

Summer
2023

Vision • You • DHS • Spirit

REALITY

~ Together in the Spirit we transform today's vision
into tomorrow's reality ~

JUBILEE MOMENTS 2023

Celebrating 775 years of service as Apostolic Religious,
Consecrated Seculars and Associates.



Sr. Fernande
Laliberté



Sr. Marie Gertrude
Laliberté



Sr. Irene Fortier



Sr. Claudette
Huot



Left to Right: Sr. Norma Bourdon,
Sr. Jacqueline Robillard,
Jane Francis Houtman, SB,
Sr. Lorraine Deziel



Left to Right: Sr. Lucille Carreau,
Sr. Sandra Porter



Sally Tolles, SB



Left to Right:
Marion Collela,
Associate
Lorena Dutelle,
Associate

Sincere Congratulations and Gratitude to one and all!

Office of Development/Advancement Daughters of the Holy Spirit

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We Remember & Give Thanks



SR. CATHERINE SOTTAK, DHS

August 1, 1929 – February 7, 2023

Sr. Catherine was born in Brooklyn, NY, the daughter of the late Edward Sottak and Catherine (Maloney) Sottak. She grew up in New Bedford, MA. The young Catherine entered religious life in 1945 and made her religious profession at the Provincial House, Putnam, CT on August 16, 1949 and took the name of Sr. Catherine Thérèse.

After profession, Catherine earned her B.A. in education from Annhurst College, South Woodstock, CT and later her LPN Certificate from Windham County Technical School in Willimantic, CT.

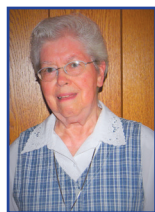
From 1949 to 1976 Sr. Catherine taught in the following schools: All Hallows, Moosup, CT, St. Mary's, Putnam, CT, St. Joseph, Burlington, VT and St. Anthony, Bridgeport, CT. Catherine also worked as principal of St. Martin de Porres School in Gadsden, AL for 15 years.

After receiving her LPN certificate in 1978, Sister worked in migrant ministry in Princess Ann, MD. Later, she put her nursing skills to work for her sisters at St. Joseph Villa and the Provincial House Putnam, CT. Sr. Catherine had long felt a call to become a missionary in a land far from the USA, and in 1983 she became a missionary-nurse in a pre-natal clinic in Ile Ife, Nigeria. When Sr. Catherine returned to the United States, she continued nursing at the Provincial House in Putnam, CT.

In 1986 Sr. Catherine returned to St. Martin de Porres in Gadsden, AL as pastoral assistant where she was involved in ministry to the poor. In 1988 she went to Jeremie, Haiti as a missionary for a brief time. From 1990 to 2005 Sr. Catherine worked with the Visiting Nurses' Association in Waterbury, CT. She then returned to the Provincial House where she served as sacristan. Sr. Catherine became part of St. Joseph Community at St. Joseph Living Center in 2016.

Throughout her life Sister was many things to many people, always willing to use the gifts her God had given her for the happiness and welfare of others.

We thank you, Catherine, and ask you to continue to be with us as we reach out to others as well.



SR. CLAUDETTE HUOT, DHS

January 3, 1934 – March 7, 2023

Marie Pauline Claudette was born in Waterbury, CT, the only child of Roger and Hélène (Vaillancourt) Huot. She attended local parochial schools and entered with the Daughters of the Holy Spirit at the Provincial House in Putnam in September of 1951. Claudette, as she preferred to be called, made her first profession of vows in August of 1953 and took the name of Sr. Hélène Roger in honor of her parents.

Sister graduated from Diocesan Sisters' College in Woodstock, CT with a BA in Education and continued her studies at Catholic University in Washington, DC where she earned an MA in Business Education, a degree that would serve her well as she went to St. Bernard High School in New London, CT to be one of the founding members in 1956. Ten years later she was assigned to Holy Ghost Academy in Tupper Lake, N.Y. for one year. She returned to St. Bernard's and remained on staff there until 1976 when she felt called to enter the medical field. Her training in dialysis landed her a position at St. Mary's Hospital in her home town. Eight years later, Claudette ministered as a staff nurse at the Roncalli Woodland Rest Home and in 1998 she worked as a member of the nursing staff in the Waterbury Hospital system. In 2002 Sister was appointed secretary to the Provincial, a position she kept until her retirement in 2018.

Claudette had an unusually gentle temperament and a walking stride that could be described only as 'a floating gait'. She was introverted and shy but was always super dedicated to her students and patients. She truly reflected kindness and serenity to all with whom she worked. Claudette also loved and enjoyed all things Canadian, from tourtières to quadrilles and folk songs; her whole being came to life when someone spoke to her in French or made a reference to her Canadian roots.

Sr. Claudette transferred to St. Joseph Living Center in 2020 and made that community her home until her entrance into life eternal.

Merci, Claudette, d'avoir partagé ta vie avec nous. Continue à sourire sur nous.



RAYLENE WITTWER, DHS ASSOCIATE

February 5, 1927 – April 17, 2023

Raylene Mae Clemmer Wittwer was born in Clyde, Texas. She and her family moved to California in 1936 when she was 9 years of age. In 1938 the family opened the well known "Clemmer's Store."

