



THE WORD LIVES

September 2017

DEDICATION AND BLESSING OF THE SPIRIT CENTER

Reflection from Sister Annette

Every step we take towards reunification of the Order serves as a reminder of what Mother de Matel dreamed for us. A reminder that is also an invitation to review how our individual and communal living fulfill her dream and the Incarnate Word's desire. The measure for our review? As Jesus instructed his first followers, "By their fruits you will know them." (Mt. 7:16)

Jeanne understood this truth, for she prayed for herself and—by extension—for each one of us: *"May she possess within her the dwelling of the Holy Spirit with all his twelve fruits. May she be charitable, peaceful, joyful, kind, modest, chaste, continent, faithful and not incredulous, patient, humble, gentle, not becoming bitter toward anyone who wrests from her whatever may give her pleasure.... May she never seek what is according to her self-love. May she faithfully make progress for the good of her neighbor."*

She also understood that *"the wood of life is the love of the cross which produces the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit... This is the interior growth of the Order, and the leaves are the good example."* As extensions of the Incarnation, may we embrace all of its mystery so that the fruit we produce through the Spirit will nurture others!



Bishop Michael Mulvey blessed the buildings at the Spirit Center.

The dedication and blessing of the Fannie Bluntzer Nason Renewal Center (also known as the Spirit Center) was held Sunday, August 13, 2017. Andy Crocker, Board President, gave a welcome and introductions. **Sr. Annette Wagner** offered an opening prayer followed by a reflection by Bishop Michael Mulvey.

John Lloyd Bluntzer, the grand nephew of Fannie Bluntzer Nason, told the story of the Bluntzer family, which began in 1849 when Peter Bluntzer brought his wife and seven children from Alsace Lorraine to settle near Coletto Creek. Fannie Bluntzer Nason's bequest of her inherited Bluntzer home and adjoining land to the Sisters of the Incarnate Word continues the spirit and legacy of the Bluntzer family in serving the community and the people of South Texas.

Joe Coco, Board Project Manager, reported on the construction of the Center. While Bishop Mulvey dedicated and blessed the two buildings, **Sr. Michelle Marie Kuntscher** closed the event with prayer.

The mission of the Center is to provide a place for spiritual, educational, and social development of youth in South Texas. It welcomes church retreat groups, school groups and field trips, adult and daytime retreats, and in-service and training.

The Center offers the opportunity to "disconnect and reconnect: to get away from everyday distractions, get in touch with God, nature, your true self, family, and community." May God's merciful love flow through this retreat center with justice and compassion for all who seek to find new meaning in life.



Let us continue to thank God for the commitment of the Board of Directors and the support of so many volunteers and benefactors.

For more information and events see: www.bluntzerspiritcenter.org or facebook.com/spiritcenterbluntzer.

MINISTRIES CORNER



Srs. Annette Wagner and Colette Brehony attended the LCWR (Leadership Conference of Women Religious) National Conference in Orlando, Florida, August 8—12. The Conference includes over 1500 members, who are members of congregations that include approximately 80 percent of the 48,000 women religious in the United States as of 2015. The conference describes its charter as assisting its members to "collaboratively carry out their service of leadership to further the mission of the Gospel in today's world."

The topic of the Conference was "Being the Presence of Love: The Power of Transformation." Included in the closing statement of the Conference they wrote, "We believe that love is more powerful than fear, dialogue more productive than rhetoric, and connection more transformative than threats of destruction."

During the closing assembly, Sr. Teresa Maya, CCVI from San Antonio, was installed as President for the year 2017-2018.

The LCWR issued a public statement imploring President Donald Trump to engage in dialogue and negotiation. The Sisters remain committed "to promote nonviolence and a compassionate response to the thirst of the word for integrity and communion."

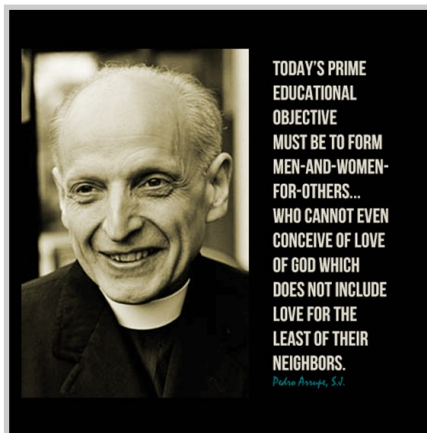
Sr. Anna Marie Espinosa attended the National Religious Vocation Conference Board (NRVC) meeting and J.S. Paluch Vocation Seminar August 19-13, 2017 at the Embassy Suites Hotel O'Hare-Rosemont in Rosemont, Illinois. The 30th annual vocation seminar, was entitled *Creating a Culture of Vocations: Where We've Been and Where We're Going*. Sponsored by the J.S. Paluch Company, Inc., it gathered national leaders from vocation, evangelization, youth, young adult, multicultural ministries, Catholic marriage and family groups, Serra International, and religious and diocesan formation / communication organizations to share information and conversation for creating a culture of vocations. Sister Anna Marie has served on the NRVC board and participated in the Paluch Vocation Seminar for four years.



