



ARCHDIOCESE
of MILWAUKEE

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NEW HAND IN HAND LOGO!

By Fr. Christopher Klusman

In our recent Summer *Hand in Hand* Newsletter, I hoped you enjoyed the article about the history of the *Hand in Hand* Newsletter. The first *Hand in Hand* logo premiered during the July/August 1992 Newsletter. Then came the second logo in the September/October 1997 Newsletter. Our second logo was used for 22 years, so it felt right for a new and updated logo.

While you look at the top left corner, reflect on what you think would be the meaning of this new logo? Ironically, around the time of September/October, the Holy Spirit enflamed my heart to use two particular hands for the new logo. The two new particular hands are not just some hands, but are some of the most precious



▲ First Hand in Hand logo from July/August 1992.



▲ Second logo from September/October 1997.

hands in our history! They are the hands of the Blessed Mother Mary and of Our Lord, Jesus Christ. Not only that but that Mary's hand is holding Christ's Pierced

▶ **NEW LOGO - Continued on Page 2.**

FR. CK'S CORNER

By Fr. Christopher
Klusman



A blessed Fall season to you, or should I say, a blessed "early" Winter season to you. The Office of the Deaf

Apostolate has been busy!

We are excited to launch our new Deaf Apostolate Pastoral Plan by the end of the year. It will be a Christmas gift to all of us! The Deaf Apostolate Advisory Committee can't wait to share with you one of our



representative's (Tricia Condon) amazing idea for the front cover. It will bring you to tears of joy when you see it!

▶ **FR. CK'S CORNER - Continued on Page 3.**

MISSION STATEMENT - DEAF APOSTOLATE

The Deaf Apostolate in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee exists to enable all Catholic Deaf and Hard of Hearing people to participate fully in the liturgical, educational, pastoral, spiritual, and human concerns ministries in the Church.

► **NEW LOGO - Continued from page 1.**

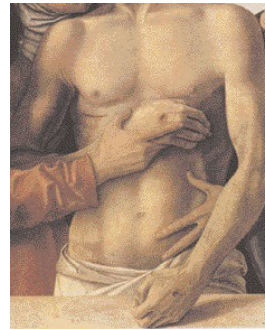
Hand, which is what the title of our Newsletter means: Hand in Hand!

Finding the perfect image was no easy task. The image is from *The Pieta* or *The Dead Christ Supported by the Virgin Mary and St. John the Evangelist*.



The painting that is now in Milan, Italy was painted in the year 1470 by a famous Italian Renaissance artist, Giovanni Bellini.

What is the deal with hands and the Deaf community? The Deaf community truly values hands for many reasons, such as being able to communicate with our hands a beautiful language: American Sign Language (ASL). Also, God made



each of us, including our hands. Jesus was pierced because He truly loves us and suffered and died for our salvation. If you look behind Jesus and Mary's Hands, you will see Jesus' Body, with the pierced side that spilled out His Precious Blood and Water, symbolizing the Creation of the Catholic Church through Baptism and the Eucharist (The Body and Blood of Christ). Also, the birth of the Catholic Church from Jesus' side shows why He is the Bridegroom (Spouse) and the Church (us) as His Bride. If you study the logo more and more, you can probably discover more things... This is why it is so beautiful for us to have this as our new logo. **Our Lady's maternal hand in the Pierced Hand of Our Lord!** So beautiful! So precious! So amazing!

OOPS! WE MADE A MISTAKE!

By Fr. Christopher Klusman with the help of Mark Hansen

On page 29 of the Summer *Hand in Hand* 2019 Commemorative Newsletter, I apologize for a mistake in the identification of two Deaf Nuns:


Figure A

OUR DEAF NUNS


By Fr. Christopher Klusman

What many people don't realize from our storied Catholic Deaf history in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee is that we even had Deaf Nuns! Imagine that! Who were their names and where did they serve? The names of our Deaf Nuns are Sr. M. Lucina, Sr. M. Floretta, and Sr. Carissima. They belonged to the Order of St. Francis of Assisi (OSF) and served at St. John's School for the Deaf.


In the next Autumn 2019 *Hand in Hand* newsletter, we will share details of the lives of each of the three Deaf nuns. We hope and know that you will enjoy learning about these important nuns who continue to be a part of our important history!



▲ Sr. Carissima



▲ Sr. M. Lucina



▲ Sr. M. Floretta

According to Mark Hansen, the photo above (Fig. A), identified as Sr. Carissima, was correctly identified by Mark to be Sr. Consolata. The second photo for Sr. M. Lucina is actually Sr. Lucy Seck. A native of Germany she came to Milwaukee at the tender age of 16 and took professional vows in 1893. She would have easily served her mission at St. John School for the Deaf as the longest of all Franciscan nuns if not for a bad fall she took in 1956, caused by an apple seed in the hallway, that broke her hip.

As you can see, the two nuns' photos from the Summer *Hand in Hand* were taken from this group photo. Thankfully, the group photo now has all the correct names as labeled by Mark



Figure B

Hansen. The group photo is believed to be dated around September, at the beginning of the 1912-13 academic school year. Mark Hansen believes that Sr. Lucina was a postulant at that time and missed this photo opportunity.

Here is the correct group picture of the Three Deaf Musketeers, named through the formation of their own alliance bonded by cultural deafness.



Figure C

◀ This photo (circa. 1921) might be taken at the popular watering hole called the Schiltz Palm Gardens in downtown Milwaukee. L-R: Sisters Floretta, Lucina, and Carissima.

► **FR. CK'S CORNER - Continued from page 1.**

It seemed like we just began our archdiocese's 175th anniversary year. Having already closed the 175th Anniversary with an interpreted Mass last November 24, 2019, we will continue to pray for continued blessings in our Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

Our Summer *Hand in Hand* 2019 newsletter received a lot of praise, for which I'm so grateful. If you missed it, you can find it on our archdiocesan website (www.archmil.org) and look for "Ministries & Offices" and click on Deaf Apostolate to find the section on *Hand in Hand* Newsletters. We added a new feature where you can sign up online to receive the upcoming *Hand in Hand* Newsletters electronically. You do not want to miss these wonderful and informative newsletters.

I hope you will enjoy this Autumn newsletter for it is filled with a lot of interesting articles. Definitely check out Mark Hansen's incredible article, "Three Deaf Musketeers," which are the three Deaf Nuns in Milwaukee, WI. Mark Hansen continues to amaze us with his God-given gift of history, especially on the history of St. John's School for the Deaf. You would not believe what he can find through his hard work.

Mark Hansen also came to Milwaukee to give an amazing presentation about the history of St. John's School for the Deaf at the St. John's School for the Deaf Alumni Reunion last October 26, 2019. Check out Deacon David's article about this.

An exciting new addition to this *Hand in Hand* newsletter is that we will include in each upcoming newsletter an article from an older *Hand in Hand* newsletter as a way to revisit important people, events, and memories from our historic past. Please check out an article from our dear sister in Christ, Peg Stachowiak, who wrote a beautiful and touching article about Fr. Don Zerkel for his retirement back in May 1999.

I'm so excited to announce that we have a new "sister" community. Check out the article about the Deaf community in Laos and why it would be wonderful to practice

Stewardship with this wonderful community. Remember that Stewardship means the "3 T's of Time, Treasure, and Talent." We can share our time to pray for them and even offer Mass Intentions for them, as well as sharing our treasure (money) with them so we can donate to help support their needs for a wonderful life by allowing them to develop their God-given talents.

We welcome Patricia Flannery Slisz, our ICDA Midwest President for her article on Our Lady of Las Lajas. Check out the incredible article about whether the image is painted or

not, as well as information on it having to do with a deaf person.

The Mass we had on Sunday, November 3, in memoriam for the Deaf community members who passed away since November 2018 was very hard. They were individuals who were an important part of our community. Please pray for several of our Deaf community members who are in hospice care. All of these lead us to an important lesson that we have to be ready, no matter how old we are, for end of life services. Deacon Jorge Benavente, who now works for the Catholic Cemeteries & Funeral Services, kindly offered to provide a workshop for us this April 2020 about how to prepare for the end of our lives. Watch for upcoming information early next year.

There is a new online interpreter request form. Check out the article about how you can find it and fill it out whenever you need

a sign language interpreter for any Catholic setting in this archdiocese.

Every year, we tend to have a Lenten weekend retreat. I hope you check out our attached flyer so that you can attend this wonderful retreat with a wonderful priest brother of mine, Fr. Seán Loomis, chaplain for the Deaf Apostolate in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The retreat theme is extremely important as he will share with us why Jesus is Our Spouse and what that means to each one of us.

