



The Spirit of Mission: The Work of Ministry Boards

Sister Charmaine Krohe, SSND, provincial leader, noted in her [Easter message](#) to the ministry boards to be Easter people and to witness to the power of the Resurrection. The Triune God sends us the Spirit to be that witness, as we emerge back to a more familiar sense of life, pre-pandemic. In his [homily](#) from this year's Pentecost, Pope Francis offers three pieces of advice to cooperate with the Spirit.

The first is to *live in the present*. "The Spirit reminds us of the grace of the present moment. There is no better time for us: now, here and now, is the one and only time to do good, to make our life a gift. Let us live the present."

The second is to *look at the whole*. "The Spirit does not mould isolated individuals, but shapes us into a Church in the wide variety of our charisms, into a unity that is never uniformity...there, in the whole, in the community, the Spirit prefers to work and to bring newness."

The third is to *put God before oneself*. "Only by emptying ourselves, do we leave room for the Lord; only by giving ourselves to him do we find ourselves; only by becoming poor in spirit, do we become rich in the Holy Spirit."

Reflecting on this, we think of the work of our sponsored and co-sponsored ministry boards. Since the start of the pandemic, we think about the ways they lived in the present to see what challenges their ministry faced and how to respond. They looked at their

ministry as a whole to see what adjustments need to be made and what new opportunities they could tap into. Finally, they put God before themselves as they strive to work for the ministry's viability and sustainability.

In this issue, we will explore how three leaders see their service on a ministry board as living and sharing in the SSND charism of *making one*. We leave you with this beau-

tiful work from Catholic artist Jen Norton, which features the Prayer to the Holy Spirit by St. Augustine.

Summer Blessings,

Patrick Laorden
Associate Director
Ministry Services

Yvonne DeBruin
Director
Ministry Services



Artwork by Jen Norton. <https://www.JenNortonArtStudio.com>
Used with permission.

Living in the Present: Reflecting on “Mission Moments”



Andrea Giampetro-Meyer
Board Chair
Sisters Academy of Baltimore –
Baltimore, MD

As board chair of Sisters Academy of Baltimore (SAB), I am mindful of the mission of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, which emphasizes unity and a ministry directed toward education. SAB educates middle school girls of different races, ethnic groups, and religions, from families of limited economic

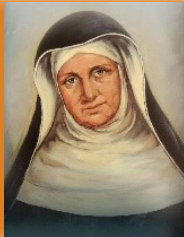
means. The school is led by our president, Sr. Delia Dowling, SSND, who keeps SAB’s mission central to all decisions.

A pandemic brings many challenges. Sister Delia and SAB principal, Dr. Jeanne Dolamore, have led an excellent group of faculty and staff members. These professionals have achieved seemingly impossible goals. The board, tasked with making wise decisions and navigating complex strategic issues, is able to engage in excellent work because we are united in our quest of continuing the mission of Christ. Our board meetings always start with a prayer and a “mission moment,” both of which remind us of our service to the Church, Baltimore, and the world.

One of our mission moments

during the pandemic highlighted a few middle school girls and a parent/guardian, who shared with the board what it has been like to learn remotely. A more recent mission moment highlighted two girls and their sponsors, individuals who provide financial support for each girl’s education. These mission moments weave together what is happening in the day-to-day with SAB’s mission of educating girls.

As a lay person and board member, I find the charism of making one empowering. I also find that engaging in work under a religious mission is comforting. Working with board members, united in service to the Church, Baltimore community, and world, is a joy. We are guided by faith, faith that directs us to help SAB achieve its mission.



“O Holy Spirit, enlighten us, strengthen us, so that we may comprehend our divine call and recognize what we are, what we should be, what we must and really want to do in order to reach this goal.”

– Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger, 29

Looking at the Whole: The Importance of Personal Connections



Martin “Marty” Kajic
Board Trustee
Caroline Center – Baltimore, MD

At the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, we have a coordinated COVID-19 response team. As a team, we ask ourselves what the needs are - not only for the daily operations but for the

mental health of our staff as well. Navigating the pandemic, I felt like the captain of a ship, focusing on how we could operate in this environment. At Hopkins we adapted, with a point of concern about the welfare of our staff by making a newsletter, sharing personal stories, trying to recreate the serendipitous moments albeit by scheduling casual conversations. We took comfort knowing that what we were going through was a shared experience.

As a trustee of Caroline Center, it was only natural for me to share what we were doing at Hopkins. I found that the pandemic made us more accessible and friendlier in sharing our resources across borders and boundaries. Thinking

about Caroline Center, we were forced to look at our organizational structure, rethinking how we delivered our academics and everything that we do. The board has done planning around crisis management and business continuity. Those can be tested, but until you are in it, you aren’t sure how people are going to react. You have to have good support and leadership to move forward and Caroline Center has done a great job providing that. We have to build differently, maintaining a balance between education and practice – which the Center does.

What has grounded me has been the pace of work. The pandemic has allowed us to interact differently with our colleagues and our

(Continued from page 2)

families. There's been separation in both regards – forced separation. It's an opportunity to pause. In making one, you have to be a strong leader, keeping focus on

being connected, making sure to reach out. We have to have genuine concern and compassion. There's a sign at Caroline Center, put up by Sister Pat McLaughlin,

SSND, that always reminds me of that. It reads, "Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about. Be kind. Always."



