

DOMINICAN SISTERS OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

# JUST *Words*



Fall 2021  
Vol. 21, No. 3

**Sister  
Kelly  
Moline's  
perpetual  
profession**  
*See page 14*



With the seasons slowly changing and the days growing shorter, it SHOULD feel like one chapter is closing and another is about to begin. Instead, I feel stuck in what feels like an endless cycle of mask mandates, vaccine hesitancy, and misinformation campaigns.

It's easy to feel angry at the unvaccinated, angry at our employers for bringing us back to a potentially unsafe work environment, angry at politicians who continue to spew lies and encourage violence. But anger will do us no good. It won't convince friends to get the vaccine; it won't suddenly solve issues with outdated office policies; and it certainly won't change the minds of those refusing to see the truth.

”

“If instead of trying to fix problems, we repair our own perceptions of the world around us, we will contribute to healing the world.”

In the past two years alone, we've collectively endured a global pandemic, numerous wildfires and natural disasters, political corruption, an impeachment trial, and waves of social justice protests. If you live inside the 24/7 news cycle, you could be forgiven for thinking it's a never-ending problem with no solution in sight.

You can't fix it all. Or maybe even any of it. And that's ok. But what to do?

The Jewish practice of *Tikkun Olam*, offers guidance. *Tikkun Olam* says performing acts of kindness can protect or repair the world. That means something as simple as holding the door for someone or sending an encouraging text message to a struggling friend *can* help repair our world.

A friend once told me, “We can't expect to live in a civilized society if we don't have models to show how to bring people together.” We can choose to be models. As we learn from the wisdom of the stories in this issue of *JUST Words*, if instead of trying to fix problems, we repair our own perceptions of the world around us, we will contribute to healing the world. If instead of seeing things through an “us” versus “them,” lens we remember there is only a “we”—all members of the same community of life on Earth—we find hope and healing. There is nothing to keep us from trying. Why not start now?



*Veronica Brown is the Communications and Mission Advancement Specialist for the Dominican Sisters.*

## Mission Statement:

Called by God  
into right relationship  
with all creation and graced by  
Dominican life and mission,  
we compassionately preach the  
Gospel of Jesus Christ.

### *JUST Words*

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# HOW ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA HEALED THE WORLD

by Sister Marcelline Koch, OP

Catherine Benincasa was born in mid-14<sup>th</sup> century Tuscany, a plague-ridden, economically and politically unstable time—much like our own.

She and her twin sister were the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> children in a prosperous family of 25 children of Lapa and Jacopo di Benincasa, wool dealers. By the time Catherine died at the age of 33 in 1380, she had left her mark on this challenging, desperate period of ecclesial history.

Well-known for her written works, *Letters* and *The Dialogue*, in 1970 Catherine became one of only three women recognized as Doctors of the Church. Her life and writing give us insight into how she helped bring about a kind of physical, spiritual, and moral healing during a time of great tumult and uncertainty. There are many ways to approach Catherine's gift of healing—or repair—as we are thinking about it in this issue of *JUST Words*. Here are five examples in this brief attempt to answer the question: *What can we learn from our Dominican tradition about how to repair the world?*

**Prayer was Catherine's ground and font of action.** From about the age of 15 until she was 20, she lived in near-solitude, confining herself to a cell in the family home, seeking deep communion with God through prayer. This was the foundation of all that was to come.

She reported that one day God pushed her out of her enclosure with the words "Remember that I have laid down two commandments of love: love of me and love of your neighbor... On two feet, you must



*Sister Maristella Dunlavy took a photo of the very humble place where Catherine of Siena slept and also captured an image of the preserved body of Saint Catherine of Siena under the altar in the Basilica of Saint Mary of Minerva in Rome, Italy.*

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walk my way. On two wings, you must fly to heaven. I shall be your guide in everything it will be your lot to do.”

Catherine’s insight was that this is not a matter of love of God spilling over into love of neighbor, but the two in fact are one single love.

While Dominicans live with the motto “To contemplate and give to others the fruits of our contemplation,” I think recently we have reclaimed the power of our contemplative lives. We justice promoters are aware that our actions for justice must be grounded in our prayer and life with God.

