

# Word

## Gathering

Summer 2021



## ANCILLA COLLEGE

# *Lasting Legacy*

*The End of an Era, The Start of Something New*



# In This Issue

- 4** PHJC Chapter: Call to Integral Living
- 6** Ancilla College: A Lasting Legacy of Transformation
- 8** Ancilla College Dedicates Nursing Wing to Dr. Dorothy M. Weber
- 10** 2021 Jubilarians: Serve In Faith
- 12** Grants Helping Vaccinate Underserved Residents
- 14** Mexico Novitiate Experience
- 16** Prophets Over Profit: A Pastoral Plan and Permaculture
- 18** Ministry Minutes and Obituary

## Editorial Board

Barbara Allison  
Erin Clark-Lupo  
Alicia Hammonds  
Sister Joetta Huelsmann, PHJC  
Sister Linda Volk, PHJC  
Mark Burkholder, St. Joseph Community Health Foundation

*Word Gathering* is published three times a year by the American Province of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ of Donaldson, Indiana for Sisters of the Province, Associate Community, members of the Fiat Spiritus Community and friends. Contents of *Word Gathering* are not official, nor do they necessarily reflect the views of PHJC Provincial Leadership.

## Contact Information

*Word Gathering*  
P. O. Box 1  
Donaldson, IN 46513  
[www.poorhandmaids.org](http://www.poorhandmaids.org)  
ahammonds  
[@poorhandmaids.org](mailto:@poorhandmaids.org)

 PoorHandmaidsofJesusChrist  
 poorhandmaids

## Paper

The paper used to print *Word Gathering* is certified through the Forest Stewardship Council. We care about all of creation. Please recycle.

Share our stories with others by sharing **Word Gathering** with friends and family.

# STATUE OF SAINT *Katharina Kasper*

By **Erin Clark-Lupo** | *Director of Mission Affirmation*

On April 9, 2021, the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ community gathered with coworkers, Associate Community members, Maria Center residents and friends to unveil the new statue of their foundress, Saint Katharina Kasper. Bishop Kevin Rhoades of the Diocese of Fort Wayne- South Bend was present to offer the blessing of the statue. This was the first time that anyone who was not on the statue committee was able to view the statue and celebrate the occasion together.

Though the statue was unveiled this spring, many individuals had been working behind the scenes for over a year to create a statue of Saint Katharina that would represent her charism of openness to the Spirit and outreach to the vulnerable and underserved. The Statue Committee which included Sister Margaret Anne Henss, Sister Marlene Ann Lama, Sister Connie Bach and JR Daves searched for a sculptor, an architect for the plaza surrounding the statue and just the right location for the plaza on the Motherhouse grounds. The committee felt the right connection with David Layman of Layman Studio in Mishawaka, Indiana who created the bronze statue and with Michael Bultinick from Lehman and Lehman, Inc. who designed the surrounding plaza.

The Poor Handmaid Sisters had expressed that Saint Katharina be depicted as a mature woman of wisdom and that her shoes be featured as a symbol of her walking in the ways of the Spirit as well as the reality of the many miles she walked throughout her life to visit and encourage her Sisters in their ministry and spirituality. They also suggested she hold a basket of pears as a reminder of her generosity already as a young child in sharing the pears from the family tree with the other poor children of her village.

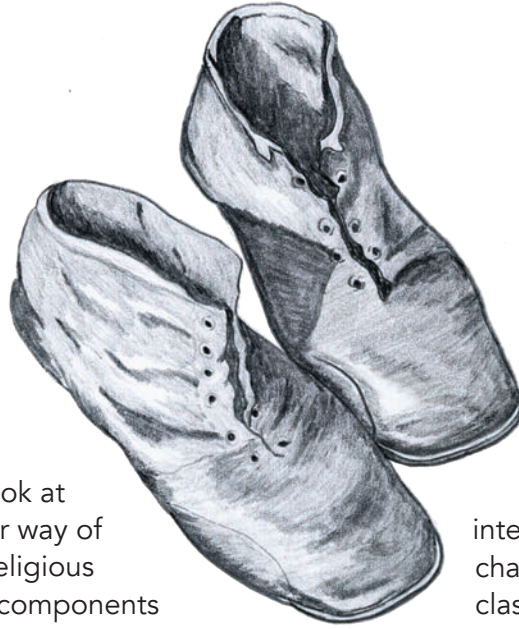
As you enter the driveway to the Motherhouse Katharina will greet you with a welcoming extended hand that also beckons you to join her in ministering to those most in need of your love and care as she did so generously in her day.