Holy Spirit, Paraclete Spirit, comfort our hearts. Make us missionaries of your comfort, paracles of your mercy before the world. Our Advocate, sweet counsellor of the soul, make us witnesses of the "today" of God, prophets of unity for the Church and humanity, and apostles grounded in your grace, which creates and renews all things. Amen." – Pope Francis, 2021 Pentecost Homily

Putting God Before Oneself: Keeping the Focus on Mission



Martha Welter

Board Chair

Corazón a Corazón – Chicago, IL

Being a board chair during a time of pandemic has been a strange experience. Since the onset, there has been very little activity at Corazón a Corazón. The staff really focused on making one by sustaining connections. Phone calls, emails and newsletters kept our clients and our donors up to date on Corazón's status. My hope is that board members will increase connections with donors by sending thank you notes and/or making phone calls.

Corazón's motto is "When hearts connect, lives are transformed." Currently, about half of Corazón's ESL students are learning virtually and half in person. While internet sessions have been great, the connection between tutor and student is not the same as when they

meet in person. We are very excited to be able to connect with Summer Camp participants this year. Last year we had a "take-away" program for a small number of kids and no after-school tutoring.

During this pandemic, one thing that has kept me grounded has been praying, "Lord, help me to say what needs to be said." Part of my job as board chair is to keep our focus on the mission of Corazón and the SSND charism. To stay inspired, the board members need to stay engaged and connected. Our next board meeting will be the first in person gathering since February 2020 and we are looking forward to being together.

St. Augustine, Encounter, and the International SSND Congregation

On March 5th and 6th, Ministry Services offered its second virtual Ministry Formation Session. Nine lay leaders in the Ministry Formation Program tuned in. Patrick

Laorden, Associate Director, explored St. Augustine's life and his approach to leadership. St. Augustine emphasized the Trinity as the source, basis and goal of communi-

ty life – as noted in the prologue of *You are Sent*. St. Augustine also identified community, building one another up and humility as essential dimensions to leadership. (Continued reading [here](#))

New Employee Orientation (NEO) – Round Two

Ministry Services offered its second New Employee Orientation on Thursday, May 13th. Eighteen employees representing sponsored ministries, province

departments and continuum of care centers were present. Sister Charmaine Krohe, SSND, provincial leader, and Sister Maria Iannucillo, SSND, provincial councilor,

greeted the attendees briefly. Participants learned about the spirit of Blessed Theresa and Mother Caroline, the SSND ministries and evolving educational

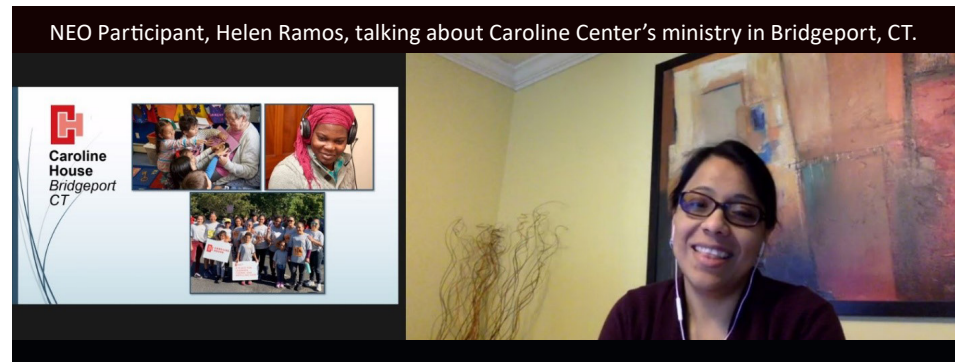
(Continued from page 3)

vision, working for a religious congregation, the AMSSND ministry values and a spirituality of work. The orientation concluded with a closing ritual, where participants finished the statement, "I have heard the call to..." and received a blessing from their supervisor.

Participants engaged in great conversation and enjoyed sharing their experience in ministry. One participant commented, "I was motivated to know that I am part of a bigger purpose and that my work helps to continue the mission of the ministry." Another

commented, "I was challenged to open my head and heart to how I may incorporate the SSND way into my everyday work." Finally, a participant expressed, "I am grateful for a place where I can

make a difference in the world without feeling overwhelmed by it, protected by the values of the SSND." The next New Employee Orientation will be offered again this fall.



Reflection Questions:

How is the Spirit moving you to *live in the present, look at the whole, and put God before oneself?*

Since the start of the pandemic, how has your ministry's, board's or community's consciousness of *making one* deepened?

Upcoming Events:

Claiming the Fire Within Retreat
June 27-30, virtual

Ministry Formation Session III
October 22-23, virtual

Resources:

Resources:

[Resources for Ministry Boards](#)

[Letters of Blessed Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger \(Digital\)](#)

["Inherit the Earth" Documentary \(8 min, 45 sec\)](#)

[SSND Commitment to be a Laudato Si' Congregation](#)

[Public Statement of Commitment \(General Council – May 25, 2021\)](#)

[Laudato Si' Action Platform Goals \(Seven-Year Process\)](#)

[Cracking the Codes: The System of Racial Inequity \(Documentary\)](#)

Articles:

[Four Principles of Purpose-Driven Board Leadership \(Stanford Social Innovation Review\)](#)

[Building Community into Our Work \(Nonprofit Quarterly\)](#)

United in Mission is a quarterly publication of the Department of Ministry Services – School Sisters of Notre Dame, Atlantic-Midwest Province.



Yvonne DeBruin
Director of Ministry Services
(410)377-7774 x1153
ydebruin@amssnd.org

Patrick Laorden
Associate Director of Ministry Services
(203)762-4113
plaorden@amssnd.org