**Catherine responded to the immediate needs around her,** focusing on what good she could do, not on that over which she had no control. She began by tending to the sick in her own family and gradually to those throughout Siena who needed her care. She learned that following Christ often requires sacrifices for the sake of neighbor and others who need our help.

When she was named Doctor of the Church, **Catherine was singled out for her gift of wisdom.** The Spirit/Wisdom of God is at work, “fashioning friends of God and prophets.” (Wis 7:27) Wisdom can be found in everyday life, in our relationships, our struggles, our joys, our failures, our reaching out to others.

By the time she was in her early twenties Catherine had done an impressive job of what we might call **community organizing.** She gathered around her others whom she enlisted in this ministry of care, calling them out of themselves to serve the needs of the time. They became known as Catherine’s *familia*.

Gathering others around her connected with Catherine’s insight and understanding that no one person has full access to the truth, which resides in God alone. By insisting



Photo by Sister Kathleen Anne Tait, OP

*Sister Martha Marie Kirbach at the fountain frequented by Catherine.*

on interdependence Catherine demonstrated that the work of repair does not happen in isolation. We need one another to heal.

Catherine was also not one to hold back. **She pushed boundaries!** Through personal conversations, letters, political negotiations, instructing and consoling popes, she used her gift of exhortation. Despite restrictions on women’s public roles, she embraced her call as preacher, peacemaker, and reconciler. She often began her letters with “Pardon my boldness,” then proceeded to call out the injustice or address the personal pain of others.

While she pushed boundaries, others pushed back. She was not always successful in her peacemaking and reconciling but she was faithful to the call. Catherine’s fidelity to the truth was at the heart of the authority of her written and spoken words. She exercised this fidelity with love, believing that genuine truth can only be spoken in love.

**Catherine was a healer.** Though she was not often able to cure those who

were ill, or ill-treated, her presence at the bedside of patients in homes and hospitals, or her accompaniment of prisoners sentenced to death was healing balm. She offered care rather than cure, recognizing the human dignity of those she served even in some of the most challenging circumstances.

While medicine in our day can cure, along with it is needed a healing presence, our healing presence. We all have been blessed by God with our unique gifts, gifts that are not for ourselves but for the good of others. How can we use them to heal, to repair the world?

We may be tempted to withdraw from the complicated, conflictive, and painful situations of our time that test our courage and hope. The memory of those who have gone before us can be a source of strength. We can lean into their wisdom, their courage, and the path that they have trod. We journey together.

***Sister Marcelline is promoter of justice for the congregation and lives in Springfield.***



Photo by Sister Kathleen Anne Tait, OP



Photo by Sister Martha Marie Kirbach, OP



Photo by Sister Judine Hilbing, OP

## HOW TO HEAL THE WORLD LIKE CATHERINE

1. Make prayer your ground and font of action.
2. Respond to the needs of those around you.
3. Seek the Spirit's gift of wisdom.
4. Organize for good.
5. Push the boundaries of what others think possible.
6. Offer care; protect human dignity.

## IN MEMORIAM

*Please join us in prayer for these sisters who have died:*

Sister Janet Marie Pfile, OP • July 7, 2021

Sister M. Loyola Miller, OP • July 11, 2021

Sister M. Stanley Karnosky, OP • August 9, 2021

Sister Mary Gianini, OP • October 3, 2021

Sister Ann Regina Baker, OP • October 14, 2021

# LAKOTA WISDOM

## AN INTERVIEW WITH ELIZABETH GARNIER-LITTLE

by Sister Geraldine Kemper, OP



Elizabeth Garnier-Little, right, with her sister Wanda Garnier and Sister Barbara Ann Bogenschutz, OP, at Our Lady of the Sioux Parish, Oglala, S.D., in 2017.

**E**lizabeth Garnier-Little is an 80 years-wise Lakota woman born and raised on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in Oglala, S. D. A teacher of all grades K-12 for 52 years, she now substitutes frequently in the Oelrichs, S.D., public school. She is a parishioner at Our Lady of the Sioux where Sister Barbara Ann Bogenschutz ministers. Liz says she doesn't remember when she was not eager to learn the culture, traditions, and experiences of her ancestors. I asked what her ancestral traditions might teach us today about our obligation and capacity to repair Earth as we navigate climate-changing pollution, ongoing threats from nuclear armaments and waste, and the social dissolution we are now experiencing in the U.S. and globally. This is a paraphrased summary of her response.