# PHJC CHAPTER

## Call to Integral Living

By **Sister Linda Volk** | PHJC



Every four years our religious congregation takes an in-depth look at how we are authentically living our way of life. As members of a ministerial religious congregation, we assess the vital components of prayer, community and service in the context of vocation, charism and the needs of the world and the church. This process goes by the name of Chapter and is a time of directional movement and rejuvenation for the province.

Integration was the watchword for the Poor Handmaid Chapter held this spring. Challenged and guided by the concept of integral living, the call to integrity and cohesiveness was in the air. There was focused energy around a desire for common direction and shared meaning of a Poor Handmaid vision for the American province and for all who partner with us in ministry, prayer and community. With the help of prayerful reflection, contemplative dialogue and facilitated processing – and all of this experienced virtually via ZOOM – we not only put our toe in the water but quickly moved into the current of discerning our potential for impact on contemporary needs and issues in an integral fashion.

None of us doubts that life is an integrative whole. Essentially what happens to one happens to all.

Integral living is a life stance based on belief in the interrelationship and interdependence of all that is. Climate change and the ongoing pandemic are classic examples of this. So are the multiple other connections in the whole community of life throughout the planet and the universe. We are slowly awakening to what the mystics and prophets of all generations and times have always known about integral living.

A vision statement articulates the collective soul of the province. It is the north star by which we align our structures; discern our choices, behaviors and decisions; and implement our operations. This results in doing things differently and sometimes in doing different things. It calls upon the collective capacity of all who are part of the contemporary response to the charism of Saint Katharina Kasper.

The key terms of “catalyst, just transformation, poor and marginalized and the sharing of our resources” found in the province’s newly defined vision statement indicate we are looking at a reality beyond ourselves and how we can influence that reality for the common good of all. We call on ourselves and our partners to be catalysts, agents that stimulate and move with the ripples of transformation in the communities where we serve.

## Poor Handmaid of Jesus Christ American Province Vision

*Called by our commitment to fostering Gospel values and communities in communion, the American Province of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ will be a catalyst for a just transformation in the communities where we serve, particularly addressing the needs and circumstances of those who are poor and marginalized, by sharing our resources to advance the mission, charism and spirit of Saint Katharina Kasper.*

The vision holds that though Poor Handmaids are continuing direct service we are also leveraging our tangible and intangible resources to effect systemic change in our arenas of influence. Our intentional commitment is that we, along with our charism partners and those with whom we integrate like purpose and efforts, will create transformation for all involved.

To support the vision statement the application of integral thinking was infused into the four PHJC core values. Each value is accompanied by four basic belief statements, each of which is followed by a tangible call of attitude or action that serves as benchmarks for our adherence to these values.

This calls for the next step in the evolution of Poor Handmaid culture. We name it "integral being and thinking" and it calls us to be deep listeners, vulnerable learners and authentic believers in "communities in communion."

All of this is grounded in Gospel, mission, vision, values, charism, Catholic social teaching, mature discipleship and the ongoing history of the congregation guided by the spirit of Saint Katharina Kasper. We need all of this



to support our living into the full meaning of the vision statement.

Yes, this takes time; yes, this takes grace; yes, this takes risk; and yes, this takes unremitting hope, resilience, and continuing openness to God's Spirit as our challenging milieu keeps changing and evolving. And ever-so-much-yes, we do not go alone. We have the wonder and gift of collaborators, partners, coworkers, associates and ministers from an array of generations with a huge variety of gifts, skills, creativity and generativity.

Chapter reveals the aspirations of the heart, but these desires must be charged with reality and a trust in our capacity to be about true transformation with attentiveness and courage, the trademarks of those imbued with the spirit of Saint Katharina Kasper.



# ANCILLA COLLEGE

## A LASTING LEGACY OF TRANSFORMATION

---

By **Sister Michele Dvorak** | PHJC

It was 1937. Sister Symphoria, aka Mother Symphoria, collaborated with her contacts at DePaul University in Chicago. The president of DePaul, Fr. Michael J. O'Connell, C.M. agreed to extend the DePaul charter to Ancilla College, in effect, creating a branch campus for DePaul University. A quiet transformation begins!

Thirty years fly by before Ancilla has procured its own Articles of Incorporation and By Laws, securing autonomy with the state officially recognizing the new Ancilla College in 1967 with authority to confer Associate degrees. Sister Joel Lampen, PHJC was named its first president; she served for 18 years. Armed with the competitive ability to offer degrees, Ancilla demonstrated incredible transformation for the small rural college. During the 1966-67 academic year, Ancilla opened its doors to the local students who desired a quality education. This new era featured additional faculty, a growing number of programs, a diversified student body, and an increased number of alumni.

