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Loretto Outreach fosters connections
Celebrate Loretto's jubilarians!
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Weeping with the women of Pakistan
... and more

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Front cover:
A Cedars of Peace retreat cabin’s screened porch calls the retreatant to come, relax and enjoy nature’s sights and sounds.
Photo by Susan Classen

Back cover:
At the Loretto Motherhouse retreat centers, visitors enjoy beauty through the seasons. 
Clockwise from top left, Knobs Haven offers a cozy resting spot during a snowstorm; spring blossoms brighten the walk around Badin Pond, which lies just out the door of Knobs Haven; in summer Mary’s Lake is a short walk from Cedars of Peace; autumn beauty greets the walker setting out from the retreat hermitages in fall.
Winter photo by Peg Jacobs CoL; spring photo by Donna Mattingly SL; summer and fall photos by Christina Manweller

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Dear Reader,

In a previous issue, I wrote briefly about my few days spent as a resident in the Loretto Motherhouse Infirmary where I recovered from the surgical procedure called a cardiac ablation. I’d like to share a little more with you about those days. When we nurses become surgical patients, there are occasions of role reversal that can be humbling and at the same time allow us to revive the teaching role that is integral to our profession. I was able to talk about how the heart performs, beating day and night as it should until some glitch requires attention.

As my cardiologist explained, he would cauterize two offending places in a ventricle that had begun to compete with the natural pacemaker for the right to set the rate and rhythm. That’s the ablation, and now I am fully discharged from cardiology.

After learning of the need for a period of recovery following the ablation, Infirmary Administrator Michelle Essex located a room for me on the second floor, a room directly across from the elevator. My nearest neighbors were Mary and Margaret Quayhagen in the double room to the south. Sylvia Sedillo was my neighbor to the north.

From this ideal location, I gained a contemporary perspective of the life of a resident in our nursing facility. As I expected, the morning began a lot earlier in the Infirmary than at my home, but it also provided room service. It was not at all disagreeable to awaken, in the morning’s darkness, to a gentle knock at the door by a night nurse, Wanda or Marla, as she delivered a morning pill and asked, “Would you like a cup of coffee?”

Inside this venerable facility that dates from 1949, with its new wing added in 1980, each resident’s safety, health care, nutrition, spiritual life and emotional well-being are among the priorities of each employee who represents administration, nursing, housekeeping, maintenance, food service, social service, pastoral care, activities, laundry, physical therapy and so on. Our dedicated staff convey much more than one might expect to receive from workers who primarily come to “do a job.”

Many of us recall the story of Sister Michaela’s reply to a state surveyor who asked, “Do you have any complaints?” “The place is too (insert your favorite adverb) clean!” Her assessment of cleanliness and order is as true today as when first uttered.

It was a blessing for me to visit with all who stopped by my room or who welcomed me as I did my walking routines. As the weekend approached and the COVID-19 incidence in the county remained low, Infirmary residents were again welcomed into the main dining room at dinner time. This gathering of the Motherhouse Community was a gift appreciated by all who chose to share a meal together. We pray that it will soon be an ordinary happening with an opportunity again to welcome family members, retreatants and visitors.

In the meantime, let’s continue to hold each other in prayer, in gratitude for all that we receive every day, and in confidence for all that we need. We hope you have been enjoying a most beautiful winter season.

With love,

Barbara Nicholas SL
President of Loretto
After the long pandemic-caused delay of two summers, the student volunteers from our three Loretto-connected high schools in St. Louis, Denver and El Paso returned for a week with us. Their days were spent in tasks such as cleaning gravestones, spreading mulch, weeding, planting, etc., which they addressed with single-minded determination. The 13 students and five teachers also enjoyed tours, nature walks, knitting, cookie making, fishing, visiting, etc. When asked why she would come here to work so hard, one student replied, “I was with Loretto in El Paso from pre-K until now [high school junior]. I always wanted to know more about the sisters and where and how they started.” The undercurrent of quiet and peace will remain with the students as they return to their normal lives.

Excerpted from “Our Days at Loretto Motherhouse,” Anndavid Naeger SL, editor, June 2022

Members of the Loretto Motherhouse Infirmary staff traveled to the annual meeting of the Kentucky Association of Health Care Facilities to receive the Best of Kentucky award (see photo at right).

“The Loretto Motherhouse Infirmary has consistently held a five-star rating which is recognition of the care provided by our amazing staff,” said Michelle Essex, Loretto’s Infirmary administrator. In her enthusiastic message of appreciation, Barbara Nicholas, Loretto president, wrote, “Congratulations to Michelle on her leadership, and to the marvelous staff who care for our residents every day and every night, who keep all the wheels running and everything clean and beautiful.” Kudos, Michelle and staff!

As of January 1, the Infirmary is called Loretto Living Center at Loretto Motherhouse. New name; same great care.

Above: Present and proud at the award ceremony this past November are, from left, Barbara Hagan CoL, medical records; Anita Tennill, Assistant Director of Nursing; Michelle Essex, Infirmary administrator; Stacy Ballard, activity director; Chris Mattingly, Infirmary chaplain.

Left, Michelle Essex, Loretto Motherhouse Infirmary administrator, receives the Best of Kentucky Award from Joe Mashni.

Photos by Larry Smith /Bisig Impact Group

Students give back at the Motherhouse

After the long pandemic-caused delay of two summers, the student volunteers from our three Loretto-connected high schools in St. Louis, Denver and El Paso returned for a week with us. Their days were spent in tasks such as cleaning gravestones, spreading mulch, weeding, planting, etc., which they addressed with single-minded determination. The 13 students and five teachers also enjoyed tours, nature walks, knitting, cookie making, fishing, visiting, etc. When asked why she would come here to work so hard, one student replied, “I was with Loretto in El Paso from pre-K until now [high school junior]. I always wanted to know more about the sisters and where and how they started.” The undercurrent of quiet and peace will remain with the students as they return to their normal lives.

Excerpted from “Our Days at Loretto Motherhouse,” Anndavid Naeger SL, editor, June 2022
Summoned by beauty: Cedars of Peace hermitages beckon to retreatants

Susan Classen CoL arrived at Cedars of Peace in 2003 and has been lovingly restoring the cabins and caring for the Cedars environment ever since. Her commitment, as well as her predecessors', to providing a natural setting resonating with beauty, peace and hospitality has touched hundreds of retreatants, many of whom return year after year. Loretto's retreat centers exist "in the service of life."

Watch a short video of Susan talking about how beauty inspires and centers us. Get a view inside the newest cabin, Gratitude, recently completed. You'll see the transformation of old wood salvaged from a ramshackle home into simple elegance gracing a new hermitage.

Check out our Spotlight Video page here (where you will also find a link to view previous videos): www.lorettocommunity.org/spotlight.

Susan Classen CoL cares for the Cedars of Peace retreat center at the Loretto Motherhouse in Nerinx, Ky. Here she carries flowers to be planted in a pollinator garden on the Motherhouse grounds.
Photo courtesy of Susan Classen

Retreat work has to do both with the beauty of stopping and resting and noticing, and also the calling forth of the beauty that is within us and around us.