**Live by virtue.** The Lakota culture is more than food, language, clothes and storytelling. It includes the virtues of prayer, respect, caring, honesty, generosity, humility, wisdom, and love. For the Lakota people, love is the foundation for our spirituality. Love and respect are to be shown everyone, regardless of who you are or what you do. One clear example of these virtues in action was the way Native Americans welcomed Europeans by introducing them to corn and teaching them how to hunt and survive through the harsh winter.

**Dwell within the web of creation.** We had no religion *per se*, but possessed a spirituality based on the belief that everything is connected. The sun, moon, earth, stars, plants, animals, and people are all in relationship together, each with its

unique spirit. The rivers, streams, trees, rocks, and all created things have their own spirit.

The Great Spirit, who is above all and the one from whom all strength and power flows, is represented in Lakota spirituality by the Sacred Circle. The Great Spirit created the universe and enumerates it by the sacred number four: four races of people (red, yellow, black and white), four seasons, four winds, four directions. It is a common belief that everything which is good and holy is symbolized by the shape of a circle representing the interconnectedness of all things and their continued development. This Sacred Circle or Medicine Wheel connects all facets of human and animal life. Knowledge

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# *Holy Listening, Sacred Compassion: Paths to a Healing Communion*

by Sister Barbara Blesse, OP



**T**he seemingly unending pandemic, climate change, natural disasters, discrimination, inequality, injustices, and violence of every kind—all the “-isms” we can think of (racism, ageism, sexism, etc.), ideological, political, and religious conflicts—impact and shape our lives in ways we might never imagine. They can spawn deep-seated, contagious anger, embed themselves in the lives of family, friends, and colleagues, and put people at odds with each another.

How do we deal with this reality? Is ignoring the other the only option? Is it even possible to heal and repair such fractured relationships? How might we restore a sense of communion among those we know and love

and those we encounter?

To invite insight into these questions, we consulted six Springfield Dominican sisters trained in spiritual direction. Sisters Anita Cleary, Kathleen Cour, Karen Freund, Phyllis Schenk, Catherine Stewart, and I contributed our perspectives to grappling with these questions.

In light of the world's brokenness, many are wondering: “Where is faith? Where is God in all of this?” What we know of and from our God is that compassion, kindness, sympathy, and caring are some of the spiritual values that drive humanity. Deep within each of us lies an innate desire to love and care

for others. We tend to turn to faith and prayer in a time of crisis, but with churches, temples, and mosques closed for many months, we’ve found ourselves without the comfort of familiar rituals in the context of community.

These testing times have required—and continue to require of us—spiritual innovation. In the midst of it all we are invited by the Divine to discover, or re-discover, that we are spiritual beings and part of a global, spiritual, connected community. Two approaches surfaced among us as promising ways forward. 1) Healing encounters with people who hold drastically differing opinions require a depth of listening, a Holy Listening. 2) Such encounters will

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emerge from and witness to a depth of sacred compassion for the other.

The first approach requires significant courage because conversation necessitates mutual listening. No small task! It is critical that each person respects the other and brings an openness to truly listen for understanding. These conversations necessitate setting aside judgmental attitudes and efforts to convince the other that “I am the one with ALL the answers!” Attentive, careful listening could reveal that the other person risks the loss of job or livelihood or is experiencing shame and disapproval. Being present to another in this way can be a blessing. It can move the conversation from “either/or” to “both/and.” It’s a chance to talk rather than fight. It can bring people to a dialogue at a deeper level. Holy Listening allows either person to choose to change his/her mind... or not.

The second approach, deepening sacred compassion, recognizes that self-compassion is a prerequisite for compassion for others. In our busy world, it’s easy to become frustrated, depleted from care-giving, jealous, angry or filled with resentment. Instead of paying attention to these feelings, we push them aside, or push through them, never acknowledging them, closing our hearts. This is the moment that calls for self-compassion if we are to be able to extend compassion to others. This same is true of forgiveness.