During the intervening years, Ancilla grew to more than 700 students, diversified programmatic options, added athletics, built a science and technology wing (Sister Maris Krimmel Wing), hosted its first lay president, expanded its nursing and Liberal Arts experiences, and strengthened its influence and support from the surrounding community. Ancilla was recognized as an excellent college providing

a foundation that would lead to success at four-year colleges. The alumni from this era typically stayed and served in the surrounding area.

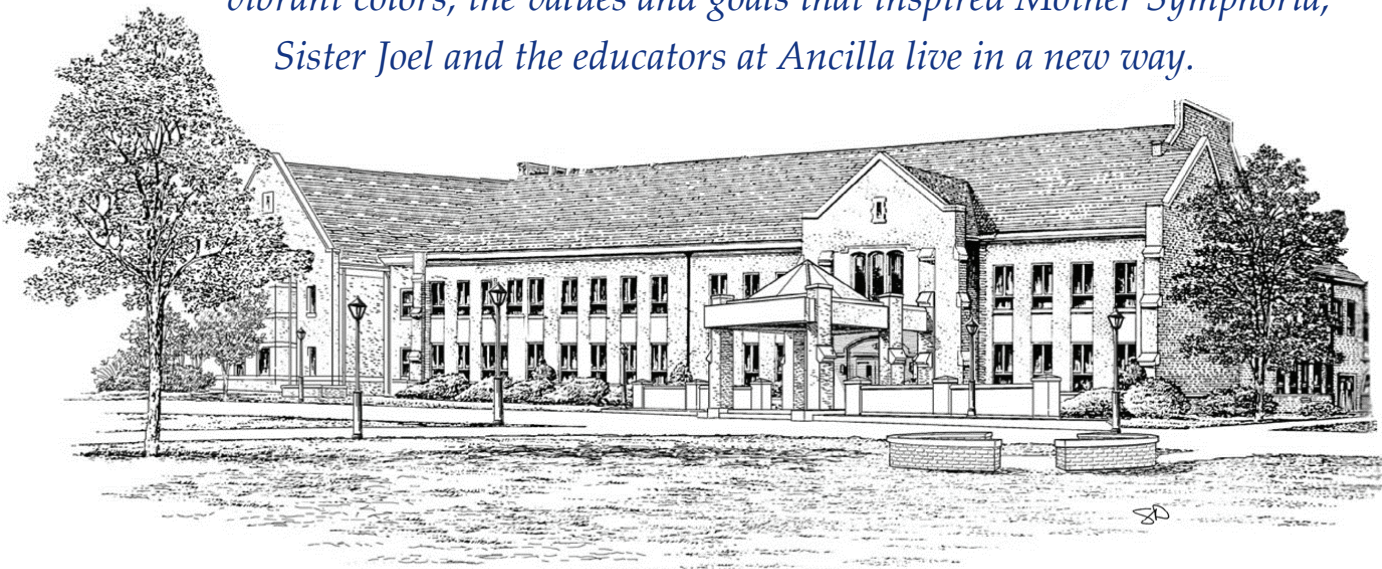
Another 54 years fly by and Ancilla College finds itself in the midst of another transformation. To secure quality educational opportunities well into the future, Ancilla has reached out toward the south, and has signed a formal agreement with Marian University. This transition holds tremendous possibilities for the future students of the new entity, Ancilla College of Marian University (ACMU). Again, the concept of a branch campus provides future stability and structure for our community.

The back story leading to the transition date of July 1, 2021 and the new Ancilla College of Marian University includes conversations with 15+ colleges or universities, hours of deliberations on the part of the Ancilla College Board of Trustees, faculty and staff, and most recently, a collaborative effort to register students and organize for fall 2021. Faculty and staff have engaged in exciting training on the new systems and have worked to create a culture that reflects the Franciscan values and character of Marian University. As well, programs will bridge to baccalaureate programs at Marian University.

A new story continues to play out day by day.



*It is 2021. Mother Symphoria and Sister Joel could not have imagined the design of higher education emerging today at ACMU. However, those two leaders and all the Sisters and faculty who taught in the college knew deep in their hearts that they were committed to providing a high-quality education for students of all ages, a legacy that would last. The PHJCs continue to create a future through collaboration and transformation. While the particulars of the dream are painted with new and vibrant colors, the values and goals that inspired Mother Symphoria, Sister Joel and the educators at Ancilla live in a new way.*



# ANCILLA COLLEGE DEDICATES NURSING WING TO

## Dr. Dorothy M. Weber

By *Emily Hutsell* | Ancilla College



**Thursday, April 15 was an exciting day on campus at Ancilla College.** The decision had been made by Sister Michele Dvorak, President of Ancilla College, to dedicate the first floor hall from the Motherhouse doors to Charger Lounge as the Dr. Dorothy M. Weber Nursing Wing. After previously dedicating other areas of Ancilla to Sister Symphoria Mueller (Miller), Sister Joel Lampen and Sister Maris Kimmel for their work in establishing, operating, and updating the college, one last area needed attention.