Susan Classen CoL

See our most recent Loretto Spotlight video: www.lorettocommunity.org/spotlight
The first time I stayed at Cedars of Peace, coming from a busy city and work, it took a full day for my breathing to begin to slow, my steps to find a more natural rhythm. Then, as if I'd reached a secret threshold, I felt my shoulders release their grip. I sat on the simple screened porch and listened to each squirrel, each bird, each acorn falling on the roof of Namaste, the small cabin I was graced to stay in. I watched as the light changed on tree trunks as day lengthened, and then again as it waned. Since that first visit, I've found myself drawn to return to Cedars' healing environment.

My next cabin is Wonder.

One of my pastor’s suggestions for encountering unease or puzzling questions in life is to "Go to wonder." So it feels appropriate to be going to Wonder at a time when the world feels uneasy and puzzling.

Visiting the small forest chapel where I’m cradled by exquisite wooden walls, floor and ceiling, I face the tall windows and the woods. Here, trees hold the space holy, inside and out. Setting the meditation timer, I settle in and keep my eyes softly open.

After a few moments, movement draws my attention. A fawn with a spotted rear has wandered into the picture and lowers herself to curl up at the base of a tree in front of me. What gift could I have asked for that would bring more wonder? The newly-begotten creature rests there in her beauty right in front of me; tears fill my eyes. In a world that feels uncertain, this feels certain.

When I emerge, birdsong and awe embrace me all the way back to Wonder. In the cabin a guest book brims with heartsongs: testaments to spiritual gleanings, rendezvous with beauty and deep gratitude. Encountering sentiments echoing my own, I enjoy the camaraderie of unknown friends and am grateful for the community of those who have come to this sanctuary before me, and those who will come after. In my solitude, I feel I, too, belong.

The next morning walking up the gravel road to the Motherhouse farm to check out the calves, I find a few frolicking in the field and a couple of newborns lolling in the barn, their awkward, unawakened legs folded under black and white bodies. Their enormous mothers loom, standing watch. Back outside, I find joy in watching calves playing chase, racing around the placidly grazing adults. I take too many pictures.

Back at Wonder once more, I open the little fridge and set out makings for a sandwich. Ensconced on the porch, listening to busy birds, I open one of the books borrowed from Knobs Haven, the Motherhouse retreat house up the road. I can hardly read I am that chock full of gratitude, and yes, wonder, and set aside the book. Gratitude fills my heart — for here is a taste of the peace that passes all understanding.
A lot of people experience peace on the Motherhouse land, and they usually attribute it to the sisters who live here, for good reason. I think the sense of peace that's created is also because of the land itself ... because of Indigenous peoples and other humans who were here long before any of us. So, when people come, they're being held by concentric circles of life.'

JoAnn Gates CoL
Knobs Haven
Welcome! The Loretto Motherhouse retreat centers, Cedars of Peace and Knobs Haven, offer rest, rejuvenation and warm hospitality.

Whether you seek the opportunity to commune with your deeper self in solitude, or prefer to organize a group retreat, you will find Cedars of Peace and Knobs Haven to be beautiful, nurturing settings on the nearly-800 acres of the Loretto Motherhouse in Nerinx, Ky. Cedars is suited to retreats for individuals. Knobs is available for individuals or groups.

Susan Classen CoL and JoAnn Gates CoL have continued Loretto’s long tradition of running the retreat centers with an eye toward eco-responsibility and love for nature (including human beings). They gently guide retreatants to experience themselves as part of the life-giving, natural whole. Susan and JoAnn say, “Cedars and Knobs exist in the service of life.”

These ecumenical retreat ministries of the Sisters of Loretto are open to seekers of any religious or spiritual persuasion, or none at all. The centers’ hospitality and the peace and beauty of the Motherhouse grow out of both the history of the Sisters of Loretto (211 years) and the local ecosystem (over a billion-plus years of change and evolution that have resulted in today’s natural environment).

You will find walking paths, three lakes, wooded areas, trees, flowers, deer and a peace that’s elusive in our day. A generous gift of birdsong will greet you each morning.

Earth-conscious measures include recycling, water filters on the kitchen sinks at Knobs (no need to bring plastic water bottles), cloth napkins and rags, an electric-vehicle charging station at the Motherhouse, green cleaning supplies, solar-powered flashlights and emergency radios at Cedars and repurposed wood within the Cedars cabins.

Spiritual direction is available to those interested.

To learn more, visit: https://www.lorettoretreatcenters.com/

'SWhen people are here, they are immersed in a healthy ecosystem and experience themselves as part of it.'

Susan Classen CoL
Cedars of Peace caretaker

By Christina Manweller

Majestic trees reach for the sky at Cedars of Peace. Photo by Christina Manweller

The restful sun porch at Knobs Haven awaits arriving guests. Photo by JoAnn Gates CoL
ojourners on life’s journey find gifts abounding at Cedars. Quiet is interspersed with bird symphony. Solitude rocks you in gentle arms. Body and soul encounter deep rest.

The eight Cedars of Peace hermitages nestle into the woods on the Motherhouse property, each featuring a small kitchen and cozy sitting, dining and sleeping areas; a tranquil screened porch beckons. Cedars invites individuals to come experience the woods for a weekend or a week. Some stay longer — for several weeks or even months.

Starting in 2004, the cabins, originally constructed beginning in the 1970s, were rebuilt by Susan Classen CoL using wood salvaged from other locations. A new cabin, Gratitude, recently completed, incorporates yellow poplar and Osage orange salvaged from a house built in the early 20th century that was slated to be burned; yellow pine was reused from the old Loretto Heritage Center floor; ash trees decimated by the
emerald ash borer live on, their beauty a gift to us today.

Cedars’s origins go back to the 1960s when Jane Marie Richardson SL yearned for a life of solitude but had not found others in Loretto with that desire, prodding Thomas Merton, monk at nearby Gethsemani, to ask, "How many do you need?" The answer: "None." She moved ahead with her plans.

In 1975, Loretto’s Executive Committee approved Jane Marie’s request that cabins be built in the woods. Cedars of Peace was born three months later when construction began on the first four cabins and the chapel. Sisters, including Jane Marie, completed much of the interior and finish carpentry.

With time, additional Community members showed interest in living at Cedars for varying lengths of time. In a 1982 *Loretto Magazine* article, Carol Kokocinski commented, "I really discovered I couldn’t be at home except in the woods. I need this to survive. I found I needed to seek God in greater silence."

Susan arrived in 2003 when Karen Knoll CoL was director; she was transitioning from Central America where she’d lived for more than 20 years. Susan spent a year working with Karen, then decided to stay, stripping and transforming each cabin, using elbow grease and salvaged material. Always on the lookout for wood she might repurpose, she shares the story of a Motherhouse housekeeper who, on her drive home, spotted a house being torn down. She stopped and said, "I know somebody who’s going to want that wood! Don’t burn it." And so Susan procured the wood to renovate the interior of the chapel.

One woman, after a recent stay at Cedars, found the small space so comfortable that she went home, sold her house and built a house about the size of one of the cozy cabins.

To learn more about Cedars of Peace, visit: https://www.lettocommunity.org/retreat-centers/cedars-of-peace/
Above, a winter snow scene appears painting-like through a window of Gratitude, the cozy new hermitage.