What we desire, and how we respond to our desires, matters. Every person’s decisions help or hinder the grace of God among us. As we claim the gifts of repentance and forgiveness that God holds out to us, we are better able to extend them to others.

# Ways to be the change

For those ready to take the next step toward healing communion, here are some options.

1. Seek spiritual direction. You can reach the six of us at <https://springfieldop.org/spiritual-direction/>. Your parish or diocese may also have lists of spiritual directors in your area.

2. Read.

*Compassion in Practice: The Way of Jesus*, by Frank Rogers, Jr. (2016), Upper Room Books, Nashville, Tenn. The author suggests those wishing to create healing encounters take their own **PULSE**:

**P** (Pay attention) Look at your restlessness or agitation in a nonjudgmental, non-reactive way.

**U** (Understand empathically) Listen for the fear, the longing, or the aching wound embedded within that restlessness. Take time to tend to it.

**L** (Love with connection) As you explore your wound, see with nonjudgmental eyes and accept its presence in your life at this time. Befriend it, talk to it, and ask it what it needs from you. The love that flows from compassion does not critique, shame or belittle.

**S** (Sense the Sacredness)

Compassion is a spiritual energy. God is working in our lives to heal and renew us so that we may in turn offer that compassion to others.

**E** (Embody new life) Notice the gifts that emerge as you take your **PULSE** throughout the day. Be attentive to the fact that the agitation that prevented your compassion is slowly disappearing.

When your **PULSE** is steady, you are ready to once again be kind, caring, and compassionate towards others.

Or try, *The Gentle Art of Blessing: A Simple Practice That Will Transform You and Your World*. Pierre Pradervand (2009), Atria Paperback, New York, N.Y. and Beyond Words Publishing, Hillsboro, Ore. This book outlines a spiritual practice of blessing others in our everyday lives. Blessing others from that most loving place within ourselves can transform our lives and the lives of those around us. While it is naturally easy to bless those we agree with, it is harder—but healing—to bless those whose perspectives differ from ours or to bless relationships that seem broken beyond repair.

*Sister Barbara is pastoral associate at St. Francis Xavier Church, Carbondale, Ill.*

# REPARANDO Y SANANDO EL TEJIDO SOCIAL DESDE EL COMPROMISO LOCAL

por Sister Doris Terrel Jiménez, OP, and Kira Soto Noria



*Diseño del logo por Hermano Daniel Mauri*

**J**óvenes Discípulos y Ciudadanos (JDC) surgió como un programa de formación de la Pastoral Social de la Diócesis de Chosica a través del departamento de Dignidad Humana, asesorado por el Sacerdote Diocesano Jorge Álvarez Calderón que dejó su legado en el corazón de cada joven discípulo y ciudadano en nuestro querido PERÚ.

De esta manera JDC se ha convertido en una gran familia, entre jóvenes y adultos, que fortalece su espiritualidad y compromiso social en las diversas pastorales de la Diócesis y en los espacios de participación ciudadana de su localidad y país.

El programa de JDC actualmente ya no está presente en el departamento de dignidad humana. Pero los miembros de JDC están activos y dinámicos, ya que mantenemos contacto mediante redes sociales para compartir la vida, la realidad, coyunturas nacionales y espacios de formación aun en la distancia. JCD no ha sido ajeno este tiempo difícil

que nos tocó vivir durante esta pandemia. Muchos de nuestros miembros fueron afectados por el Covid 19, pasaron por otras afecciones. También perdimos hermanos JDC quienes se encuentran ya con Jesús y de hecho se encontraron con Jorge, nuestro “maestro Yoda” (Así le decíamos en nuestros encuentros).

La familia JDC se ha organizado y planificado actividades para brindar ayuda y acompañamiento a sus hermanos y familiares. Como respuesta ante la pandemia, hemos formado equipos de trabajo en diferentes áreas: acompañando a nivel espiritual, brindando primeros auxilios psicológicos y acompañamiento psicológico, apoyando en el seguimiento de la recuperación de salud, procesos de duelo, solidarizándonos económicamente con quienes

necesitan y organizando encuentros de fortalecimiento al equipo de salud JDC. Para informar y continuar con la gran misión de ayuda a nuestros hermanos en respuesta a la pandemia surgió el grupo JDC - SALUD, con profesionales de salud y miembros voluntarios para ayudar al grupo de JDC u otras personas que necesitaban de su tiempo, dedicación y compromiso, con quienes estaban buscando asesoría y acompañamiento.

