

Word Gathering

Spring 2022

Building Hope for Better Days

Finding Hope in a Pandemic 8

We Get You, We See You, You Matter

Family Justice Center Model is Established
with Grant from St. Joseph Community
Health Foundation 10

Casa Catalina

A Place with Human Warmth, Respect,
and Love Without Distinction 14

justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion

BECOMING A CHAMPION

Sisters and Laity Together

page 6



In This Issue

- 3 A Humble Heart
- 4 Pipe Organ Update
- 6 Becoming a Champion: Sisters and Laity Together
- 8 Building Hope for Better Days
- 10 We Get You, We See You, and You Matter
- 12 Bem Vinda, Sister Cailla! Welcome!
- 14 Casa Catalina
- 15 Obituaries

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A Humble Heart

Excerpt from **WORN OUT SHOES: Walking in the Wisdom of Saint Katharina Kasper** written by **Sister Nkechi Iwuoha | PHJC**

The virtue of humility is one of the most outstanding qualities of Saint Katharina Kasper in all her search for the divine will of God. She was committed to God in humility and simplicity of heart. She was truthful and transparent to her Sisters and to God in all her endeavors to promote the reign of God.

The spirit of humility enabled her openness to being the handmaid of the Lord. She listened attentively to the Bishop, the various authorities that the Sisters worked with, to her Sisters and to the spirit of God within her heart. In her work, she had the mind of Christ who humbled himself to do what his Father wanted of him till death. This was exemplified when Saint Katharina took care of children in their homes so that their mothers could have a break or work outside the home to support their family. In all her deliberations with the governmental authority she maintained a humble spirit that respected and listened to them yet stated clearly and firmly what she needed to continue her mission. She always listened attentively to Bishop Blum and had a humble way of expressing herself without automatically submitting to his words. She obtained the best she could for her Sisters in every negotiation with the authorities. This was also evident in her discussion with Bishop Blum regarding the name to be given to the new congregation. Though he had chosen another title she stated the name she preferred for her congregation with simplicity and respect in the dialogue on this matter with the Bishop. The humble approach she always employed in dialogue teaches us the power of humility, choice of verbal and body language and the respect due when dialoguing with one another. For me it is also a learning that the best opinion may be rejected depending on the spirit with which it is presented.

Walking in the Wisdom of the

WORN OUT SHOES



of Saint Katharina Kasper

A SYMBOL OF TRANSFORMATION

Sister Nkechi Iwuoha, PHJC

Please enjoy this small excerpt from **Worn Out Shoes** written by Sister Nkechi Iwuoha, PHJC. Copies of her book can be purchased at the **Lindenwood Retreat and Conference Center's Christian Book and Gift Shop** located at 9601 Union Rd, Plymouth 46563. Hours of operation are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. For additional questions please call 574-935-1780.