Enjoy this Newsletter as we all have been very busy! Please know of my prayers with you during the Advent and Christmas seasons! God bless you always!



THE THREE DEAF MUSKETEERS



By Mark Hansen

Upon reading my writeup in the last edition of *Hand in Hand*, I came across photo inserts of the three deaf nuns where the editor announced their stories will be forthcoming in the next run. With the benefit of

processing numerous vintage photos and receiving identification help from older alumni of the school staff and pupils for the past decade or so, this allows me to quickly catch misidentification on a couple of them. Sisters Lucina Wolsfeld was mixed up with Lucy Seck and Carissima Normann with Consolata Ehlinger (see *Figure A*, page 2). I even submitted a 1913-14 staff photo with my own labeling as proof of evidence. Then I threw in my own humor at the editor, calling that deaf threesome as “The Three Musketeers”. He loved it and wanted to know if I would take this writing assignment. So here we go.

Let’s see that for the genre, it is a well-known literature classic by Alexandre Dumas, a French author, the *Three Musketeers* is primarily a historical and adventure novel. So in my own interpretation what the three deaf pupils of St. John’s chose as their vocation that was ground-breaking for this religious order of St. Francis of Assisi and of course in their assigned service, the adventures were intertwined with the history of St. John’s. I will go in the order starting with Margaret Wolsfeld who first entered the convent and took up the religious name as Sister Mary Lucina. Jeannette Normann followed four months later however she made a professional vow on the same day as Margaret. Lenora Menn entered the convent in 1919 at that time with Anna Frederick (Sr. M. Reynildis). The motherhouse made a special



▲ This photo deems as one of the first of three together as nuns – taken in circa. 1921 on the right side near the girls’ playhouse.

arrangement by taking Sister Matthia Croarkin (see Fig. B, p.2) out of St. John’s to be either as I am not clear which one yet, Lenora’s teacher or interpreter at the convent.

MARGARET WOLSFELD

Margaret (Fig. D) was born in Aurora, Illinois on 19 August 1895, the daughter of Adam Wolsfeld of Luxembourg in Europe and Barbara Molitor of Sheboygan Wisconsin. She was the seventh of eight children, four girls and four boys.

An older brother, Nick lost his hearing at the age of six. When the father brought Nick, then 10 years old to St. John’s to enroll him on 7 June 1900, he spoke about his little Margaret who had apparently been born deaf. It was suggested that even though she was a couple of months short of her fifth birthday, to bring her to school. So Adam went home and brought Margaret and her hearing brother, Henry (8) one week later. I think the reason was that the mother died a while ago so Father Gerend had a golden heart to have Henry for one year.

It was only three months later when tragedy struck on Saturday, the 29 of September when Nicholas was killed by an electric street car near Kenosha. He was buried in the Seminary Woods cemetery (Fig. E).

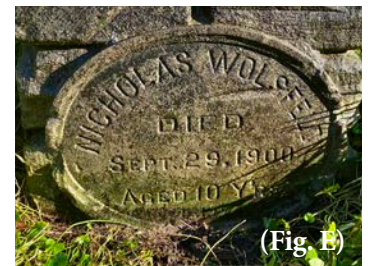
Margaret loved school and was a probably the pet because of her age. She shed copious tears after being promoted from first grade because she thought her days of drawing pictures were ended. But numbers and language soon captured her fancy and as there were large classes she became teacher’s “little helper.”

Basketball was even then her favorite sport and she hurried to practice in the old hay barn — long before it was renovated into what we remembered as the “Old Gym.”

Living with the Sisters even in the summertime, Margaret began to think of dedicating her life to the service of God. For a year after finishing seventh grade at St. John’s, she worked at home as a housekeeper but when the call came clearer her father accompanied her to St. Francis on 6 September 1911.



(Fig. D)



(Fig. E)

► THE THREE DEAF MUSKETEERS - Continued on Page 5.

► **THE THREE DEAF MUSKETEERS - Continued from Page 4.**

Work in the greenhouse and around the flower beds and tending the newly planted grapevines and lilac bushes was her principal activity at the convent. This was where she developed a green thumb and the garden and greenhouse became her hobby. She did this faithfully to supply the altar with plants and flowers, to “make our home pleasant.”

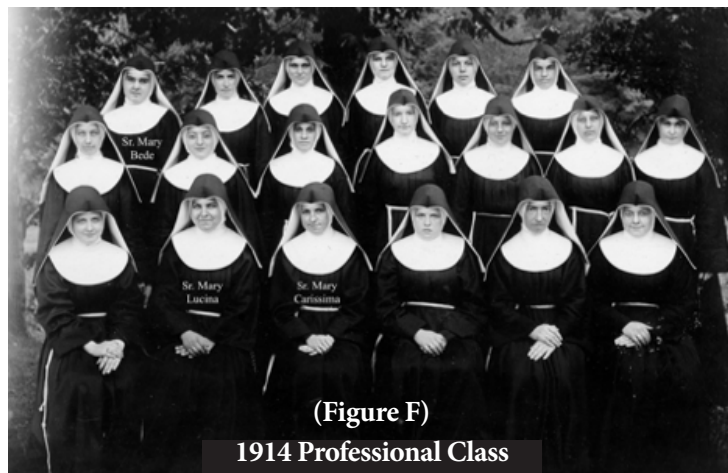
She was thrilled to teach temporarily from January until Holy Week at St. John's when Sister Mathia had an operation, then in her two years as a novitiate, she assisted Sr. Mathia three days a week. The other two days were doing laundry duty the first year at Pio Nono then at the convent for the second year. One Monday on a rainy day at noon she had a fright. As she was rinsing some clothes, a lightning struck her left elbow however hurt her very slightly. One person (Sr. Delphine) witnessed the incident.

She was professed on 2 August 1914 (Fig. F), and missioned to St. John's to perform various functions as group mother and sacristan over the years until close to her jubilee time. Laundry was her main activity in the latter years. She always gladly helped those who have much work.

On 25 of October, 1915 she along with the other three Sisters had a narrow escape on the way to Holy Hill when another automobile struck the driver's side. Father Gerend suggested to take the train ride back home to the Sisters' relief. Two years later on 8th of September she got her wish to go home with Sr. Lucy to see her aged father. He was miraculously saved after being struck by a train. But she refused to visit his funeral the following January after he was paralyzed by a stroke. She only wanted to remember the happy times rather than to attend this sorrowful services.

As a pupil, she missed the major 1907 fire because it was during the summer break however had a vivid recollection of a minor fire that broke first in the boys dormitory on All Saints Eve in 1917. She took care of the homeless girls in one of the classrooms at Pio Nono. She led them at the rosary, signing repeatedly, “Please St. Florian, put out the fire” before every Hail Mary. That night she went to the convent asking for shelter for the homeless girls in which was received. For the next couple of days while waiting out at the convent, she tried to gladden the spirit of poor girls who were welcomed there.

When she did not feel swell, she simply went to bed to rest then passed away after a couple of days on 20 March 1970. To the deaf who have known Sister Lucina through the years she had been an example of acceptance of the Will of God. I knew that she enjoyed collecting newspaper articles concerning St. John's in which whoever may learned the history and development of our school from this Sister, that I never had the chance to listen from her myself.



JEANETTE NORMANN

The first of ‘three musketeers’ to pass away on 3 February 1970 of a heart attack. This is going to be an exercise of deciding



which account to be true and accurate. The facts have seriously contradicted each other that it is best to lay out all sides to her lifestory. I shall begin with the obituary for Jeanette Normann who took the religious name as Sister Mary Carissima found in the 1970 edition of St. John's School for the Deaf Newsletter. This is pretty much adopted from an autobiography she wrote that is filed away at the convent archives.

“Sister was born in Mineral Point, Wisconsin [on 10 January 1891]. She lost her hearing at the age of two after suffering from pneumonia. After some years in a parish school [my note: St. Mary's Grade School in Mineral Point], she came to St. John's when she was 14 [my note: 12] years old and attended school for seven years. (See Fig. G)

She entered the convent and was received in 1912 [record shows 7 December 1911]. After she was professed [on 2 August 1914], she worked at St. John's as a child care worker from 1915 to 1940. In 1940 she was sent to St. Francis Minor Seminary where she did domestic work and served meals to priests there. She moved to the new De Sales Preparatory Seminary and was there until she became ill [record shows that she retired to the convent in June 1969].

► **THE THREE DEAF MUSKETEERS - Continued on Page 6.**

► **THE THREE DEAF MUSKETEERS - Continued from Page 5.**

The priests, Sisters and former pupils of St. John's remember Sister for the many humorous incidents connected with her life. She was always cheerful and ready to serve others."

