

The background is a dark blue, starry night sky. A prominent, bright starburst with multiple rays is centered in the upper half. Numerous smaller, twinkling stars are scattered throughout. In the lower foreground, a dark silhouette of a person stands on a dark surface, holding a glowing lantern. The light from the lantern illuminates the bottom of the letter 'G' in the word 'LIGHT'.

THE LIGHT

of the world

Christmas Star

Anonymous

*The brightest star,
That shines in the sky,
Is the light that guides,
The Three Kings tonight.*

*With Mary his Mother,
And Joseph his Father,
He'll spread the words,
Of God the Father.*

*The Christmas day,
Our Savior is born,
In a manger that is simple,
and very small.*

*To teach us all,
Will be his mission,
And living in us all,
Is always his action.*

May you be richly blessed this Christmas
Season and throughout the year.

A novena of masses is being offered for
you and your intentions.

We hold you in our hearts and in our prayers.

**Merry
Christmas!!**



SISTER UPDATES

Sr. Maria Diem Nguyen, our new missionary from Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam arrived July 10, 2017. She resides in Marquette and is studying English.

Sr. Mary Ann Laurin arrived in Marquette on August 4, 2017. She helped us in the Perpetual Profession of Sr. Priscilla (August 27, 2017) and the Golden Jubilee of Sr. Juliana (October 15, 2017). She was with us helping with many things in the District. She also had the opportunity to visit with her family in Nadeau, Michigan. She left for Rome October 25, 2017.

Sr. Priscilla DeGuzman has a new ministry and is working as an Operating Room Registered Nurse at Providence Hospital in Washington, DC.

Sr. Gloria Schultz has a new ministry at the Bishop Noa Home in Escanaba, Michigan. She transferred to Escanaba on November 10, 2017.

Sr. Dorothea Jang was assigned a ministry at the Bishop Noa Home and now lives in Escanaba, Michigan.

Sr. Norma Vicentillo continues to stay in Washington, DC and is volunteering at the Providence Hospital and Washington Hospital Center.

The renovation of the new housing for the Sisters in Washington, DC has begun. Further notice will be given later on when they are going to move. Thank you to all who donated and the grant received by the Archdiocese in Washington, DC for all the renovations needed at our new convent.



Session for New Superiors

_ Sr. Estela Garcia

As newly appointed District Superior, I was invited to attend the in-service training in Rome from July 6-14, 2017. The newly appointed Provincial, District, and Regional Superiors present were: Sr. Agnes Boonruksa Sritrakul (Thailand), Sr. Therese Thi Thoi Nguyen (Danang, Vietnam), Sr. Estela Fortunata Garcia (USA), and Sr. Fabiola Kyeong Ai Pak (Ireland). Conferences were given by Mother Maria Goretti Lee and her Assistants. The topics included were: Role of Superiors, Authority and Obedience, Community Life, Formation and External Relations. Sr. Remedios and Sr. Josiane also gave instructions on administrative and economic services. The Session began with mass and recollection at the Mother House. Visits to the Basilicas and Churches were included in our schedules . We had a closing liturgy on July 14 and sharing of experiences and clarification of things with Mother Goretti and her council.



Session in France for Superiors

On July 15, 2017, I joined the other Provincial, District, and Regional Superiors of our Congregation of the different countries for our session in Chartres, France. We had our mass at the Cathedral of Chartres at 11:00 am. In the afternoon we visited our sick Sisters at the infirmary. Visiting our sick Sisters in the infirmary is to visit the suffering Christ in the poor. It is also to be in communion with them and to carry them in our prayers.

In the evening at 8:00 pm, Sr. Monique Francoise, the Provincial of France gave a welcome message to all of us Provincial, District, and Regional Superiors. The next day, we had the opening liturgy and the opening message of Mother Goretti for the Formation of Major Superi-

ors on “ Unity in Diversity”.

She mentioned that the challenge is unity in spite of differences. She continued in saying that our Congregation is not dispensed from this kind of challenge. We need to reflect on our relationships. We are an International Congregation but not yet intercultural. She quoted the passage in our Book of Life #36: “We are called according to God’s plan and brought together by providential circumstances”. Reflecting on this, I believe that the process of interculturality will help us understand each other and share the richness of each culture and be united as God wants us to be.