Nursing is a big part of our educational offerings, and has always been one of the main ministries of the Poor Handmaids. So upon realizing the contributions made by Dr. Dorothy Weber to the nursing program through the years, Sister Michele determined that the stretch of hallway used for the nursing faculty should become the Weber Wing.

Dorothy (who was 90 on May 16) was delighted to be asked and immediately began to figure out how she could be released from her long-term care facility due to COVID restrictions. With help from her family, Dorothy made the arrangements, and planned her trip to Donaldson. The day would prove to be extra special as Dorothy was given the opportunity to reunite with her dear friend Sister Joan Fisher. They joined Sisters Antoinette, Pauline, Damian, Jolise, Deanne and Marlene Ann for lunch at Catherine's Cottage, along with her family. It was a special sight to see the friends reunited and so happy to reconnect after this past difficult year, and years separated by distance.

After lunch and a rest at Lindenwood, Dorothy was refreshed and arrived in the college escorted by





# Ancilla Veterinary Nursing

Ancilla College held an Open House to bless the Ancilla College Veterinary Nursing Teaching Facility on Wednesday, April 28. Donors, Poor Handmaid of Jesus Christ Sisters, faculty and staff were able to tour the building completed in January 2021. Guests also included families of the Vet Nursing Program students. Current students were on hand to give visitors tours of the almost 5,000 square foot facility. The plaques dedicating each of the sponsored rooms were installed in the morning and then blessed by President Michele Dvorak, PHJC. About 30 people came through the facility to see the classrooms, kennels, surgery prep room and treatment room which is currently serving five second year students and eight first year students, with a new cohort being formed for fall admission.

her step-children Pamela, Doug and Jeff Schneeman, and a surprise guest, her niece Connie Dettmer who drove five hours from Wisconsin to attend this special event. Sister Michele opened the ceremony with a welcome, followed by Sister Joetta with a prayer and an introduction of Dorothy by Emily Hutsell.

Dorothy's message to those in attendance was that although her life took many twists and turns, she never lost her connection to the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ and she was inspired to support the college to honor her parents. Dorothy's life took her from leaving her family in Illinois to come to high school in Donaldson, then joining the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ congregation. She earned her associate degree from Ancilla Domini College, her bachelor's and master's degree from DePaul University, and her Doctorate from Catholic University of America. After teaching for several years, and then leaving the congregation, Dorothy had to make her own living and went into nursing by working at St. Joseph Hospital in South Bend while taking classes. She took care of several family members through illness and end of life care and went on to use her caring skills to help others in work with dementia patients, including her dear friend Sister Mary Dolores Grier. Although she married later in life, Dorothy gained three step-children who adore her and were excited to celebrate the day with her.

After a reading from Lori Huffman, Nursing Program Director, the plaque was unveiled and now holds a place on the wall across from Charger Lounge. As a special addition, Dorothy donated a quilt hand-stitched by her mother years ago to be raffled off with proceeds to benefit the nursing department. She would like to honor those whose path does not take them on in education, but allows them to use skills and talents to make life better.

A reception followed where Dorothy was able to greet old friends and Sisters who came to congratulate and celebrate with her. While she was here, Dorothy and her family were also able to see the simulation mannequin that she donated to the nursing program, JUNO, in action. Nursing instructor Shanna Ricker showed off some of the features used to teach nursing students how to respond to medical situations. Dorothy was happy to see her support of the program in action.

After a long and exciting day, Dorothy and her family returned home to Indianapolis with wonderful memories and a few tokens of appreciation from Ancilla College. Although the day is over, the college will have the Dr. Dorothy M. Weber Nursing Wing to keep the memory of a great day alive. Thank you to Dorothy Weber for her support, dedication and commitment to helping students at Ancilla College.

# 2021 Jubilarians

## *Serve In Faith*

By **Barbara Allison** | **Communications**

---

The years were 1946, 1951, and 1971. They were historic in many regards. In 1946, the world watched the Nuremberg Trials unfold at the beginning of post-WWII America. 1951 and 1971 saw the publication of the classic novel, *The Catcher in the Rye* and release of *The Pentagon Papers*, respectively. In those years, three Poor Handmaids also professed their first vows, making quiet history of their own, and it's a history of service lived through faith. Sisters Antoinette Volk, Joan Fisher, and Kathryn Haas all celebrate jubilees with the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ this year.

