

# ASSOCIATES ALIVE

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Pam Mason, AND**



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## Congratulations, Sue!



Congratulations to Sue Strandberg, the Workforce Development Manager for the Educational Bridge Center, for receiving the 2020 Saint Julie Billiart Award! This is the highest honor bestowed upon an employee of Notre Dame Health Care in Worcester, MA. Each year, this award is given to an employee that exemplifies the spirit of St. Julie Billiart, foundress of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.

The Center's focus is on "Empowering Life through Education". Its website describes it as follows: "The Notre Dame Educational Bridge Center,

embracing the mission of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to educate for life, fosters a culture of learning and growth, wherein all individuals are engaged and provided the opportunity, guidance and support to attain their personal, academic and professional goals." There are many ways that they do this, including a wide array of courses, career counseling, tutor support services, and referrals to other nonprofit support organizations. Some course offerings include: HiSET Prep, English for the Workplace, ServSafe Food Manager Certification, and Math for Meds.

Sue has been Workforce Development Manager since 1993, and has made a profound impact on the lives of many. Some testimonials from the Bridge Center website include: "Your staff, led by Sue, is just kind and generous. Where else can you study until 2am in the morning? NONE. I feel safe going home and coming in. THANK YOU"..."I could not have done the work without the help of Sue Strandberg. Sue is an amazing person! She took the time to listen and had the patience to assist me in doing all the paperwork that is required to become a citizen. Because of the commitment and help provided by Sr. Karen and Sue, I became a Citizen of the United States in January 2019 and I was sworn in along with 996 others."

Thank you, and Congratulations, Sue!

# Live the Good!

Associates often look for opportunities to join in ministry with the Sisters. Holly Schlaack, responsible for Volunteer Engagement, invited Associates to join a service opportunity through the Live the Good Volunteer program. The event ran from February 22 – March 6. The goal? 1000 brown bag lunches which would be donated to the St. Francis Seraph Ministries in downtown Cincinnati. Participants agreed to prepare quantities of 25, 50, 100 lunches in the comfort of their own homes, and then bring them to drop-off centers such as Mount Notre Dame. Associates Vickie Carnevale and her mother, Carol Carpenter, packed lunches, and headed to Mount Notre Dame for delivery as part of the Live the Good project.

A follow up Zoom Prayer Service and Reflection invited the participants to share their reactions to the experience and hear the first hand experiences of Sisters Therese Del Genio and Marietta Fritz in their outreach work. One Associate tuned in to get a glimpse of her long-time friend, Marietta, and found the stories so compelling she stayed to the end.

In her report, Holly Schlaack, noted “We set an initial goal of 1000 lunches and quickly learned the generosity went well beyond our expectations. The final numbers: 74 Registrants, 2597 Lunches packed, 3,011 Lunches delivered. The overwhelming success of the drive has prompted another June 7-June 18. We anticipate even more Associates will join this way to make God’s goodness known.

*Eleanor Wagner, AND*



Associate Vickie Carnevale  
constructing sandwiches



Mother and daughter Associates Carol Carpenter  
and Vicki Carnevale ready for delivery!

# Gathered in God's Abundant Mercy



One of my favorite quotes from St. Julie is: "When you have free moments, go faithfully to prayer. The good God is waiting for you there." As a wife, mom, working person and an Associate, time for prayer is sometimes non-existent. So, when I had the opportunity to participate in the weekly **Gathered in God's Abundant Mercy** prayer opportunity through the Mount Notre Dame Spirituality Center in Ohio this Lent, I was excited.

For five weeks beginning on Ash Wednesday, the MND Spirituality Center offered a beautiful opportunity for anyone interested to pray the Sunday Gospel in a prayerful and contemplative style of reflection within a 30-minute time span. Presented via ZOOM, Sisters and Associates from all walks of life, and all parts of the United States, took part in the Lectio ("word") Divina model of praying.

There are four parts of the Lectio program. For this program, the upcoming Sunday gospel was read four times, each time by a different voice, with periods of quiet in between.

**Lectio:** The gospel is read for the first time, and we are prompted to consider what word or phrase brings an awareness or interest to us.

**Meditatio:** As the gospel is read again, we are asked to consider what word or phrase brings meaning to the us in our life.