I have been blessed working with an archivist for the Iowa County Historical Society in Mineral Point and coming across family genealogy work by Phyllis Grissom (nee Norman). Phyllis, the niece of Jeanette, wrote to say, "Infant of Prague with Madonna given to Johannes Normann by his mother in their hometown of Spiesen, Saarland, Germany before leaving for America. Johannes was about 17 years old with his brother Bernard, 2 years older. They were the two youngest in a family of eight and were the only family members who came to America.

When arriving at his point of entry in the U.S., Johannes was met on shipboard, by a gentleman unknown to him, who greeted him, and introduced himself as his sister Margareta's husband. This stranger told the young man that in order to enter the country, he needed to sign the legal document the stranger was carrying. John did this. Later, when John went to draw upon the funds he had brought with him from Germany, he found they had been withdrawn and he was penniless. John tried until 1924 to locate his sister, but failed in his search. John's portion was something in the neighborhood of 10,000 Deutsch Marks or dollars, we don't know which."

"The boys stopped off first in Pennsylvania, which was the pattern of all the Gräber [the maternal side] immigrants. They visited with their Uncle Nicholas and Uncle Conrad. Bernard decided to stay and work in the mines, but John opted for moving on west to Wisconsin. John settled in Mineral Point where he became a [lead] carpenter." He was employed at the Zinc Works all his working life, where he had a tool chest so large that it takes two men with the iron handles to move it around.

He married Katherine Kemmerling of Mineral Point. Together they had eight children, five girls and three boys. Jeanette is the third child. Life in the house went on a mundane routine until scarlet fever swept through the family affecting all the girls but not the boys. Phyllis' vivid account about Bernard Conrad Normann, the younger brother of Jeanette is the one I feel is most true and accurate.

Phyllis wrote, "Though my mother [Marie Kennedy Normann] claimed that my father [Bernard Conrad] graduated from elementary school that was not the case. My father said that he dropped out of school in the fifth grade. He gave the reason as being taught first in English and then in German. However there is another reason for his leaving school. The tragedy caused by the Scarlet Fever epidemic within his family.

The date of this event is not recorded but it can be guessed at. Application for admittance to the school for the deaf at St Francis



(Figure C (circa. 1921 – see page 2))

▲ *The Three Deaf Musketeers: (L to R) Sisters Floretta, Lucina, and Carissima.*

is dated 1908 [My note: school rolls shows Jennie [*sic*] and Eva enrolled on 8 May 1903]. The hearing loss for the three sisters would have been prior to that date. In 1908 the children were: Jeanette (b 1891), 17 [12] years old; Eva (b. 1894) 14 [8] years old, Little Marie (b. 1904) just 4 years old [Phyllis' guess is way off target. Note here that Marie was not yet born when scarlet fever struck the girls and enrolled later on 11 September 1911]. It was not an easy situation, having three [indeed two?] family members suddenly unable to hear. It is not known how many years passed from the time of the loss until the application for admission to school was made. Another sister, Caroline was forced by the mother to care for the stricken sisters and herself survived with her hearing intact.

Phyllis continues, "In 1908 Bernard was 10 years old. If he began school at the age of 6, He was in the 4th grade when the older girls went off to school. He was the only one at the home that could be of help to his mother. There was Little Marie deaf, and Loretta just 8 years old and Leo 6 years old. It seems that my father's family had need for him to stay at home and help his frantic mother. [the 'frantic mother' was then temporarily paralyzed from that anxiety attack however received a second and permanent paralysis a few years later when she was confined to wheelchair]."

What follows next explains how Bernard Conrad Norman carried his weight as the central figure in the family. Phyllis explains that he had retired after 45 years in administrative work with J.I. Case Farm Implements in Rockford and moved to Florida for the warm weather.

"When Sister Carissima came to the 60th wedding celebration of her brother Bernard and his wife Marie, she saw that the other nuns present came by themselves. Sister decided that she would like to travel alone as well. Her wish was to travel to Florida. She wanted to see Bennie's house. Arrangements were made for her. She was granted permission to travel alone all the way to Florida.

► **THE THREE DEAF MUSKETEERS - Continued on Page 7.**

► **THE THREE DEAF MUSKETEERS - Continued from Page 6.**

She had a wonderful time. When she returned to Milwaukee and St John's, she set about making packets of pictures for her nieces and nephews. She felt she was nearing her time to go home to her Lord. Bestowing her photographs was one of her last actions. Many of the pictures in this family history were those cherished by Sister. She was a very young girl when she first left home for St. John's School for the deaf. She was the young and beautiful Jeannette Norman[n]. She and her sisters, Eva and little Marie [?] lost their hearing as a result of a bad case of Scarlet fever. All three girls were educated. They learned early to speak. They could also read lips. They were proficient in the use of the sign language as well."



LENORA MENN

Lenora's grandparents, John Lauer and Josephine Meyer was part of an original group of 113 from the Baden area of Germany that emigrated in 1854 under the leadership of Ambros Oswald, a Roman Catholic priest. Oswald came to Manitowoc County to form a religious

haven for those members of his congregation following a purchase of 3,840 acres to what became the village of St. Nazianz. Soon work started on the community's first church and, like a monastery, members of the colony would gather daily to pray the Divine Office in their native German. The settlers began going by the name "The Association" and agreed to share everything in common and work without pay, in imitation of the lives of the first Christians as depicted in the Acts of the Apostles. Her mother Sophia was born there in 1871 and hence grew up under those cult-like circumstances.

The 1870 U.S. Census report reads that John was a farmer and the family lived in Schleswig and the post office was at Kiel. Somehow along the way their belief for Christian utopianism may got replaced by a wanderlust to be a yeoman under the 'Manifest Destiny' banner. "Go West Young Man" was a phrase popularized by American author Horace Greeley, regarding America's westward expansion and homesteading. The 1885 Nebraska census shows the Lauer family made home in Lincoln Township, Colfax County, 70 some miles northwest of Omaha.

In the year 1868 the first German and Czech Catholics settled in the neighborhood of Oleyen in Colfax County. They helped this section grow from virgin prairie into one of the most productive regions in the state. Did August Menn went straight to Nebraska from Milwaukee under the same 'Manifest Destiny' fervor? He settled in Howells about three miles west of Oleyen. It was platted earlier in 1886 when the Fremont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley Railroad, called the 'Cowboy Line' was extended that bypassed

Oleyen. The population of Howells in 1890 grew to 197. August was employed as a stock buyer where the livestock were shipped from Howells to the Omaha Stockyards. He was twenty-eight when married to Sophia who was eighteen years old in Oleyen in 1889.

Lenora was born on 25 April 1892, the second child of seven and she had been placed in the public school, because there was no Catholic school far and near— not within six hundred miles. Her father August however insisted on putting Lenora into the state school as the tuition cost was covered by taxpayers. She was a pretty child and very talented; and soon became the pet of the school.

Below is what Father Gerend wrote about Lenora. She had been placed when quite young at the Nebraska School for the Deaf, because she couldn't hear; and, on account of her tender age, she spent a great deal of the time in the home of the superintendent, whose wife was very fond of her, and gave her the best of care.

Every thing seemed well and good until she grew up to be quite a young lady. She spent an occasional vacation at home with her parents and family, who soon realized that she was becoming more and more a stranger to all at home who had been reared in the Faith. Lenora was not, and when an attempt was made to instruct her, she showed displeasure. The many years of absence from home, the kind treatment she had received at school, her associations and the strictly secular education—all this accounted for her dislike of Catholic practices at home; and she would not even acknowledge parental authority. Then the mother became alarmed. She was aware now of her responsibility, and willing to make any sacrifice to save her, but it seemed too late.

Now, there was another deaf child in the family growing into school age. This time there was to be no experiment, a Catholic school must be found. It happened that they learned of St. John's Institute through Milwaukee friends, and then a correspondence ensued. Helen however was also sent to the Omaha school over Sophia's objection, but then August died roughly a year later. So finally it was determined to send Helen, and, if possible, Lenora to the Catholic school. Lenora at this time had finished the grades with credit, and the ambition of her life was to receive more education—to attend Gallaudet College, a High School for the Deaf, at Washington, D. C. Everything was done to dissuade her. They begged her to go with her younger sister to the Catholic school. She was finally prevailed upon to go and, at least, see the school. This she did.

One nice day she and Helen came all the way from Nebraska— escorted by an older sister. Helen at the time seemed like a mere baby. She would not stay without Lenora. Then Lenora consented to remain, until her sister would feel at home, after that she

► **THE THREE DEAF MUSKETEERS - Continued on Page 8.**

▶ THE THREE DEAF MUSKETEERS - Continued from Page 7.



would go on to Washington.

