



ASSOCIATING *News*

PHJC ASSOCIATE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Spring 2011



Donna Sikorski, Director of the Associate Community

From the Director's Desk

I am very happy to be your new Director of the Associate Community. I am sure many of the Associates do not know me, so it seemed appropriate for me to give you a little of my background, especially how

I came to be in the Associate office. I am a lifelong Catholic, having been raised on the South Side of Chicago, along with my two brothers and two sisters. My husband Ron and I just celebrated our 36th wedding anniversary. We lived in the Chicago area until just over 20 years ago, when Ron's employer transferred him to Plymouth. We had never even heard of Plymouth, but it seemed like a good place to finish raising our three children. It did prove to be a good decision as we eventually settled into the slower paced life of a small town. It was our children who eventually led us to meet the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ Sisters. The Sisters taught the St. Michael's Confirmation class. As Confirmation classes were held at the PHJC Ministry Center, I would drive out and spend the time they were in class visiting the chapel, walking the grounds and learning more about this peaceful and beautiful place. Later, I also came out for Bible Study classes and took a few courses at Ancilla College. I was in awe over the peace I felt while here and the joyful spirit of the Sisters – they were always smiling! In the early days when I longed to be near my extended family, who were all back in Chicago, I could feel at home here.

Many years have passed and our three children are now grown. Our oldest, Amy, lives in St. Louis along with her husband Greg and our only grandchild Connor – he just turned one year old in November. Our son Dan is the middle child and he is living and working in South Bend. Katie, our youngest, lives in Indianapolis and is engaged to be married this June. As for my professional background, I graduated from Indiana University majoring in Sociology (Psychology minor). I worked in early childhood for a few years and then took a position as the Social Worker at a nursing facility. After several years, I became a bereavement counselor at our area hospice. I have always been blessed to have worked in fields that were both rewarding and meaningful to me.

A few years ago, I was invited to begin my formation and I began learning about the Associate Community of the Spiritual Family of Catherine. I was inspired by Blessed Mary Catherine's life, her simple ways, persistence and vision. I loved each new thing I learned about the Spiritual Family of Catherine, and I am sure like many of you, was in awe of the many ministries in which they were involved. This vision Blessed Mary Catherine had, evolved into something huge! What an amazing person. I was renewed in my faith and inspired as I began to understand Blessed Mary Catherine's charism. I could feel the core values of Community, Dignity and Respect for All, Simplicity and Openness to the Spirit being lived in the ministries of the Associates I met, and growing in me. The thought of becoming a part of the Spiritual Family of Catherine was exciting, although my role as an Associate was still rather unclear to me.

(From the Director's Desk, continued on page 3)



Gayle Fiwek, Former Director of the Associate Community

A Fond Farewell

By Gayle Fiwek, Former Director of the Associate Community

I take this opportunity to write and thank each and every one of you for these beautiful twelve years as Director of the Associate Community. This ministry is all about relationships. I treasure each and every person that I have walked with on the journey. My heart is full of wonderful memories and cherished friendships that I've gathered during the years.

Even though I say goodbye to the role as director, I look forward eagerly to continuing my participation in the Associate Community. My journey as an Associate continues, and I will strive each day to continue to follow Blessed Catherine's examples of joyful service, attentive listening and courageous heart! And I also look forward to enriching the relationships

that have begun, and to welcome new people as they hear and answer the call to a vocation in the Spiritual Family of Catherine!

I am quite happy with the process of passing the leadership "hat" on to Donna. I know she will be a wonderful director, and each of you will grow to love her deeply. As I have been nurtured by your support and love, I know she will experience the same. God bless each of you and thank you again for all the sacred and spiritual gifts you have given to me over the years.

This is not goodbye! We will continue together as friends in spirit!

Love and blessings,

Gay



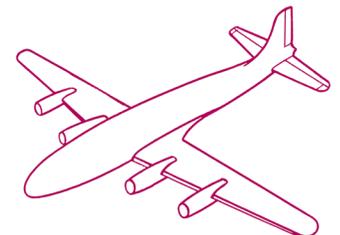
Start saving those pennies!