**Oratio:** As the gospel is read for a third time, we are asked to thank God for the reading and ask Him to lead us to a deeper understanding or meaning. After the third reading, each participant could access the "chat" button on Zoom and type in a related thought or personal prayer. Several people did, bringing more awareness to the gospel meaning to the listeners.

**Contemplation:** As the gospel is read for the last time, we are asked to go deeper into our thoughts and ask ourselves, "What is God trying to teach me through this passage of self-reflection and prayer?"

Led by Sister Kristin Matthes, SNDdeN, as our moderator, with Sister Marilyn Kerber, SNDdeN and Lisa Brackmann, ANDdeN as prayer leaders, this weekly experience was both energizing and nourishing!

Meg Sharp, AND

# “Looking Forward to a New Dawn”



Technology sometimes dictates to us what it wants. Having planned a zoom conference for January 9, 2021, the connections simply did not work. But, as fate would have it, we gathered together on January 23rd with more guests than originally planned! We felt as a team we needed time to see where we as associates are with the many factors that have bombarded us over the last year. Yet, we wanted time together that would lift us up and bring us contemplative thinking of sustenance. Thus, we chose the title “Looking Forward to a New Dawn: Kindness, Compassion, and Healing”.

Beginning with prayer, we joined with one another to say:

“Generous God, you smile upon the wide diversity and beauty in the humanity whom you created, but you weep at the great divide between the “haves” and the “have-nots.” We come before you today as we begin a new year seeking kindness, healing, and compassion. We aspire to help you heal our world through a greater awareness and a deeper commitment to one another. Help us to look at our daily living, so that who we are and what we do has a positive benefit to our brothers and sisters everywhere in our earthly home. Light our vision so that we are ever conscious of those who seek food, shelter, safety, and medical care. Enable us to use the earth’s resources mindfully. Awaken in us a sincere gratitude for all that we take for granted. Give us the gifts of wisdom and discernment so that we can navigate the constant news and differing opinions that surround us. Let us take people’s stories to heart, seeking our common bonds and resisting the cynicism that tries to take hold of us. Infuse us with compassion so that we know the pain of the hungry, the violated, the homeless, the burdened, and all those who yearn for a better life for themselves and the children they love. Loving God, stir our hearts. Grant us the strength and conviction to be true care-takers of the world. We who have been graced with abundance need the courage and generosity to inclusively share our gifts with our brothers and sisters. Amen.”

Following this, we presented three aspects of love that connect us in our daily lives, while integrating the charism and mission in Notre Dame. We looked at several quotes about kindness, and participants were encouraged to share some examples of a small act of kindness that they might do. We reflected on the words of Saint Julie, foundress of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, who breathed life into kindness as she always sang, “How good is the good God.” Always goodness...always kindness.

For compassion, we reflected on words of the Dalai Lama and Pope Francis, and contemplated what it meant to “develop a compassionate heart”. For healing, we explored the times of healing in St. Julie’s life, as outlined in the Sr. Mary Linscott book, To Heaven on Foot. St. Julie knew, as we are invited to as well, that healing is a resuscitation to accept the gifts given to us, to revive these gifts within, and share-- however simple those gifts may be- with those around us. Healing, in essence, is to acknowledge with gratitude of God’s love in the simple comfort as is found in a warm fire, a soothing broth, or gentle smile of understanding.

After these presentations and reflections, there was time to break into smaller groups, where rich discussion ensued. This was followed by a closing prayer, and the hopeful looking forward to a “New Dawn”

~ Beth Plesche, SND, and Associates Kathy Noether, Dede Waters-Masters, and Laura Leon

**\*\* The next virtual gathering will be held this Saturday, April 10 on Zoom. Please see the flier attached to this email, and note that the time listed is PST, so adjust accordingly \*\***



# Happy Feast of St. Julie!

*The next issue of *Associates Alive* will be published on July 12. Submissions are due by July 1st. Any questions or comments—please send to your Area contact or to Editor Pam Mason, AND at: [pamela.mason@sndden.org](mailto:pamela.mason@sndden.org). I am very grateful to the following Associates for volunteering to serve as Area Contacts for this newsletter:*

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