But this never happened, thank God, and Lenora today calls blessed the hour when she entered underneath the hospitable roof of St. John's. As time went on, she began to like her new school, and the pleasing ways of the good Sisters; and she remained for a number of years.

It required good judgment on part of priests and sisters to bring about this result.

Lenora was a wonderfully apt pupil, and became a devout Christian. She had great talent for art, and in this too she succeeded very well. She loved to draw religious subjects—due to the religious instruction she was daily receiving. She had a special knack of painting angels; and many are the specimens of her talent in our dining room. On one of the walls of my room hangs a picture of the Sacred Heart. It shows the heart in red, surmounted by a black cross—all aflame with love, and throwing off rays of light all about it; and it is encircled by a wreath of thorns, which cause heavy drops of blood to flow from it. It is not a masterpiece by any means, but only an attempt at amateur art, and it was given me—in kind remembrance.

When Helen was old enough to travel alone, Lenora remained at home to help her mother at housework. She loved housework, and was a home body. This gave her mother great pleasure. But she could never forget St. Francis, and its environment; it had taken thorough possession of her heart.

One day I received a long letter from her, in which she told in very good language—considering that she is completely deaf—how she longed to be with us, and how often when alone at home and everything quiet about her, she travels in spirit to deaf St. John's, especially at Christmas time, when she thinks of the midnight Mass and the other church services. "Oh, the sweet Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament, in the loveliest of

chapels! How could I ever forget it?" Then she continued to tell of the Month of May—how she recalled the walks to the Chapel of the Woods, and the first flowers of spring which they gathered to decorate Mary's shrine. "It seems like a dream!"

As I read the letter, I could see a tear glisten in her eye, she was home-sick, really home-sick.

"Some day," she continued, "I hope to again see St. John's, and stay there forever. I can never forget it. Would you receive me, Father? Can you believe it? Lenora wants to be a nun, just like the deaf Sisters Carissima and Lucina. Write me, and let me know what you think of it?"

Three years have passed since I received that touching letter—one that brought joy to the hearts of all at St. John's who knew her. And how happy must have been her relatives when they learned of her intentions—and of the wonderful turn that things had taken!

God grant that she may continue to blossom out more and more, until she resembles the "Little Flower of Jesus," whose name she has taken by vows in 1921. End of Gerend article.

The three musketeers must have enjoyed their comradeship for the next 18 years until Sr. Carissima was reassigned to do general work at the Minor Seminary in 1940. By 1947 Fr. Gehl sent Sr. Floretta over to the convent. It was done suspiciously to satisfy the parents of pupils who may complained that Sr. Floretta does not talk well with any of them. She obviously had a "deaf voice". That arrangement lasted until the death of Fr. Gehl in 1963. When Fr. Murphy became director, one of his first task was to bring Sr. Floretta back to St. John's for the remainder of her service years. Sr. Carissima did not ever return to St. John's until her death.

For each of their service years at St. John's; Sr. Lucina has the most at 55, Sr. Floretta came in second at 35 and 24 for Sr. Carissima.

Bibliography: VOL. 30 No. 7, Our Young People, July 1921



▲ A rare gem of a picture in 1965 of the Three Deaf Musketeers at a Christmas party in the old building. It is most likely a last picture of all three together. Left to right: Sisters Lucina, Carissima, and Floretta.



St. Andrew Parish

DEAF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MINISTRY

SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

FROM THE DELAVAN CORNER



**By Jennifer Paul, Coordinator
Deaf Religious Education & Deaf Ministry
St. Andrew's Parish, Delavan**

As it is Thanksgiving time, I would like to take this opportunity to say a few words of gratitude – and giving. We have been saying for many years how fortunate we are to have such an accessible program that is the Deaf Religious Education and Deaf Ministry, generously supported by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee's Office of the Deaf Apostolate and St. Andrew's Parish.

With their support, countless Catholic children attending Wisconsin School for the Deaf and Catholic adults living in and around the Delavan community continue to grow in their faith. It is with hope, in deep prayer, that these children go on to thrive as Catholic adults serving in their communities.

It is also in deep prayer that the Catholic adults continue to be inspired and to grow spiritually. The deepest way to grow spiritually is to serve their communities in many ways. After all, St. Andrew's Parish believes that we gather to pray, to grow and to serve!

Serving can mean different things. One obvious way to serve is to give your time, talent and energy to your community. That is the wealth of our health and abilities. With our abilities, it could be as simple as making use of your excellent communication skills to read and share the Bible in a way that other people can understand. It could mean reaching out and seeking donations for clothing items and

various essentials for families in need of them. It could mean making use of your excellent organization skills to catalog and sort for food and clothing drives. Having excellent organization skills could help the ministries with so many things going on with so many needs to meet.

But it could be as challenging as giving your money. What financial wealth we have – we owe to the Almighty Father above. Give however much you can. Together, the impact is significant across the ten counties of Southeastern Wisconsin, including the Deaf Religious Education & Deaf Ministry delivered through St. Andrew's Parish in the Walworth county.

We need to remember our Deaf children. They are our future. As our beloved late President John F. Kennedy said, our “children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see” and “we can say with some assurance that, although children may be the victims of

fate, they will not be the victims of our neglect.” We must not forget our Deaf children and give what we have – our abilities and our resources – to God's children so that they can grow to be fully functional, spiritual contributing members of their communities as God intends.

Reach out to Father Christopher Klusman at the Office of the Deaf Apostolate and to Father Oriol of St. Andrew's Parish. Find out from them how you can help serve the families and children. They would be so happy to hear from you. After all, you belong!



OUR NEW “SISTER PARISH” COMMUNITY

By Fr. Christopher Klusman

Over the past several decades, I remembered parishes having what they call a “sister parish,” which is a parish community in a different country which we could pray for, as well as help support through stewardship of time, talent, and treasure (money). I have always wondered what would be our “sister parish” community?



the children cannot stay forever, because each year, more and more are coming. The generations have to take turns, without ‘pushing out’ the older ones. To complete their education, and ensure their future, the Sisters of Charity

have opened for three years a professional training program for the older students.



Over the past several months, the Office for the Deaf Apostolate had the privilege to meet with Mayhoua Moua, the President of HOPE Foundation, Inc. in which H.O.P.E. stands for Hope, Opportunity, Prosperity, and Equity for children who are less fortunate and have special needs. Their Mission Statement

is: “We strive to instill hope and opportunities for children with special needs and to develop skills and talents that will give them prosperity and equity for a better tomorrow.” In the city of Luang Prabang, in the country of Laos, there is a Deaf community that I would like to introduce to you.

I am borrowing an excellent description from Marianne Vernet, a volunteer of the Luang Prabang Special Education School, writing on behalf of Sister Sivongsouk:



“Ten years ago, the Sister of Charity founded in Luang Prabang a school for the [Deaf]. Year after year, the reputation of this institution and the opportunity it represents for the children from all North Laos, lead to the Sister project development.

Close to the school, the Sisters live at the ‘centre’ among the fifteen grown girls. Those two spaces are life places. Fruits, vegetables, aromatic herbs and mushrooms are cultivated, and pigs, poultry, cows and fishes are raised there.



Nowadays, about eighty children, from five to twenty years old, are students and residents. Although this school has become the heart of a tightly-knit community,

Girls are trained to weaving, sewing, and cooking profession: from Monday to Friday, they go to school in the morning and weave in the afternoon in a workshop building at the centre, in order to be sufficiently qualified when time to leave the community comes: the purpose being to guaranty them a mean of making a living and of social integration.



For the boys, in the same manner, they are trained to bicycle and motorcycle mechanics, and to carpentry.

Therefore, this is

how they have been created at the centre a weaving workshop, a garage, and a handicraft shop.

This handicraft shop opened two years ago, is a showcase for the girls’ production. And the garage is also a place for the boys to get real experience in a friendly environment.

Recently, a café has open at the centre, next to the handicraft shop, the weaving workshop and the garage, with a nice view of the garden! Those three businesses are complementary resources opportunities



► “SISTER PARISH” - Continued on Page 11.

► “SISTER PARISH” - Continued from Page 10.

for the community: the coffee and the shop are intended for the tourists who care about Lao sustainable development, and responsible tourism. Their visit to the centre and their purchase at the handicraft shop are real supports to the [Deaf] community of Luang Prabang and take part in committed action.

In addition, opening a café will give to those who want to become a cooker, or to work in the catering industry, to have the first experience.

This year, for the first time, three former students, who graduated in June 2019, are staying at the centre after their years at the school. They work as employees in an apprenticeship in the garage and in a partner company (for woodworking).