At the request of so many Associates, the Development and Associate Offices are planning a pilgrimage to Germany in October 17-26, 2011. The trip will include those sites so much a part of Blessed Mary Catherine's life—Dernbach, Limberg, Wirges, Rhineland and Southern Netherlands.

Also planned are day trips to Aachen, Cologne, Dusseldorf, Rudesheim and Bingen. We plan to visit shrines, castles, historical places, watch "westerwald pottery" being made, enjoy Rhine wine and savor typical German foods.

Lodging will be in the same hotel for the entire time, so there will be no need to pack and unpack, carry luggage from place to place, and sleep in a different bed each night.

We are now in the initial stage of making all the arrangements. If you think you might be interested please contact the Development Office at (574) 935-1737 or the Associate Office. The pilgrimage will be limited to 30 persons.



TRAVEL!

(From the Director's Desk, continued from page 1)

Well, life is indeed a journey, and little did I know, that journey was unfolding (although I have a feeling Mother Mary Catherine knew it all along). The ability to be more fully involved in the Associate Community as your director was calling me as soon as I heard that Gay was leaving. She was such an inspiration and I thought perhaps I would talk to her about it, but I quickly put it out of my mind. I loved the position I was in at hospice and it would be silly to start something new – what was I thinking? Several days later I ran into another Associate and I mentioned how sad I was to hear Gay was retiring (although happy for her personally) and once again the thought entered my mind, again I pushed it out. Well, as things that are meant to be tend to do, the idea kept pushing its way back into my mind. Finally, I spoke with Gay to learn more about it. One thing led to another, and following much thoughtful prayer, here I am! I have never felt so called to do anything in my life.

I have only been in the Associate office for a short time. I thank those of you that have already sent me warm greetings. I still am not too sure about where this journey will lead us, but I have confidence that the Holy Spirit has led me here. With that in mind, I know we are headed in a meaningful direction. As I take this leap of faith, please keep me in your prayers. Together, we will move into the future of what the Associate Community is to become.

Please feel free to contact me anytime. The Associate office number remains the same and for those of you who have email, my address is dsikorski@poorhandmaids.org. I look forward to traveling to each of the regions and getting to know all of our wonderful Associates and the various ministries with which you are involved.

God Bless,

Donna



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2011 Directories

You received your 2011 calendar and directories for Catherine's Three Expressions in our December mailing. Please check your listing carefully to be sure it is accurate. Also check to be sure we have your birthday listed correctly. And, Associates, there is an alphabetical listing of all Associates at the back of the directory. Please check to be sure you are included in that list.

Please report any errors and any necessary updates to the Associate Office as quickly as possible. Once these directories are published, we keep you updated on everyone's changes through this *Associating News* publication. So watch for Directory Updates each quarter when you receive your mailing.

Carol Buchanan Professes First Commitment

By Gayle Fiwek, Former Director of the Associate Community

On Sunday, January 16, 2011, Carol Buchanan professed her First Commitment to the Associate Community. The ceremony was held in the Ancilla Domini Chapel, in the PHJC Motherhouse at 4:00 p.m.

Carol is a resident of Plymouth and completed her one-year formation process in late fall. Jeanne Boomershine led the process and was helped by a team of other East Three Associates and PHJC Sisters.

Jeanne Boomershine, as co-leader of the East Three region, coordinated and led the beautiful ceremony.

Carol is married to Tom, a professor at Ancilla College. She is active in St. Michael's Parish, Plymouth, where she first learned about the Associate Community during an information meeting. Sister Judith Diltz and Associate Jeanne Boomershine had attended the information meeting in order to be available to answer questions about vocations as Poor Handmaid religious and Associates.

Prompted by the Holy Spirit, Carol proceeded in taking her first steps towards entering the formation process.



Carol Buchanan pictured with her husband, Tom, a professor at Ancilla College.