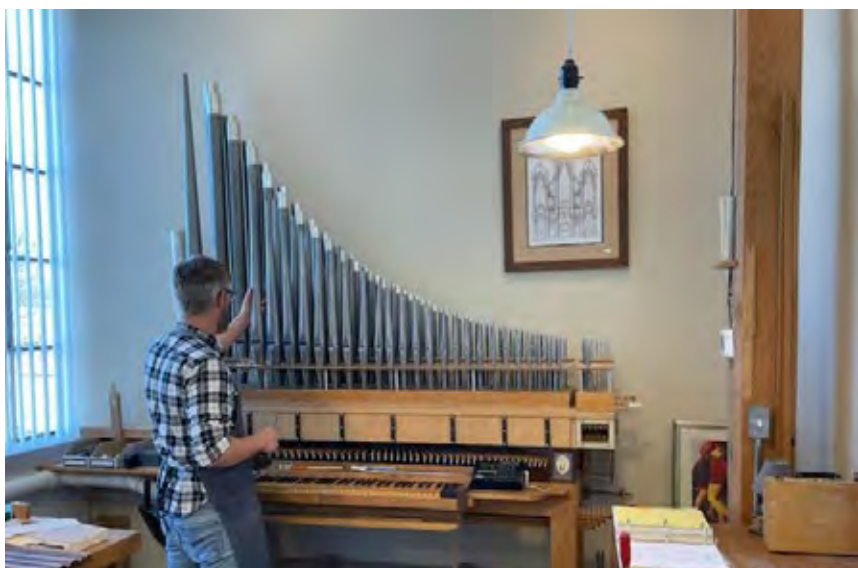
Pipe Organ Update

By **Andrew Jennings** | *Director of Liturgy and Music*

The installation of Taylor and Boody Opus 83 Pipe Organ is drawing near! As of right now, the construction process is around the 50 percent mark with a target date of September 5 to begin installation. A couple of weekends ago, I made a visit to the Taylor and Boody shop to check on the progress and meet with the builders. The shop is in a restored school building a few miles outside of Staunton, a charming town nestled in the mountains of Virginia.

At this point, the structural and main components of the lower and upper cases have been built, all the metal pipes have been cast with most having been constructed, the wood for the wood pipes has been milled and planed, the wind chests are constructed, and many of the smaller components are made. They will soon begin the finer work of pipe shade carving, spire carving, key and pedal design, and other decorative details. The entire process is practically done by hand, with very few pieces made with computer assisted technology. The metal used in the pipes is melted at the shop to create the ideal combination, each metal

pipe is rolled and soldered by hand, the stop knobs will be turned by hand, and the carvings will be designed and carefully carved by hand. I know a lot of words are used here that are likely new, which makes it all the more important to come visit me and the new organ after it's installed!



Joel VanderZee of Taylor and Boody testing the rank of the 4' Spitzflöte for tone quality. He had just finished assembling the pipes before this photo was taken.



Sean Dye, one of the shop's newest co-workers, is putting felt on stoppers. These stoppers will go in a rank of wooden pipes and help create the tone as well as tune the pipe.

Opus 83 will arrive in several box trucks around September 5 and the entire organ will be laid out in the nave (the main section) of the chapel. It will take approximately two weeks to assemble the case and get the pipes in place. From there, tonal director Aaron Reichert will take charge of creating the sound of the instrument in the chapel. Each of the 2,472 pipes will get individual treatment as they get tuned and voiced. In total, it will take approximately two to two and half months to have the organ completely installed and ready for use. In early December 2022 we will have a prayer service to bless the pipe organ followed by a recital to dedicate the instrument. Dr. Mary Catherine Levri, assistant professor and director of music at Mount St. Mary's Seminary and School of Theology (the Athenaeum of Ohio) will play the dedication recital. In the weeks following I will be presenting demonstration or "getting-to-know-the-organ" events.

In the pictures you can see the structure of the upper case. That is my dog, Péro (short for Pérotin, and for your daily dose of music history, look up that name) who traveled with me to check on things and get plenty attention from the organ builders. You can also see Penny, the shop cat, nestled in the case. She was not all that thrilled to meet Péro, however. In the picture with the metal pipes, you can see Joel VanderZee testing the rank of the 4' Spitzflöte for tone quality. He had just finished assembling the pipes before this photo. Sean Dye, one of the shop's newest co-workers, is putting felt on stoppers. These stoppers will go in a rank of wooden pipes and help create the tone as well as tune the pipe.

September will be here before we know it! And I can't tell you how much I'm looking forward to sharing this entire process with everyone. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the new organ or the building/installation process, send me a message or hunt me down. I can talk to you about it all day!



The structure of the organ's upper case.



Penny, the shop cat, nestled in the case. She was not all that thrilled to meet Péro, however, as noted by his epic side-eye.



justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion

BECOMING A CHAMPION

Sisters and Laity Together

By **Arleen Peterson** | Executive Director of Relational Services

Most people recognize a champion as the one who steps up to the podium, but each champion has taken an amazing journey before ever reaching that podium. Champions must create a daily routine and experience failures and opportunities to improve before reaching champion status. Most of the time we only see the final glorious moment, but it's a head, heart, and way of living that gets the champion to the podium. As lay people and PHJC Sisters we are being called to be champions of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI). Do you want to be a JEDI Champion? Let's explore how we together are all doing this work!