Below, the finished cabin nestles into the woods.

Photos this page by Susan Classen CoL

'Gratitude' springs forth

'Nature has a wonderful power to take you out of yourself, letting you recognize yourself as part of God’s creation. Your own troubles are minimized. It’s sheer praise.'

Jane Marie Richardson SL
Loretto Magazine, 1982

Above, Katie Leitch, volunteering during her stay at Cedars, sands the new shower.

Below, a beautiful room with a comfy chair lends itself to reflection and contemplation. The floor is yellow pine salvaged from the Heritage Center.

Below center, this house was slated to be burned when a friend asked Susan Classen CoL if she could use the wood. She said yes, and wood from the house lives again in the newest cabin at Cedars of Peace.

Above, a winter snow scene appears painting-like through a window of Gratitude, the cozy new hermitage.

Below, the finished cabin nestles into the woods.

Photos this page by Susan Classen CoL

'Nature has a wonderful power to take you out of yourself, letting you recognize yourself as part of God’s creation. Your own troubles are minimized. It’s sheer praise.'

Jane Marie Richardson SL
Loretto Magazine, 1982
Knobs Haven is 'a place of wholeness in a fragmented world.'

A retreatant describes Knobs Haven, Loretto Magazine, 1981

By Christina Manweller

Hospitality and gentle grace are gifts you can relax into at Knobs Haven. The beautiful wood floors and staircases, tranquil sun porch, comfortable meeting and prayer spaces, lovingly appointed bedrooms, updated kitchen — all blend with a spirit of deep rest to bring a breath of respite. A retreatant described Knobs as "a stopping place on the journey into the heart of God." Here you might set down your burdens; you may find yourself drawing from a well of living waters.

Founded in 1975 in a building built in 1873, Knobs abides at the heart of the Loretto Motherhouse, taking its place among the historic buildings and cradled by Mother Nature: green rolling hills (called "knobs" in Kentucky) and an abundance of trees hosting abundant bird life.

Knobs offers hospitality to individuals or groups for a weekend, a few days or a week. The two-story building holds a large, comfortable meeting room and an additional, generous space that might be used for prayer, yoga or meditation. The kitchen is spacious and offers filtered water, dinnerware, utensils, a dishwasher and plenty of room for preparing food.

There are books! Really good books! You’ll find an enticing array of poetry, fiction, nonfiction. You could live off these books, is the honest truth. An enclosed sun porch invites you to relax in a rocking chair before generous windows with your journal or one of the soul-feeding books and a fresh-steeped cup of tea.

With its inviting hospitality and gracious beauty, Knobs Haven is like a kind, venerable friend you’ll want to visit again and again.

Those who yearn for time in nature will find the path to Badin Pond just a few steps out the door. The stroll around the pond is suitable for those able to manage jaunts of about a quarter mile on a concrete path; benches provide places to rest. Elsewhere on the Motherhouse property are Mary’s Lake and Joseph’s Lake, providing longer walks on unpaved paths. The Motherhouse Farm is a short walk up the road; you may get lucky and meet some newborn calves.
Knobs's air-conditioned house features seven bedrooms and two full baths and easily accommodates 10 persons. A second space, with room for an additional 16 occupants, is available across the street in the historic Academy Building. In addition to charming bedrooms, it includes a large gathering area, fully-equipped kitchen, dormitory-style bathroom and a single full bathroom. An elevator is available, with access to a ground-level ramp.

Badin Pond, a delightful site for walking and meditating, lies just steps from the Knobs Haven retreat house.

Photo by Christina Manweller

In a photo taken for Loretto Magazine around 1981, Elaine Prevallet SL provides spiritual direction to a retreatant. Elaine, who directed Knobs Haven for many years, called herself a "not very directive director"; the quiet, accepting approach she took in running the retreat center continues into the present day.


In this 30-year-old photo taken in the Motherhouse dining room, Dolorita Williams SL jokes with deacons who are on retreat at Knobs Haven.


The Knobs Haven retreat house on the Motherhouse grounds features bookcases filled with enticing offerings to whet your reading appetite.

Photo by JoAnn Gates CoL

In this 30-year-old photo taken in the Motherhouse dining room, Dolorita Williams SL jokes with deacons who are on retreat at Knobs Haven.


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Knobs Haven is ‘... a stopping place on the journey into the heart of God.’


Top left, the comfortable meeting room at Knobs invites group sharing or contemplative time.

Left, a bedroom in the Knobs Haven retreat house offers comfort and rest.

Below, the newly-remodeled kitchens in the Knobs Haven retreat house and the Academy building are utilitarian and attractive. Individuals and groups can easily prepare and store their food. Dishes and dishwashers are available. Below left is the updated Knobs kitchen; below right is the kitchen in the Academy building (across the street from the Knobs retreat house), where additional accommodations are available for larger retreat groups.

*Photos by JoAnn Gates CoL*
Sandra Hareld has been a Loretto co-member since 2011. She holds an undergraduate degree in philosophy, a Master of Divinity and a master's in library information science. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate in women's spirituality at the California Institute of Integral Studies. Ordained in the United Methodist Church, she served as a pastor in the Pacific Northwest for 15 years. She also has worked as a religious education coordinator in the Catholic Church.

How can people be connected to Loretto who share our values? Sandra Hareld CoL, who has served as Loretto’s Outreach Coordinator for the past eight years, shares the Outreach Team’s pivotal question. Thus far, the answer lies in offerings that include retreats, study groups, workshops, Circle gatherings, an online contemplative prayer group and virtual solstice and equinox celebrations.

Loretto Outreach’s hospitality is rooted in Henri Nouwen’s writings, Sandra says. "Open up a space where people can come and be themselves and discover the presence of God for themselves in their own life," she explains. "It’s creating a space of warmth, of openness, of safety, where people can explore their connection with the divine, as well as with other people and with nature."

Loretto Outreach has offered retreats since 2014. Sandra's hope for those attending a retreat is that they "come and refresh themselves spiritually, emotionally, physically and mentally; they come away from their daily activity and find a place of prayer and peace, and a place where they can reflect on certain topics, connect with others and discuss those topics." In the past, contemplative prayer, lectio divina, tai chi or qigong have been offered, in addition to spiritual sharings by Loretto Community members. Retreats in recent years have been offered at the Loretto Motherhouse in Nerinx, Ky., St. Benedict’s Monastery in Snowmass, Colo., and most recently in Florissant, Mo.

Sandra enjoys experiencing others’ insights during the retreats. Describing an Outreach retreat’s spiritual context, she says, "I see it as a very broad expression of spirituality. We have a background of ecospirituality as well as contemplative prayer and lectio divina.” The Outreach Team includes members with Buddhist and Sufi backgrounds.

Loretto Circles also bring together Loretto Community members and non-Community individuals who are interested in connecting with and learning about Loretto. Circles meet regularly online or in person.

Loretto Outreach began in 2013 to provide learning opportunities for potential Community members. Over the years it has grown into a group that fosters connections between Loretto and those with common interests in the areas of spirituality, care for Earth and social justice. Connections are also cultivated with Loretto Link, a non-canonical organization founded to carry forward the mission and spirit of Loretto.

