted waters of our own lives and the life of the associate relationship. Andy Meyer reflected on his appreciation for the challenge of being intentional about having sanctuary experiences during which we can integrate the outer and inner dimensions of our lives.

Our final quest into “putting out into the deep,” was to “recast our nets.” Sister Judy assured us that “recasting our nets takes great courage in these deep new waters of the associate relationship.” Sister Lois Ann Meyer reminded the directors during Friday night’s presentation that these nets needed to be new; we cannot continue to do things the way they have always been done. Sister Judy affirmed this on Saturday saying, “If you do what you’ve always done, you’re going to get what you’ve always got.” She went on to share a story of biscuit baking and the importance of making sure the biscuits touch to aid in the rising process. This was a learning for her and her sisters. It meant a change in the way they used to make the biscuits.

Carolyn Meyer, associate co-director, Oldenburg Franciscans, stated, “I was inspired by the vision of active hope. Sister Judy has given me a renewed direction and appreciation for the associate relationship.”

FOSTERING OUR FUTURE

How Do We Tell Our Story?

Associate Dan Carney, Passionists of St. Paul of the Cross Province

In the aura of hospitality from the Sisters of The Humility of Mary, religious and associates gathered on October 23, 2018, at the Villa Maria Community Center, Villa Maria, Pennsylvania, for prayer, learning, challenge and inspiration.

The program began with prayer asking our God to keep us mindful of nature's lessons, especially that the darkening days and falling leaves of autumn should awaken us to and keep us mindful of the truth that dying and rising are a lesson for our lives.

There followed an excellent video presentation featuring Benedictine Sisters Joan Chittister. Developing the theme "Let the Call Be Heard," she challenged us to ask why we are here; from whence we came; what are we called to do; and why do we exist? Her answers, grounded in Scripture, sparked, challenged and called us to growth, creativity and fidelity in living our charisms. She contends that deepening, adapting and living charism in service to all in need must be the future of the church.



Talking in smaller table groups and whole-group sharing made the day interactive and a growth experience for all participants.


The afternoon session, themed "Lead with Spirit," drew upon chapter six of NACAR's Manual for Associate Leadership. Associates Erin Middleton and Karen Snyder, Sisters of Divine Providence, presented best practices on how carefully preparing a mission statement leads to clarity, awareness of purpose and formation of action to implement the mission statement. They stressed the need to use e-technology, social media and an always-improving newsletter. Best practices, they added, lead to better informed and more closely aligned associates and communities, as well as the living out of their charism, mission and ministry.

Below, participants gather for a photo during the October retreat.



BACAR SPONSORS SCREENING

I Am Still Here



2019 JANUARY
Anti-Trafficking
Events

Movie screening on
*Saturday, Jan. 26, 2019
at 6:15 PM – St. Mary's
Parish, Los Gatos
in Howley Hall

*Sunday Jan. 27, 2019
at 6:15 PM – Los Altos
Methodist Church in
Creekside Crossing

MOVIE SCREENING
“I AM STILL HERE”
January 26 & 27, 2019

Explore the serious issue of human trafficking in our country.
Q&A with writer/director Mischa Marcus and the producer.
Movie is for mature audience.
High School Students should be accompanied by an adult.
For more information contact: ecavalos@comcast.net

St. Mary's Parish in Howley Hall Saturday, Jan. 26, 2019
at 6:15 PM to 8:30 PM
219 Bean Ave, Los Gatos, CA

LAUMC in Creekside Crossing Sunday, Jan. 27, 2019
at 6:15 PM to 8:30 PM
655 Magdalena Ave, Los Altos,
Prior to the movie, You are welcome to join us for Worship
at Creekside Crossings at 5 PM

Sponsored by: St. Mary's Parish, The Diocese of San Jose & the Social Justice Committee of the Diocese of San Jose, STOP-Stop Trafficking on the Planet, BACAR-Bay Area Conference of Associates and Religious, CNEHT-Catholic Network to End Human Trafficking, Daughters of Charity, and BVM Sisters

Virgin Mary, and Sister Rosemary Everett, Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.

Mischa just finished traveling the festival circuit in promotion of her film *I Am Still Here*, which she wrote, directed and produced to raise awareness about child sex trafficking in America. The film has won over 30 festival awards including best feature film at the Nice International Film Festival, best director at the Beaufort International Film Festival, the audience award at Julien Dubuque International Film Festival, as well as accumulating multiple best actor awards and best feature film awards. Mischa also received the emerging filmmaker award, the IndieFest film award for women filmmakers, and the visionary award at the Pasadena International Film Festival.