In the summer of 2020, as the echoes of police brutality and scourges of racism awakened our daily routines, PHJC leadership in solidarity with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious,

announced their province statement on racism and their commitment to address systematic racism. I took this to heart as the Executive Director of Relational Services, as a skilled dismantling structural racism trainer, and as an African American women transformed into a JEDI Champion. The engagement of "Structural Racism Dialogue Discussions" began weekly as either socially distanced in-person sessions or hybrid presentations at The Center at Donaldson. This engaged coworkers, residents, leaders of ministries, and Sisters who wanted to commit to the lens of racial equity and justice.

This is the JEDI Champions way of daily routine, refusing to give anyone an excuse to not understand racism, bias, microaggressions, Jim Crow, Black Lives Matter, or any of the racialized truths and mistruths



Fr. Daniel Horan, OFM, spoke to The Center at Donaldson coworkers, Poor Handmaid sisters and many others on racism and privilege.



of what our history in America has been for Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC). There were many sessions in which I had thoughts of quitting, of being emotionally exhausted. In the stories that I've read about Olympic champions, exhaustion shows that you are pushing your limits. Like them, I needed to embrace these moments of exhaustion because the fatigue means you are becoming a champion. More than 150+ lay people and Sisters have participated in these sessions and have stepped onto the podium.

As the pandemic progressed into 2021, the head work and way of living took aim as JEDI champions moved out of their comfort zones. We established the JEDI Core group which is comprised of ministry coworkers and a Sister who guides and supports JEDI. The core group identifies guest speakers, events, and strategies for implementing JEDI. Like champions who don't always do things like everyone else, Sister

Kathleen Quinn, PHJC centers us in the values of Saint Katharina Kasper, an extraordinary example and JEDI champion.

Our JEDI speakers have inspired us, like Fr. James Martin, SJ on LGBTQ issues; moved us like Rev. Smash in addressing "white supremacy"; engaged us like our Juneteenth celebration featuring the National Negro Anthem of "Lift Every Voice and Sing." JEDI Champions create space for more external voices to root for the progress of how the Poor Handmaids are a catalyst for just transformation. Every champion needs competitors and the JEDI speakers are a healthy dose of competition to keep us moving forward and continually improving.

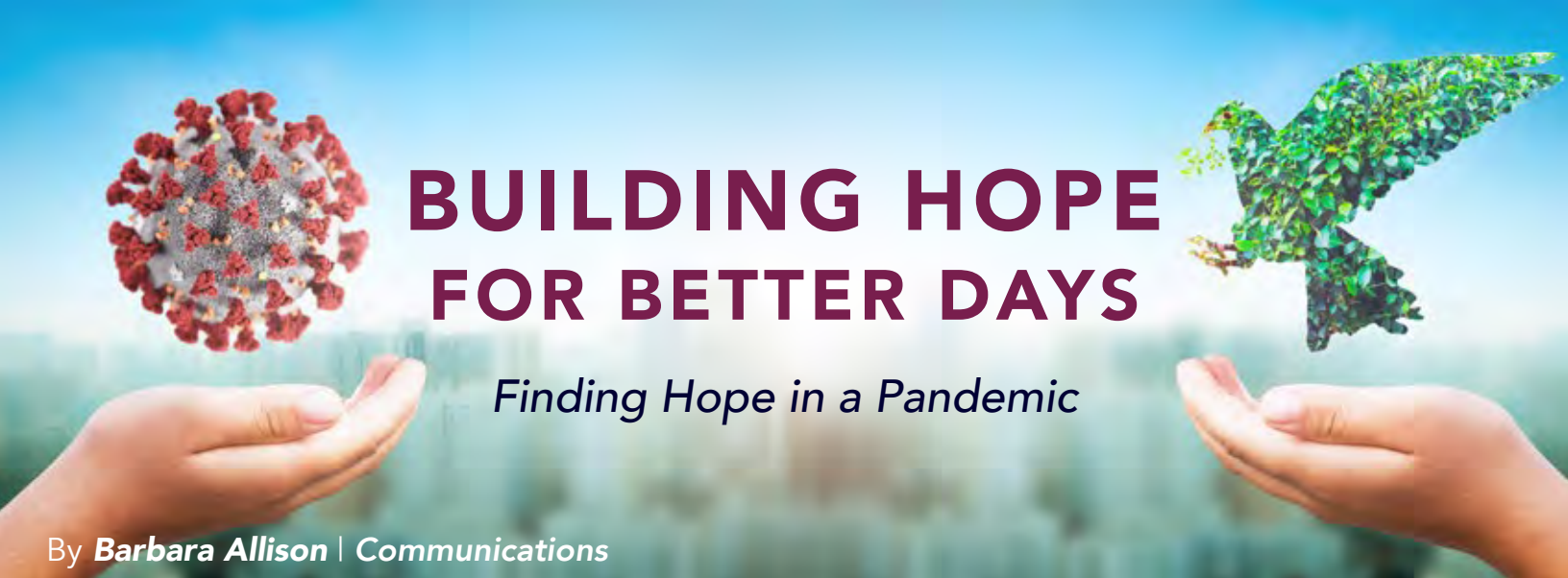
I'm most encouraged that racial equity training is a requirement for all new hires. We are not only training like all champions do to get to the podium, but we are also teaching and being the lifestyle example for a JEDI champion. This year, one of the three African American coworkers at The Center was not the one who

