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Sharon Glumb, SLW

TO ‘EMBRACE OUR LIVING WORD MISSION WITH NEW AND DRIVING ENERGY’ describes the direction of our Community today and into tomorrow. Each member—from the oldest to the youngest and all in-between—has committed to this direction through her words and her actions. Following the call of the Second Vatican Council, we regularly ‘read the signs of the times’ and choose to respond as the gospel message mandates.

Clearly, there is much to ‘read’ as these ‘times’ unfold locally, nationally and globally. And the Sisters of the Living Word are choosing responses that stand with the poor and marginalized, responses that consider emerging needs of society, and responses that faithfully care for ‘our own’ members who now need care. These pro-active responses also include planning well for our own future as a congregation of women religious.

In these pages of OutWORD our corporate future is described as emerging and unfolding, seizing the present moment so that we continue to make a difference for good. Our stories hopefully encourage and inspire you to embrace (or seize) the mission that God has given you, as well. Together, as partners in the mission of Jesus, we have the potential to multiply the forces of good, the power of light and the movement of the Spirit in this twenty-first century.

We had better get going then! The call of that Spirit is “blowin’ in the wind,” in the challenging winds of new responses to new needs, and in response to the call to discipleship that we share as followers of Jesus.

Sharon Glumb, SLW
YOUNG REFUGEE TRULY A LIVING WORD

Embraces Newness and Acts Happily With Kindness
By Mary Cornille, SLW

LAST AUGUST THREE YOUNG refugees came to join their father in the Chicago area. Homan, now at Maine West High School, Fares at Chippewa Middle School and the youngest, Elyas, a 7-year-old first grader at Central School, are all honor roll students after their first semester in the U.S. Their father, Marwan, is a teller at a bank. The family has settled into an apartment with the help of their sponsors, the Sisters of the Living Word and the Viatorian Clerics in Arlington Heights.

Soon they hope, their family will be complete. Their mother, Lama, and sister, Maria, presently in the United Arab Emirates, are still awaiting finalization of their visas.

Meanwhile, Homan is hoping to play soccer next fall at his school, Fares is learning more and more magic tricks, Elyas likes to play Legos.

Elyas also received an award at a school assembly in January. SLW Eileen and Marlene Geimer were present to take pride in the ceremony. Kelly Krueger, principal, presented the recognition and read from a tribute written by Elyas’ teacher, Karen Lucas. Here are some excerpts from Ms. Lucas’ commendation:

“I would like to recommend Elyas for being a great addition to Central School. When he came in September, he did not know any English. I quickly saw that Elyas was motivated to learn and wanted to try out new words and phrases whenever he could. He can share his thoughts and answer questions in English. Elyas also made friends very quickly. He is funny and caring, which is why the students like to be around him.

“One thing that makes Elyas happy is sharing his supplies with his classmates. He will often do this secretly by placing a pencil or marker on someone’s desk without their knowing. He likes to see them smile when they find the new surprise. His giving attitude has sparked a following in the classroom. Many students are now happily sharing supplies throughout the day. It has been very rewarding to have him in our classroom. He makes us laugh and we all enjoy watching him grow.”

Kudos to Ms. Lucas for this tribute, to his father and older brothers for their good example, to Luanne Wilhelm, SLW, who tutors Elyas, and to all who hold the family in prayer and give financial and other support. If you would like to join the supporters, please contact Sisters of the Living Word, Refugee Family, 800 North Fernandez, Arlington Heights, IL, 60004.

Don’t forget the words of the poet, “More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of,” and most important, God’s words through the prophet Jeremiah: “I have plans for you, plans for your future, plans for hope.” —Jer 29:11.

As of the publication date, Lama and Maria have received the needed visas in the UAR and are waiting for travel arrangements to be made. Please keep the family in your prayers.
OUR 2017 JUBILARIANS

By Donna M. Williams, SLW

OUR SIX JUBILARIANS with their combined years in religious life (390) have experienced all the mysteries their life and faith have to offer.

GENEVIEVE SHEA, SLW is celebrating 80 years of consecrated life. For her, the rainbow has been a symbol of God’s promise to each of us: “I am with you always.” Sr. Genevieve’s God has been faithful to her in all her varied ministries — in the classroom, the office, the hospital, the Archives, formation work and artist. Well into her tenth decade, Sr. Genevieve writes wonderful articles for OutWORD and has organized a current events discussion group at Resurrection Life Center, Chicago.

