

# Rejoice!



*For unto you is born this day in the city of David  
a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

*Luke 2:11*

Dear Lord Jesus,

You gave up your home in heaven above to be born in a humble stable, a place for animals. You came from infinite grandeur to incomparable poverty.

You accepted to go through all the steps of a human child – learning to eat, walk, talk – growing as all of us do – step by step, phase by phase. You came from all-powerful to infantile dependence.

You learned the occupation of your foster father, Joseph, and became known as a carpenter in your own right. You came from Creator of the world to maker of furniture.

You accepted to die on a cross as a common felon. You came from unimaginable glory to suffer the ignominious death of a criminal.

And you did all of this for me, for every person on earth. So that we could join you one day in your heavenly home.

Thank you for coming that first Christmas, Lord Jesus. Thank you for staying with us in the Holy Eucharist, and thank you for the invitation to come to your celestial home one day.

Sr. Mary Ann Laurin

*Unto Us  
a Child is Born*



A Novena of Masses is offered at the Chapel of the Sisters in Marquette and the Bishop Noa Chapel in Escanaba during December for the intentions of all the benefactors, friends, and family members. Thank you for your love and support. May the blessings of Almighty God descend upon each of you and remain forever.

## Updates of Sisters

Sr. Marie Hong Nhan and Sr. Marie Huyen Trang, who came to the United States from Vietnam in late October, are busy learning English. With a combination of self- study, computer guided lessons, and tutoring by several Sisters and friends of the Sisters, they are making rapid progress. However, it will still take time before they will be able to assume the ministries for which they have been prepared in Vietnam – nursing and teaching.

Sr. Dorothea Jang will be returning to her native Korea in January of 2024. We have deeply appreciated her service to the USA District during her 11 years here. Her first ministry in the United States was assisting in the pastoral care at Bishop Noa Home in Escanaba. Then from 2014 to 2016, she worked in pastoral care at Divine Infant Living Facility in Wakefield, Michigan and since 2017 has been ministering as chaplain at Bishop Noa Home in Escanaba. We pray for her good health and future ministry in her home Province. May God bless her.

Sisters in Escanaba as of December, 2023 are: Sr. Marie Kim Nguyen, Superior, Sr. Gloria Schultz, Sr. Dorothea Jang, and Sr. Fidelia Villa.

Sisters in Beltsville, Maryland are Sr. Daria Moon, Superior, and Sr. Maria Diem Nguyen.

Sisters in Marquette are Sr. Mary Ann Laurin, Superior, Sr. Estela Garcia, Sr. Juliana Djo, Sr. Rosalie Hughes, Sr. Josephine Ramada, Sr. Marie Hong Nhan Tran, and Sr. Marie Huyen Trang Doan.





## TWO NEW VIETNAMESE MISSIONARIES

Recently our Congregation here in the United States was privileged to have an addition of missionaries from Vietnam, Sr. Marie Hong Nhan and Sr. Marie Huyen Trang, to help our District. Both Vietnamese Sisters are from the Saigon Province in Vietnam.

When we expressed the need for more Sisters about a year ago, Mother Maria Goretti Lee agreed to send us some missionary Sisters from Vietnam. Both Sr. Marie Hong Nhan and Sr. Marie Huyen Trang expressed their willingness to serve as missionaries, and when the Provincial Superior in Saigon, Sr. Marie Thom, agreed for them to go, they were assigned to the United States by Mother Sr. Maria Goretti Lee.

They arrived here in the United States on October 20, 2023. Sr. Estela and Sr. Josephine went to meet them at KI Sawyer International Airport at 2:00 p.m. They were happy to see us. It was their first time to leave their country and their first time to travel in the United States. They were amazed to see the trees with leaves of different colors as we drove back to the convent. I told them that it is autumn in the United States.

The Sisters at the Marquette convent warmly welcomed Sr. Marie Hong Nhan and Sr. Marie Huyen Trang. Everyone was so happy to see the new Sisters and expressed their gratitude by welcoming them to the District. Sr. Josephine and Sr. Estela provided a meal for them, and after eating, showed the two Sisters their rooms. The new missionaries were so happy to go to rest after their trip of over 24 hours.

The next day, Sr. Mary Ann gave them an orientation of the house, prayer time, etc. She also gave them their schedule to follow every day, which included times to have English lessons with friends of the Sisters. In the meantime, Sr. Estela helped them with their English and took time to model for them how to pronounce the psalms and prayers in the breviary. Sr. Mary Ann

spent some time tutoring them in basic letters and sounds, and all the Sisters helped in any way they could.