In 1947 Raylene Marie Walter married her high school sweetheart. They enjoyed 39 years together before Walter's untimely death.

Raylene was a high energy person and became involved in many groups and projects such as the St. Columba Altar Society, the Dairyland PTC and 4 H and later on in the Associate program of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit.

Raylene also loved to garden and to can fruits and vegetables and was an excellent embroiderer who loved to gift her masterpieces to friends, family and those in need. Perking up someone's day with an embroidered item was key to her happiness. Raylene also put her college degree to work by her service in a legal office and in realty until she was 90 years of age. There was never a dull moment in her life, and she took special pride in those moments when she could help others. She indeed reflected the charism of the DHS by her deep concern for the welfare of those around her.

Raylene, we thank you for using your gifts to assist others. Rejoice now in your God's energy as you continue to bless all of us.



SR. GISELLE BROUILLARD, DHS

November 20, 1932 – May 6, 2023

Giselle Beatrice Brouillard was born in Waterbury, Connecticut as the first child of the late Antonio and Marie Jeanne (Descoteaux) Brouillard. Giselle attended parochial schools in her native town and entered the Congregation of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit in 1949 in Putnam,

CT. She traveled to the congregation's Motherhouse in St. Brieuc, Brittany, France where she pronounced her first vows in 1952 and took the religious name of Sr. Jeanne Antoine.

The young religious returned to Putnam and earned her Bachelor's degree at the former Diocesan Sisters' College on the Annhurst campus. Degree in hand, she was missioned to teach in Catholic schools in Massachusetts, Connecticut and Vermont until 1971 when she moved to Anniston, Alabama. There she taught at All Saints School until she changed careers in 1989 and moved into the health field. She retired as a home health aide in 2004. In 2007 Sister moved to the Provincial House in Putnam and became an active member of that senior community until 2016 when she transferred to St. Joseph Living Center to form a new community with 21 other DHS. Giselle was a gifted quilter and artist in her own right. She enjoyed sharing her designs and creations with anyone who asked. She was also most generous in offering her pieces as gifts for various occasions.

Giselle had a quiet and gentle demeanor which radiated in her lovely smile and glance. Sister passed on as she had lived, responding in her own quiet way to her Lord's final call.

Giselle, we believe you are with us and continue to share your many gifts as you cast your gentle smile upon us.



SR. IRENE FORTIER, DHS

June 14, 1933 – June 9, 2023

Marie Alda Irene Fortier was born in Waterbury, CT and was one of fourteen children of Arthur and Regina (Berger) Fortier. Irene entered religious life in Putnam at the Holy Spirit Provincial House on September 5, 1951 and made her religious profession there on August 18, 1953. She chose the religious name of Sr. Albert Rita.

She held a B.A. in Education from the Diocesan Sisters' College and an M.A. in Education from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

For 18 years she taught in schools staffed by the Daughters of the Holy Spirit in CT, CA and MA. She served as Director of Religious Education in various parishes in MA and CT. From 1978-1988 Sr. Irene was Associate Retreat Director and the first woman to serve in that capacity at the Holy Family Retreat House in West Hartford under the auspices of the Passionist Fathers. Following that, she was Pastoral Associate at Ascension Parish in Worcester, MA and St. Peter's Parish in Elizabethtown, PA. Returning to Connecticut, Sr. Irene served in various capacities in the Archdiocese of Hartford where she was an Instructor for the Marriage Tribunal, Archivist, Director of the Office for Religious and Co-director of the Haitian Ministry. In 2001 she became the Archivist for the US Province of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit. At that time, she also assumed the responsibility for the Jubilee Choir and served on a number of Consultative Committees. Sr. Irene formally retired in 2015 and she joined the community at St Joseph Living Center in 2016.

Sr. Irene celebrated her 70th Jubilee as an apostolic religious on June 4 this year, a couple weeks shy of her 90th birthday.

May you enjoy leading the choirs of angels as you praise your God forever and ever.

My Nine-year Walk as Provincial



On July 1st, 2014 I started my first mandate as Provincial of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit in the U.S. Province. This was my first introduction to Province leadership. Yes, God had prepared me through my previous ministries in administration. Thank you, God.

I am now completing my third three-year mandate. Many thanks to all the councilors I have worked with. These years have really been like no others with all the letting go and transitioning to new places and new ways of doing things. We have worked very hard at informing/involving the sisters in major decisions and undertakings. First there was the closing of Holy Spirit Health Care Center and moving the sisters to St. Joseph Living Center in Windham, then the sale of our Provincial House and finding new homes for the community members and relocating our administrative offices to Pomfret Street.

In these major undertakings I have worked very closely with so many wonderful persons beginning with our staff at the Provincial House. Many professionals have worked with us and taught me so much.

Aging and sick sisters have left the ministries they loved and returned to the Putnam area from Alabama, Virginia, Vermont, Massachusetts and other parts of Connecticut. We have also sold houses in Worcester and Hartford.