led the Martin Luther King Holiday celebration. Thanks to JEDI champion Paul Mach for stepping up to the podium.

This year, we continue to engage JEDI voices – hey, it is an Olympic year! We had an amazing opening ceremony with Fr. Daniel Horan, OFM discussing his recently published book, "A White Catholic's Guide to Racism and Privilege." Also in January 2022 we held a showing and discussion of the documentary "13th" by Ava DuVernay, an in-depth look at the prison system in the United States and how it reveals the nation's history of racial inequality. Perhaps lessening COVID restrictions will allow us to also visit Ferris State University's Jim Crow Museum as the year progresses.

The pursuit of becoming a champion is difficult. People often look at a champion who wins a competition and think that getting there must have been fun, happy, and maybe even comfortable. Get that out of your head. It's not. PHJC Sisters are not taking the easy road, and neither am I. We are doing something rare that many predominantly white led organizations are not willing to do. We are engaging the head, heart, and lifestyle together – laity and Sisters. These are the choices we are making to get on the podium and to be JEDI champions.

We are not only training like all champions do to get to the podium, but we are also teaching and being the EXAMPLE LIFESTYLE for a JEDI Champion.



BUILDING HOPE FOR BETTER DAYS

Finding Hope in a Pandemic

By **Barbara Allison** | *Communications*

Tragedies and pandemics have a flip side: They bring out the best in some people when the world is at its worst, propelling us forward toward better days.

Two years ago, on the cusp of a global pandemic, the cracks in income inequality altered life disproportionately for those in service jobs. Consequently, workers across the economic spectrum have been adapting to rapid changes for two years now. How fortunate for The Center at Donaldson community that no one lost their job in the early days of the pandemic and lockdowns.

Several directors and ministry leaders shared their insights on how the PHJC ministries have adapted and built hope for the future over the tumultuous past two years, and how their ministries have changed in the communities they serve.

Relational Service Director Arleen Peterson thinks the change is two-fold and centers on “our care of Earth and our care of each other.” This involved thinking differently about the environmental impact of not only projects large in scope, but also cumulative, everyday choices. “Think of the thoughtfulness of the Earth throughout the design of the Illuminata House hermitages,” she noted. “We’re deeply rooted in Earth Care, but it’s also how we care for the well-being of our co-workers,” she added. To that end, Arleen and Provincial Leadership are set to host a workshop this spring, facilitated by a mental health professional from Bowen Center, on the topic of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), how they affect survivors, and what can be done to help ease the burden and facilitate recovery.

Lindenwood Retreat and Conference Center Director Paul Mach focuses on co-worker well-being with his

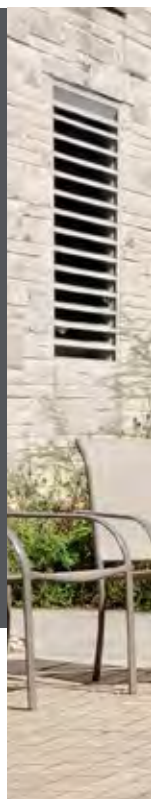
team, too. “We’ve learned to be more adaptive as a team to people’s circumstances,” he said. An example: the Lindenwood team gathers for five minutes every morning for prayer and a check-in. “We lift one another up in prayer, but we stay standing,” Paul laughed about the check-in’s casual vibe. “It’s just to check in and move forward. It’s simple, but it’s made a difference,” Paul added. Since the pandemic began, there’ve been fewer groups visiting Lindenwood, but personal retreats have increased. “People still long for that spirituality, just not in large groups of people,” he said.