Sister Antoinette Volk celebrates her 75th Jubilee this year. She professed her first vows in 1946. She was born in 1922 in Wendelin, Illinois, and served in the ministry of Hospitality services, Hospitality management, senior care, and community service. When reflecting on her 70th Jubilee in 2016, Sister Antoinette said, "When we take a moment to reflect upon time, we are certainly astonished to see how quickly the years of our lives have passed and the richness these years have given us." Sister Antoinette is now retired at the Catherine Kasper Home in Donaldson and ministers in community service.

Sister Joan Fisher commemorates 70 years as a Poor Handmaid this year. Born in Chicago in 1930, Sister professed her first vows in 1951. She began her ministry in teaching and later became an

advocate for the poor and underserved, ministering in Cairo, Illinois, and as one of the founding Sisters of Sojourner Truth House in Gary, Indiana. Sister Joan noted at her 60th Jubilee in 2011, "I wouldn't change any of it for a moment. Now at this time of my life I am grateful for all those opportunities and wish I could have done more, but that is in the Lord's hands." Sister Joan is currently retired to Catherine's Cottage in Donaldson and ministers in sewing, community service and prayer.

Sister Kathryn (Kathy) Haas celebrates 50 years as a PHJC Sister this year. Born in 1950 in Trenton, Illinois, Sister Kathy professed her first vows in 1971. She's served in the ministries of education, parish ministry, vocation ministry, community service, and as a Provincial Councilor from 2005-2013. Sister Kathy resides at Convent Ancilla Domini in Donaldson and ministers in community service.

Of her upcoming milestone, Sister Kathy reflected on her family and church community's influence on her path to becoming a Poor Handmaid. "Many varied and treasured memories easily come to mind and heart as I think back on my life as a Poor Handmaid. My family and growing up in a rural community and parish have been foundational steps in my journey as a woman, as a Christian, as a Poor Handmaid Sister and as a part of the larger communities of life. My relationship with God

was nurtured by my family and a closeness to nature that was part of my growing up on a family farm.

I stepped forward in my journey to become a sister because I was encouraged by the love of my family. The support of my parents and modelling of living life generously and in service to others along with that of my parish community were key for me.

In becoming a sister I became part of another community. I have been blessed with experiences that built on the values I came with and that expanded my perspective on life.

Understandably, there have been difficult times, along with times of celebration, times of confusion and sadness and times of wonderment at the gifts of life. I often wanted a clear answer or direction regarding

ministry or some other steps on this journey of life. I learned that the way isn't always clear and that the unexpected turns can be growthful and enriching, when walking the path with others and in tune with God."

### ***Congratulations, Sisters!***



# Grants Helping Vaccinate **UNDERSERVED RESIDENTS**



---

By **St. Joseph Community Health Foundation Staff**

In partnership with the Foellinger Foundation, the St. Joseph Community Health Foundation is working with 11 grassroots organizations helping to vaccinate Black, Latino, non-English speaking and other underserved residents against COVID-19.

Because COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted vulnerable populations, the Foellinger Foundation and St. Joe Foundation are providing rapid-response grants of up to \$5,000 to nonprofits, churches and other organizations to help remove some of the barriers that keep marginalized and underserved people from getting the vaccination.

The effort has involved working with people and organizations, particularly those in southeast Fort Wayne, who are already working with underserved populations, have the trust of the people they serve, know their communities' needs, and understand what it would take to help the people they serve get vaccinated. Through programming focused on education and awareness, assistance, and services

such as transportation, scheduling, or translation and interpretation, or anything else that an underserved population might need, the Foundation aims to help organizations make an even larger impact in their respective communities.

To date, the Foundation has awarded \$46,252.47 to 12 local organizations that have gone the extra mile to support and protect communities they serve. Here are a few highlights:

## **HealthVisions Midwest**

HealthVisions Midwest of Fort Wayne has been one of the Foundation's major collaborators. They assembled a task force that organized and carried out a Vaccine Registration Week April 10-17 across Southeast Fort Wayne at various churches, community centers, apartment complexes, barbershops, supermarkets and food banks, and nonprofits where people could get information about the vaccines or register on-the-

spot. Some locations offered Spanish and Burmese interpretation services as well as food giveaways.

HealthVisions also produced two public service announcements, one featuring community leaders and the other featuring members of the Greater Fort Wayne National Pan-Hellenic Council, to share personal stories and reasons why getting vaccinated is important for Black people.