Our session for two days was on Canon Law presented by Sr. Claire, a Sister of Christ from Madagascar. She spoke about Formation of Religious, Religious Profession, Obligations of Members of the Institutes, Relationship between Consecrated Life and Ecclesial Authority, Holy See and Supreme Power, Superiors and Councils, as well as Leave of Absence/ Dispensation and Exlaustration.

Another session for two days was presented by Sr. Martha, a Salesian Sister from Haiti, on Interculturality. She started with Cultural Shock - the definition, causes and symptoms, followed by critical incidents and models of cultural representations. She continued with the topic of Intercultural Communication, Body Language, Prejudices and Stereotypes and ended up with the three stages of Intercultural Approach.

All of us, the Provincial, District and Regional Superiors were given opportunities to visit our roots in Levesville. At first we stopped at Allianes where Marie Anne de Tilly was born and baptized and then went to Fresnay L’Eveque where Barbe de Faucault was born. From Fresnay L’Evereque, some of us made a meditative 4 km. walk, praying the rosary to Levesville



We went to Pertuis and visited the house where Father Louis Chauvet was born and the new convent of the Sisters that was there since 2010. Father Louis Chauvet’s family were well -known in town. The history of his family was in the archives of the

town. Reflecting on this led me to appreciate how God gives good things to those who love Him. May we step forward to a new life with the birth of a new house of love and joy at the place, which is full of the breath of the air of our founders.

We also went to visit Mont St. Michel. It is one of Europe's most unforgettable sights set in the mesmerizing bay where Normandy and Brittany merge. Mont St. Michel Abbey lies at the peak of a rocky islet less than half a mile off the coast of Normandy.

We visited too, the birthplace of Mother Benjamin in Periers, France. We went to Notre Dame de Lumiere but had a stop over in Nevers to visit St. Bernadette's Monastery. The visit designed as a journey helped us to discover the life of Bernadette. It retraced the various places connected with her : the "cachot", the grotto, the hospice in Lourdes and her life in Nevers, France. After the monastery we went to Notre Dame de Lumiere (Our Lady of Lights). The shrine became an important pilgrimage site in the middle of the 17th century because of a miraculous apparition of lights. The site includes a shrine of The Black Madonna that is taken in procession every August 15.

Then we departed to go to Abbey of Senangue. Notre-dame de Senangue Abbey is a Cistercian Monastery. Throughout the ages the Senangue community has endeavored to stay faithful to monastic life. The rules of St. Benedict by which the monks are guided, encourages them to work. Their resources today include performing farming work (growing lavender, cultivating vegetable garden, fruit trees, olive trees etc.) or making honey . They work and help preserve and harness the value of the heritage passed down to them by their predecessors. After the Abbey of Senangue, we went to the Sanctuary of Ars of St. John Vianney. He is the patron saint of the priests. He was a man of prayer who spent long periods in front of the tabernacle. This was his greatest joy and the ground for a true friendship with God. Thousands of people came to Ars for confession with him and more than 100, 000 in the last year of his life. The Cure of Ars was a true martyr of the confessional, John Paul II declared. He awakened the faith of his parishioners through his preaching, but most of all by his prayer and his way of life.

These experiences I had in Rome as well as in France gave me encouragement to be faithful to the ministry given to me. It was so enriching and uplifting.



Perpetual Vows

Priscilla DeGuzman

“ Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.” Ps.89

My journey with the Lord is a never ending story of Love and Joy that comes with the discoveries and challenges along the path.

August 1954..... **Baptismal day.**

The choice to belong to God was initiated by my parents.

December 8, 1962.. **First communion**

My choice to know and love Him more with awe and enthusiasm.

March 1977..... **Entrance to Novitiate**

The desire to follow and love Him uniquely.

February 2, 1986.... **Perpetual Vows in Philippines**

August 27, 2017 **Perpetual Vows in District USA**

YES Lord ... Forever and ever . . .AMEN

And through those years I have been blessed in many countless ways with friends, family, relatives and circumstances that allowed me to find my path where God wants me to be and be loved.