Through her role leading the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Team, Arleen also sees an opportunity to “care for everyone and lift-up everyone’s voices. In the simplest form, it’s the values of the Poor Handmaids—all resonating and embodying hope,” she

Top Right: *Students from the University of Wisconsin-Madison walk the indoor labyrinth during their volunteer visit to Lindenwood in January 2022.*

Middle: *Jennifer Weinert teaches the class, Form Your Story, at MoonTree Studios in March. The class is specifically designed for participants 65 years of age and up.*

Bottom: *Niki Juarez-Cummings portrays Hildegard of Bingen in the first of the Women Who Knew God Retreats in September 2021.*



said. "Justice and equity are approaches to bringing awareness and understanding. It affects everything from how and where we advertise jobs so we can build a more diverse workforce."

Simple, mindful, and present are how MoonTree Studio has adapted to life during the pandemic. "When challenging norms and how we think things out, an alternative worldview can emerge other than the direction we were going in," said MoonTree Director Matthew Celmer. "Integral ecology in the Church is a great example." Currently, MoonTree is working with Marian University Ancilla College students in permaculture and art classes. "They're (the students) the ones who'll build a future that challenges the conventional norms," Matthew said.

Paul best summed up the past two years of change and upheaval:

"I think the Sisters showed their true colors in their pandemic response. They gave to those who work here and also to the community. It's then that who they are truly shined."





Mary Tyndall, right, program officer for the St. Joseph Community Health Foundation, stands with members of the Amani Family Services staff. From left, Ewelina Connolly, CEO, Melissa Singh, associate director of the Justice Center and Jessica Ortiz, director of the Justice Center.

"We Get You, We See You, and You Matter"

**Family Justice Center Model is Established at Amani Family Services
with Grant from St. Joseph Community Health Foundation**



By **Mary Tyndall** | Chief Storyteller at **St. Joseph Community Health Foundation**

Since 2008, the St. Joseph Community Health Foundation has been supporting Amani Family Service's programming to help immigrants and refugees navigate the United States' criminal justice system after experiencing a crime such as domestic violence or sexual assault. Over the years, Amani case managers advocated for their clients and provided much-needed interpretation and translation services, but they found the process to be unnecessarily stressful for the victims of crime.

"They have to go to the police to file a report, then another agency and another agency and they have to tell their story over and over again, essentially re-traumatizing them," says Jessica Ortiz, Family Justice Center director for Amani Family Services.

While the process creates a great deal of distress, it can also be inefficient. Separate appointments require taking more time off from work, arranging for transportation and childcare, and paying for interpreters for each meeting. It can all take weeks or even months.

That's why Amani staff began searching for ways to lessen the burden on clients, and they discovered the Family Justice Center model. The model is being implemented nationwide and streamlines the criminal justice process for victims of crime. It calls for public safety, legal, case management, mental health and other services to be available all at the same time and in the same location so a client can take care of multiple appointments at once and with one interpreter.

"We're learning that our client can know that there is a 911 number to call but they may not have trust in the process," says Ewelina Connolly, CEO of Amani Family Services. "Amani helps bring comfort and security to our clients as they're navigating the systems. At the same time, we are helping the community deliver the services through the police department, prosecuting attorney's office, and in the courts because they have expressed to us that they would like to improve their ability to assist our clients. We are playing an important role in pairing up with other service providers and bridging the gaps."

In the spring of 2021, the St. Joseph Community Health Foundation Board and staff met with the Amani Board and staff to discuss launching a local Family

Justice Center model. The Board then approved a new \$50,000 grant to help Amani launch the model. Since then, Amani professionals have been working to implement the new model and began by partnering with the Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic, which schedules appointments at Amani's office two times a month. They're also working with the Fort Wayne Police Department and the Prosecutor's Office to find the best ways to collaborate and serve immigrants and refugees who are victims of crime in the Fort Wayne area.