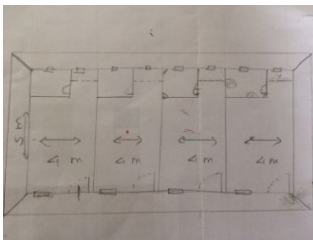


The Sisters of Charity challenge is to accommodate those three boys, and the future finishing ones whereas the centre is a girl living place. So far they share a very small room, a little bit apart from the girls.

The project is to build a new building, separated from the existing one, but still on the centre's property ground. Four



bedrooms, with kitchen corner and bathroom within, would allow the finishing students-young professionals to spend a year or two among the community. Thus, they will have a gap between their time at the school and the autonomous working life.”



There are a construction plan and area where they hope the new future building would be. The total cost of the four bedrooms is \$20,000 with each bedroom costing \$5,000 that also includes

the workforce and materials.

They would be most grateful for any amount that you can donate so that they can grow to give more support serving these wonderful Deaf children and adults. Please email the Office for the Deaf Apostolate

at deafapostolate@archmil.org for more information on how to give to our new “sister parish” community. God bless!



SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE TOURISM, PROFESSIONAL TRAINING, AND THE DEAF COMMUNITY

The **Luang Prabang Special Education School** gives to **deaf children** the opportunity to receive an education, and to learn a job in order to have a better professional integration. Thus, they are trained for weaving, dressmaking, carpentry, mechanic and for the catering sector. To value their work, and promote their apprenticeship, the centre has developed businesses.

WHEN TO COME?

MONDAY - SATURDAY
8AM - 5 PM

Coming by, you can visit the **weaving workshop**, and the **handicraft boutique**. If you come for lunch, we will prepare **homemade cuisine**, with our own products. Otherwise, you can still have a drink and snacks in the **café** with view on the **garden!**

FACEBOOK AND TRPADVISOR: @LUANGPRABANGDEAFMUTECOMMUNITY
HTTP://DEAF-MUTE-LUANGPRABANG.MYSTRIKINGLY.COM/
TEL : 02095134648



LUANG PRABANG DEAF&MUTE COMMUNITY



Handicraft shop - Coffee place

BAN PHOUMOCK - JUST BEFORE THE BOWLING ALLEY, COMING FROM THE LUANG PRABANG STADIUM, ON THE MAIN ROAD.

NEW INTERPRETER ONLINE REQUEST FORM

By Fr. Christopher Klusman

We are excited to launch a new online Sign Language Interpreter Request Form! When you go on www.archmil.org, go to “Ministries & Offices” to click on “Deaf Apostolate.” Scroll down until you see “Links.” Below that, you will see first: “Interpreter Request Form” and click on it. Please type in/fill out the boxes provided. Once you are finished, you can click on the orange “Submit” button to send it to us and then I will try our best to find the appropriate sign language interpreter that will



fit according to the needs of the request.

This will be the standard and required way of requesting sign language interpreters for any Catholic Deaf events, such as funerals, workshops, etc. Emails will no longer be accepted.

Here is the link that goes directly to this online form:

<https://www.archmil.org/deaf-apostolate/InterpreterRequest-Form.htm>

EPHPHETA/ICDA CHAPTER 7 SUMMER PICNIC

By Arvilla Rank

Around 50 people gathered at St. Charles Borromeo Parish Hall for the annual Ephpheta/ICDA Chapter 7 picnic on Sunday, June 30, 2019. The day began with an ASL Mass celebrated by Fr. Christopher Klusman and Deacon David Sommers at 11:00 a.m. The Mass was followed by a picnic lunch beginning at 12:30 p.m. Guests brought dishes to pass. The young adults who were preparing to attend the International Catholic Deaf Association-United States Section (ICDA-US) Conference in Santa Clara, California took the lead role in preparing/barbecuing the meat, as well as setting up/cleaning. They were Ephpheta/ICDA Chapter 7 President Carlos Velez, Edgar and Marisol Vizcarra, and Julian Chairez, Jr. Ephpheta/ICDA #7 provided the meat: Brats, hamburgers, and hot dogs were prepared on the grill. All of the food I sampled was very good. Donations were put towards the Young Adult fund which helped to sponsor the young adults at the conference.

Sissy Zoellick was in charge of games for the children. It was good to see young children at the picnic. We look forward to another picnic in the Summer of 2020.



▲ Edgar and Julian helping to cook delicious grilled food for us.



▲ The guys from all over the state (yes, with one from near Green Bay and another from near La Crosse) enjoying a fun chat with each other.



▲ Thanks to Sissy for finding great items for the kids to enjoy!



▲ Lots of delicious picnic food!



▲ The women enjoying their time together, with one coming from near Green Bay and even another from Illinois!



DEAF PICNIC IN DARIEN

By Arvilla Rank

The annual picnic in Darien was once again a successful event. About 1,200 people attended, and many people came from other states. The Deaf Apostolate and Ephpheta/ICDA Chapter 7 had an exhibit table. This year, the booths were near the area where food and beverages were served; this area was near the main activity and many people stopped at the exhibit tables. A big draw to our table was the advertisement for the St. John School for the Deaf Alumni Reunion, which will be held October 26, 2019. At least 35 alumni present at the picnic came to pick up a flyer.

The picnic committee is looking forward to celebrating its 15th anniversary next year. They are hoping for a big celebration.

Thank you to Fr. Christopher Klusman, Deacon David Sommers, Deaf Apostolate Advisory Committee Facilitator Tim Gall, and myself for staffing the booth.



14th Annual DEAF PICNIC!

Hosted by Southern Lakes Association Deaf MAD

AUGUST 17, 2019
10am to 8pm

DARIEN WEST SIDE PARK -Rain or Shine- Shelter Provided!
357 W. MADISON ST.
DARIEN, WI 53114

Free Admission - Free Parking
FOOD & BEER WILL BE SOLD
COOL Playground
Exhibition Booths

Horseshoes 1pm
Cornhole
Washer Boards

Awesome Door Prizes!

DEAFPICNIC.COM

ST. JOSEMARÍA ESCRIVÁ VIDEOS

By Fr. Christopher Klusman

During the week of October 20, 2019, the first video broadcast was posted on our Facebook page about St. Josemaría Escrivá. It introduced very briefly who he was and how he was the founder of the Opus Dei (The Work of God). Every week afterward, a new weekly video is posted. Each video posting will be a quote from one of his books, *The Furrow*.

In the Catholic community, it is very exciting that there are more videos, emails, and websites to learn and grow in the Catholic faith. But, there are so few resources for the Catholic Deaf community to receive on a weekly basis. This is why I wanted to provide quotations from St. Josemaría Escrivá's *The Furrow*. I explained in my first video that his quotations are very rich,



meaning that his quotations are like food in which they required a lot of chewing, tasting, and digesting which can take a whole day and week to understand most of his quotations. This is why there is only one posting per week.

The postings are on the Deaf Apostolate's Facebook page, currently titled for now, "DHHMO." We are going to be changing our Facebook title soon to match our office's name of Deaf Apostolate.

If you do not have a Facebook page, but would like to receive the weekly video postings by St. Josemaría Escrivá, you can email me at

klusmanc@archmil.org.

I hope you will enjoy these weekly postings and find them rich spiritual food for your learning and growth in your relationship with God and His Church.

**LIVE TRUTH.
DEFEND TRUTH.**

ANNUAL CONFERENCE
MILWAUKEE 14 MARCH 2020

CATHOLIC MEN: SAVE THE DATE!

The Men of Christ Conference will take place on Saturday, March 14, 2020, at the Miller High Life Theatre in Downtown Milwaukee, WI.

Their registration and flyers are not ready as of this month. If you are interested in joining, please email Fr. Christopher Klusman at: klusmanc@archmil.org. When registration opens, he will let you know. Registration through the Office of the Deaf Apostolate will ensure a group rate, which is cheaper than a single person rate.

Beginning with this Newsletter, there will be an article chosen from an older Hand in Hand newsletter. We hope you will enjoy this selection from the September/October 1999 Newsletter written by a dear friend of ours, Peg Stachowiak, who passed away on August 31, 2015.

MY FRIEND, DON ZERKEL



By Peg Stachowiak

Father Don Zerkel is one of my favorite people and a treasured friend. I know many people in the Deaf community share my feelings. It's hard to believe this active, young-at-heart person has retired!

Don was born in Chicago, Illinois. He had three brothers and three sisters. His brother, Joe, had Down's syndrome. Even though he was younger, Don often protected his handicapped brother, who was two years older. He hated when other kids picked on or made fun of Joe. He couldn't understand why others would be so mean to someone so innocent and trusting. One of the reasons Don became such a good teacher was his early experience in giving clear explanations to his brother.