I am forever grateful to all for your prayers, love and support. Thank you so much for celebrating with me.





My perpetual vows was a celebration of reaffirmation as well as a thanksgiving for all the blessings, the wonderful love and joys in my life.

As I venture into my new ministry in Washington, DC, I ask for your prayers that God continues to give me the grace to follow Him with love and joy in my heart and forever sing His faithful love and goodness!

Thank you so much!

Sr. Priscilla de Guzman, SPC



Reflections from Across the Ocean

— *Sr. Mary Ann Laurin*

Sr. Estela asked me to share some of my experiences, and they seem so insignificant that maybe you will look at it as kind of a “blog” rather than a news article!

I arrived back in Rome on October 26, after having spent two and one-half months in the U.S. This was the longest time I had ever spent away from Rome in ten years, so it was a wonderful time for me.

Originally, I was supposed to be there from August 9 to September 16, but because of needing cataract surgery, I had to add on five weeks. The surgery went well, and I was also able to have a general check-up. It is nice to have everything explained in English so there is no danger of misunderstanding! And yes, I am in good health for my age!

Something very wonderful for me was being able to attend the Laurin family reunion which is every August. It was only the third time in ten years that my time at home coincided with the family picnic. And, not only was I home for three days then, but the longer stay in the U.S. allowed me to have a full week with them later in September. With a large family (11 siblings) it takes time to get around to visit all my brothers and sisters, and yet there were two I didn’t get to see. I am also grateful that I was able to see three Aunts and one Uncle. How wonderful it is when family members are also friends!

A great joy, of course, was living so long with the U.S. District Sisters. I had the privilege of preparing with Sr. Priscilla a three-day retreat before her Perpetual Vows on August 27, and of celebrating with her the grace of her total commitment to God. As for the Golden Jubilee of Sr. Juliana in October, it was wonderful to just be there - because originally I would have been already back in Rome. So it was great joy that I could help Sr. Estela and Sr. Gloria with some of the preparations, aiding by contacting and planning with people who would have important roles in the ceremony, and then being at the Mass and reception to follow. Being at two big celebrations in two months was just great!

It is hard to think that my presence in the U.S. District was anything special to others, but it was really a blessing for me. The Sisters are my second family and even though I love the Sisters in Rome, and have a big family of 4,000 Sisters of St. Paul throughout the world, the ones in the US have a special place in my heart. It was fun to tell stories together, to pray together, to share our spiritual journeys together, and just to enjoy being with one another.

As for some little things that I did: I worked a little with our newest missionary from Saigon Province in Vietnam, Sr. Maria Diem, helping her

with English. I took part in several meetings with our Sisters on the District Council either in planning activities and orientations for the USA Sisters or in meetings at Bishop Noa Home. I was also privileged to join in two meetings of the Companions of Saint Paul.

My brothers and sisters are good cooks, and so are most of our Sisters; so I had the great joy of eating some of my favorite foods at home and/or in the convent – home-made, of course – including chicken soup, “Mom’s” chili, spaghetti and sauce, corn on the cob, pot roast, mashed potatoes, home-made French bread, American pancakes with maple syrup, rice krispy bars, etc., - things that I miss in Rome. I also had the fun of helping make a few things, but was never the main cook!



This time, because of the longer visit, I was also able to visit our Sisters in the Vietnamese ministries in Grand Rapids and Lansing. It was nice to see Sr. Marie Thu Hoi and Sr. Therese Vu, who had been in the USA District for about ten years, and who are now helping young Vietnamese Sisters in formation.

The Sisters are very active in the Vietnamese parishes, helping with catechetical instruction, sacramental preparation, and some of them also visit the homebound and those in nursing homes. In addition, the Sisters study English and are taking courses at the colleges of the area.

In Rome, we have our Lauds and Vespers in French every day, and the Mass is in French three days a week, in Italian two days, and in English two days. I am now quite comfortable praying in these languages, but the quality of the English Masses in Rome is not the same as it is in the U.S. where the musicians and the choir members really know English, and we have such a great variety of songs and hymns to choose from. So, I would consider praying the English Mass and prayers together as one of the best things about being in the U.S.