## Community Harvest Food Bank

Community Harvest Food Bank participated in the Vaccine Registration Week by having educational resources and vaccine registration opportunities available during its regular Saturday morning food distributions and its Farm Wagon mobile pantry at St. Peter's Catholic Church. Community Harvest worked with Language Services Network, another vaccination assistance grantee, to offer Spanish and Burmese interpreters to assist limited English proficiency attendees with registration while receiving food assistance.

During the events, Community Harvest was able to register 70 people for a vaccine and provide 118 people with informational materials. According to Maia Pfeffer, Community Engagement Coordinator, "Our greatest success was with outreach to the Burmese-speaking community on Saturday, April 17 thanks to Yin Yin Moe, Lin Kyu, and Win Tun from Language Services Network."

## Amani Family Services

Amani Family Services, a local nonprofit organization serving more than 1800 immigrant and refugee families in Allen County, provided information and access to a vaccine in a way that made the families they work with feel safe, understood, and empowered. Amani had information in multiple languages, helped bridge technology gaps by helping people register for a vaccine, and worked with Meijer to host a vaccination clinic at their office so that the families Amani serves could come to a safe and trusted place to be vaccinated. 138 people were vaccinated thanks to their efforts.



As the St. Joe Foundation reviews the impact of the initial grants to determine how best to proceed, staff are observing that non-English and limited-English speaking populations are successfully using trusted people, organizations, and "safe sites" to overcome concerns about safety, language, and technology barriers to getting vaccinated. The Foundation also recognizes that transportation remains a barrier for many in the community, and that there will need to be a longer-term education and outreach effort to overcome vaccine hesitancy, particularly among the Black population, due to a history of racism and implicit bias. The St. Joe Foundation will shift its focus to address those observations while also helping to strengthen the valuable organizations and assets already doing great work in the community.



# MEXICO

## *Novitiate Experience*

### Yessica Torres Cruz

*Experience of my Novitiate*



We PHJC novices started 2021 with the opportunity to experience different PHJC local communities located in the south. The PHJC formation house where I am in the novitiate is located in the north. My first experience at Casa Annunciation with four other PHJC Sisters began with a special and joyful welcome that made me feel right at home. As the days went by, I adapted to the community rhythm of the house and the dynamics of life in the southern Mexico.

Due to the situation of the pandemic, I was not able to work directly in the ministries of the Poor Handmaids. My service consisted of attending to the needs that arose within the convent and neighborhood: packing bags of food for families, attending to migrants who passed by the house asking for help, helping in the kitchen and with other household needs, and reviewing some community documents. After a month I moved to the other community, Casa María. In this community my participation consisted of helping the sisters within the household and getting involved in gardening.

This time of experience has been profitable and enriching for me. I learning new things and got to know my Sisters a little more. It was edifying and motivating for me to listen to them narrate their journey in religious life and their participation in many ministries. As we shared prayer and faith they readily revealed their concerns and their dreams for the region of Mexico. I thank God and both of these communities of PHJC sisters for this time of experience and discernment. I pray through the intercession of Saint Katharina that I choose every day to give a firm and joyful yes to the Lord, as a Poor Handmaid of Jesus Christ.

*“If we do all we can,  
God will be satisfied.”*

- Saint Katharina to Sister Eulogia  
January 1881



## Ilsey Janeth Reyes Aparicio

*My novitiate experience in the different local communities*

Due to the pandemic situation, my experience of living in several PHJC communities was a bit different than I had anticipated. However, in spite of the difficult circumstances I managed to experience living in community and getting to know my Sisters and their ministries in a meaningful way. Although, due to Covid restrictions I could not immerse myself fully in the ministries, I focused on being of service in the ways I could, attentive to the needs that arose. This experience helped me realize how important it is to serve with joy and an attitude of learning in the midst of any ministry.

Each of the PHJC communities and their local service is quite different. I found myself adapting from one moment to the next to gardening, English classes, cooking, and meeting the needs of the migrants who knocked on our door. This helped me recognize that no need is insignificant and that we respond with the gifts and abilities we have. This was a very tangible experience of our community's spirit of openness to embracing the new needs that arise each day. This also helped me to envision using my talents to best serve others in the future.

During this period of experience outside the novitiate I had the opportunity to participate with the Sisters

and others in the celebration of the Feast of Saint Katharina Kasper, in the virtual praying of her novena with others and in the regional assembly gathering of the PHJCs.