El acompañamiento espiritual se realiza por plataforma digital zoom mediante webinars, comunicándonos en tiempo real. El aislamiento social nos permitió estar más unidos espiritualmente. No hubo barrera para mantenernos en contacto. Hacemos uso de las diferentes redes sociales como medio de apoyo mutuo. La oración es poderosa y pudimos ver milagros en nuestra familia, personas cercanas, y colegas de trabajo que se unían para compartir la fe. Hay sed

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de encontrar a Dios en medio del miedo e incertidumbre del contagio.

Reconocimos que todos pasamos por momentos difíciles, de enfermedad a nivel personal de nuestros familiares de nuestros compañeros. La preocupación ante esta realidad nos llevó a tomar acción, para ser parte de la solución ante la situación adversa en nuestro país. También participamos en marchas y organizamos actividades para fortalecernos como ciudadanos y para promover el compromiso ciudadano en otras personas.

Ser discípulos y ciudadanos es una gran responsabilidad y eso lo tiene presente JDC. Buscar alternativas de solución en el lugar que se encuentra, brindando esa mirada de amor “amar a tu prójimo, como a ti mismo” es una gran enseñanza de nuestro flaquito Jesús.

Actualmente continuamos con la gran misión. Para ello es indispensable escucharnos, conectarnos con nosotros mismos desde nuestro lugar de origen y comprometernos en el lugar que habitamos en esta gran nación. Somos seres resilientes, ahora queda reconstruirnos a nivel personal, familiar, social, nacional y a nivel mundial, de la mano de la fortaleza espiritual cada día.

Somos un país pluricultural. Juntos podremos realizar más proyectos en nuestra sociedad en favor de nuestros hermanos y hermanas, sin ser indiferentes a nuestra realidad y a las necesidades específicas en las diferentes regiones.

JDC es un gran equipo, que continúa activo a pesar de los años, del dolor y de las pérdidas. Sentimos gratitud por tantas bendiciones en nuestro caminar de la mano de Jesús.

Gracias a todo el equipo, por la formación y acompañamiento hasta hoy. Gracias a nuestros hermanos y hermanas del equipo de salud JDC; por su entrega, apoyo, acompañamiento, consejería, información, por sus desvelos, llamadas, oraciones y más por las reuniones durante esta emergencia sanitaria. Le ponen alma, corazón y vida en cada caso.

Gracias señor Jesús por dejarte ver en el rostro de nuestro prójimo. Nadie ama lo que no conoce y nadie defiende lo que no ama. Continuaremos con el gran compromiso con nuestro prójimo en nuestra sociedad como discípulos y ciudadanos, siendo coherentes con lo que predicamos.

*La Hermana Doris es miembro de JDC hace ministerio en San Juan Bautista de Jarpa, Huanancayo, Perú. Kira es miembro de JDC y psicóloga licenciada que vive en Lima.*

# REPAIRING THE SOCIAL TAPESTRY THROUGH LOCAL COMMITMENT

by Sister Doris Terrel Jiménez, OP, and Kira Soto Noria

**Y**oung Disciples and Citizens (JDC) emerged as a formation program on Catholic Social Teaching offered by the Diocese of Chosica, Lima, through the Department of Human Dignity. The director, the venerable diocesan priest Jorge Álvarez Calderón, died in 2020 but left his legacy in the heart of each young adult disciple and citizen of our beloved Peru.

Through the years, JDC became a great intergenerational family of young people and adults by strengthening their spiritual and social commitments through pastoral activities at the diocesan, local, and national levels.

Though JDC is no longer offered by the diocese, its members are active and dynamic. In spite of our physical distance, we stay in touch through social networks, sharing about our lives and local and national situations. We continue our formation even amid physical distance. Nor have we been oblivious to this difficult time of pandemic. Many of our members were directly affected by COVID-19 and experienced serious health conditions. We also lost JDC members to COVID who are now with Jesus and must have met Padre Jorge in heaven, our “Master Yoda” as we called him during our meetings.