Last, but not least, during my time “in the States” (as we foreigners say), it meant a lot to me to reconnect with parishioners in Nadeau and in Marquette, and with people at Bishop Noa Home in Escanaba. I also had the opportunity to visit with several of my friends in the U.P., some whom I have not seen in over five years. I am grateful that everything worked out to make it possible this year.

May God bless each and every one of you reading this newsletter – those I know and those I don’t know. Thank you for your prayerful support for all of us Sisters of Saint Paul, and all our ministries.

My Golden Jubilee Year

By Sr. Juliana Djo

This year I am a golden jubilarian celebrating 50 years since I entered the novitiate in Seoul, Korea. It has been a profound gift to reflect on my journey and call to religious life. I am so thankful for the gift of my vocation and the fact that God has called me and given me the grace to say yes. I am also deeply thankful for my family, my religious Congregation of the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres, and my groupmates who supported me throughout the years.

When I had a new mission to leave my homeland, my greatest challenge was learning a new language. It remains a challenge for me to this day. I am thankful for the degree that I was able to learn the language so that I can share God's grace and mercy. This gives me great pleasure as bringing God to others is the desire my heart. I see God's face as I visit others and this brings me closer to Christ. They in turn see God in me and I help them on their journey to God.

I had the honor of going to Korea in May and celebrating with those who entered the novitiate with me. When I entered the novitiate, there were 16 in my group. There was 13 who were able to celebrate together in May. What a gift to connect with my groupmates and share memories of our novitiate days as well as to share what is presently going on in our lives. Seeing how God was moving in the heart of each of my classmates gave me joy and inspiration to continue being faithful on my journey. The quote that I like and would like to share with you is from Luke 10:20 "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." This is what I shared with those who celebrated with me as it was written on my holy cards.

My heart was full of joy on October 15 as we gathered for



mass at St. Peter's Cathedral to celebrate my jubilee in the United States. Thanks filled me as the Sisters of St. Paul and friends gathered to celebrate with me. The beautiful, joyful music helped to make it a celebration where praise and thanks filled the air.

Emotion, praise and thanks filled my heart as I once again had the privilege of renewing my vows. It brought back memo-



ries of the day I first committed myself to the Lord and of His faithfulness to me throughout the years. The memories of God's great love were truly a gift.

As is tradition for the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres, I had the honor of offering a bouquet of yellow roses to Mary as the Ave Maria was sung for the communion meditation. An added gift was the fact that the statue of our Lady of Fatima was in the Cathedral and I made my offering to her. Thank you Mary, my Mother, for this added gift. It was a sign of how close Mary has been to me throughout my life.

After mass, many joined us for refreshments. Joy filled the air as the celebrating continued.

Much could be said yet the heart of my celebrating is thanks for God's love and faithfulness as well as thanks to all who supported me on my journey. I pray for the grace to persevere and ask you to do the same for me.



New Missionary

By Sr. Maria Thi Diem Nguyen

I, Sr. Maria Thi Diem Nguyen, arrived as a new missionary to District USA on July 12, 2017, from Saigon City, South Viet Nam.

I grew up in Ninh Thuan Province in the south of central Viet Nam. On one side, it is mountainous with big rocks and lots of trees. The other side it is very narrow with plains along the sea. This scenic area is a wonderful place for a vacation.



I belong to a catholic family. When I was young, we went to mass every day and I sang during the mass. We prayed the rosary at night most especially during the month of May and October. We gathered at the different family homes every night to pray the rosary. My parents were very religious and they handed on the faith to us. I am very grateful for the gift of faith they shared with us.



We are eight members in the family. My father passed away and my mother is still living. I have two sisters and three brothers. My older sister entered Mary Lady Congregation and my youngest sister and I entered the same Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Paul of Chartres. I entered the convent on July 6, 2006.

After my first vows, I was assigned as kindergarten teacher for

three years. I was also given responsibilities to teach religion in the parish, teaching the children to sing at mass and visiting the sick. Then I went back to the provincial house to study theology for two years. After that, I was sent to our community Vung Tau City, Viet Nam as assistant principal in kindergarten. Again, I was there to do some parish work like visiting the poor and the sick, arranging the flowers in the church, and giving communion.