JOANNE FEDEWA, SLW though tiny in stature is large in presence. A picture of the “Smiling Jesus” is in her room, along with a ladybug balloon. These two symbols remind her of how blessed she is to have ministered as teacher, pastoral coordinator, chaplain in a jail, exemplar to young sisters and Associate mentor. With the parishioners of Christ the King Church in Flint, Michigan she helped to build a new church, raising funds through Bingo evenings. Sr. Joanne, too, is inspired by the words “I am with you always!” as she shares her gifts with others and is enriched by their gifts to her. Sr. Joanne is celebrating her 70th anniversary of consecrated life in Palatine, IL and keeps very busy visiting residents at the St. Joseph Home.

JOHN BOEGEMAN, SLW also began her ministry in the classroom. Sr. John is also an artist and is particularly drawn to work in wood. Many of our homes display her handiwork which remind us of our devotion to the Word, Jesus. John’s special biblical quote: “He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him” has made daily Mass and communion very special to her. She would cherish the opportunity to attend Mass each day – and has done so for most of her 70 years in religious life. She resides in Minnesota.

ELAINE TWOREK, SLW has spent 60 years as a woman religious. Her most recent active ministry was on a Native American reservation in South Dakota. Here the needs were many and the resources scarce. She loved the personal contact with the parishioners and felt that she shared the great love, mercy and compassion that Jesus, the Word made flesh, calls us to. Elaine’s outreach these days is to her companions at Resurrection Life Center, Chicago.
OUR 2017 JUBILARIANS

JULIA STUMP, SLW from Michigan was planted by her God in Louisiana. Sr. Julia spent six years at St. Henry Parish in New Orleans and, since 1965 has been at St. Edward the Confessor Parish in Metairie, LA. She has been with this faith community for almost three generations. This bond is very evident in the affection shown her. Recently, she and Mary de Lourdes Charbonnet, SLW, were honored with their own street sign between the church and the school. The actual sign remains for one year, but her influence will go on forever – way beyond her 60 years as a sister.

CARRIE MILLER, SLW made her original religious commitment to the Franciscan Sisters, the Order which had educated her in California. Eventually she heard about the SLW Community and applied to transfer to that Order. She has been involved in retreat work and spiritual direction, counseling and parish/family ministry. Presently she is co-founder and Program Manager of Faith Community Homes, an ecumenically initiated and supported organization that assists employed families of low income in preventing homelessness and in bettering their lives. It is through lifelong supportive relationships that “hope for being an instrument of goodness, healing and growth” has developed as an important thread of her SLW life and ministry. Sr. Carrie lives in Palatine, IL.

PRAYER CARDS FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS

NEED A MEMORIAL CARD? How about a birthday card for a co-worker? Or a thank you card for a neighbor? The Sisters of the Living Word have cards that include the gift of prayer. Designed by KATHLEEN HEER, SLW, the four-color cards are available for the following occasions:

  • MEMORIAL
  • HEALING
  • GRATITUDE
  • BIRTHDAY
  • CELEBRATION

The Sisters will include the name of your loved one during Mass every Tuesday, during their daily prayers, and at a special gathering on the first Monday of the month. Your donation will be noted in the next issue of OutWORD.

Your donation will enable the Sisters to continue their ministries. In any amount, every donation is greatly appreciated.
APARTMENT A1 AT THE SLW CENTER in Arlington Heights has been renovated to be more accessible for elderly residents. Bathrooms were remodeled to encourage independence and safety and flooring allows for the use of walkers and wheelchairs, should they be necessary. Currently, three SLW live in Apt. A1 and they find the physical setting convenient, convivial and reassuring. They especially appreciate its proximity to the Chapel. The Center is a busy place and they enjoy being a part of all the activity and visitors.

Grants from a number of sources have allowed SLW to improve their facilities. SOAR, Support Our Aging Religious, in 2015 and 2016 allowed SLW to provide furnishings for aging in place residents as well as 28 new mattresses for SLW residences around the country. NRRO, National Religious Retirement Office, has helped greatly with the remodeling of Apartment A1 in recent years through annual collections from Catholic parishes for aging religious. St. James Church in Arlington Heights made a recent grant allowing the purchase of a Dell computer server.

The SLW are tremendously grateful to these donors and to all who make their lives so much easier.


Interior and exterior images following show the Living Word Center, the renovations, and the facilities at A1 in Arlington Heights, Illinois.
REBEKAH MCFARLAND, ARCHIVIST comes to us from Chicago. She did her undergraduate work at the University of Chicago and received her MLIS from Dominican University. She chose archival studies because she loves to read and she loves history, so archiving seemed a natural. She has worked at SLW Center for a few weeks and is reading the oral histories of the SLW to introduce herself to the Order. She is also enjoying the history of Sisters of the Living Word by Mary Ann Zrust, SLW.