According to Meg Distler, Executive Director of the St. Joseph Community Health Foundation, "We see Amani Family Services and Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic as truly "communities in communion" ministering to assure no immigrant is a stranger, and everyone is treated with dignity. In 2008, we were among the first donors to both organizations. Since then, we have worked together on numerous community projects, like the Family Justice Center and Diversity Awards, and provided 24 different grants. Like a mustard seed planted, St. Joe's initial grant investments have yielded great results for many immigrant families. It is such a privilege to see the ripples spread outward."

Amani is working to go beyond the criminal justice services, however, and will soon have a health coach that will be available to meet with clients, who can also access mental health services through the agency.

"We can help navigate the whole criminal justice piece and the legal case may progress as they want, but that doesn't mean they will have the healing and hope they need, so we're working to address all of that with this model," says Melissa Singh, associate director of the Family Justice Center.

In the end, the Family Justice Center model is about more than just helping non-English speaking residents navigate the criminal justice system, it's about supporting the local immigrant and refugee community.

"This sends a simple but powerful message that 'we get you, we see you, and you matter,' says Ortiz. "The message for our clients is that we will continue to find ways to work with them in a way that says 'you belong here, we embrace you with open arms.'"



Sister Cailla Belfort, PHJC (center), has left Brazil to experience intercultural living and to improve her English language skills. She is living in community with Sister Marie Heppeler, PHJC (left), and Sister Connie Bach, PHJC (right).

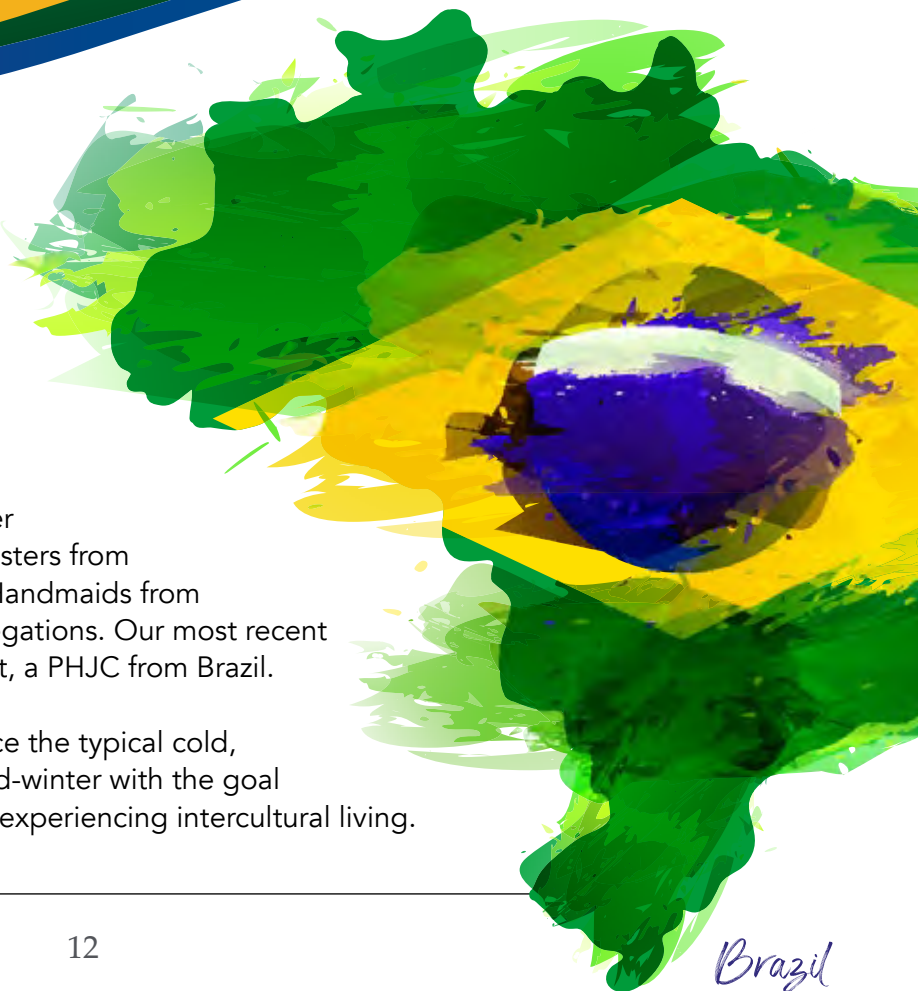
Bem Vinda, Sister Cailla! WELCOME!