In 2014, I made my final vows. Then I continued my assignment in the same community. In 2015 I was sent to the Philippines to study English for five months. It was a preparation for me to go to the missions. I tried my best to take the opportunity to study hard to help me in the mission. My



new assignment was to go to Tan Lam countryside in the mountain where Ethnic people live. We were only two Sisters assigned there. My job was to take care of the coffee plantation, do household chores, as well as to work in the Parish.

Now I am sent here in the US as a missionary and I have no idea what my life will be like. But I trust in God. He calls me and plans my life and **I belong to God. So wherever I go, when the sunrises or the sunsets, whoever I live with, when I feel happy or feel sad, I still belong to God. Have you ever seen wildflowers growing in the cliffs? They do not have enough good soil. Still they try to grow up and to blossom. So I believe in God. He will take care of me and I will try to bloom in love and peace and be humble of heart... because there is nothing small in the eyes of God.** Presently, I am studying English with the help of Sisters in community and from



Sr. Gloria's friends. I am grateful for the Sisters for helping me adjust my life here. I am confident that God will give me all the graces that I need to be a good missionary here in the US.

THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE HOME

My visit to Seoul, Korea

Sr. Daria Moon, SPC

If someone asked what was the best moment of my home visit to Korea was, I would say *“being blessed to see and spend time with my 81 year old Mom, Julieta Kim, who is a widow and an active Catholic.”*



My first visit upon arrival to Incheon, Korea I met my group mate Sr. Maria Pak. She took me to the convent and I met other Sisters. We had a wonderful fellowship together and I spent two days at the Seoul Provincial House. I was happy to attend mass with many Sisters in the chapel. Before breakfast I greeted Sisters and shared my joy with them. Even though I was tired

because of jet lag, I was asked to go to St. Paul Hospital where four Sisters, Sr. Theresa Yun, Sr. Maria Suh, Sr. Rose and Sr. Druse were very weak and sick. We had an opportunity to spend time with them and prayed for them.

On September 4, the third day of my visit, I took a subway and bus and finally arrived at my Mom's house. Mom patiently waited and greeted me with a warm smile and we hugged each other so tight we didn't want to let each other go. We were so very happy to see each other. Mom looked older and more fragile since the last time we were together in 2014. I painted a portrait of my Mom that I brought to her and she absolutely loved it and put it in her living room. We spent so much time laughing and talking. She prepared one of my favorite dishes, white fish, various vegetables and rice that was so amazing. She had a beautiful assortment of fresh fruits and she served me. It brought back so many childhood memories. Mom had a nice bed prepared for me and we talked until she went to sleep. Mom and I got up early to pray and attend daily mass and her Legion of Mary prayer group and prayed together. I had an opportunity to thank the members of the Legion of Mary in person for their continual support and prayers for my mission. After the meeting they treated me to lunch. I also joined the vocation support group and prayed with them. Every Saturday they gather together to pray for vocations to priesthood and religious life. They called each priest and nun's name for that parish and remembered them in their prayers.



One day my Mom and I visited Sr. Dorothea Jang's brother, Augustine Jang and his wife. He had cancer years ago and I was grateful to see that he had improved and got stronger. After lunch my Mom and I dropped by to say hello to my sister, BoHyeon and her husband at their work place. They have a store and were busy preparing rice cakes for the Korean Thanksgiving Season. I was proud of them because they worked diligently for their family and children.

On September 18, I was able to attend the meeting with the Sisters to welcome our Superior General, Sr. Maria Goretti Lee who was visiting Korea. She encouraged us in our ministry and emphasized the importance of community life. She shared our new mission in different countries. After our meeting, Sr. Othilia Kim, my group mate, and I traveled to Jeju by air in order to make my annual retreat.

I spent my time with the Lord and took a walk each day. At Hamie Shrine, they had a real size of the Stations of the Cross and the Bible stories and a lake surrounded by a 20 decade of the Rosary Stations. I truly enjoyed the very peaceful and beautiful scenery each day. I reflected on my life and thanked the Lord and the Blessed Mother. They have inspired me and directed me on my mission in life.