During the first day of snow this season on October 31, 2023, Sr. Marie Hong Nhan and Sr. Marie Trang ran excitedly outside trying to catch snowflakes and playing in the snow. It was their first time to see snow in reality, whereas formerly they only saw it in Christmas cards and in the movies.

Our two missionary Sisters readily pitched in with cooking and cleaning tasks, in addition to their commitment to study English so as to communicate with all of us, and later on to help us in the apostolate. They eagerly expressed their desire to help in any way they can in the kitchen or elsewhere.

Looking at them, their enthusiasm was very evident in giving themselves to God and a life as missionaries, leaving their country to serve God and others. And we are very happy to welcome them to the USA District of the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres.

*By Sr. Estela Garcia (missionary to the US since 1985)*





My name is Nhan. But you can call me Sr. Marie. In Vietnam they call me Sr. Hong Nhan. I am from the Saigon Province in the south part of Vietnam. It is near the capital, Ho Chi Minh, about 100 kilometers.

I am 34 years old. I am a nurse. There are 8 people in my family, including my parents, one older sister, a younger sister, three brothers, and me.

I like listening to music to relax. I also enjoy playing tennis because I think it's a good way for me to stay healthy.

I came to the United States in October, 2023. I want to be a missionary and help the people to love God. When my English improves, I want to be a nurse to help the USA District serve the people at Bishop Noa Home.

Sr. Marie Hong Nhan Tran

This is the history of my life.

My name's Trang. The full name's Thi Huyen Trang Doan, but it's hard for some people say so you can call me Sister Marie Trang.

I was born and raised in Dong Nai province – Vietnam. That's a beautiful S-shaped country.

My family has eight people. Includes parents, one brother and four sisters.

I entered the Congregation of Saint Paul of Chartres when I was only 18 years old. I made my first vows on August 6, 2018 and final vows on June 29, 2023 with the words of mindfulness: "I am the way, the truth and the life" (Jn 14,6). This is the word of God that I really like. It guides my life and tells me what I should do everyday.

Maybe my life is a gift from God because there is nothing that I do not receive from God. And my mission now is that I want to respond to the gift that God has given me in assisting the needs and apostolate of the United States.

Sr. Marie Thi Huyen Trang Doan



## Visit of Mother Goretti and Sr. Emily

How blessed we, the Sisters of the United States District, were to welcome Mother Maria Goretti and Sr. Emily DelCastillo for their visit to us. They arrived in Marquette on August 7. With open arms and big smiles, they were welcomed by the Sisters in Marquette and our Sisters from Maryland who had flown in for this important occasion. It had been around 10 years since we had a visit from the head of our Congregation so this increased the excitement and added to our thankfulness.

After mass and breakfast, they set out for Escanaba along with Sr. Mary Ann to visit the Sisters there and their ministries. Arriving just before the noon meal, they were met by the Sisters with big smiles on the faces who gave them a warm welcome. The Sisters prepared a special lunch including some Korean food, since Mother Goretti is Korean.

After lunch, time was reserved for the Sisters to meet individually with Mother Goretti or Sr. Emily. In the evening we brought them to Honk Kong Buffet to enjoy some Chinese food. Sr. Mary Ann stayed home as she was not feeling well and shortly after getting our food, a call was received by Sr. Marie Kim to take Sr. Mary Ann to the Emergency Room. After eating, we all went to the hospital to see her. We visited a while in the Emergency Room, and then Sr. Marie Kim brought Mother Goretti and Sr. Emily home to the convent so that she could eat, since she had stayed with Sr. Mary Ann for a couple of hours already. Sr. Gloria and Sr. Fidelia stayed with Sr. Mary Ann until admission arrangements were made.

The next day after prayer and breakfast, we headed to the Bishop Noa Home. We showed our visitors around, and then at 10 a.m. we had mass in the Bishop Noa Home Chapel. Following the mass, there was a meeting with our Administrator, the Directors, and the Board for Bishop Noa Home. During lunch, Mother Goretti shared statistics and information about our Congregation. Sharing was also done by many others with the invitation by Sr. Gloria to share something about their lives.

Immediately after this session, Sr. Gloria took Mother Goretti and Sr. Emily to the Gary Abrahamson Memory Care Center to meet the director and her assistant. When this meeting was over, Sr. Gloria drove them to Marquette along with Sr. Fidelia. Sr. Gloria returned to Escanaba immediately after dropping them off in Marquette.