Bekah is married to Alex Faraone, a computer programmer, and they live in the Logan Square neighborhood.

As influenced by her love of reading and history, Bekah has an independent business as a bookbinder. She studied the art at Dominican University and worked for the instructor as an apprentice. During her apprentice period she cleaned and rebound an early printing of the King James Bible dating from 1617. She has also rebound an original German Bible, which had been in the owner’s family since publication in 1578. In those times pages were made of cotton, which can be soaked in warm water with lime for cleaning. She then resews the pages together. Many of her projects are family bibles handed down through generations.

In her spare time she enjoys crocheting and sewing and serving as sous chef for her husband, who loves to cook.

Bekah says there is about one year of backlog in the SLW Archives to be cleared up, then she can start adding to the stories and histories. She is at the Center on Mondays and Thursdays.

KELLENE URBANIAK, COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Kellene grew up in the southern suburbs of Chicago, but moved with her family to Munster, Indiana when her mother became ill. She is married to Jeff and has two children, a 20-year-old daughter who is studying at Bellarmine University in Louisville, Kentucky, and a 16-year-old son at Munster High School.

Jeff likes to bake bread, rolls and cookies. The Urbaniaks also have a dog, Lola, a Boston Terrier/Beagle mix.

A graduate of the University of Illinois, Champaign, Kellene has a Liberal Arts degree. While an undergraduate, she worked for a textbook company as a designer and discovered she really enjoys that kind of work. She is currently studying botanical illustration at Morton Arboretum.

Kellene says she doesn’t mind the long commute from Munster to Arlington Heights and she finds the SLW multifaceted and comfortable to be with. She looks forward to introducing them to new media, such as Instagram. Kellene is at the Center on Wednesdays and Thursdays.
THE VOICE HEARD AROUND THE WORLD

By Genevieve Shea, SLW

WITHIN A FEW DAYS AFTER the November 8 election the early plan for the Women’s March in Washington was a statement on women’s concerns about Donald Trump’s words, actions and attitudes toward women and their human rights. All avenues of social media began to buzz with opinions, ideas, suggestions, plans. On January 21, 2017 the world saw the power of words leading to action.

The communication waves enveloping the earth carried the conviction: every person has the right to respect and to a life of justice and peace. This implies the shared responsibility to give the same to every other person. Women of the United States raised the banner and gave the call. Women of 81 other countries, representing every continent, joined the march. Their voices blended and became a universal voice. The God who said “Whatever you do for the least of mine you do for me” was present and speaking up for oppressed people. The words are directed toward those who inflict suffering as well as to those who exert efforts to relieve or end it. For 24 hours the world vibrated with sound waves calling for compassionate justice leading to universal peace.

Like countless Christians, the Sisters of the Living Word look to the Life and Gospel of Jesus for guidance and the power to promote justice and peace. This is one of the core values implied in the statement of our Mission — our “reason for being”— to reflect and affirm the presence of Jesus who frees the oppressed and gives new life. It was in this spirit four Sisters of the Living Word represented all of us when they participated in the Women’s March.

Colette Fahrner, SLW, joined the March in Oxford, MS. For years Sr. Colette has advocated for the poor and for the Earth, our home. Much of the world’s poverty is related to the use and the abuse of the earth’s resources. For Sr. Colette, care for the Earth is also care for the people who live on it. After the march, Sr. Colette reported she had been impressed by the broad range of attendees: older people, young families with children, people of many ethnicities, welcoming one another like neighbors.

Georgene Schumacher, SLW, currently in St. Louis, joined the
March there. Georgene has spent most of her professional life actively involved in meeting the needs of immigrants and marginalized people. She has helped many not only with material aid but also with the skills needed for self-help and independence. Her voice was blended with the call for systemic change. She said that she was afraid the march would be “a white women’s march” and was relieved to see the spectrum of participants and signage. “The delight for me was that this was a diverse crowd with diverse messages.”

Marie McKenna, SLW, joined the thousands of women and men in Washington, DC. Marie has been actively involved with Catholic Charities of Chicago, providing help in various aspects of personal and family distress. Her daily contacts and work with victims of abuse and various forms of social injustice fuel her energy to be a channel of God’s compassionate love. Sr. Marie remarked “The people who couldn’t fit on our bus made Care packages for us. There were charter buses all along the highways from Chicago to Washington, and there were so many buses at the gas station we had to wait an hour and a half to get gas.”