Spurred on by the challenges of the pandemic the JDC family organized activities to accompany siblings and relatives. We formed teams to

accompany people on a spiritual level, to provide psychological help and accompaniment, to monitor their recovery, to assist the grieving, to promote solidarity with those in financial need. From these efforts “JDC Salud” emerged as a way for health professionals and volunteer members to continue the mission of helping our brothers and sisters during the pandemic.

Spiritual accompaniment is offered digitally through webinars and communication in real time. Though socially isolated, we are more spiritually united. There was no barrier to keep us away from others. We used different social networks as a means of mutual support. Prayer is powerful. Through it we witnessed miracles in our families, with work colleagues, and with others who joined us in prayer. There is a thirst for God in the midst of fear and uncertainty of the pandemic.

We recognized that all people are going through difficulties in this time of illness: we personally, our relatives, and our colleagues. Concern about this led us to action and to become part of the solution. We also participated in demonstrations and organized activities to strengthen ourselves as citizens and to promote that commitment in others.

Being disciples and citizens is a great responsibility. JDC keeps that in mind, as we look for alternative solutions to the challenges we see

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Photo by Martha Marie Kirbach, OP

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around us. In this way we respond in love to the great teaching of our beloved Jesus: “Love your neighbor, as yourself.”

We continue with that great mission. To do so it is essential to listen to each other, to stay connected to our place of origin and to be committed to the places we live in this great nation. We are resilient beings, committed to rebuilding ourselves at all levels: personal, familial, social, national, and global, hand in hand with spiritual strength every day.

Peru is a multicultural country. Working together helps us accomplish

more than we could do alone in support of our brothers and sisters, without being indifferent to the specific needs in different regions.

JDC is a great team that continues to be active despite the years, pain, and losses. We are grateful for the many blessings in these years of walking hand in hand with Jesus.

We are grateful for the ongoing training and support of the core team and for the heart and soul our brothers and sisters on JDC health team poured into their accompaniment, counseling, care, calls, and prayers in the face of this health emergency.

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for letting us see you in the face of our neighbor. Nobody loves a person they don't know, and nobody advocates for the one they don't love. We continue our commitment with our neighbors and society as disciples and citizens, being consistent with what we preach.

*Sister Doris is a member of JDC and lives in San Juan Baptist de Jarpa, Huancayo, Peru. Kira is a member of JDC and licensed psychologist who lives in Lima.*

## Associate News

*The annual Associates and Sisters' Day of Reflection looked a bit different this year as Springfield Dominican Sisters gathered in Aquinas Center and participated with almost 100 virtual guests including Springfield Dominican associates and sisters and associates from other congregations across the U.S. Those gathered learned from Sister Sharon Zayac, OP, what it means to participate in the global Catholic action to mitigate climate change known as the Laudato Sí Action Platform organized by Pope Francis. Learn more at <https://laudatosiactionplatform.org/>.*

### MORE CARE FOR CREATION RESOURCES

1. <https://catholicclimatecovenant.org>
2. <https://laudatosimovement.org>





Photo by Aaron Tebrinke

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concerning the earth's compass, the seasons, life stages, and animals are learned from it.

**Use only what is needed for life.** My ancestors lived in the present moment, taking from Mother Earth only what was necessary for survival. A buffalo would be utilized in providing food, clothing, shelter and tools with nothing wasted. They lived unencumbered without a lot of belongings. Buffalo hide tipis were easily and quickly dismantled and ready to travel where the Great Spirit would lead them.

Mother Earth's rivers and streams provided mineral rich water for good health and cleanliness. The rain and snow cleansed our homes. Our deep respect for this life-giving resource kept it from becoming a dumping ground for pollutants and waste as we dwelled close by.

**Recognize the necessity of caring for the common good.** The virtues of

respect and caring for all things and living beings influenced our actions toward others. When needing to cross over onto another's territory it was done quietly in order not to disturb or cause any difficulty with anyone.