Pictured from right to left: Former Associate Director Gayle Fiwek, Jeanne Boomershine, co-leader of East Three, Carol and Tom Buchanan.

Carol also teaches CCD classes at St. Michael's Parish and serves on the pastoral council. She states that, as an Associate, she wants to be involved in helping the poor and powerless. She also desires to be part of the Associate Community prayer life and community lifestyle. She sees the relationship among the PHJC Sisters, Associates, and Fiat Spiritus members as a community of people who share their thirst for God, seek a closer relationship with God, and listen attentively to the Holy Spirit, while sharing the charism of Blessed Catherine Kasper in reaching out to others.

Following the Commitment ceremony, a reception was held for Carol. Poor Handmaids, Associates, and Fiat Spiritus members joined members of her family and personal friends to celebrate this special day.

Welcome to the spiritual family, Carol!

2011 PHJC Raffle

The snow may be falling and the wind may be blowing, but thoughts of the 2011 PHJC Raffle are circling!

In September we will be drawing lucky winners for prizes and cash.

Again we turn to you to support the raffle. If you are able to donate a prize it will be greatly appreciated. Perhaps you received that gift you don't know what to do with, or you know a business or a store that would be happy to donate to a worthy cause if asked. Each donor would receive a tax credit for the value of the gift. And of course, those with nimble fingers may want to crochet an afghan or get together with others to make a quilt. Both works of art are greatly appreciated by winners! If you are able to donate a prize, please complete the form on page 8 or contact Sister Mary Jo Shingler at development_dir@poorhandmaids.org.

Thanks to each of you for all you do for PHJC ministries to those in need. May God bless you!

Please Remember in Prayer...

All Associates, PHJCs, Fiat Spiritus Community members, friends and families of the Spiritual Family of Catherine Kasper; all those spoken and unspoken prayer requests of friends, families and members of the Spiritual Family of Catherine.

East One

Cindy Schmitz..... *illness of friend*
 Maxine Book..... *illness and husband's health*
 Sister Joetta Huelsmann..... *illness of sister*

East Two

Sister Connie Bach..... *recovery from surgery and mother's surgery*
 Sister Marie Heppeler..... *recovery from cataract surgeries*
 Sister Melanie Rauh..... *recovery from surgery*

East Three

Barb Lowry..... *birth of cousin's twins; illnesses of cousin and aunt*
 Dolores Schafer..... *ongoing health issues*
 Sister Jeanne Kohler..... *illness of sister*
 Sister Nora Hahn..... *illnesses of brother and sister-in-law*
 Christina Weigler..... *illness of friend*
 Jeanne Boomershine..... *birth of grandson and husband's illness*
 Sister Agatha Niebrugge..... *death of brother-in-law*
 Margaret Bonen..... *death of daughter*
 Sister Michelle Dermody..... *death of cousin*
 Sister Virginia Kampwerth..... *death of brother-in-law*

North

Joan Blake..... *illness of niece and two friends*
 Loretta Kania..... *illness of friend*

West

Sister Margaret Anne Henss..... *birth of nephew's twin boys*
 Sister Barbara Kuper..... *death of brother-in-law*
 Donna Grzych..... *birth of 17th great-grandchild*

South

Rita Nordhaus..... *recovering from stroke*
 Dorothy Uebinger..... *friend's recovery from heart attacks; friend's unborn grandchild*
 Evelyn Pakosta..... *illness of friend's granddaughter*
 Libby Riggs..... *illness of friend*

Quincy

Dorothy Messick..... *ongoing health issues*

Other

Sister Therese Galarneau..... *death of brother*
 Sister Yolanda Bautista Salinas..... *death of grandmother*
 Sister Shanti (India)..... *brother recovering from heart surgery*
 Sister Germaine Hustedde..... *brother-in-law's illness*
 Warren Allen (*Motherhouse Co-worker*)..... *recovering from stroke and heart attack*