Associate Kathy Noether, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, BACAR co-director

Trafficking is real and not just somewhere else. It is right here in Any Neighborhood, U.S.A.! As BACAR continues to discuss actions that permeate our society with sorrow and shame, we spent an evening with multiple award-winning writer/director Mischa Marcus and producer Stephanie Bell to explore the issues of sex trafficking. For almost two hours we were mesmerized by the showing of *I Am Still Here*. It is the story of 10-year old Layla, who was stolen from her family and thrown into America's child sex industry. Stories of courage drawn from interviews with trafficking survivors are the foundation for the fictionalized account of Layla's journey as she confronts the monsters of her past and embraces the hope of her future.

Mischa and Stephanie came for two showings: January 26 at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Los Gatos, California, and January 27 at the United Methodist Church of Los Altos, California. Both nights drew engaging audiences, including BACAR members and other community friends, to tackle this sensitive topic. After the showing there was a quiet time of reflection followed by a discussion lead by Sisters Marilyn Wilson and Elizabeth Avalos, Sisters of Charity of the Blessed



Mischa Marcus and Stephanie Bell presented their powerful film to BACAR members and others in the Bay Area.

This film will be available soon. You can view the trailer here: [I Am Still Here](#). Be prepared; it is for mature audiences and very real. Most of our congregations have a powerful stance on trafficking and have been involved in many capacities through the police department and other avenues here in California. Check out the resources in your area.



ASSOCIATES AND COMPANIONS

Living Out the Same Charism

Associate Anne Carey, co-director of associates, School Sisters of Notre Dame, Central Pacific Province

I love being an associate of an international community, belonging to something so much bigger than my limited reality. This fall I joined 16 associates and friends on a pilgrimage to experience Germany, the birthplace of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. We spent eight days experiencing many wonderful sites, enjoying Oktoberfest and walking in the footsteps of Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger, the foundress of the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

In 1833 Mother Theresa of Jesus did not set out to form an international community; she just responded to the needs of her time. For most of us the highlight of the pilgrimage was spending a day at the Munich motherhouse with 18 German associates from Westphalia, northwestern Germany, and Bavaria, southeastern Germany. In Germany, associates of the School Sisters of Notre Dame are called weggemeinschaft, or companions on the way. The Westphalia weggemeinschaft spent a day traveling by train to join us. We were touched by their efforts, the coordination required for translation and the hospitality shown to us by the sisters and weggemeinschaft.

After a delicious lunch with the sisters, the associates and weggemeinschaft spent the afternoon sharing in



Sharing coffee and strudel at the convent which now occupies the space where Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger was born.

small groups. With the assistance of an interpreter, we quickly overcame the language barrier and discovered what we call ourselves doesn't matter. We share similar relationships, hopes and challenges as we respond to our call to live out the charism and continue to say yes to the needs of our time, much like our foundress. What a blessing it is to share this common bond.

At the end of the day the sisters and associates prayed vespers, alternating between English and German. We experienced the gift of our internationality when the North American associates renewed our covenant in English at the tomb of Blessed Theresa and the sisters accepted our renewal in German. We invite you to view the post on the [Bavarian province website](#).



Pilgrimage participants gather with German weggemeinschaft for a group picture.

A DAY TO REMEMBER

A Day to Celebrate



Oldenburg Franciscan Associates

As we reflect on our call to be Oldenburg Franciscan Associates, we are met with the exciting challenge of finding ways to spread the Franciscan charism among our associates and the Oldenburg community at large. Franciscan values, such as prayer, hospitality and joy, were evidenced on November 3, 2018, when over 200 associates, sisters and local community members gathered for “A Day to Remember, A Day to Celebrate” in the Oldenburg Franciscan Sisters’ chapel.

The day was envisioned and realized with more than one purpose and vision. As associates, we could not be more grateful for the support, love and affirmation of the community whose charism we seek to live. Through their spiritual, financial and moral support, we have been able to reach interested charism followers (associates) in 19 different states. One of the reasons for implementing “A Day to Remember, A Day to Celebrate” was to raise funds for the continuation of the Oldenburg Franciscan Sisters ongoing ministries.

Secondly, the day was planned as a means of calling the community together for prayer. It just so happened that our prayers were directed towards the men and woman within our lives who were and continue to be instruments of God’s love and peace.

Associates, sisters and the community at large were invited to make donations in memory or in honor of the loved ones. Each person (300 this year) being remembered or honored was mentioned in a luminary lighting prayer service. At the end of the prayer service guests were invited to take a luminary jar home with the hopes of keeping the light of their loved ones alive in their hearts and in their homes. The day ended with a light social.

