



Servants of the Holy Heart of Mary
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Fall, 2019

Blessings to You, our Dear Friends,

Autumn is certainly a time of change and we SSCMs are experiencing many changes, too. Last year on the feast of Teresa of Avila, October 15th, we blessed the ground and turned the soil for our new convent. St. Teresa built many convents under the patronage of St. Joseph. We have her icon and a statue of St. Joseph placed in windows of the Province Center, facing this marvelous project. It has been an amazing journey watching our home progress. Sisters from Hopkins Park, the farmhouse on the property here, and St. Mary's Convent, Kankakee, will live in the home we've placed under the patronage of Our Lady of Peace. I, too, will be at home there. We're planning and packing and getting ready to move. We hope the weather will co-operate when the big day comes.

Now on to other good news: our blossoming new ministry. The Servants of the Holy Heart of Mary have never been restricted to just one type of ministry. We arrived in the United States to be domestics and within a decade founded a boarding school and a hospital. We have been involved in a multiplicity of ministries under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Now that many of us are in our 'wisdom years', we find that helping others grow in their spiritual life is central to our call to ministry. To that end, we felt that we could expand our reach by hiring a person to work full-time with us in this endeavor. Susan Amann was recently hired as our Director of Spiritual Ministry to focus solely on developing and growing our Spiritual Ministry programming within the communities in which we serve. For example, we offer a Prayer Breakfast and a Morning of Prayer every month at One Heart One Soul Spirituality Center in Kankakee, Illinois. At Nazareth Spirituality Center in Batavia, Illinois, we offer a monthly Prayer Breakfast and Evening of Reflection. We also offer Lenten and Advent Retreats at both spirituality centers as well as in Rockford and Champaign where we have convents. We are hosting book study groups using spiritual classics. Susan's hope is to appeal to young adults, families and career people. She converses with parish staffs, asking them what we could do to help that they may not be able to offer to their parishioners. Susan is putting great effort into a holistic strategic plan to work with communities to find their spiritual needs.

In 2020, we will offer a five-week adult faith formation series. Susan would also like to begin a women's faith sharing group in the Kankakee area. The new year will be all about building relationships within parishes and finding out their needs and desires as regards their spiritual life. Our charism is *faith, self-giving* and *family love* and we live our charism daily by being welcoming and offering hospitality to those we meet along the way so that we may grow together in faith. Not

every parish has the same needs, so by building relationships with parish staff, we will better know what to offer. There are be numerous opportunities for evangelization and welcoming.

We have also taken a very proactive approach in Rural Ministry. Sister Linda Hatton visits the small towns in Iroquois and Ford counties in Illinois, offering a 4 or 6 week series on the Basics of the Faith. She also helps to create the Lenten and Advent retreats. She travels from town to town, worshipping at the various parishes, building relationships and communicating with parish members and CCW (Catholic Council of Women) members. Sister Linda, raised in Melvin, Illinois, finds it highly enjoyable being back in her old ‘stomping grounds’.

So if it sounds like we have a lot going on, you are absolutely right! We are busy, busy, busy. And as I have said before, we would not be able to make the strides we have if it wasn’t for you. We are grateful and humbled by your ‘partnership’ with us in our varied ministries.

Before we know it, we will be celebrating the birth of Christ. Let us all pray for a peaceful, hopeful, healthy and happy Christmas and New Year. It will certainly be a big year for us; and we hope it will be for you, too. Christmas blessings on you, your family and friends. We remember you in prayer **always** and we hope you remember us as well.

In Mary’s Heart,

Sister Carol, SSCM

Sr. Carol Karnitsky, sscm
Province Leader