I certainly lived a different type of Lent outside the House of Formation and an even more different Easter because of my interaction with the American culture along with my home culture. It was a gift to receive the American Sisters' wisdom, listen to their experiences, their anecdotes and jokes and the joys and difficulties of their past lives.

I have much gratitude for this time outside the House of Formation. In living for periods of time with each of the communities my vocation was reinforced and I was given tools and learnings to further my discernment process in regard to choosing religious life and the commitment that it entails.

These were days of gratitude, of prayer, of ministry, of community. I hope that "God is a little satisfied" that I cooperated with the grace offered during this special time. I continue to ask the intercession of our Holy Foundress Katharina Kasper and Saint Joseph to guard the vocations of our Congregation.



# PROPHETS OVER PROFIT

## A Pastoral Plan and Permaculture

By **Matthew Celmer**  
*Executive Director, MoonTree Studios*

As MoonTree is celebrating the 30th anniversary of the 1991 PHJC Pastoral Plan, I have frequently referenced a particular quote from that inspiring commitment. I want to dive deeper into those words and how they have influenced our direction as a 21st century ministry who “challenges people to experience mindfulness as they fearlessly explore the interconnectedness of art, nature, and the Spirit within.”

“We stand as prophets called to share an alternative world-view with a society convinced that ownership, consumption and power are most important.” (1991 PHJC Pastoral Plan, p. 18)

Proclaiming oneself as a prophet is no small gesture. It is a commitment to ideas that are admittedly not always popular in one’s own time. A prophet is almost always pitted against the status quo and those who strive to maintain it at all costs.

Though this was written 30 years ago, we still live in a society convinced that ownership, consumption, and power are the most important things. We can look at the popularity of our last president as a testament to this. Not only does his legacy suggest his personal adherence to the importance of these three things, but it also serves as a reflection of our capitalistic tendency towards them.

We value things only as much as they generate some type of profit for us such as owning a piece of land or



*Coworkers and residents participate in a conversation about permaculture in the MoonTree Gallery.*

building that you then charge others to use. We grade our economic wellbeing (Gross Domestic Product) by calculating how much we have consumed, regardless of any negative long-term effects of that consumption. We worship power to the point that we hold those with great power less accountable than the most vulnerable of our society.

At MoonTree, we have committed ourselves to conversations that challenge these realities through programs such as “Permaculture 101,” “Integral Rebel,” “Beginning Vegetable Gardening,” and “Microgreens Basics.” In response to ownership, consumption, and power, we reply by giving, creating, and being vulnerable. This is Simplicity.

“We are voices calling for lives of interdependence and inter-connectedness in church, society and creation.” (1991 PHJC Pastoral Plan, p. 18)

Our existence is already one of interconnectedness and interdependence, but it takes an acknowledgement of this universal truth for us to begin to fully live into what that means. Our churches may worship differently, but their commonalities cannot be ignored. Though we have borders that separate our societies, the people are fundamentally the same on both sides. And we can choose to continue to exert power over creation in







A tray of sunflower microgreens grown at MoonTree for the "Microgreens Basics" offering.



a way that robs creation of its future health and wellbeing, or we can wake up to the reality that we share in its fate and build a regenerative relationship with it.

Through programs such as "Nature Journaling," "More than One Way to Make Compost," and "Contemplative Creativity," MoonTree strives to awaken people to their relationship with the living world around them, filled with diverse and beautiful living organisms at all levels. This is Dignity and Respect for All.

"How do we respond? We resist our fears and dare to accept the challenges we find before us." (1991 PHJC Pastoral Plan, p. 18)

We must acknowledge our fears before we are able to resist them. If we do not, they influence us subconsciously in ways that perpetuate the very things we hope to change. The challenges are monumental and often seem overwhelming, but together, there is no hurdle we cannot overcome. We want to highlight this power to overcome our fears together through programs such as "Eat What You Reap," "Natural Building with Cob," and "Woodworking." This is Community.

"We speak to the present needs of our earth by modeling an Earth-keeping vision and by developing personal and communal spiritualities that reverence creation." (1991 PHJC Pastoral Plan, p. 18)

If we have so far removed ourselves from Mother Nature that we are oblivious to its cries for help, we must open our eyes and listen more deeply. Through programs like "What to Do with All Your Waste," "Herbs 101," and "Art as Experience,"

our goal is to open participants' hearts and minds to a new dynamic with creation and the creative process. This is Openness to the Spirit.

All of these concepts align with the principles and practices of permaculture and are rooted in the values of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ. There is no better time for us to renew our commitment to following in the footsteps of Saint Katharina by being "partners in the work of the Spirit." At MoonTree, we view permaculture as the toolkit that empowers us to do this. Please join us in this journey and let us share how the values of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ can be more fully lived into through the application and practice of permaculture.