Thursday morning, they had mass at St. Peter's Cathedral and toured the Cathedral and the Shrine to Bishop Baraga. The rest of the day was open for individual visits with the Sisters from Maryland and Marquette.

Three of our Vietnamese Sisters from Wyoming, Michigan arrived in Escanaba as they planned to join the celebration in Marquette. They spent the night in Escanaba and traveled to Marquette for the celebration of our 60th Jubilee.

Friday morning, we all met at St. Christopher Church where we had a small celebration of the 60 years since the Sisters of St. Paul de



Chartres arrived in the Diocese of Marquette. Bishop John Doerfler presided the Mass, assisted by Bishop Emeritus James Garland, Very Reverend Dan Moll, pastor, and Msgr. Michael Steber, rector of St. Peter Cathedral.

At the end of Mass, Sr. Mary Ann introduced all the Sisters of St. Paul to the congregation. Then, immediately following Mass, the parishioners were invited to the parish hall where there was a reception prepared by the District USA Sisters.



After the celebration, we had a meeting at the District house. During the meeting, Mother Goretti shared about the several subjects and answered our questions. Sr. Emily showed a PowerPoint about the new establishments of our Congregation in two cities of Italy, and a hospital in Ethiopia. We were all thankful for the sharing of Mother Goretti and Sr. Emily.





After a short break, we prayed Vespers together, and then the Escanaba Sisters and the Sisters from Wyoming, Michigan returned to Escanaba.

On Saturday morning in Escanaba, Fr. John Shiverski celebrated mass in the Bishop Noa Home Chapel for our Vietnamese

Sisters from Wyoming, Michigan who would be returning home later in the morning. They were joined at Mass by Sr. Marie and Sr. Gloria.

On Saturday morning in Marquette, after mass at the Cathedral, Mother Goretti had individual visits with some Sisters and Sister Emily visited some of the scenery around Marquette. Later in the afternoon, they attended mass for Sunday because their flight was very early on Sunday morning.

We, the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres of District USA, were sorry to see them leave, yet our hearts were full of gratitude for the gift of their visit.

By Sr. Gloria Schultz

## Second Celebration of the 60th Jubilee



On Thursday, November 16, 2023, all the Sisters of St. Paul in the Upper Peninsula and many friends of the Sisters from the Escanaba area attended the 8:00 Mass at St. Anne's Parish in Escanaba. The Mass in honor of the



60<sup>th</sup> Jubilee of the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres coming to the Diocese of Marquette was celebrated by Rev. Fran DeGroot, assisted by Deacon Terry Saunders. After the Mass, all were invited to the Parish Hall for a breakfast reception.

The first 60<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Mass was celebrated by Bishop John Doerfler August 10th at St. Christopher's Parish in Marquette during the visit of Mother Maria Goretti. The intended celebration in Escanaba for August was postponed at that time because of delays in the flight schedule of Mother Goretti and Sr. Emily. So, this November 16<sup>th</sup> Mass and reception was held to accommodate the friends of the Sisters in Escanaba.

### Thailand: Trafficking Hotspot

In the battle against human trafficking, Sr. Francoise Jiranonda, SPC, (second from right in photo) has been a model of servant leadership for more than 30 years. She lamented that “At this very moment, criminal networks are exploiting close to 600,000 Thai people for sex or labour.”

According to Sr. Francoise, “Thailand is a human trafficking hotspot, and a country of origin, transit and destination for trafficked victims across Asia.”

She was instrumental in the creation and growth of Talitha Kum Thailand, where she set out to meet well-networked crime with a well-networked response. As the first coordinator of the network, Sr. Francoise Jiranonda engaged, trained and empowered many Sisters and lay people to develop the anti-trafficking network within the country and beyond.

With her leadership, Talitha Kum Thailand has made an exceptional contribution to the anti-trafficking cause, earning them the Thai government's prestigious Workers' Award.

“I will spend the time God has given me,” Sr. Francoise continued, “I will do it at every opportunity to prevent human trafficking.”