Following All Saints’ and All Souls’ Days, this was the perfect time to remember and to celebrate. Plans for the 2019 gathering are already underway.



Guests raise their hands in blessing over the luminaries.



ASSOCIATE GROUPS COME TOGETHER

Day of Friendship & Prayer

Associate Amy Kulesa, associate director, Sisters of Bon Secours

Two NACAR member groups of congregational associates in the Baltimore, Maryland, area, have been making a reality their long-held plans to gather together and share charisms and community. The associates of the Oblate Sisters of Providence and the Bon Secours share history and roots in Baltimore. In the fall of both 2017 and 2018, Oblate Sisters of Providence Associates have joined the Bon Secours Associates at their annual retreat in Marriottsville, Maryland. Much laughter and shared insights were enjoyed together during the retreat.

The associates of the Oblate Sisters of Providence extended an invitation to the Bone Secours Associates and Sisters on November 10, 2018, when they renewed their vow of commitment, celebrated in a mass offered by Father Sam Lupico at the Oblate Sisters of Providence's motherhouse. Oblate Associates came from Delaware; Illinois; Missouri; New York; Pennsylvania; South Carolina; Texas; Virginia; Washington D.C., and various locales in Maryland.

The associate gathering began on November 8 and included several days of meaningful presentations and intense focus on collaboration and commitment to the ministries of Mother Mary Lange and the Oblate Sisters of Providence.



Several associates renew their commitment to the Oblate Sisters of Providence.

This momentous occasion closed out the Oblate Lay Associates 25th year of being in relationship with the Oblate Sisters of Providence. Associates and several sisters of the Sisters of Bon Secours were present for the mass and shared in the festive meal held afterwards. It was a wonderful time of fellowship, especially between our two associate groups. The day culminated in an evening ice cream social. We found that sharing celebration and prayer is a meaningful and joyful way for these two NACAR member congregations to come together as family in the Baltimore-area.

FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF THE SACRED HEART

Host Charism Retreat

Sister Norma Janssen, Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart, director of associates

This past fall, the Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Frankfort, Illinois, held a sister-associate retreat entitled “Deepening and Expanding Our Living of the Charism Together as Sisters and Associates.” An enthusiastic gathering of sisters and associates explored the charism of the congregation: “Sisters of mercy, joyous and poor, doing works of neighborly love.”

As Franciscans under the title of the Sacred Heart, the retreat started with a guided meditation centered on the moving and beautiful fresco of the Sacred Heart found in the Chapel of the Visitation in Paray-le-Monial, France, a place a number of our sisters were privileged to visit during the 150th celebration of the founding of the congregation. The glowing brilliance of the Sacred Heart warmed all the participants and set everyone off on a heart-felt journey through the charism.

The Franciscan characteristics of itineracy, seeing all as sisters and brothers, contemplation and the focus of relationships through fraternitas, were gathered together through the medium of the tavola, which traced the journey of our charism from the congregation’s founding to the present embodiment in sisters and associates.

Individual sessions on mercy, joy and poverty explored through a variety of mediums (Visio Divina, TED talks and quotations from Scripture and spiritual leaders) how these aspects of the charism challenge all of us today. All of these elements of the charism culminated in



Two associates celebrated 25 years of commitment to the congregation.

conversations about our new neighbors; we identified 26 new neighbors and 35 ways to make a difference.

Two associates celebrated 25 years as associates and four new associates made their initial commitments. One had made her commitment earlier as she was unable to attend the retreat. All associates present were invited to come forward to renew their commitments, which gave everyone an incredible visual of the impact the charism is having beyond the sisters themselves.

The associates and sisters continue to nurture the growth and evolution of the charism which was entrusted to our congregation at its founding.

Pictured below are the new associates the Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart welcomed recently.



Mary Patalita-Au



Diane Janowski Hermle



Darlene Ryan



Robert Velcich



Jeanne Worden

A JOURNEY WITH UNIQUE TWISTS

My Spiritual Discernment

Father Paul H. Colloton, Oblates of St. Francis de Sales

I belong to the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, Wilmington-Philadelphia Province, and am an associate of the Dominican Sisters of Peace. My spiritual journey has had some unique twists.

For 25 years I was a Dominican friar (Central Province). A number of life circumstances served as a catalyst for transferring to the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales. I began that process in October 2009 and professed vows as an oblate on May 11, 2012.

I served the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids as co-director of pastoral life and had considered becoming an associate with them, to publicly express and continue to feed my Dominican spirit. However, after being asked to be the director of campus ministry and campus chaplain at Ohio Dominican University, it became clear that I was called to become a Dominican Sisters of Peace Associate, which I did on August 8, 2017.