By **Sister Marie Heppeler** | PHJC

In 1883, Saint Katharina wrote a letter to Sister Bartholomea stating "...I know no foreign countries and no foreign sisters, there are only Handmaids of Christ, filled with the spirit of their vocation and truly working in blessed ways..."

In 2017 and 2019 respectively, Poor Handmaids were called by both Provincial and General Chapter to grow our bond of community living to include sisters from other cultures. We have welcomed our own Poor Handmaids from other countries as well as sisters from other congregations. Our most recent welcome has been extended to Sister Cailla Belfort, a PHJC from Brazil.

Leaving behind the tropical weather of Brazil to face the typical cold, wintry days here in Indiana, Sister Cailla arrived mid-winter with the goal of advancing her English language skills as well as experiencing intercultural living.



***“...I know no foreign countries and no foreign sisters,
there are only Handmaids of Christ, filled with the spirit
of their vocation and truly working in blessed ways...”***

— Saint Katharina Kasper

The Language Company, located on the IUSB campus in Mishawaka, provides advancement in areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing and looks to be a good fit for her needs at this time. Because of her extended stay till mid-summer, Sister Cailla has the opportunity to complete a number of classes.

When Cailla is not in class, she is sharing community life at Sarah House in South Bend with Sisters Connie and Marie. Our days together have been and continue to be filled with laughter, funny stories, tasting chili for the first time, introduction to Brazilian cooking, praying and singing in both English and Portuguese, and conversations that include our favorite APP – Google Translate!

This is such an amazing opportunity for all three of us and for our province – certainly a graced time “to see the other face of God.” (Antonio M. Pernia,

SVD) “Interculturality must touch every aspect of our Institute’s life. Our understanding of the vows, community, ministry, and our spirituality should be transformed as we engage this process honestly and intentionally... nothing short of a transformation of the heart is required.” (Sister Teresa Maya, CCVI)

I believe Saint Katharina was on to something when she shared her belief of knowing “no foreign countries and no foreign sisters...” She may not have known the term intercultural living, but she definitely had a vision of how her sisters were to live – with lifegiving hospitality, with mutuality in community living and with openness and appreciation for diversity. We are experiencing all this with our PHJC sister from Brazil.

***Bem vinda a casa, Sister Cailla!
WELCOME HOME!***



Left: Sister Cailla clears a driveway of snow, much different than her tropical climate in Brazil.



Right: From left, Sister Cailla, Sister Marie, and Sister Connie.



CASA CATALINA

A place where we offer human warmth, respect, and love without distinction.

By **Vanessa del Carmen Vergara Aguilera** |
Social Worker at Casa Catalina

Casa Catalina, a ministry located in Coatzacoalcos, Mexico is supported by the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ. This ministry, begun in 2012, provides temporary shelter to those most in need of healthcare services. Created and identified as a safe, caring place, it possesses all the means necessary to accommodate patients from a day up to several years. Most patients who come to Casa Catalina are suffering from chronic illness or physical trauma. However, emerging social problems such as migration, homelessness and domestic violence have brought people from all over to the doors of Casa Catalina.

Casa Catalina serves persons who have been abandoned by family and society and do not have the economic resources to cover their basic needs. Our mission is to conserve their physical, mental, and psychological stability. Our donors are critically important to this ministry by ensuring that we are able to care for all who need our services.

At Casa Catalina we make an impact on the lives of our patients, but we are also touched by those in our care. A patient, an older gentleman by the name of Manuel Rodriguez Gonzalez, was referred to Casa Catalina by a local hospital. Through our ministry he found the help and compassionate care he needed from our nurses and volunteer doctor, Sister Frances Gallinatti, PHJC, all of whom were attentive to his progress, especially since he had no family to tend him.



Manuel was a patient at Casa Catalina for more than two years. In July of last year when we celebrated his birthday it also happened to be Grandparents Day. Manuel loved sharing his birthday and being a grandfather to all those who had the privilege of knowing him. After some ups and downs in his health, Manuel passed away January 4, 2022. A man of character and faith, our Grandfather Manuel, trusted in God's providence right up to his last moments. He will always be remembered with love by every single one of us.