Dangers and unrest in Nigeria, especially near the PHJC Formation House

Prayers for those in Formation:

PHJCs

- Denise Smith, American candidate
- Maria Antonieta García Perez, Mexican postulant
- Yulma Concepción Torres Zaragoza, Mexican postulant

Associate Candidates

Elke Lewis
 Joyce Gertz
 Rosemary Martinez
 Diane Rockhill
 May Crider
 Linda Felke
 Mary Beth Lyvers
 Susie Swain
 Lori Martin
 David Haycraft
 Diana Haycraft
 Bonnie Slegel
 Toni Heinzman
 Mary Griffith

Blessings on the new Director of Associate Community, Donna Sikorski.



Rest in Peace

Sister Loretta Volk, PHJC
 Sister Jeanette Cyr, PHJC

Lindenwood Retreat Offerings

Ruth Van Vactor, Marketing and Program Coordinator

Women’s Lenten Retreat

March 18 from 5:00 p.m. to March 20 at 1:00 p.m.
Journeying with Jesus, you, the woman at the well, the man born blind, and with the raising of Lazarus
Our retreat will focus on ways Jesus is calling us to grow in where we look for living water, how we see, and trusting God in all things – even death and beyond. **Facilitator:** Jay Freel Landry is Pastoral Associate at Little Flower Catholic Church in South Bend, Indiana.

Quiet Day of Reflection

March 21 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
The Spirituality of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, from a Biblical Perspective
The day will be of the Journey of Mary through the Scriptures in her relationship with family, friends and her community of Faith. **Facilitator:** Father Jerry Schweitzer is Pastor of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Wanatah, of St. Mary’s in Otis and of St. Martin in LaCrosse, Indiana.

Road Scholar (Elderhostel)

April 3 – April 8
Course One – Tai Chi, is a graceful form of exercise, for any age, used for stress reduction and to help with a variety of other health conditions. Taught by Mary Hagen of South Bend, Indiana.
Course Two – Positivity Class: Humor, optimism and positive emotion improve health and well-being, and make life worth living. Taught by Mary Labuziowski of Plymouth, Indiana.
Course Three – Techniques for Remembering and Understanding Dreams: Dreams are our unconscious source of wisdom. We’ll explore the hidden meaning in our dreams, discover our inner truth and realize our strengths and capabilities. Taught by Jane Maxfield of San Mateo, California.

Woman’s Day Away

April 9 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Wonderful Women of God
The day will be fun, scripture-based and participants will be able to attend three breakout sessions offering different aspects of women of the Bible. The breakout sessions will be led by Mary Hilger of Fort Wayne,

March 18	Women’s Lenten Retreat
March 21	Quiet Day of Reflection
April 3-8	Road Scholar (Elderhostel)
April 9	Woman’s Day Away
April 11	Quiet Day of Reflection
April 14	Contemplative Prayer Day
April 21-24	Triduum Retreat (Non-Directed)
May 16	Quiet Day of Reflection
June 5-10	Road Scholar (Elderhostel)
June 10-12	St. Francis of Assisi
June 13	Quiet Day of Reflection

Indiana; Kathy Light of Valparaiso, Indiana and Dorothy Stewart of Hartford City, Indiana. The Keynote Speaker will be Rachael Phillips of Upland, Indiana. Rachael is an inspirational speaker, humorist and author.

Quiet Day of Reflection

April 11 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
A Quiet Day with Julian of Norwich
An amazing woman who lived in a tiny cell in Norwich, England, during the late 14th century wrote the first book composed by a woman in English. Her book, Revelations of Divine Love (also sometimes called Showings), remains one of the greatest theological works in the English language. Her book continues to provide guidance in prayer for people around the world today. **Facilitator:** Marlene Kropf is associate professor of spiritual formation and worship and director of spiritual formation at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

www.lindenwood.org

(Lindenwood Retreat Offerings, continued on page 7)

(Lindenwood Retreat Offerings, continued from page 6)

Contemplative Prayer Day

April 14 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Experience the support of praying together in silence. Touch the deep "I Am" in your heart. Know the presence of God in all. If you have a meditation bench or meditation cushion, feel free to bring it (chairs will also be provided.) Facilitators: Sister Nancy Raboin, PHJC and Sister Coletta Wrasman, PHJC

Triduum Retreat (Non-directed)

April 21 from 4:00 p.m. to April 24 at 1:00 p.m.