The Zerkel family moved to Milwaukee in 1944. Don had to leave his longtime classmates and complete the eighth grade at a new school, St. John Cathedral School. His brothers and sisters went to St. Robert's school which was closer to their home. The school would not accept Don because their eighth grade was overcrowded. Father John Allemang was the director of the servers at St. Robert's Parish and he encouraged Don to enter the seminary high school. His seventh-grade teacher, Sister Jane Edwards (with whom he still corresponds), supported Don's decision to do so.

Don Zerkel was ordained a priest on May 25, 1957, by Cardinal Meyer. His first assignment (1957-1966) was to St. Andrew parish in Delavan. He was assistant to three different pastors, Fr. William McDermott, Monsignor Joseph Emmenegger, and Fr. Robert McCormick. Don's first pastor, Fr. McDermott, told him that he would work with the Deaf and gave him no choice in the matter. This was an area of service that Don had never considered. He learned to sign



▲ Peg Stachowiak interpreted for Fr. Don Zerkel's retirement Mass at St. John's Parish in Byron on June 13, 1999.

from Ray DuCharme and Mark Carter. With the help of Edra Duick and Mary Kenny, he tried his best to teach religion for the Deaf students at the Wisconsin School for the Deaf (WSD). At that time, WSD Superintendent Ken Huff allowed the religious education classes to occur on the WSD campus.

Zerkel was very frustrated working with the Deaf. The Deaf told him he was a lousy signer and he agreed! His receptive skills were even worse. The kids called him the "baby priest" and played all kinds of jokes on him. Ray DuCharme interpreted the whole Mass because Zerkel felt he was not skilled enough.

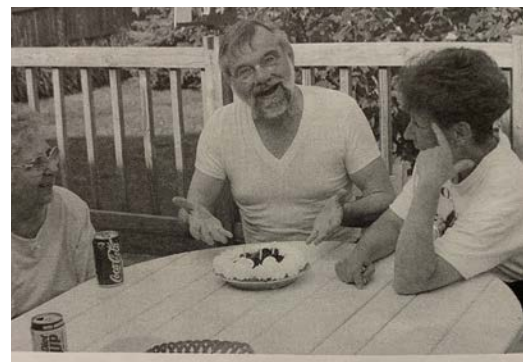
When his time ended in Delavan, Father Murphy at the St. John's School for the Deaf in Milwaukee, asked Don to come to work at the school. Zerkel refused! He was too frustrated working with the Deaf. His next assignment was at St. Killian Parish in Hartford. His pastor expected Zerkel to speak Spanish and was very disappointed that Don did not know any Spanish. He stayed only one year.

Fr. Murphy called again. St. John's School for the Deaf had just lost their principal and associate priest – would Zerkel reconsider? This time he said "yes!" Knowing that he needed to improve his signing skills, he went to St. Mary's College in Michigan to take a course for Deaf Catechists. There he met Fr. Jerry Thompson, Sr. Dorothy Kazel, Sr. Corita Ambro, and Fr. Joe McNulty. Returning to Milwaukee, he learned more signing from a Deaf nun, Sr. Lucina.

Don taught two classes his first year at St. John's and helped in the high school boys' dormitory. By the end of his third year, he was teaching history, English, and religion full-time. Don began to enjoy working with the Deaf as his receptive skills grew and he began to appreciate the beauty of their language.

In 1974, Zerkel became the director (superintendent) of St. John's School for the Deaf. He credits principal, Sr.

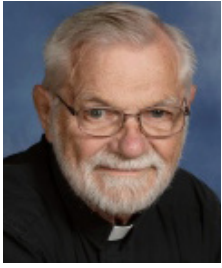
Roberta, and his secretaries, Alice Prier and Rita Tesar, for keeping him organized and on task. As the director, Don still continued to teach full days. He loved signing the Eucharist. He was very



▲ Sr. Martha Ann Czarnyszka and Kelly Jenson help Fr. Zerkel celebrate one of his birthdays.

► MY FRIEND, DON ZERKEL - Continued on Page 15.

► **MY FRIEND, DON ZERKEL - Continued from Page 14.**



▲ *Fr. Don Zerkel*

disappointed and heartbroken when the school closed in 1983.

In June of 1983, Don went back to St. Andrew in Delavan. That is where our friendship and working relationship began. We were without a priest that was able to sign, and we very happily welcomed Fr. Zerkel. His teaching experience with the Deaf and his skilled

signing was now begin used to teach many Catholic students at the Wisconsin School for the Deaf in Delavan. Don is one of the best teachers I have ever observed! He can take the most difficult concept and break it down into understandable units. He always has a funny or interesting story to explain his point. He is also aware of who is or is not understanding his topic, and he can make adjustments in the presentation. I learned so much from watching him teach. Zerkel is also a gifted preacher. His love for Jesus is real, simple, and natural. He shares this in his sermons, and everyone is touched and challenged to make their faith alive and active.

He is also one of the most compassionate men I have ever met. When I would complain about “certain” people, he would always remind me to give them the benefit of the doubt. “You don’t know where that person is coming from or what problems that person has been dealing with.” He never joined in my criticisms of anyone. I asked him about Jesus’ teaching to forgive “seven times seventy;” Zerkel would say that it meant “seven times seventy” for each person in your life!

Zerkel and I share a love of antiques. We spend many afternoons finding just the right piece of furniture or other



▲ *Fr. Zerkel celebrates Rosie Kaleta’s birthday.*

antique that we “just can’t live without.” No one enjoys a flea market more than Don Zerkel does.

I don’t want to give anyone the wrong idea,

Zerkel is not perfect. He is a terrible procrastinator! It’s one of the reasons he has always had a strong woman nagging him to get his work done. I got that job, along with the secretary at St. Andrew. When I would “bug” him to work on something right away, he would tell me, “Peg, why should I work on that now, when I can do it tomorrow or the next day?” He would sometimes wake up in the middle of the night

to work on his homily because he just never made time for it during the day. Of course, he would need to take a nap later that day. He is a gifted nap taker! He could sleep in the middle of the afternoon in a room right next to the copy machine with the phone ringing and people talking.

Zerkel is not a very comfortable administrator. He is a very humble man and understands his own talents and weaknesses. I was very sad to see Zerkel leave the Delavan area in 1991. All of the parish members felt blessed to share his spirituality and unique talents. He spent the last eight years at two small parishes, St. John in Byron and St. James in Oakfield. He was able to help them merge as one parish with the new name, Sons of Zebedee. Fr. Don Zerkel retired on June 13, 1999. Now he will have more time to spend with his antiques in his cottage near Lakewood (in northern Wisconsin). He plans to stay involved in the Cursillo movement in the Milwaukee diocese and help with the Deaf Koinonia. I am also recruiting him to help teach an occasional religious education class in Delavan.

Don Zerkel has touched many lives! All of us want to say thank you to a man who has shared his vision of God with us by living it every day. Thanks, Don!



▲ *Fr. Zerkel and Peg “dressed” as Bob and Sue Drefs to sign a song from “Fiddler on the Roof” for the Drefs’ 25th wedding anniversary in 1983.*

ROSARY GROUP

By Fr. Christopher Klusman

On Saturday, October 12, 2019, at St. Roman Parish, Todd Zoellick organized a Rosary Public Rally with the Catholic Deaf community. He and Tim Gall co-led the rosary. The day was beautiful and sunny, but the winds were really strong and cold as to remind us that the Holy Spirit is still going strong!



Everyone was pleased that our group continues to grow with each coming year. It was a beautiful opportunity to come together to pray this most special prayer that Our Lady asks of us to do on a daily basis. Our Lady of Fatima, pray for us!



CATHOLIC QUIZ

1. What is the name of one of Zebedee's sons?

- (a) John (b) Jacob
(c) Judah (d) Jonah

2. On what day after Jesus' birth was he named and circumcised?

- (a) First (b) Third
(c) Eighth (d) Fourteenth



3. In what city did Jesus meet Zachaeus, the tax collector?

- (a) Jericho (b) Nob (c) Jerusalem (d) Joppa

4. What is the vessel which holds incense called?

- (a) Boat (b) Aspergillum (c) Lumen (d) Cruet

5. Who was pope when the Universal Catechism was written?

- (a) John XXIII (b) Paul VI
(c) John Paul I (d) John Paul II (Answers on page 18.)

ULTREYA IN THE FALL

By Fr. Christopher Klusman

The Catholic Deaf community hosted the Ultreya on Saturday afternoon of October 12, 2019, from 2 to 3:45 p.m. at Steiger Hall in St. Matthias Catholic Parish. The theme was based on 1 Peter 5:7-11. The theme was: "Faith in Hard Times." It was a theme thought of by Kathryn Harbison of Delavan.