An innate sense of taking care of and providing for another is embedded in the heart of the Lakotas. It is common for more than one family to live in the same dwelling where all are cared for according to their need. Each day 10 to 15 people will gather to share a meal following the premise that if you keep a bowl of food it will spoil; thus we share what we have.

**Love one another.** Love is meant to be the motivating force behind all our actions and decisions.

#### **Indigenous Impact**

*The world owes a debt of gratitude to members of Liz's tribe and dozens of other indigenous communities whose personal and communal sacrifices on behalf of the repair of Mother*

*Earth are making a positive impact. A report released in August by the Indigenous Environmental Network and the research group Oil Change International demonstrates that during the past 10 years direct action against 21 North American fossil fuel projects by indigenous peoples of North America has stopped or delayed greenhouse gas pollution equal to the amount that would be released into the atmosphere if 400 new fossil fuel power plants were brought on line. That is equivalent to 25% of yearly carbon emissions released by the United States and Canada combined. You can read the report at <https://www.ienearth.org>.*

**Sister Geraldine is Community and Parish Outreach Coordinator for Rosary High School, Aurora, Ill., and a member of the JUST Words editorial board.**

# Congrats!

## PERPETUAL PROFESSION FOR SISTER KELLY

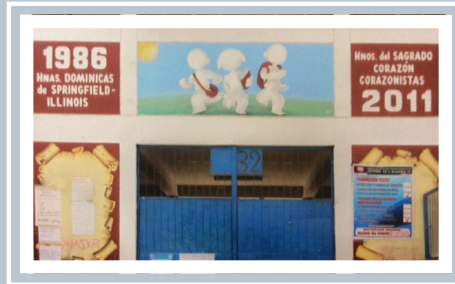


**Sister Kelly Moline** made her perpetual profession of vows as a Dominican Sister of Springfield during a Eucharistic celebration at Sacred Heart Convent on August 8, 2021, in the presence of a fully vaccinated congregation of family, friends, her Dominican Sisters, and other religious women and men who've been a part of Sister Kelly's life. By making her perpetual vows "Sister Kelly became the most recent in a long line of women and men who have been drawn by God toward a life of prayer, study, common life, and preaching," said **Sister Elyse Ramirez**, who has accompanied Sister Kelly as director of initial formation for the Springfield Dominicans. "Sister Kelly's yes puts her in good company. Her commitment is a courageous one at this time of such dramatic change in the church and the world. We are so happy to have her alongside us and encourage other women to consider the same rewarding, challenging path." Learn how you can become a member of the Dominican Family at <https://springfieldop.org/join-us/>.

## CONGRATS TO FE Y ALEGRÍA No 32!

The Pontifical Catholic University of Peru (PUCP) has recognized a school founded by the Dominican

Sisters of Springfield for academic excellence, designating it among the 275 PUCP schools at the national level and giving its students a preferential admission to college. Fe y Alegría No. 32, San Juan



de Lurigancho, was founded by Dominicans from Springfield in 1986 to serve families fleeing from terrorism and economic disasters and families searching for roots, job opportunities, education, and security. That first year, Sister Judith Hilbing and six dedicated young women taught two hundred and twenty-five primary grade school children in reed-mat shacks with make-shift desks of bricks and wooden planks. There was no electricity; water was brought in by trucks. Enough cannot be said in praise of the dedicated teachers who creatively endured heat, dust, illnesses, and lack of physical conveniences to bring wonder, learning, and care into the children's lives.

In 1986 there were six classrooms and a grade school population of 220. By 1996 when the Dominicans turned the school over to the Sacred Heart Brothers, there were twenty classrooms, three fully equipped workshops, and dozens of teachers and staff serving 1,200 K-12 students in two sessions. Congratulations to the faculty and staff of Fe y Alegría 32, past and present!

## EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE



**Sister Ann Elizabeth Little**, chaplain at St. Dominic Hospital, Jackson, Miss., received the Franciscan service

award for the month of August. This award is offered at St. Dominic and other hospitals in the Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady Health System to recognize those who exemplify the hospitals' mission and core values in some extraordinary way. Sister Ann was nominated by one of her coworkers for being a supportive presence for a family whose primary language was Spanish. Sister Ann, who is working towards certification as a medical interpreter, was missioned in Peru for six years.