To learn more about Loretto Outreach or request the Outreach e-newsletter, please visit the website (Fill in the contact form to request the newsletter): https://www.lorettocommunity.org/get-involved/outreach/.
Katherine Ann Heinz SL

Katherine Ann spent 36 years as a teacher, mostly in lower grades at schools in El Paso, St. Louis and Denver. She then worked as a member of the Denver Loretto staff office for 16 years before moving to the Motherhouse, where she worked in Archives and now “does lots of little odd jobs,” she says, for the Motherhouse Community.

Katherine Ann, who turned 94 in August, has outlived all of her Loretto novitiate classmates.

You should have a very close connection with God and pray to God to ask, 'What do you want me to do?’

Katherine Ann Heinz SL

*We are recognizing Loretto's 2022 jubilarians in 2023 due to an unexpected delay. Congratulations jubilarians! 2023 jubilarians will appear in a later issue.
Loretto honors 2022 jubilarians

50 years

Rosemary Chinnici SL

Rosemary says, “I have had a good life in the Community. I loved being a teacher and being a student. My mentor and good friend Sr. Rose Alma (Schuler) always made me be a better person and helped bring out my gifts to share in the Community. I have always had great love for Loretto, and tried my best to help the Community go in the direction it needed to grow into at the time.”

Becky Coakley CoL

Becky was received into co-membership in 1972 by Helen Sanders SL. Five months later she moved to England. She had a one-year work permit to live and work at St. Christopher’s Hospice, a pioneering enterprise in London. She fell in love with history and stayed. "I suppose this was not how I envisioned my co-membership," she says. "Working in numerous committees within the Loretto Community means I can properly meet people albeit on a screen! The Link Cooperative Economics Working Group has been a godsend and life-giving inspiration for me. It is an honor to have known many sisters and co-members over the years."
Marianne Novak Houston CoL

Marianne was originally a vowed member of Loretto. Upon leaving that commitment, she did not leave the Community. Marianne continues to do Loretto’s work. On belonging to Loretto, she says, “These holy women and men who are called to respond to Spirit are the greatest companions in the world. Even though you may not talk to some folks for 10 years, you are never really separated from them. They give us courage and teach us how to continue the work of our great community organizer known as Jesus Christ. All around, great company.”

Mary Louise Murphy CoL

Mary Louise was a Sister of Loretto before leaving vowed membership and becoming a co-member. To both experiences she says, “Joining Loretto as a sister and a co-member is a blessing and has enriched my life.” She values all of her Loretto experiences, especially visiting the Motherhouse with her husband, and says, “All that Loretto brings to you widens your horizons and thinking.” Mary Louise is grateful to be more aware of environmental issues and current events. She treasures her friendships with the sisters.
Linda Peeno CoL

Linda is a co-member who received the Mary Rhodes Award in 1995. The Mary Rhodes Award has honored women who are notable for their accomplishments in working for peace and acting for justice. In 1996, during the height of the national debate over patients’ rights and the role of health maintenance organizations (HMOs), Dr. Peeno testified before Congress, condemning for-profit insurance companies for their part in making the U.S. healthcare system at that time the most expensive and one of the most dysfunctional in the world. Since then, she has become one of the world’s best known whistle-blowers concerning HMOs and the healthcare industry. Her commitment to working for peace and acting for justice has never faltered.

Mary Helen Sandoval CoL

Mary Helen joined the Sisters of Loretto after college. She is grateful for that time in her life. “It really changed my life and helped me to become aware of social justice issues. After three-and-a-half years I left. Later I was married and had four kids. As my kids were growing up, I would read Interchange, Loretto’s monthly newsletter. I always thought, ’Loretto are such wonderful people!’ I was invited to Loretto’s St. Patrick’s day gatherings. One day I came home and thought, I have to become a co-member! Being a co-member has far exceeded any expectations I had. I have a hard time expressing the gratitude I feel for the support of things I really believe in, the sense of working on those things together as a Community and deep friendships that continue to change my life. I’m very grateful.”
Weeping with the Women

‘I took a deep breath and lost all my words. After the woman left I sat stunned and felt my emptiness and inability to help her.’

Nasreen Daniel SL

I would like to share the story of a woman. Let us call her Parveen (Parveen means evening star). She brought two girls, ages 7 and 12, to our school. She also had a little girl in her lap and was expecting her fourth child. She wanted the two older girls to be admitted to our school, but she said she could not pay even 50 rupees (about 50 cents). I asked about her husband’s occupation. She said he was a driver, but he fell in love with another woman and lives with her. I asked, “Can’t you go back to your parents?” She said her father and mother are old and dependent on her brother and sister. The in-laws say that they cannot afford to keep Parveen and her children in their home. She said, “I live in a one-room house which my husband has rented for me, and he gives us some food items every month.”

I asked how long ago her husband had left her for another woman and she said two years. I looked at her and very reluctantly asked, “Why are you expecting again?” She said, “When he comes to my house, if I don’t listen to him, he will stop helping me financially. I have no other place to go, and I will be on the road, and my children will starve to death.”

I took a deep breath and lost all my words. After the woman left, I sat stunned and felt my emptiness and inability to help her. I felt tears in my eyes not because I had witnessed such misery; the realization of my helplessness in this very strong patriarchal society where women are a commodity hit me hard. The questions stayed with me for many days: “How will this woman be able to break the vicious cycle of inhumane treatment? Will her daughters’ lives end up like hers? What can I do for her?” I have admitted her daughters to the school. I have listened to her pain and distress. I have held her with sympathy. Maybe that is what God wants me to do in this moment.

I have studied the history of slavery. I have often thought that the soul of Harriet Beecher Stowe possessed me. The horrifying tales of voiceless women compelled me to write my Ph.D. thesis on their lives.

Women in my society are voiceless, many with horrifying stories, especially those from the lower strata of society. Where is my hope? I will see it only when most of my people are better educated and will recognize the dignity of all human beings, made in God’s image.
Kausar is beaten every day by her husband because she has given birth to five girls. She now has a job at St. Anthony School which helps her get out of the house.

Facing page, a young woman passes through Green Town, the area in Lahore where St. Anthony School is located; the school is headed by Nasreen Daniel SL. Photos courtesy of Nasreen Daniel SL.

'And God created humankind in God's image ... male and female God created them.'

Genesis 1:27
Women in Pakistan, especially those who live in poverty, are often voiceless, lacking opportunities to make choices that might improve their lives. These photos were taken by Nasreen Daniel SL in Green Town, Lahore, where St. Anthony School is located.
Loretto recently donated a major piece of art, Miguel Cabrera’s painting, “Our Lady of Light,” to the Museum of Spanish Colonial Art (MOSCA) in Santa Fe, N.M. This painting had been with Loretto since the late 1870s, when Archbishop Jean Baptiste Lamy gave it to Mother Magdalen Hayden SL and the Sisters of Loretto at Our Lady of Light convent in Santa Fe. After having been a fixture in the convent for close to a century, the painting was moved to the Loretto Center in Denver when the Santa Fe Academy of Our Lady of Light closed in 1968. The painting had been on loan to museums in Santa Fe in recent years, and has not been out of the U.S. Southwest since it first arrived in the 1700s.