A snack spread featuring herbs grown at MoonTree is laid out for those participating in "Herbs 101."

# MINISTRY MINUTES

## BEING A CATALYST FOR A JUST TRANSFORMATION THROUGH A SCHOOL REMODEL

By **Sister Nkechi Iwuoha** | PHJC

Egbelu Community School is in Ikeduru Local Government Area of Imo state Nigeria. It has a total population of 500 children. The students who go to school in this community are predominantly from low-income families. The parents are either traders or subsistence farmers. Due to the dilapidation of most of the buildings and lack of educational tools, the richer parents have withdrawn their children to private schools. It is heartbreaking to see how the Muslim-led government leaders neglect and under fund the education of poor children for two main reasons: because most of the politicians send their kids to either private schools or are sent abroad for their education and the federal government allocate most of the budget to fighting terrorist group known as Boko Haram literally translated to mean "Western education is bad." Subsequently the education sector suffers.

Based on their belief that education is power and a determinant of socio-economic development, the

American Province of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ Sisters rolled up their sleeves to get involved in the rehabilitation of the school building. And this decision by the sisters is rightly so because education is the beginning of transformation. Education, yes education is the determinant factor in how far we can go in life and career. And the real transformation begins with a quest for self-improvement through daily learning from parents and teachers. Through the financial contribution of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ Sisters, they have continued to walk the talk by positioning themselves to be a catalyst for a just transformation of the children at Egbelu Community School who are indeed waiting to spark a ripple effect. In this way, these poor and marginalized children will have the opportunity to access not only education in a decent classroom, but will be ultimately empowered to rename their world and the world of our global community.



# SOJOURNER TRUTH HOUSE ANNOUNCES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ (PHJC) announce the appointment of Angela Curtis as the new Executive Director of Sojourner Truth House (STH) in Gary, Indiana. Sojourner Truth House is a ministry of the Poor Handmaids and serves homeless and at-risk women and children in Gary, Indiana.

Angela began her career with The Poor Handmaids at Sojourner Truth House in June 2015, serving as Senior Case Manager. In June 2019, she became the Administrator of Nazareth Home until it closed in August 2020. Angela returned to STH as a Case Manager in September 2020 where she has continued to supervise and mentor interns. Angela has a Master's in Social work, a Master's in Business administration, a Master's of Human Resource Management and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.



Angela succeeds Sister Peg Spindler, CSA, who retires at the end of June after 16 years of service. The Poor Handmaids express their deep gratitude to Sister Peg for her faithful service to STH and wish her much happiness and good health in her retirement.

Visit [www.SojourneyTruthHouse.org](http://www.SojourneyTruthHouse.org) for more information about the organization's dynamic community services.

## In Loving *Memory*



### Margaret M. Weigley

Associate, Margaret M. Weigley, 99, peacefully passed away on April 20, 2021 at Catherine Kasper Life Center, Donaldson.

She was born in Gary, Indiana on December 1, 1921 to Charles H. and Mary (McFarland) Kelly. She graduated from Ancilla Domini High School with the class of 1939.

Margaret entered the Poor Handmaids in 1942 at the age of 21 as Sister Martin. She professed her vows in 1947. Her ministry included working as a nurse for 10 years at Lake County Convalescent Home, St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago, Indiana, and Catherine Kasper Home in Donaldson. Although Margaret departed as a member of the congregation in 1978 she later became an active

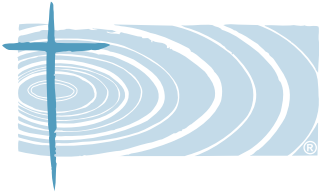
member of the PHJC Associate Community in 1984. On July 16, 1981 at All Saints Church in Hammond, Indiana, Margaret married Julius G. Weigley. The couple had a love for dancing. He preceded her in death on January 24, 2000.

Margaret is survived by her nieces and nephews, stepchildren, great-nieces and nephews; and step-grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

A visitation was held at the Ancilla Domini Chapel at the Center of Donaldson, IN on April 24, 2021 with burial in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Donaldson, IN. Rest in Peace, Margaret.



Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ



*Partners in the work of the Spirit*

**Word Gathering**

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

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Donaldson, IN  
Permit No. 17

# Donaldson **DASH**




**THE \$1,000 ADVENTURE RACE**

**Dash begins at 9:00 AM EDT SHARP!**

For More Information or How to Register:  
**[www.PoorHandmaids.org](http://www.PoorHandmaids.org)**

**Or Call: 219.947.8665**



**AUGUST  
28**