Our Witness Talk was given by Deacon David Sommers, who shared his spiritual journey with us. We had small group discussions, signed several songs together, and prayed together. This Ultreya was one of the best that I have attended over the past several years.



OUR LADY OF LAS LAJAS



By Patricia Flannery Slisz

In Spanish las lajas means “the rocks.” This image was imprinted on the rocks of a gorge above the Guaitara River in Colombia near the border of Ecuador. It has the singular characteristic of having been painted by Angels. The image is situated inside a cave

very high in the mountains and was completely unknown until it was discovered in the mid-18th century by an Indian.

It is not painted but mysteriously imprinted in the rock. The colors are not applied in a surface layer of paint or other material but penetrate deep into the rock. No one knows how the work was done. Certainly, it has no natural geological cause. No one has ever heard of any case where nature reproduced human faces with such perfection.

The image represents a noble lady from an uncertain period, most probably 16th or 17th century Spain. How such a picture came to be in that cave unnoticed by anyone remains a mystery. These circumstances seem to indicate that it is an akeropita image – akeropita in Greek means not made by human hands, but painted by the Angels.

Back in the 18th century, Maria Mueses de Quinones, an Indian woman from the village of Potosi, Colombia, often walked the six miles between her village and neighboring one of Ipiales. One day in 1754 as she was making her journey, she approached the place called Las Lajas (the Rocks), where the trail passes through a deep gorge of the Guaitara River. Maria never liked this part of the trail. There were rumors that a cave in Las Lajas was haunted. Superstitions lingered amongst the converted Christian Indians.

She was carrying her daughter, Rosa, a deaf-mute, on her back in the Indian fashion. By the time she had climbed to Las Lajas, she was weary and sat on a rock to rest. The child got

down from her back to play.

After a while, Rosa emerged from the cave shouting, “Mama, there is a woman in here with a boy in her arms!” Maria was beside herself with fright since this was the first time she had heard her daughter speak. She did not see the figures the girl was talking about, nor did she want to. She grabbed the child and hastened on to Ipiales.

When she recounted what had happened, no one took her seriously at first. However, as the news spread, some asked if perhaps it was true. After all, the child was now able to speak.

A few days later, the child Rosa disappeared from her home. After looking everywhere, the anguished Maria guessed that her daughter must have gone to the cave. The child often said that the Lady was calling her. Maria ran to Las Lajas and found her daughter in front of a noble Lady and playing affectionately with a Child who had come down from His mother’s arms to let the girl enjoy His divine tenderness. Maria fell to her knees before this beautiful spectacle; she had seen the Blessed Virgin and the Divine Infant.

Fearful of ridicule, Maria kept quiet about the episode. But she and Rosa frequently went to the cave to place wildflowers and candles in the cracks of the rocks. Months went by, with Maria and Rosa keeping their secret. Finally, one day the girl fell gravely ill and died. A distraught Maria decided to take her daughter’s body to Las Lajas to ask the Lady to restore Rosa to life.

Moved by the sadness of Maria’s unrelenting supplications, the Blessed Virgin obtained Rosa’s resurrection from her Divine

Son. Overflowing with joy, Maria returned home. It was not long before a crowd had gathered to hear what had happened. Early the next morning, everyone



▲ *Our Lady of Las Lajas, in Spain. In Spanish las lajas means “the rocks.” This image was imprinted on the rocks of a gorge above the Guaitara River in Colombia near the border of Ecuador. It has the singular characteristics of having been painted by Angels. The image is situated inside a cave very high in the mountains and was completely unknown until it was discovered in the mid-18th century by an Indian.*



▲ *The Las Lajas image is situated inside a cave above the altar.*



◀ *The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lajas was built high in the mountains of Columbia*

► **OUR LADY OF LAS LAJAS - Continued on Page 18.**

► **OUR LADY OF LAS LAJAS - Continued from Page 17.**

went to Las Lajas, each one wanting to check the details for themselves.

That was when the marvelous picture of Our Lady on the wall of the grotto was discovered. Maria Muese de Quinones could not recall noticing it until then. The Child Jesus in Our Lady. They are next to St. Francis, and the other is St. Dominic. Her delicate and regal features are those of a Latin American, perhaps an Indian. Her abundant black hair covers her like a mantle. (The two-dimensional crown is metal and was added by devotees much later on). The Indians had no doubt: this was their Queen.

The current church was built between January 1, 1916, and August 20, 1949, with donations from local churchgoers. It rises 100 meters (300 ft) high from the bottom of the canyon and is connected to the opposite side of the canyon by a 50 meters (160 ft) tall bridge. It is in southern Colombia and has been a tourism and pilgrimage destination since the eighteenth century.

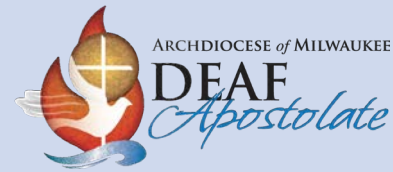
The Shrine of Our Lady of Las Lajas is a Roman Catholic basilica church dedicated to the veneration of our Lady of Las Lajas Ipiales.

Las Lajas received canonical coronation from the Vatican in 1952 and was made a minor basilica in 1994.



▲ *Las Lajas Church, the cave. (See the rear wall, mountain rock.)*

► *See the location: "Lajas Sanctuary" near Ecuador.*



Renewal Prayer for Deaf Catholic Church

Father, we ask you to look with mercy at us,
your Deaf Catholic Church.

We ask you to bless us, inspire us to always love you
above all things and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

We pray to you for our bishops, our spiritual leaders.

Please bless them and give them the strength
and wisdom to guide us, their people.

Help them to recognize, understand, and respond
to our unique needs.

Please bless the priests, deacons, religious, and lay people
who serve our community.

Inspire them so that they may
then inspire all hearts of deaf people
to know, love, and serve you and your Catholic Church.

Father, we pray to you for our baptized
Deaf Catholic brothers and sisters.

Please send your Holy Spirit to enkindle and
renew their hearts

so that they may continue to grow spiritually
through making time for prayers, receiving sacraments,
and serving other people.

Our young baptized Deaf Catholics are growing up
in a challenging and confused world.

Almighty God, please help them understand
that the way of the world does not give life;
your way alone gives true life.

Please touch their hearts and guide them to find your love.

Bring them back to the Church.

Put in them the desire to pray, to receive the
sacraments and to serve other people.

Holy Spirit, come and transform each of us
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Holy Mary, our Mother, pray for us. Amen.

Answers from page 16: 1a; 2c; 3a; 4a; 5d.

INTERVIEW WITH JULIAN CHAIREZ, JR.



Tell me about yourself. My name is Julian Chairez, Jr. I am now 24 years old. I currently live in Milwaukee, WI. I am a graduate of the Wisconsin School for the Deaf (WSD). I attended religious education through St. Andrew Catholic Parish in Delavan and was confirmed. I love playing football and played on the WSD football team. I enjoy watching the Green Bay Packers. Recently, I tried fantasy football and have come to love it too.

I know you attended the ICDA-US Conference last July 2019. Tell me what you did to prepare for that opportunity? I am grateful for the financial support of the ICDA (International Catholic Deaf Association) #7 organization for making possible the opportunity for me to attend the ICDA-US Conference last July. It was my first ICDA-US Conference experience which was filled with many formative experiences. In gratitude for their support, I helped to serve at various Catholic Deaf events, such as helping with various jobs at the ICDA #7 Summer Picnic and helping carry the canopy during the Corpus Christi procession.

What were your initial experiences of the ICDA-US Conference in Santa Clara? I never knew that Santa Clara, where the Conference was held, was the Spanish translation for St. Clare, while San Francisco was also the Spanish translation for St. Francis (of Assisi). It was amazing to be part of the largest Catholic Deaf Young Adult group (so far) during this Conference with our group totaling 19 Catholic Deaf Young Adults! It was incredible to meet and get to know them as they came from all over the USA. It was powerful to develop connections.

During the ICDA-US Conference, what were your top two memorable experiences? One memorable experience was the presentation by Angelo Libutti and his then-fiancée, Rannah



▲ *Our official group photo.*



▲ *Here I am leading the group prayer.*

Evetts. His experiences with his art amazed me, as well as Rannah's experiences serving the Deaf community in Africa. Another memorable experience was our service opportunity at Rose Academies, where we helped make important items for the menstrual health & hygiene, gender empowerment, education, and advocacy of the Deaf in Africa.

During ICDA-US Conference, we had a Mass where the Young Adults helped serve in various liturgical roles. What was your role? My role was that I was an Extraordinary Minister of the Cup, serving the Precious Blood of Christ.