## LCWR PRESIDENT-ELECT

**Sister Rebecca Ann Gemma, OP**, prioress general of the Dominican Sisters of Springfield, is



the president-elect of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) for a 3-year term that began in August

2021. The LCWR presidency is a three-person team of Catholic sisters which includes the president, president-elect, and past president who collaborate to lead the conference. Sister Rebecca Ann will serve as president-elect for a year, moving into the president's chair in August 2022. Congratulations, Sister Rebecca Ann!

# PARTNERS *In Mission*

## REPAIRING REGINA COELI YOU MADE OUR FUTURE HOME POSSIBLE

by Sister Kathleen Anne Tait, OP  
Director of Mission Advancement



After moving the sisters to Rosary Hall for the duration of the project, the next step was the deconstruction of the space. O'Shea Builders and their crew took great care to recycle materials they removed. Rather than replace bedroom doors they are stripping and refinishing them.

On August 15, 2021, workers completed supports for the new floor, converting the atrium into added square footage. Cement was poured and levelled.

When we made plans to remodel Regina Coeli, the building where our frailest sisters live, we looked forward to creating a living space that would better meet their needs for private visits with friends and family and increase efficiency for meeting their medical needs. In addition, the new design will reduce noise levels in open areas and provide rooms for reflection and private consultation.

Like so many things in the world, the project was put on hold with the onslaught of COVID-19 and the collapse of the supply chain. It was then and still is now, a time of discouragement, division, and devastation for many. Our sisters are not exempt from questioning and feeling discouraged. We still restrict visitors to the motherhouse and limit our interactions with co-workers.

Like many of you, we have buried loved ones without the comforting rituals and community that bring us together. We share the isolation and lack of personal freedom that many others also experience.

Yet, we know we are abundantly blessed. We have roofs over our heads, and we have predominantly escaped the pandemic's impact on our health. Knowing that God sustains us is a source of hope! Belief in God's faithfulness unites us with one another and with others, like you, who bring hope and healing in these uncertain times.

God asks us to focus on the mission of service to others. Our eldest sisters continue to minister *For the Life of the World* with their daily prayer and personal sacrifices. But this fall we are overwhelmed with gratitude for your generosity to us. Your donations

have successfully bridged the gap left by the increased costs associated with the pandemic delay.

Your gifts will enable us to complete the Regina Coeli renovation with the furnishings and medical equipment we need to enable our most senior sisters to extend their ministry of prayer in safer, more appropriate living quarters that will serve us well now and into the future.

Your gifts are creating a home where this generation of our elder sisters will soon experience healing and comfort. Your kindness is also a sign of great hope for the future and the next generations of sisters who will come home to Regina Coeli.

Your generosity is overwhelming. Thank you! Thank you for partnering with us to bring hope and healing to a world greatly in need.



DOMINICAN SISTERS  
OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD

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### About the Cover Art:

Sunday, August 8, 2021, Sister Kelly Moline professed perpetual vows with the Dominican Sisters of Springfield, Illinois. Sister Kelly seems to have found her place. "To be with the poor, to be with the sick, to provide them hospitality, that is what brought me joy," Sister Kelly said in an interview for the new podcast, *F.L.O.W.cast*.



## Dominican Sources

*"We may be tempted to withdraw from complicated, conflictive, and painful situations that test our courage and hope. The memory of those who have gone before us can be a source of strength. We can lean into their wisdom, their courage, and the path that they have trod."*

~ Sister Marcelline Koch, OP

## DATEBOOK

*Events not public unless otherwise noted.*

### October

- 11 Indigenous People's Day
- 31 All Hallows Eve (Halloween)

### November

- 1 All Saint's Day
- 2 All Soul's Day
- 8 Two Cultures, One Call virtual event\*
- 12 Preaching on the Prairie: Gospel Living at Jubilee Farm virtual event\*
- 13 Springfield Dominican Antiracism Team meeting
- 24 Thanksgiving Day
- 28 First Sunday of Advent

### December

- 8 Feast of the Immaculate Conception, patroness of the United States

\*Call 217-787-0481 or visit [springfieldop.org/NVAW](http://springfieldop.org/NVAW) for details.