Despite its long life in the U.S., the painting originated in Mexico. Cabrera was a mestizo artist in New Spain, regarded during his lifetime and after as one of the region’s greatest painters. He painted “Our Lady of Light” around 1750, and the life-size piece was soon purchased by Governor Francisco Antonio Marín del Valle for use in Santa Fe’s La Castrense chapel, which was also called Our Lady of Light. This chapel was constructed in the mid-1700s to serve the military colonizers of what is now known as New Mexico. “Our Lady of Light” was folded to fit the stone reredos, or altar screen, of the chapel. (This elaborately carved reredos is a treasure of New Mexican art, and is now housed in Santa Fe’s Cristo Rey Church.)

The story of this particular depiction of Our Lady of Light began in 1722 when Father Giovanni Antonio Genovesi SJ of Sicily requested a painted image of the Virgin Mary. He asked a devout woman known for visitations from Mary for guidance, and the woman soon reported a vision of Mary as she wished to be represented in the painting. An artist was commissioned to complete the work, and copies spread around the world with the Jesuits. If Cabrera was not familiar with the original painting — which had been brought to León, Guanajuato, Mexico, in 1732 — he would have seen copies of the popular image by European or Mexican artists.

The year 2022 was fitting for Loretto to donate “Our Lady of Light” to the Museum of Spanish Colonial Arts, ensuring its permanent home in New Mexico; fall of 2022 marked the 170th anniversary of Loretto’s first journey to Santa Fe and the 20th anniversary of the opening of MOSCA.

See lorettocommunity.canto.com/v/archives for historical photos from Loretto archives.

Above, “Our Lady of Light,” painted by Miguel Cabrera, recently was donated by Loretto to a Santa Fe, N.M., museum. Below, the painting once hung in the Loretto convent in Santa Fe. Photos: Loretto archives
Santa Fe, historic capital of New Mexico, has long been known for its jewel-like setting at the foot of the Sangre de Cristo mountain, and for its early cultural diversity that has left a distinctive imprint upon the city. Among the historical threads braided into Santa Fe’s rich heritage is the story of the Sisters of Loretto, who first arrived in 1852.

They had been escorted over the Santa Fe Trail by New Mexico’s new Bishop, Jean Baptist Lamy, a Frenchman by birth who was handed the task of Americanizing the Church and expanding its mission in the arid Southwest. Within three months of their arrival, the sisters opened Our Lady of Light Academy, on land scarcely two blocks from the central plaza, the destination of Santa Fe Trail caravans, and today a historic site and tourist destination.

Sisters Matilda Mills, Magdalen Hayden, Catherine Mahoney, Rosanna Dant, Monica Bailey and Roberta Brown left the Loretto Motherhouse on June 27, traveling by horse-drawn wagon to Bardstown, Ky., and by afternoon stage to Louisville. Staying for some days at Cedar Grove Academy, they awaited the next steamboat that would take them down the Ohio River and up the Mississippi to meet Bishop Lamy in St. Louis.

On July 10 the sisters and Lamy boarded the Kansas, a Missouri River steamboat, for the trip to Independence, Mo., and the starting point of the Santa Fe Trail. The river trip was expected to take eight days, giving Lamy time to begin the sisters’ Spanish lessons (a language he himself had just learned).

In the early hours of July 16, the future of the little group changed radically. Mother Matilda, the superior, was suddenly ill. The burning fever, vomiting and cramps left no doubt that she had contracted the fatal disease cholera, and in a few hours she had died. The sisters had scarcely realized their loss when it became apparent that Monica showed the first symptoms of cholera and after her, Magdalen. Because of the danger of contagion, Lamy’s entire entourage was put off the steamboat 6 miles short of their destination. The sickened sisters were left to recover in a riverside warehouse while Matilda’s body was buried in secret at night in a private cemetery. Sister Monica was too ill to go further; she would return to St. Louis. Three years later she would join the sisters in Santa Fe. Magdalen recovered in a few days. Bishop Lamy took her aside and asked her to take Matilda’s place as superior of the little group of sisters. She said she was willing, but only if her superiors in Kentucky agreed.

Magdalen, 39, had already served as superior at several Missouri convents, even at her home place at the Barrens. For several years she had been in charge of training novices at the Loretto Motherhouse. Being the superior of a community of four seemed simple enough. Going to a foreign land with so many unknowns was the challenge!

Early on Aug. 1, Lamy had assembled a crew and a dozen wagons filled with supplies for his new diocese and the sisters’ school. The caravan, including the sisters’ Dearborn wagon, was ready to leave Independence. Eager to be on the way west, all 23 members of Lamy’s party seemed jubilant. In less than an hour, however, all came to a halt. A wagon was in trouble; a wheel had to be repaired. Then rain began to fall. It was too late to raise tents. As night fell, a raging storm took over. Wind, lightning and thunder rocked the wagons, threatening to rip the canvas covers away. The sisters huddled together in their carriage; sleep was impossible.

Later Magdalen learned from the bishop that during that stormy, sleepless night, he had considered returning to Independence. He wrote to a fellow bishop about his reservations. Perhaps he had been premature in bringing sisters to New Mexico. How would gently-raised women cope with the rough 800-mile trail and then the demands of primitive living once they reached Santa Fe? Over the next weeks, as the caravan slowly made its way along the trail, Bishop Lamy’s qualms would give way to a growing admiration and confidence in the Loretto pioneers.

More than 1,200 miles from Kentucky’s knobs — by steamboat on three great rivers, by wagon caravan through dry prairies — after three months, the sisters reached Santa Fe on Sunday afternoon, Sept. 26, 1852. Close to 1,000 people came to greet them with music and garlands of flowers. The welcome was overwhelming. The sisters had come simply to open a school for girls. How could they have imagined such a celebration upon their arrival?

They received two orphan girls as their first students that November, and in January 1853, the Sisters of Loretto officially opened Our Lady of Light Academy. It would serve families of the Southwest until 1968.

Adapted by Eleanor Craig SL from PJ Manion SL’s "Beyond the Adobe Wall"
Community members and friends gathered this past September to celebrate Loretto's 170th anniversary of working and serving in New Mexico.

"Our Lady of Light," the painting donated to the Museum of Spanish Colonial Art in Santa Fe (see article, page 23), was the focus of the first evening’s presentation and reception, held at the museum. Speakers included Loretto Historian Eleanor Craig SL, the museum’s Executive Director Jennifer Berkley and New Mexico art historian Donna Pierce.

In her talk, Eleanor mentioned that, from the beginning, Loretto’s veil depicted the heart of Jesus and the heart of Mary, representing to the sisters their wholehearted dedication to those with whom they lived, worked and served. This wholeheartedness is evident in Loretto’s New Mexico history. As Kathleen Ortiz, educated by Loretto, commented, "Loretto’s impact on the community in New Mexico has been significant through the generations."