My Oblate provincial has been very supportive since this dual commitment affords me the opportunity to affirm both my Dominican and Oblate identities in a committed and public way. I have found that Dominican and Salesian spiritualities complement each other. My image for that is a human heart with two chambers: one chamber Dominican spirituality and the other Salesian spirituality. Just as blood flows through the chambers of the human heart to feed one another, so, too, these two spiritual traditions flow through my heart and feed one another. I am blessed.

LEADERSHIP TEAM CALLS ASSOCIATES TO *Prepare for 2020 Chapter*

Associate Christine Milner, Sisters of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin

At the beginning of December, in an Advent greeting emailed to all of us, the Sisters of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin leadership team invited the associates to reflect and discern two questions as we prepare together for the 2020 chapter. The team is asking us as a community of associates to sit with these questions and allow them to “simmer.” At some point later, we will gather our insights and share them with the team. The 2020 chapter will be the fourth one at which associates have been invited to participate in at least part of the sessions of the general chapter process. We have been invited since the 2005 chapter.

The following is an excerpt of a letter to associates sent by the congregational leadership team of the Sisters of the Assumption.

With joy and in the name of HOPE we invite you to actively engage in an ongoing process of reflection and sharing that will help lead us one step closer to chapter 2020.

The following questions are offered for your reflection as we discern together God's transforming vision for us.

As an associate, what is essential for me, for us, in this time in which we are living? (Consider what is happening in our world, in our country and wherever we are living our call and charism.)

What does God seem to be asking of us today? What are the invitations, challenges, hopes ... ?

May your group encounters provide the opportunity to welcome each other's insights and to be enlivened by the same spark of faith, hope and love that continues to inflame the heart of our congregation's life and mission as it has these past 165 years.

Trusting in the Spirit and supported by the wisdom and light that each one bears, we continue to be led in the midst of our present day (sisters and associates) and world realities toward a promised yet unknown future.

MAKING PROVIDENCE VISIBLE

at La Posada



Above, Sister Barbara McMullen holds three-week-old baby Emmanuel at La Posada.

Associate Linda Hoefflin, Sisters of Divine Providence

Early on an October morning in 2018, I traveled with Divine Providence Sister Barbara McMullen and Associate Rose Vierdag from Granite City, Illinois, to La Posada in San Benito, Texas, a trip of 1,135 miles. La Posada Providencia, founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Divine Providence, is a ministry for people in crisis from around the world who are seeking legal refuge in this country. We took a load of supplies, including toiletries and essentials, gifts and \$200 for the building fund, which were donated by the associates and sisters of the St. Louis and Tennessee areas.

The mission experience at La Posada was eye-opening. Sisters Zita Telkamp, and Margaret Mertens, Sisters of Divine Providence; and Sister Therese Cunningham, Sisters of Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate, deserve medals for their service. During my work as an

operating-room nurse I was often on call, and I know how grueling it can be. But these sisters are on call all of the time. I can't imagine the stress, loss of sleep, and emotional and physical toll this schedule takes on the sisters' lives. Yet, with willing hearts and hands they show God's loving providence to those in their care.

No longer are only Hispanics served at La Posada; a recent client from Zimbabwe brought the total number of countries served to 86. During our four-day stay, La Posada had 40 clients in residence from Eritrea, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Zimbabwe and the Congo. As Sister Barbara reflected, "If I ever want to know what hope looks like, I just have to see the faces of the men, women and children who come through the doors of La Posada and are welcomed warmly."

The shelter staff provides a safe and welcoming home, mentors to promote self-sufficiency and cultural integration, and imparts values which witness God's providence in our world. Each client is provided with a place to stay, food, clean clothes and showers. For four hours a day, clients receive lessons in reading and writing English, as well as basic concepts such as numbers and colors and many other life skills. It takes many hands and donations to assist La Posada in opening the doors each day. As Rose Vierdag commented, "Every associate should experience a day at La Posada." My prayers will be stronger than ever for this powerful ministry.



Associate Linda Hoefflin teaches English to clients from Honduras.

EVENTS

Coming Events

PREPARING LEADERS FOR THE FUTURE

Apply now to empower the youngest vowed members, co-members or associates of your community to:

- Prepare to meet the demands and challenges of leadership in church, community and society,
- Develop skills to lead from a spirituality attuned to global and local realities, and
- Partner with other sisters, associates and co-members in emerging leadership roles.

The Collaborative Leadership Development Program is a program sponsored by the Leadership Collaborative. It is an 18-month integrative process with an intercultural perspective, designed to prepare participants with the skills, knowledge and confidence to assume leadership positions in community and ministry. The program blends contemplative practices and building relationships with self-growth and spiritual development through prayerful study and interaction, online forums, mentoring and coaching.