Mary Catherine Connolly, SLW, with several members of her family, joined the Women’s March in Chicago. Throughout her life Mary Catherine has advocated for justice and peace at every level of life. Most recently she has joined in efforts to assist a Syrian refugee family struggling through their first year in America. On returning home, Sr. Mary Catherine said “I felt a part of womankind…and we were supported by the men and children there too. It was a joy. There was no violence because the people were united in a cause.”

For the Sisters of the Living Word, January 21, 2017 was not the beginning of being a voice for the voiceless. It was a day of concerted determination to stand with the victims of systemic injustice and all forms of discrimination. It was a day to blend our voices with the universal voice raised with millions of others calling for justice and peace.”

[Image of people marching]

[Image of a sign saying “She’s Someone’s Mother/Sister/ Daughter/Wife”]

[Image of a sign saying “Hear Our Voice”]

[Image of a sign saying “They Golly We’re High”]

[Image of a sign saying “New York to Washington”]

[Image of a sign saying “CEO of the World”]
Those who knew both Sister Agnes and the movie “The Sound of Music” might see a resemblance in the two women – Agnes and Maria: “How do you hold a moonbeam in your hand?” We know that the moon reflects the light of the sun. To Agnes, her God was the sun and her life was about reflecting His light!

Agnes was born in Lucan, MN to her parents Agnes and Herbert on May 13, 1927. She was baptized Joan Marie, received her First Communion at seven and was confirmed at twelve. During these years her two younger brothers, Jerome and Robert joined the family. At age thirteen Joan Marie’s mother died, impacting the young woman for the rest of her life. The family moved to New Ulm, MN where the children attended Holy Trinity School. Her father was an avid harness racer and Joan Marie would accompany him to various tracks, proudly driving one of the vehicles.

During her teenage years, Joan Marie began to feel the call by her God to enter religious life. This was supported by her grandmother, but not by her father. Herbert tried right up to the end to dissuade Joan Marie from entering the convent with the promise of flying lessons. The call from God was stronger.

She entered the Sisters of Christian Charity July 11, 1945; was invested in 1946, receiving the name Sister Agnes; made profession in 1948 with final profession in 1954.

Sister Agnes began her teaching career in Grades 3 and 4 at St. Gregory School in Chicago, moved to St. Martha School in Morton Grove, IL and then took time off to earn her RN and a BA in Education. From 1957 to 1967 Sr. Agnes was a teacher (4 years) and principal of St. Theresa School in Palatine, IL. In the summers she used her nurses’ training to care for the elderly SCC’s at Sacred Heart Convent for 14 years.

She also received her Masters in Education and Supervision during this time. Her father had promised that if she became a superior he would buy her a car, and in 1961 he drove up to the convent in a blue Cadillac for her!

Vatican II brought many changes for religious communities and the church. In 1975, after much prayer, soul searching and planning, Sr. Agnes joined 89 of her religious community in the founding of a new community, The Sisters of the Living Word.

Sr. Agnes spent her retirement years in Minnesota volunteering – over 2,000 hours in hospital ministry, mentoring teachers and working in the school office. She continued her ministry in community also by coordinating Associates of the Sisters of the Living Word in the Minnesota area.

Sr. Agnes was a combination of a nurturing mother, a tough love guardian and an excellent principal. She was a forward looking educator because she was a life-long learner. The thousands of lives she touched in her 89 years are a testament to a woman who was a free spirit and who was able to help free others.

“How do you hold a moonbeam in your hand?” We know that the moon reflects the light of the sun. To Agnes, her God was the sun and her life was about reflecting His light!
SLW AT EDEN HOUSE & BISHOP PERRY CENTER OUTREACH IN NEW ORLEANS

Associate, Judge Joy Cossich Lobrano, Board Member at Eden House and the Bishop Perry Center, hosted an educational outreach day for SLW, Associates and friends at both locations.

Left to right front row: Cynthia Warren, Elaine Warriner, Judge Joy Lobrano, Julia Stump, SLW, Vianney Moore, SLW, Linda Strohmeyer, ASLW, Joel Curcio, SLW; left to right back row: Margie Mei, Kris Vorenkamp, SLW, Judiann Derhake, SLW, Jeannette Daniel, SLW, Catherine Guirovich, ASLW, and Sharon Glumb, SLW.