The next evening, a presentation on Loretto’s history in New Mexico was held at Santa Fe’s Loretto Chapel and featured a video prepared by Eleanor and Neil Tucker CoL. The video highlights Loretto Community members sharing Loretto’s New Mexico story, as well as historic photos and interviews with Loretto school alum. We learn that in Santa Fe in 1896, Loretto built a three-story convent next to the chapel (which had been built around 1880) and later, a grade school, followed by a large high school. In the 1930s, the sisters opened the Opportunity School to serve children with mental and physical disabilities, a novel undertaking at the time. Loretto’s wholeheartedness in New Mexico has a long, rich history. Community members operated, and/or taught in, 23 schools in locations across the state.

That same evening, Loretto’s newest co-member, Allison Grace Lemons, was accepted into the Community during a beautiful ceremony in keeping with the Loretto spirit.

Finally, a reception at the Inn at Loretto was attended by many Loretto members, friends and former students.

Neil Tucker CoL and Eleanor Craig SL created a Loretto in New Mexico video; watch online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0d6GwBeSa8g
Loretto welcomes Allison Grace Lemons, newest co-member

Spirits soar following Allison’s commitment ceremony and public acceptance into the Loretto Community. The ceremony was held in Santa Fe’s Loretto Chapel. Closing her acceptance speech, Allison confirmed her commitment "to work for justice and act for peace; to grow in love and service wherever I am able."

Mary Margaret Murphy SL accepted Allison’s commitment on behalf of the Community.

From left, happy celebrants include Mary Ann McGivern SL, Allison Lemons CoL, Mary Jean Friel CoL and Virginia Nesmith, Loretto’s director of development.

Photo by Christina Manweller
Loretto marched with the Poor People’s Campaign (PPC) in Washington, D.C., this past June. Approximately 30 Community members and friends participated in the Moral March on Washington led by Rev. Dr. William Barber and Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis. The march highlighted urgent issues the PPC confronts, including poverty, systemic racism, the war economy, climate change, voter suppression and prison injustice. The Poor People’s Campaign is Black-led, faith-based and committed to nonviolence in the tradition of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Below, Loretto Community members and friends gather for a meal at the home of Jean-nine Gramick SL on the day before the march — a day that had been spent advocating for peace and social justice alongside NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice. Photo courtesy of Lillian Moskeland

Ready to march! From left, Loretto friend Bob Kee joins Alicia Ramirez SL, Sally Dunne CoL, Mary Ann McGivern SL and Mary Jean Friel CoL. Photo courtesy of Mary Jean Friel
Rosalie Duran CoL  Aug. 29, 1931 – June 12, 2022
Rosalie was born in 1931 in Las Vegas, N.M., the second of seven children. She was raised by her tío and tía, Cipriano and Angelina Flores. Upon high school graduation as valedictorian, she entered the Loretto novitiate. She briefly was Sister Joanelle in the early 1950s and became a Loretto co-member in 1971. Rosalie moved to Denver in 1953, where she remained the rest of her life. She founded United Management Resources in Denver and was a savvy businesswoman who generously shared with those she loved. Rosalie was affectionately called Auntie Rollie by her nieces and nephews. A funeral Mass for Rosalie was celebrated on her birthday, Aug. 29, 2022, at Holy Family Church in Denver. Many from Loretto were present and Marty Lally, Loretto co-member, presided.

Angela Bianco SL  July 21, 1943 – June 18, 2022
Angela was born in Brooklyn, N.Y. She was a twin and had an additional sister and a brother. Her father immigrated from Italy and her mother’s parents from Italy and France. While working with Navajo people as a volunteer with a local mission in Thoreau, N.M., in the late 1970s, she saw an ad about Gabriel Mason SL’s work in Denver; this is how Angela found Loretto. Angela wrote, “The spirituality that emerged and still holds me is an interesting collage of Loretto readings, Navajo spirituality and gleanings from prayer and reading over many years.” A registered nurse since 1966, Angela began programs with the Navajo people in New Mexico that are still providing services today. She worked for years in Thoreau, inviting many Loretto Community members to join her in projects.

Evelyn Donohoo SL  February 3, 1923 – November 6, 2022
Evelyn wrote, “My mother taught me to take risks. My father taught me to help the poor and Black people and to be political.” In 1937 Evelyn campaigned to be the first female president of the eighth grade class at St. Cronan’s School in St. Louis, and won. She married James Michael Donohoo in 1946. The couple raised seven children. Later, she volunteered; this included teaching religion to mentally-challenged children, working with depressed women and indigent families. She also worked with women from abusive environments, conducted self-esteem workshops for the children of hospitalized parents and counseled prisoners on parole. In 1964 Evelyn joined the Nerinx Hall staff as a teacher. When she retired in 1992, she became a co-member of the Loretto Community, continuing her justice work.

Evelyn Houlihan SL  June 2, 1932 – July 16, 2022
Evelyn was born in Sterling, Ill, the youngest of three children. She joined Loretto in 1951 and taught school and worked in parishes for her first 20 years as a sister before working in other areas. She earned a bachelor’s from Webster College and master’s degrees from Notre Dame University and Boston College. A woman of many skills, Evelyn received her real estate license in 1978. She managed the Bonnie Brae Ice Cream store in Denver for 14 years, later writing, “I called it BBIC University. In that job I needed every skill I ever used in the classroom.” She loved the outdoors and traveled widely. At 65, she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Evelyn said, “I refused to live an unlived life.”

Angela was born in Brooklyn, N.Y. She was a twin and had an additional sister and a brother. Her father immigrated from Italy and her mother’s parents from Italy and France. While working with Navajo people as a volunteer with a local mission in Thoreau, N.M., in the late 1970s, she saw an ad about Gabriel Mason SL’s work in Denver; this is how Angela found Loretto. Angela wrote, “The spirituality that emerged and still holds me is an interesting collage of Loretto readings, Navajo spirituality and gleanings from prayer and reading over many years.” A registered nurse since 1966, Angela began programs with the Navajo people in New Mexico that are still providing services today. She worked for years in Thoreau, inviting many Loretto Community members to join her in projects.
**Marian McAvoy SL**
*July 15, 1927 – June 30, 2022*
Marian McAvoy lived much of her life in the service of the Loretto Community, including as Loretto’s second president (1978 – 1986). After teaching school for several years, Marian moved to Fairfield, Iowa, where she contributed to some of Loretto’s earliest adult education initiatives. As director of Loretto work development from 1970 to 1978, Marian and her staff created programs and provided individual guidance to facilitate the mission and career decisions of Loretto sisters. As president, Marian worked to devise a major evaluation of the new government structure. Out of that work came the idea of Community Groups, which were designed to be at the heart of Loretto’s decision-making. Much more could be written about her presidency. Throughout her life, Marian’s conversation was bright, and her heart was warm and open.

**Mary Lee Murphy SL**
*October 30, 1928 – August 24, 2022*
Shortly after birth, Mary Lee was taken to an orphanage in Mobile, Ala. She later wrote, “I attended grade school and Bishop Toolen High School, then worked for Mr. Murphy. William and Anna Murphy and their son Bill invited me into their family and formally adopted me, giving me their name.” She joined Loretto in 1948 and taught or was principal at several schools. She met her best friend, Barbara Ann Shultz SL, in Sterling, Ill. Later, Barbara Ann and Mary Lee taught at Loretto Academy in El Paso. In 1977-78, they and Justa Justyn learned about the detention in El Paso of 50 Haitians and raised enough bail to release these young men. Mary Lee ran the post office at the Motherhouse for 16 years. Later, she served as a medical driver and gardener at the Motherhouse.