"Casa Catalina is a place where we offer human warmth, care, attention, respect, tolerance, and love without distinction, and we definitely receive it in return. A prime example of this was our patient and friend Manuel Rodriguez Gonzalez whose memories, blessings, love, affection, and moments of joy were transmitted to us and remain in our hearts," said Nurse Maria Elena Sanchez Cruz.

Nurse Lesvia Leon added, "Manuel died leaving great sadness in our hearts, but also left us with the message that life is to be embraced and enjoyed despite adverse circumstances and illnesses that can appear in any of our lives. We say to this wise, cheerful man of strong character, may he rest in peace and may God receive him into glory."

To make a gift to Poor Handmaid ministries in Mexico visit PoorHandmaids.org/Donate.



In Loving *Memory*



Sister Antoinette Volk, PHJC (Marie)

Sister Antoinette (Marie) Volk, Poor Handmaid of Jesus Christ, died at age 99 on January 1, 2022 at the Catherine Kasper Home, Donaldson, Indiana. She was just 2 weeks away from her 100th birthday.

Born to Anton and Catherine (Kuentler), Wendelin, IL she was preceded in death by her parents along with her brothers Virgil, Anton, Don, Louis and her sister, Sr. Loretta Volk, PHJC. She is survived by her sister Ethel Zwilling.

Sister Antoinette entered the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ September 8, 1943 and professed her vows June 25, 1946.

Sister Antoinette began her ministry in the dietary departments at Angel Guardian Orphanage, St. Mary School Carlyle IL, St. Mary Hospital East St. Louis IL, and St. Joseph Hospital Fort Wayne IN. Beginning in 1960 she held dietary supervisory positions at Convent Ancilla Domini in Donaldson IN, St. Mary Hospital Gary IN, and St. Augustine Convent Chicago IL. In 1990 she became the Coordinator of Hospitality for the United Family Center Chicago IL. and transitioned in 1996 as a companion to the elderly from Saint Peter and Paul Parish Chicago IL. Sister Antoinette considered each new mission a new beginning and in it she made love visible. Sister's daily living was a prayer of loving service which she offered up for each person. Before Sr. Antoinette left her last mission and retired, the presenter at her farewell gathering expressed the

sentiments of so many people: "We are humbled by her gift of prayer and the beauty of her complete trust in God, not on a day-to-day basis, but, minute-by-minute."

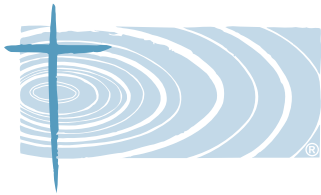
Sister Antoinette officially retired to the Catherine Kasper Home, Donaldson, IN on July 1, 2001. Even in retirement she continued to serve by caring for the other sisters and residents at Catherine Kasper Home. She also designed and sewed baby quilts and comforters, selling or gifting them to those in need, and her creations were always admired and appreciated.

Rest in Peace, Sister Antoinette.



We remember our Associate that died in early 2022

Joseph R. Chamberlin, Sr.



Partners in the work of the Spirit

Word Gathering

Ancilla Domini Sisters
PHJC Communications
P.O. Box 1, Donaldson, IN 46513

COMPOSTING COLLECTION

At the beginning of 2021, a fellow PHJC co-worker came up with the idea to have a co-worker compost collection system in place. Interested co-workers were given 5-gallon buckets with lids and a list of acceptable compostable items. Each week they were able to drop off their buckets, and PHJC Greenhouse Manager, Sam Tepes, would collect the buckets, weigh them, record the data, and add the contents to the greenhouse composting units.

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| March – 24 lbs | August – 70 lbs |
| April – 134.25 lbs | September – 72.75 lbs |
| May – 61 lbs | October – 19.25 lbs |
| June – 51 lbs | November – 26.25 lbs |
| July – 83 lbs | December – 25.5 lbs |



In 2021 **A TOTAL OF 567 POUNDS** of compostable material was diverted from the landfill, to feed the microorganisms which in turn feed the plants, thus providing nutrient-dense foods for our health.

Results from what fellow co-workers contributed to the PHJC greenhouse operations in 2021.