*From an article in the Vatican Newsletter, November 7, 2023*



## Prayer of Jacques Leclercq

*I believe,  
yes, I believe that one day,  
your day, O my God,  
I will come before You  
with my staggering steps,  
With all my tears in my hands,  
And this marvelous heart that You have given us,  
This heart too large for us,  
because it was made for You.*

*One day, I will come before You,  
and You will read on my face all the distress,  
all the struggles, all the failures of my efforts,  
and you will see my errors.  
But I know, O my God, that the faults are not important  
when we are before You.  
Because, it is when we are in front  
of other people that we feel humiliated.*

*But, in front of you,  
it is marvelous to be so poor,  
because we are so beloved.  
One day, your Day, O my God,  
I will come to You,  
And in the veritable explosion of my resurrection,  
I will finally come to realize  
the tenderness that is You.*

*I will come to You, O my God  
And You will show me your face  
I will come before You with my most foolish dreams,  
Bringing the world in my hands to You.  
I will come to You,  
and cry aloud the whole truth  
of life on the earth.  
I will shout my cry which comes from the depth  
of the ages:  
"Father, I have tried to be an man."  
And I am Your child." Amen.*

- Jacques Leclercq





## Facing Death as a Christian

Dear Friends,

My aunt Elizabeth died this past summer. Her daughter, Laura and Laura's husband were taking care of her in her last years. I asked if her mother knew she was dying, and if they had talked about it together. It was as if they both knew what was going on, but had not spoken directly, and she decided that it would be good to look at death together in the way of a Christian, believing that when we die, we go to meet Jesus. Below is part of an article that she shared with her mother, my aunt Elizabeth, a week or so before she died.

Sr. Mary Ann Laurin

### **A reflection from "The Tent World,"** sent to me by my cousin, Laura:

He led me to a plateau from which we could see a vast panorama of the wilderness, mountains, valleys, canyons, plains, rocks, and sand.

"It bears a profound mystery," said the teacher.

"What does?" I asked.

"This...the desert. It's the landscape through which God's people journeyed on their way to the Promised Land."

"The Israelites."

"Yes. In order to get to the Promised Land, they had to journey through the desert wilderness, dwelling in tents. In that is the revelation."

"The revelation of what?" I asked.

"This life," he said. "Everything in this world is temporary. It's not the place in which we stay. It's the place through which we journey. We pass through this world. It isn't our home. It's the tent world. And all of us are just campers. Everything in this world changes, every circumstance, every experience, every stage of life... they're all tents. We dwell in one tent for a season, and then move on to another. Your childhood was tent in which once you dwelt and then you moved on. Your good

times, your bad times, your successes and failures, your problems, your joys and sorrows, your adulthood, your old age...they're all just tents. Even your physical being, even that's a tent, temporary and always changing. The very frailty of it all is a reminder that we're only journeying through."

"Journeying through to where?" I asked.

"For the child of God, it's the journey home. It's the journey home to the Promised Land...to heaven...the place where we give up our tents and exchange that which is temporary for that which is everlasting."

"And how do I apply this?"

"In every way," he said. "No matter what happens in this world or in your life, never forget, you're not home... you're only journeying through. Every problem will pass, and every temptation will fade. So, tread lightly. It's where you're going. Keep your eyes focused and your heart fixed on your destination, that is, on the Promised Land. And for all the rest, just remember...you're only camping."

References: 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:5; Hebrews 11:8-16





## Compassionate Hearts Club

In October the annual Compassionate Hearts Club mailing was sent out to support our Mission Projects. The 16<sup>th</sup> year of Mission Projects is the same as last year as they hold special meaning to us.

Haiti relief efforts

Central Africa relief efforts

Victims of Human Trafficking – through USCSAHT

Catholic Schools in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan – Tuition help

From October 2022 to October 2023 we had collected \$24,455 for the Mission Projects. So far since the Compassionate Hearts Mailing went out in October we have collected **\$10,707**. We take donations all year for our Mission Projects through the Compassionate Hearts Club mailing, the newsletter or just mailing it to the Marquette address and noting it is for the Mission Projects. You can also direct it towards certain projects if you chose to, just note your intentions.

We are blessed by your generosity throughout the years and are grateful for any continued support.

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*In memory of Sr. Feliciele  
and family Marie & Firo*

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A heartfelt THANK YOU for all the gift and donations to our community and donations to our mission projects.

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

You may write or email Sr. Mary Ann Laurin at:

Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres

1300 County Road 492

Marquette, MI 49855

Email: [srstpaulweb@yahoo.com](mailto:srstpaulweb@yahoo.com)

[www.sistersofstpaulus.org](http://www.sistersofstpaulus.org)



**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.

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