**Mary Anne Reese CoL**
*June 21, 1956 – December 20, 2022*
Mary Anne Reese grew up on the East Coast. She graduated from Notre Dame of Maryland University with a degree in English and completed her law degree at the University of Tennessee. Then, discerning a different call, she entered the Sisters of Mercy for a short time, moving to Cincinnati for training. She worked in the legal field for many years, in the Ohio Attorney General’s office and with the U.S. District Court. As a member of Bellemarine Parish at Xavier University, Cincinnati, for more than 30 years, she valued the liturgy and community life there and initiated projects that shared her creative gifts, including work with young adults. Spending what turned out to be her final weeks on the sacred ground of the Loretto Motherhouse brought her great solace.

Unabridged remembrances are found on the Loretto website: https://www.lorettocommunity.org/category/obituaries/
Memorials and Tributes of Honor  
June 2022 — December 2022

In Honor of:
Requested by:

An asterisk (*) following a name identifies a Loretto co-member.

Pauline Albin SL  
Anna Mae Gallegos  
Guadalupe Arciniega SL  
Michael Talamantes  
Barbara Ann Barbato SL  
Donna Marie Campbell  
Richard Fox  
Mary Helen Gautreaux  
Buffy Boesen SL  
LaFawn Biddle  
Susan Charmley SL  
Mary Beth Reese  
Denise Ann Clifford SL  
Rosemary Filippone  
Jeffrey and Eileen Fostey  
Nancy and Jacques Leveille  
Loretto and Bill Peterson  
Jan and Ershel Redd  
Rosemary Chinnici SL  
Sheila Zipse  
Donna Day SL  
John and Jacquelyn Dear  
Angeline Kinnaman  
LeAnn Detherage  
Carol Colligan*  
David Schoeni and Laura Rasor  
Antoinette Doyle SL  
Susan Congalton  
Cynthia Giguere-Unrein  
Terry Macaluso  
Regina Drey SL  
Kim Vance  
Marie Ego SL  
Patricia Lewis  
Mary Beth Reese  
Kathleen Erickson  
Barrie Ryan  
Jeannine Gramick SL  
John Le Bedda, II  
Nancy Krody  
Jennifer Morgan  
Cristina Noyes  
Ryan Ignatius Pratt  
Rev. Paul Thomas  
Mary V. Ryan Hayden  
Ann Hayden

Katherine Ann Heinz SL  
Catherine Czysz  
Mary Jo Highland  
Mary A. Highland  
Roberta Hudlow SL  
Joann Malone  
Sharon Kassing SL  
John and Jacquelyn Dear  
Eileen Kersgieter SL  
Regina and Steven Hermann  
Sr. Mary Schmittgens, OP  
Cathy Kirn  
John and Mary Straub  
Beatrice Kebba SL  
Colleen Douglas and Arnold Nowak  
Michael McCann  
Tracy and Diane Roberts  
Tom and Connie Szurek  
Anna Koop SL  
Mary Sue Anderson  
Allison Lemons*  
Denise Fort  
Sr. Mary Lid  
Loughry Family

Loretto:  
Dearest Teachers, 1944-56,  
Sterling, Ill.  
Cliff Wise  
Friends, Loretto Heights College,  
Class of 1958  
Inez and Earl Brines  
Loretto Heights College, Faculty &  
Staff 1963-67  
Michele Saad  
Sisters who taught me in  
Florissant, Mo.  
Rev. Stephen Bauer  
Gabriel Mason SL  
Patricia Wiedower  
Joy and Mark Maxwell  
Robert Rau, Jr.  
Mary McAuliffe SL  
Sheila Zipse  
Anndavid Naeger SL  
Sue and Arthur Wessel  
Barbara Nicholas SL  
Rose Grenough Nett

A cardinal poses for a photo at the Loretto Motherhouse in Nerinx, Ky.  
Photo by Donna Mattingly SL
Valerie Novak SL
Ronald Novak
Lydia Peña SL
Steve Atchley
Kam and Michael Martin
Elaine Marie Prevallet SL
Peggy and Tom Derieg
Marianne Lewis
Bill & Deana Price
Terance and Colette Purcell
Carol Ann Placek SL
John and Jacquelyn Dear
Alicia Ramirez SL
Sue and Arthur Wessel
Helen Santamaria SL
John and Jacquelyn Dear

Anthony Mary Sartorius SL
Beth Blissman*
Paulette Peterson* & Dr. Mark Nachmias
Virginia St-Cyr
Terry and Libby Schoeni
David Schoeni and Laura Raso
Agnes Ann Schum SL
Deborah and David George
Barbara Schulte SL
Leslie Barth
Lynn and Nick Davis
Sue and Arthur Wessel
Sister Angelita Shay
Lavonne Stockdale
Ceciliana Skees SL
Sandra and Thomas Tokarski
Sue and Arthur Wessel
Rita Smith
Rita M. Smith

Marlene Spero SL
Leslie Barth
Lynn and Nick Davis
Margaret and John Veatch
Sue and Arthur Wessel
Marie Lourde Steckler SL
Jason Steckler and Family
Mary Swain SL
Mary and Thomas Morrison
David Schoeni and Laura Raso
Kathleen Tighe SL
Jackson Bradt
Alfred Frey
Joseph Tally
Kathleen Vonderhaar SL
Yolanda Butler
Emerson “Emily” Watkins
Steve Watkins

In Memory of:
Requested by:

Martha Aldridge
Ruth E. Aldridge
Barbara Anderson SL
Joy and Gary Addiego
Clare J. Andert
Barbara Jacober
Elizabeth Landa
Stu and Pat Valentine
Patricia Ann Shaw Ashman
Joseph Ashman
Dr. Earl Bach
Robert and Judith Allan
Martha Belke SL
Kevin and Julie Dicken
Rita Carol Bennett
Angela and Michael Ballard
Angela Bianco SL
Sandy and Judy Steckler
Jane Wilson*

Mary Ann Bowling
Samuel Corbett
Rhonda Day
Jennie Smith
Kevin Bradt, SJ
Henry and Margaret Ferraioli
Marie Celine Brown SL
Michael Taylor
Mary Rhodes Buckler SL
Joan Kidnay
Margaret and John Veatch
Kay Carlew SL
Ellen Castille
Alice Cavanaugh
Mary Vincent Breeck
Frances Camilla Cavanaugh SL
Mary Vincent Breeck
Rose Celeste Block SL
Sr. Lesley Block, OP

Alice Cochran*
Mary Helen Gautreaux
Alda Collaco
Theresa Da Silva
Aunt Sis (Elizabeth Ann) Compton SL
Kaye Strom
Kate Compton
Kaye Strom
Julieanne Conley
Cliff and Stefani Conley
Lee Connolly SL
Mike Tevlin and Sue Murray
Mary Campbell Moore Coorssen
Jeaninne Sandlin
Kathy Crowley
Karen Gross
Marilyn Cusick
Dorothy Cusick