Walk with Jesus to Calvary and celebrate the victorious resurrection during Holy Week in a private, non-directed Triduum Retreat. The retreat begins on Holy Thursday with supper and concludes with a celebration meal on Easter Sunday. Join us and participate in special liturgies with the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ Sisters.

Quiet Day of Reflection

May 16 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Writing as a Spiritual Practice

Participants will explore how the writing process and the written word can be a graced experience. Sessions will focus on what professional writers have noted about writing as a healing, meaning-making, awe-filled, prayerful experience. **Facilitator:** Sister Judith Diltz, PHJC

Road Scholar (Elderhostel)

June 5 to June 10

Course One – Experience the Benefits of Self-Hypnosis: hypnosis is the way to access the deeper mind's potential and achieve benefits you never dreamed of. Relax! Experience the mental, physical, and emotional benefits that self-hypnosis brings. Taught by Dr. Cynthia Davis of Bourbon, Indiana.

Course Two – Religion and American Culture: We will explore what happens when a religion is taken out of its native culture and brought to America, the connection between religion and American culture and how one impacts the other. We will examine current events that shape religious life. Taught by Rev. Dr. Sam Boys of Plymouth, Indiana.

Course Three – Creative Thinking/Writing: Want to write your life story, express yourself in new ways, or look at life more creatively? Together we will invent, extend, and hone ideas, learning varied strategies for discovery and development. Come prepared to explore, emulate and celebrate! Taught by Anna Liechty, Plymouth, Indiana.

St. Francis of Assisi

June 10 from 7:00 p.m. to June 12 at 1:00 p.m.

Join us as we journey and pray with Francis of Assisi using a wonderful book, *God's Fool: The Life of St. Francis of Assisi*. We will discuss what it means for our unique journey. Please read the book prior to the retreat and bring it with you as we journey with one of the most beloved saints in the Church: Francesco Bernadone. **Facilitator:** Jay Freel Landry is Pastoral Associate at Little Flower Catholic Church in South Bend, Indiana.

Quiet Day of Reflection

June 13 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Spiritual Gardening

We will examine our spirituality through everyday life, cultivating awareness of God's presence in our lives, using images related to gardening. We will consider the importance of "spiritual soil preparation," and the value of "fertilizer." We will examine the "spiritual fruits" we want to harvest and how that determines the "seeds" we must choose to sow. Reflection on our need for "spiritual pruning" and "weeding" will help us grow as we read the garden-theme parables Christ gave us.

Facilitator: Kathy Light lives in Valparaiso, Indiana, serving her congregation at a Licensed Minister of Spiritual Care. Kathy recently completed the Spiritual Companionship program offered at Lindenwood and John XXIII Retreat Centers.

To register for any of the Lindenwood programs, please call 574-935-1763.

Plan Now for Gathering X in 2011

Plans are underway for the Associate Community Biennial Gathering. Be sure to save the date of Saturday, September 24, 2011. You will receive further details about the Gathering, but now is the time to mark your calendars so that nothing will interfere with your attendance at the PHJC Ministry Center for our Tenth Gathering!

At Gathering X we will be honoring the Associate Anniversaries for those celebrating 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 year anniversaries. You will receive a listing of who those Associates are in 2011.

2011 PHJC Raffle Donation Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Donated Item: _____

Please return to:
PHJC Development Office
P.O. Box 1; 9601 Union Road
Donaldson, IN 46513-0001

Questions?

Please contact the PHJC Development Office at
(574) 935-1737 or email development_dir@poorhandmaids.org