After my retreat, I was able to enjoy some sightseeing, including South Sea, SamHak Island, Climbing Youngsil, the part to Hanla Mountain and talking with my friend and sisters.

When I arrived back to my Mom's house after the retreat, she was praying for my retreat and very happy to see me again. She



knew that we only had 10 days left to spend time together before I left to come back home. I helped her to clean and rearrange each drawer. I found two boxes where my Mom kept all my letters and cards from me since I entered the convent in 1987. I was deeply touched because my Mom treasured them for many years. She missed me just as much as I missed her and kept the letters to reread over and over.

I was fortunate to share in our Korean Thanksgiving time with my family. We visited my Aunt who had back surgery at the Rehabilitation Hospital and prayed with her. Though she was very happy to see my Mom, nieces, my older sister and I, she felt bad that she couldn't be

home. After our visit to the hospital, my niece, Monica Kang drove us to see the Han River Night Show. My Mom was also very excited to be together to celebrate our Thanksgiving Day. We enjoyed the full moon, the water show with music and driving over the bridges. It was a lovely night.

Before traveling back to the USA, I went to the convent to say good bye to the community Sisters in Korea.

Mom knew what I liked and prepared another dish for me. She pampered me and made my trip beautiful and memorable. **“Mom, thank you for being my mom. I am so proud of you. I love you so much.”**

Thank you Loving Jesus. Please continue to take care of my Mom and family.

For there is **NO PLACE LIKE HOME.**



Mission Projects October 2016 – October 2018

Our Compassionate Heart’s Club was formed in 2008 to help aid the poor in our area and around the world. I would like to say a gigantic thank you to those of you who have donated in the past to the Compassionate Heart’s Club or our Mission Projects. We are really making a difference.

The four mission projects that we sponsored last year will remain the same this year. They are the Catholic Schools in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, victims of human trafficking, Haiti, and Central Africa. Following is a little information about each mission.

We know of parents who are struggling to keep their children in a Catholic School so we will help the ten Catholic Schools of the Marquette Diocese to provide a scholarship for a student(s) who cannot afford the tuition.

To fight human trafficking our monies are sent to the Coalition of U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking (USCSAHT). They are building an endowment fund to help further the education of women who are coming out of situations of labor or sexual exploitation. Many of these women, once stable, desire to further their education in order to strengthen their skill base, gain a diploma or certificate, and thereby find better employment. Women who apply are carefully vetted and show signs that their efforts will reach a successful end.

You are all well aware that Haiti is one of the poorest countries in the world and the earthquake and recent hurricane made living conditions more difficult. The Sisters of St. Paul have seven schools in Haiti where school supplies, equipment, student’s tuition and teacher’s salaries need support. There are on-going needs for supplies and medicine for the



health clinic and our orphans continue to have need of medical treatment and clothing.

The Sisters in Central Africa struggle to take care of their needs as the cost of food and living is escalating. They do not always have their basic needs met. They don't have enough food and other supplies for their health and personal hygiene as well as to help others.

Thanks to many generous and faithful donations, we were able to raise \$26,905 Total from October 2016 to October 2017. Since some people have a special request where their money goes, the amounts of the mission varies. Following is a breakdown of the monies:

- Haiti: \$11,655
- Victims of Human Trafficking: \$4,500
- Catholic Schools: \$7,050
- Central Africa: \$3,700



Since October 2017 we have collected over \$9000.00 and will continue to accept donations for our tenth year of the Mission Projects through October 2018.

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**A heartfelt THANK YOU to all
 who sent gifts and donations to our
 community and to our Mission
 Projects.**

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Want more information about becoming a Sister of St. Paul?

You may write or email Sr. Estela Garcia at:

Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres

1300 County Road 492

Marquette, MI 49855

Email: srstpaulweb@yahoo.com

www.sistersofstpaulusa.org



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Envelope Enclosed

We are enclosing an envelope for those who may wish to make a donation, write for information, be added/deleted/make correction to the mailing list or to add a friend to the mailing list, etc.

.....
Name _____

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