Many changes have occurred in these nine years. For me this time has been well seasoned with many blessings. I have had the opportunity to get to know all the sisters in the province. Their faith has inspired me. Their ongoing expressions of appreciation and gratitude and their compliments have humbled me. I have enjoyed working with the members of our DHS Spiritual Family, the Associates and Consecrated Seculars. I must admit that keeping us all connected has been my primary goal. It does feel like together we have accomplished this and are reaping the fruits.

Now is my moment of Gratitude. I want to thank all of you, my sisters, the members of our DHS Spiritual Family, and all of you that I have worked with during my short time in leadership in the Quiet Corner of Connecticut. I have been carried by a long history of Daughters of the Holy Spirit in the U.S. and throughout the world. First and foremost I am grateful to the Spirit that walks with all of us each day.



A Hearty Welcome to Our NEW Provincial Team



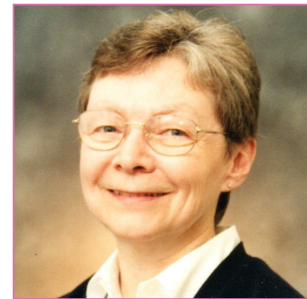
Sr. Bonnie Morrow



Sr. Janet Lewis



Sr. Michèle Bisailon



Sr. Yvette Rainville

May the Spirit of creativity, love and joy inspire your new beginnings and all your tomorrows.



SECULAR BRANCH UPDATES

Members of our Secular Branch or Consecrated Seculars mark two key moments in their history this year: they will celebrate the 20th anniversary of their existence on July 23rd with a Mass and festive luncheon at our Administration Center in Putnam. They recently honored Sally Tolles as she retires as General Moderator of the Branch. Sally served in that capacity since the foundation of the group. She was also a key personage in the establishment of a Secular Branch for the DHS. Thank you, Sally and sincere congratulations to all the members of the Branch in USA, South America and France. The photos show a small local group and Sally Tolles who celebrates her retirement.

DHS ASSOCIATES' PROJECTS

2023 has been a busy year for our East Coast Associates so far.

In February, they organized a luncheon and celebration of the Sisters in conjunction with the world



wide celebration of Catholic Sister's Week. The event offered time for sharing, praying and eating together in the Grande Salle at the Administrative Center in Putnam.

In April, this same Associate group gathered members of the three Branches of the DHS Family to join them for a Covenant Renewal ceremony that took place within a celebratory liturgy offered by Rev. Edward Dempsey. Associates renewed temporary and made definitive commitments as part of this service. Hugs, congratulations, photos and good food all contributed to the joy of all in attendance.

In May, the Associates invited members of the 3 Branches and other friends to join them in a day of spiritual retreat and sharing. Kathy Irr led the activity and invited the participants to spend time focusing on and sharing how God forms us continually through our everyday activities. A delicious lunch gave the group time to relax, to share their emotions and to express their openness to the Spirit's ongoing work within them.



You may contact Pat Krodel (860-917-1494) or Muriel Bingham (860-546-1129) about our DHS Associate Program. This may be the boost you need right now.



WE CARE FOR OUR PLANET

The charism of the DHS encourages us to be concerned for our planet and all its inhabitants and needs. So it was a natural response to collaborate with the greater Putnam Interfaith Council in hosting its annual Earth Day event.

Based on the theme that "Everyday should be Earth Day" members and representatives of various religious denominations along with pastors and leaders of earth conscious associations from the Last Green Valley gathered at our DHS Center in Putnam to speak about their efforts to respect all of creation and to preserve it for future generations.

The presentations included prayer, singing and music by Sally Rogers and Leslie Sweetman, input on environmental justice and on our moral and social responsibility to care for Mother Nature. We are grateful to all who came together for this occasion and for this unique opportunity to do our part in assuring that our common home will heal and be there for generations to come.



From Our Director's Desk

Dear one and all,

In this edition of our REALITY newsletter we try as always to squeeze in as much information as possible, in a limited space, about the comings and goings in our US Province. We have a plethora of photos on file and many more stories waiting to be told. Hopefully the selection presented gives you a good idea of activity levels in our DHS Family and in collaboration with our greater civic community and various organizations. We do trust that our tales and pictures awaken within you the desire to get to know us better and to become more involved with us.

Our DHS Family has ministered long and hard on the East and West Coasts and many places in between since the early 1900's and the Sisters have served as models, mentors, teachers and surrogate parents often and their generous and kind way of life has inspired many. YOU are living proof of that. Your kindness to the Sisters is a genuine blessing for us and we remind the Lord each day to continue to fill your life with the gifts you need most to lead happy and fulfilling lives.

At this point of our annual initiative your generosity has us on the brink of the halfway mark to our goal of \$80,000. We are profoundly grateful and know in our hearts that YOU will, as always, carry us to our goal by the end of the year.

I truly hope you enjoy spending time with us through REALITY and that you will be honored once again to play a role in assisting us, working with the Spirit to transform today's vision into tomorrow's reality, as we say thank you to those thousands of Sisters who shaped our lives forever.

I do look forward to hearing from you soon and frequently.

In the Spirit of Anticipation and Gratitude,

Françoise G. Gauthier, PhD
Development Director
DHS/USA

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