An asterisk ( * ) following a name identifies a Loretto co-member.
In Memory of:
Requested by:

Aline Dalton SL
Theresa and John Smith
Deceased Family Members
Susan and Richard Widdowson
DeCourcey Family
Maureen DeCourcey
Roger Delgado, Jr.
Janyce White
Mary Ann Dorman*
Rose Marie Hayden
Helen Downs
Angela and Michael Ballard
Rosalie Elliott SL
Janyce White Angel
Margaret Grace Elsey SL
Mary Jean and Rodney Brod
Mary Ely SL
Mary Ann Sullivan
John Erickson
Barrie Ryan
Joseph Estrella
Maria and Tim Loveall
Martha Fly*
David Schoeni and Laura Rasor
Libby and Terry Schoeni
Joy Gerity*
Paulette Peterson* and Mark Nachmas
Ann Francis Gleason SL
Carol Harris
Nancy Cella Sunkel
Patricia Hamburg
Peter and Barbara Conroy
Margaret and Stephen Hamburg
Charleen Kelly
Ben and Karen Levek
Barbara Nelson
Mark Small
Roberta Turner
Mary Katherine Hammett SL
Marilyn Montenegro
Lois Marie Tiffany Harp
Donald Tiffany
Theresa Griffin Hartley
Michael Hartley
Marie Noel Hebert SL
James Hebert
Eileen Marie Heckman SL
John and Susan Reuter
Janet Hensel
Michelle Smart
Joseph Highland
Mary A. Highland

Gabriel Mary Hoare SL
Barbara Buettner
Kathleen Cady
Carol Colligan*
Kathianne and David Crane
Winnie Docter
Katherine Traxler Goldring
Alice Sargent
Jennifer Staed
Evelyn Houlihan SL
Isabel Derr
Mary and Waldemar Perez
Rita Maureen Hurt SL
Theresa and David Hampton
Ron Ingram
Margaret Wright
Ann Johnson SL
Len Grinstead
Cecily Jones SL
Martha Alderson*
Rita Moran
Patricia Anne Kaiser
Valorie Becker
Dolores Kelley SL
Daniel Bednar
Len Grinstead
Dave Kelley
Daniel Bednar
Teresa Flattery
Kathy Holubar
Deb and Tim Kellehen
Patricia Kelley
Jill Wolverton Kranz
JoAnn Latta
Catherine Mullaney
Craig and Margaret Murphy
Sheila Osman
Pat and Mary Kay Sharkey
Jean Kelley SL
David McCarthy
Patricia Kenoyer*
Barbara Warner
Thomas Kinealy
Theresa Kinealy*
Jane Kosters*
Margaret Burgess
Carol Daiglish
Mary Johnson
Mary and Waldemar Perez
Mary Ann Ross
Ed and Susie Tomlinson
Michael Tomlinson
Robert and Patricia Tomlinson

Louis Marie Kroeger SL
Larry and Mary-Mel Kroeger
Mary Lynn Meade Lally
Kevin Lally
Kay Lane SL
Alfred Frey
Bette Lesch
Edward Lesch
Marion Liang*
Alice Chow Man
Bette Watkins Lorenzen
Linda Thomas
Kathleen Watkins
Loretto
All the Sisters who taught me
Gloria Tabacchi
Loretto Heights College: In apprecia-
Counsel, Westport, Mo., 1943-1950
Loretto Academy, St. Louis, 1950-
Webster College, 1954-58
John and Barbara Marshall
Sisters of St. Michael School, Houston
John and Deborah Webre
Sisters who taught at St. Ann's,
Arlington, Va.
Charles and Kathleen Titterton
Mary Frances Lottes SL
Mary and Thomas Morrison
Francene Lum SL
Alice Chow Man
Mary Mangan SL
Richard Fox
Ann Manganaro SL
Jessica Maich
Patricia Jean Manion SL
Emilie and Joseph Deady
Rosemary Mason
Hilda Mark
Stephanie Kunz
Marie J. Shew Massarotti
Florie Massarotti
Maureen O'Connell SL, Mother
Superior, Shanghai
Theresa Da Silva
Virginia Maxwell
Robert Rau, Jr.

An asterisk (*) following a name identifies a Loretto co-member.
Colorful flowers greet the winter weary eye in March.

Photo by Christina Manweller
I give to Loretto because I love this Community, its people and its mission.

Then, I contribute to people and causes that are especially meaningful to me—for example, Loretto’s Hunger Fund, the Haiti project, the Loretto Motherhouse, honoring or memorializing special friends. Sometimes I give in dribs and drabs instead of saving up for a bigger one-time gift. A friend once suggested that I reconsider this practice of sending small gifts requiring numerous bookkeeping notations. But for me, it’s easier to send smaller amounts when I think of it. And I know that my gifts to Loretto are appreciated no matter how I send them.

On a rare occasion, I receive an amount that allows me to make a larger contribution. For example, in June of 2022 I sold my condo in St. Louis and moved to the Loretto Motherhouse. I gave a bit of the profit to Loretto. That was a one-time occurrence.

I dream (don’t we all?) of winning a huge jackpot and spreading the money out to Loretto and to friends. Because I don’t buy lottery tickets, it is less than likely I will ever win that jackpot. But if I somehow did, I would give Loretto a large percentage of the winnings.

My giving is a commitment and a life choice. Besides the good feeling of sharing, there is the good feeling of supporting a community that means so very much to me.
Dear Loretto Friends,

It is February and the cold of winter is still with us. But the glow of holiday lights is long gone, the Salvation Army bells stilled and the needs of the poor are no longer highlighted in the news. It is up to us now to shine that light; to be “light into darkness” as Robert “Stro” Strobridge, Loretto co-member, illustrates.

We can look to the Loretto Community for inspiration and direction as it does the work to light up the darkness. How does Loretto bring this light to the world?

Sisters and co-members come to the aid of those for whom there is no room in the inn: immigrant men, women and children in the desert, in asylum centers and in the cities — El Paso, Denver, Tijuana. Loretto provides relief for those devastated by floods and food for those whose cupboards are bare. Teachers light up the hearts and minds of young people in schools in Pakistan, the U.S., Haiti, Guatemala and Ghana. Staff at the Motherhouse care for the elderly with compassion.

Loretto members lift up the urgent need for a world without war, speaking up at the gates of weapons manufacturers, the halls of the United Nations and the chambers of Congress. Nasreen and her colleagues in Lahore respond to the needs of abused women, listening, weeping and taking action. Community members at the Motherhouse run programs that help us find ways to heal and be healed by Earth. All members lift up their voices, marching in solidarity or singing in celebration.

Loretto’s light is strong. It endures. It beckons us forward. For those surrounded by darkness, it stands out as a beacon of hope. You ensure this continues, shedding your light on Loretto with an abundant generosity of donations and care.

Thank you!

Virginia Nesmith
Loretto Development Director
vnesmith@lorettocommunity.org
'When we contemplate with wonder the universe in all its grandeur and beauty, we must praise the whole Trinity.'

Pope Francis, "Laudato Si," paragraph 169

The Loretto Motherhouse retreat centers offer access to nature’s grandeur and beauty through the seasons. (See inside front cover for photo descriptions and credits.)