**September 2, October 7,
November 4, December 2:**
2017 Leadership Team Meetings

September 30 - October 1:
General Assembly

December 3:
Associates Advent Retreat



Executions in Texas

Thursday, September 7:
Juan Castillo

You are invited to join the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, 5201 LIPES BLVD on **Thursday, September 7 @ 6 PM** to pray for **Juan Castillo** who is scheduled to be executed by the State of Texas, for the victims and

PEACE AND JUSTICE CORNER



Hate cannot drive out hate. Only love can do that.

—Martin Luther King

A gospel that doesn't unsettle, a word of God that doesn't get under anyone's skin, a word of God that doesn't touch anyone's skin, what Gospel is that?

—Oscar Romero

"The more powerful you are, the more your actions will have an impact on people, the more responsible you are to act humbly," Pope Francis warned. "If you don't, your power will ruin you, and you will ruin the other."

—Pope Francis

Now is the time to make space in our hearts and our homes for the needs and concerns of all God's people, the undocumented mother, the unemployed steel-worker father, and those children and elders consigned to live in poverty. It is long past time to make room in our politics for those who have been disaffected, disenfranchised, and discarded.

—LCWR

Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.

— Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Do you want to speak the praise of God? Then be yourselves what you speak. If you live good lives, then you are God's praise.

—St. Augustine of Hippo



The NRVC Board members

NEWS TIDBITS



Ariel Garza and Rayelynnne Orona enjoyed creative reflection time during the Vocation Retreat at the Motherhouse August 4—6th. **Sr. Anna Marie Espinosa** planned and directed the retreat days with assistance from several of the Sisters. The days included liturgy, talks, Rosary, recreation with the Sisters, Emmaus Walk and reflection time. The retreatants also joined our Sisters who attended the profession of Sr. Maria del Rosario in Victoria on August 6th.

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Madeleine Perez, Chair of the De Matels, participated in West Side Helping Hand this July, a summer program held at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church. From 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m., she helped 110 kids each day with arts and crafts, exercise and reading. **Sr. Lou Ella Hickman** and **Sr. Anna Marie Espinosa** also joined on July 13th where they had the opportunity to visit with the children there. When asked about her involvement and experience, Madeleine said “It was in late June that I was invited by **Sr. Rosa** to help at West Side Helping Hand. I knew deep down that this was God calling me and there was no way I could ignore the stirring of emotions in my heart to go. This experience changed me in a unique way - a way that reminded me of the beauty of service. I was able to be completely vulnerable with these kids, and in doing so, I learned a lot from them: to be compassionate, to be understanding, to love and to be joyful with one another. Being able to serve is always an incredible experience, and sometimes an experience can bring you back and set you on fire for Christ; this was one of those experiences.” We thank her for her witness and pray for all of those involved with West Side Helping Hand.

HURRICANE HARVEY



Storm or no, trash must go. That was fun!
Thanks Srs. Rosa Ortiz and Raquel Newman.

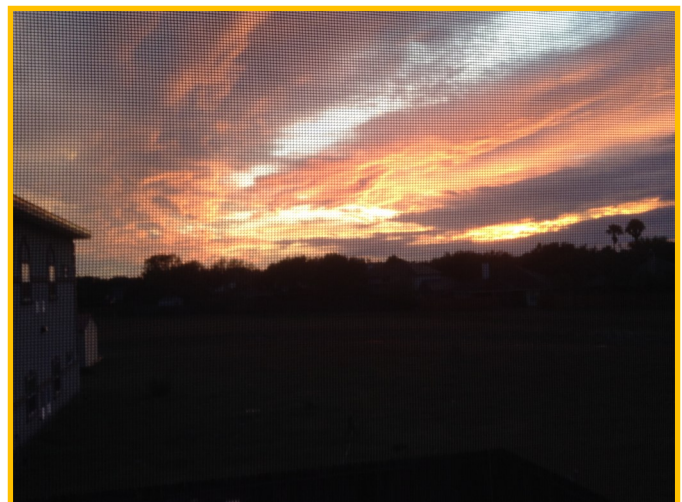
Hurricane Harvey was a storm we will remember. However, we are counting our blessings as we view the reports coming from places such as Rockport, Victoria and Houston.

With the help of **Jody Kirshner**, **Mike Madden** and the Sisters, the Motherhouse was well prepared with flashlights, buckets of water, and towels blocking windows. Other than loss of power, water in some rooms, a few sections of fence blown down, and ceiling tiles down, we fared well. While we waited for power, we used flashlights at night and ate in the community room where we have natural light.

Srs. Annette and Barbara suffered little damage in their house on Austin Street.

Sr. Jude Janeczek was unable to return to her home in Rockport for several days as the people there waited to have power and water provided again. Her house suffered a little damage from a broken window thanks to a downed tree. Her parish office was untouched.

In Beaumont, **Sr. Esther Dunegan** rode out the storm in her first floor apartment, watching the water creep toward her door and then recede,



Following the storm, we were treated to a gorgeous sunset shining in the dark with no city lights to dim it.