Eligible applicants are:

- Vowed members, co-members or associates of congregations based in the United States with ministries outside the United States,
- No older than 60 years of age as of January 1, 2019,
- Able to commit to three four-day sessions: October 13-18, 2019; March 1-6, 2020; and November 8-13, 2020, and
- Recommended by congregational leadership.

Applications are due May 20, 2019.

If you would like an invitational letter, brochure and application form to be emailed directly to you, please contact Sister of St. Joseph Charlene Diorka, program director, at charlenediorka@gmail.com or call 215-421-9915 for details.

PREPARING LEADERS FOR THE FUTURE

The Collaborative Leadership Development Program (CLDP) is a program sponsored by the Leadership Collaborative. It is an 18-month integrative process, designed to prepare participants with the skills, knowledge and confidence to assume leadership positions in community and ministry. The CLDP blends contemplative practices and building relationships with self-growth and spiritual development, through prayerful study and interaction, online forums, mentoring, and coaching.

Apply **NOW** to empower the youngest vowed members, co-members, associates of your community to ...

- Prepare for demands and challenges of leadership
- Develop skills to lead contemplatively in global and local realities
- Partner with other sisters, associates and co-members in emerging leadership roles.

Eligible applicants are ...

- Vowed members, co-members, associates of congregations based in the U.S. including those in ministries outside the U.S.
- No older than 60 years of age as of January 1, 2019
- Able to commit to three 4-day sessions: **October 13-18, 2019; March 1-6, 2020; and November 8-13, 2020.**
- Recommended by Congregational leadership

Tuition: \$4500 (includes all three sessions and board; participants cover their own travel.)

Applications are due May 20, 2019

Contact Charlene Diorka, SSI, Program Director, at charlenediorka@gmail.com or 215-421-9915 for an application or more information.

listening • learning • leading
Leadership Collaborative

Coming Events

ASSOCIATE LEADERSHIP RETREAT

May 13–16, 2019

Sister of St. Joseph Janet Mock
Passionist Retreat Center, Houston, Texas

All associate directors, coordinators and others who serve or plan to serve in leadership positions are encouraged to attend this formational retreat, “Living the Charism in Turbulent Times,” to be held May 13-16, 2019, at the Holy Name Passionist Retreat Center in Houston, Texas.

The times in which we are living are especially challenging as the woundedness and collapse of institutions globally becomes more apparent. The strength of disillusionment is that one stops believing in an illusion and is prepared, however haltingly, to face reality as it is.

The courage and imagination of our founding forebearers are no less needed as we confront new frontiers in human consciousness, communication, moral agency and faith development. Our days together as associates and religious provide an opportunity to plumb the depths of the charism that we bear and claim its significance in this age.

Sister Janet Mock, Sisters of St. Joseph, Baden, Pennsylvania, will facilitate this gathering. Sister Janet has been an educator, formation director and has served in congregational leadership. Sister also served as executive director for the Religious Formation Conference, director of leadership and mission at Washington Theological Union and executive director of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious.



For more information or to register by April 1, 2019, visit the [NACAR website](#).

Coming Events

CREATIVE CONVERSATIONS

Tuesday, March 12, 2019

1 p.m. Eastern, noon Central, 11 a.m. Mountain,
10 a.m. Pacific

Dealing with Serious Associate Matters

Facilitators: Amy Kulesa and Terri Butel

For more information or to register, contact
the NACAR office at
253.256.2227 or info@nacar.org

BACAR DISCUSSION GROUP

Saturday, May 18, 2019

Notre Dame Province Center,
Belmont, California

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

CARMA CONFERENCE

Saturday, April 6, 2019

LEGACY, LOVE, LEADERSHIP: THE UNFOLDING ASSOCIATE PATH

Best Western Dubuque
Hotel & Conference Centre,
Dubuque, Iowa

Associate Kathleen Wade,
Sisters of Mercy of the

Americas, invites sisters and associates to
explore the legacy of individual charisms, the
need to deepen relationships across those
charisms, and the emerging role of leadership
in association, locally and globally. Participants
will enjoy interactive exploration, couched in a
contemplative spirit.

[MORE INFORMATION](#)



BACAR: Sister Simone Campbell in Bay Area

September 21, 2019

Simone Campbell, Sisters
of Social Service, will be the
keynote speaker at an event
this fall sponsored in the
San Francisco Bay Area by
BACAR. Simone is a lawyer,
lobbyist and executive
director of NETWORK. She is known as an
outspoken advocate for social justice and the
Nuns on the Bus campaign.



Watch for more details to come!