5TH ANNUAL DAY AT THE RACES 2017

Left and below left: Guests attend 5th Annual Day at the Races in the Black Gold Room of the Derby building on March 18 at the New Orleans Fairgrounds.

Below: The Partners in Mission Award was presented to the Kimble Family: Michael, (Norma, in absentia) Charlotte, Marianne and Philip, shown here with Sr. Sharon in New Orleans.
PARTNERS IN MISSION is an association of the Sisters of the Living Word that honors and recognizes in perpetuity individuals who have made provisions for the Sisters of the Living Word in a far-sighted way.

If you’re over the age of 70½, the “charitable rollover” law lets you transfer assets from your IRA to Sisters of the Living Word, and whatever amount you transfer reduces the amount you’re required to withdraw. For example, if you’re required to withdraw $20,000 in 2017, but you instead donate $20,000 to the Sisters of the Living Word, you don’t have to withdraw any funds for yourself, and you don’t have to pay any income tax.

Donating directly from an IRA may be better than taking a distribution and then making a donation, because it results in a lower adjusted gross income – which can help you avoid taxes on Social Security benefits, reduce your Medicare premiums, limit the 3.8% surtax on investment income, and qualify for other deductions and credits.

For the full article from the Law Offices of Robert Ross, please go to: SLW.ORG/DONATE/PLANNED-GIFTS-CHARITABLE-GIFT-ANNUITIES/

To learn more about PARTNERS IN MISSION or other planned giving opportunities that benefit the mission and ministries of the Sisters of the Living Word contact:

MARGARET MEI
Director of Mission Advancement
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847-577-5972 EXT. 226
mmei@slw.org
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LAST YEAR WAS A WHIRLWIND of events going on in my life. I made a conscious decision and commitment to complete my initial formation as a member of the Sisters of the Living Word in Chicago, Illinois. This past fall saw the culmination of the discernment period and I took my first vows in the presence of my community sisters, some of my biological family members who had traveled from Nigeria and my friends who came from different parts of the US and world as well. Also in the ceremony were some of my friends who were part of the Inter Congregational Novitiate (ICN) program with me and some of my Giving Voice friends. It was a memorable occasion for me and the sisters.

Of course with the summation of formation comes the start of a ministry. As a Social Worker by profession, I have worked in different organizations and indeed loved being present to the poor who need the services that I have been able to provide. Through discernment with my community, I will continue in the same ministry but with a twist — exploring working more with the immigrant community particularly of Latin American descent. These past few months have seen me studying the basic Spanish language, and I completed a two months’ Spanish immersion program in Mexico this Spring - an opportunity that came through one of my Giving Voice sister’s connections. The gift of sisterhood!

Being a member of Giving Voice has been a great gift to me, especially as I navigate through the search, discernment process and formation period in a new congregation in the US as an immigrant. This group has created a forum for me to associate, relate and mingle with young women who are discerning to be sisters or who are already sisters, share daily experiences in our context and encourage each other on our journey and ministry.

I have been enriched greatly by the opportunity of cross cultural contact, particularly Latin American culture, which gave me access to people’s ways of life and traditions, some elements of which remind me of my own cultural heritage. As I look forward to the years ahead of me, I continue to be ever grateful to my sisters for this opportunity and to rely on God’s grace especially in my ministry with the immigrants and the less privileged of our society. 🌱

OUR CORE VALUES

LIFE OF FAITH
Being rooted in God’s Word as followers of Jesus and in communion with all people and creation.

LIVING THE GOSPEL
Trusting in God’s providence, sharing in mutuality with people who are poor and marginalized, working in collaboration, and searching for truth in dialogue with others.

PEACE & JUSTICE
Promoting the common good through systemic change and accompanying and empowering others to bring new life.

SIMPLICITY OF LIFE & CARE FOR EARTH
Sharing our gifts and creating sustainable ways of living so all will have what they need.

RESPECT
Respecting the dignity of each person, and valuing each person’s word through the gifts of listening, presence and compassion.
IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE OutWORD WITH FAMILY MEMBERS OR FRIENDS, PLEASE CONTACT: ADVANCE@SLW.ORG

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april 23
2ND ANNUAL JAZZ BRUNCH
Wheeling, IL

may 20
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CHRIST THE KING CATHOLIC CHURCH
Flint, MI

june 26-30
COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY
Chicago, IL

july 1
JUBILEE
ST. THOMAS OF VILLANOVA CHURCH
Palatine, IL

november 4
ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE
LIVING WORD CENTER
Arlington Heights, IL

november 26
ANNUAL ADVENT PRAYER SERVICE
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