What was an important lesson that you learned from the ICDA-US Conference? I learned that it was important for

◀ *My group with one from Massachusetts, another from Oregon, and another from Pennsylvania.*

▶ **JULIAN CHAIREZ, JR. - Continued on Page 20.**

► **JULIAN CHAIREZ, JR.**
- Continued from page 19.

the Catholic Deaf Young Adults to connect with each other and to learn from each other. It is so important as we can communicate with each other in our language: American Sign Language (ASL). Having access is so valuable, such as that we have access to presentations, workshops, service opportunities, and small group discussions that are harder to find in other places. I learned about the importance of respecting what we shared during our small group discussions and to maintain confidentiality as the bonds between us are so important and valued.

Tell me how you grew as a servant leader during the Conference? While we all took turns to co-lead during the week, I helped to keep track of attendance, explained the expectations for that time frame, and lead in prayer. This gave me confidence that I



▲ *I am standing with Angelo Libutti, a Catholic adult that I truly admire.*

can do this in future Catholic events, or even at other public events.

What are your thoughts about the next ICDA-US Conference in Boston in 2021?

I hope that I can have the opportunity to attend that Conference, God-willing, with how my schedule will be during that time. I have never been to Boston so it will be a cool opportunity.

Now, as a Catholic Deaf Young Adult, who are some of the Catholic Deaf individuals that you look up to? I look up to Fr. Mike Depcik, OSFS, who is a Deaf priest currently serving in Detroit, Michigan. I enjoyed talking during the ICDA-US Banquet with a Deaf Latino Man who was the Minister of Ceremonies (MC) of the Banquet. His name is Michael Callejas. I also look up to Colin Lualdi, who gave a great presentation during our Catholic Deaf Young Adult program. When I met him during ICDA-US Conference, he looked familiar and I realized that I had met him before at a NAD Jr. Conference! I never knew he was Catholic so that was an awesome experience for me!

Any last comments? I still hope to help out in any way I can, especially for the Catholic Deaf Young Adult programs.

WOMEN OF CHRIST CONFERENCE 2019

By Fr. Christopher Klusman

On Saturday, November 9, 2019, the 11th annual interpreted Women of Christ Conference was held at the Washington County Fair Park on 3000 Pleasant Valley Road in West Bend, Wisconsin. The theme was: "Come and see... He delights in you!" from John 4:29.

They had an incredible lineup of speakers: Steve Ray, a famous author and renowned evangelist; Derya Little, the author of "From Islam to Christ," whereas she shared her conversion story; and Kimberly Hahn, the famous person of another famous man named Scott Hahn, talked about family and love. Bishop Don Hying of the Diocese of Madison also presented and led the Eucharistic Procession, while Archbishop Jerome Listeki led the 4 p.m. Mass of Anticipation.

They had the opportunity to go for Confessions, as well as rejoicing in silence with Our Lord in Holy Adoration.



▲ *A truly, uplifting spiritual experience for all of us Catholic women to be a part of and to share with each other!*

Many thanks to the Elizabeth Meier and the wonderful Women of Christ committee who have always been so helpful and supportive of the Catholic Deaf community. You are in our

continued prayers!

Next year, please write on your calendars to Save the Date for next year's 12th Annual Women of Christ Conference on November 7, 2020!

ST. JOHN SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF REUNION



By Deacon David Sommers

St. John's School for the Deaf Alumni Reunion met on October

25-26, 2019. Mike Walter hosted this event. Mike asked me, Arvilla Rank, and Mark Hansen to be on the committee to help him prepare for this event.

About 70 alumni attended the Reunion at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church on the south side of Milwaukee. Coffee, donuts, lunch, and supper was served.

The presentation by Mark Hansen gave us the history of St. John's School for the Deaf from 1859 to 1983. He shared information about the Old Building and on the important (mostly deaf) people of St. John's School for the Deaf. We truly enjoyed what Mark Hansen shared with us!

We also wanted to thank Janet Jerins for hosting the social gathering on Friday, Oct. 25 at Romine's.

Mike Walter told us that he will be hosting again for the next St. John's School for the Deaf Alumni Reunion in 2022 in Milwaukee.



▲ Alumni from St. John's School for the Deaf arriving and feeling overjoyed at seeing faces of longtime friends.



▲ Everyone enjoying a lunch break, catching up with each other as longtime friends.



▲ Mark Hansen sharing about one of the revered figures of St. John's School for the Deaf, Rev. Louis Mihm.



▲ It was great to see so many alumni gathered together.



▲ During the presentation, Mark Hansen shared information about Sr. Longoria, the German nun.

▶ REUNION - Continued on Page 22.

► REUNION - Continued from Page 21.

► One of the most moving parts of the reunion was when Mark Hansen brought forward our alumnus, Robert Zweber. Robert is the last Deaf custodian of St. John's School for the Deaf, in connection to the first Deaf custodian, Bernard McGrane.



▲ Alumni were so overjoyed at seeing their priest from St. John's School for the Deaf, Fr. Don Zerkel.



▲ Memorabilia were available for all to see and reminiscence.



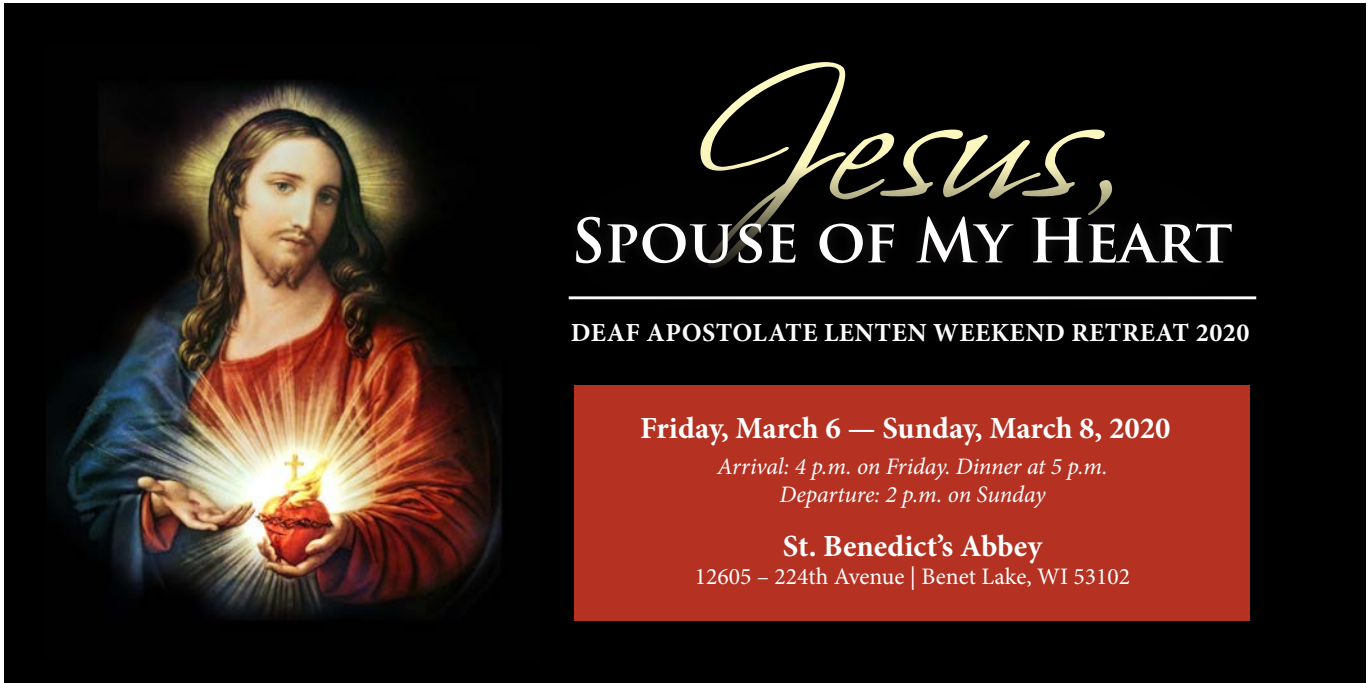
▲ A delicious supper shared with each other!



▲ After having finished Mass, supper time was the last get together before our next Reunion in 2022.



▲ Alumni gathered for their 2019 Group photo with Fr. Zerkel.



RETREAT INCLUDES: Masses, workshops, Confession, Adoration and devotions.
Cost is \$140. Includes room, food and supplies.

Hurry! Limited 33 spaces. First come, first served. If financial assistance is needed, please let the Office of the Deaf Apostolate know.



Once registration is sent with payment, a packet of information will be sent to you.

QUESTIONS:
Fr. Christopher Klusman
 klusmanc@archmil.org or
 (414) 501-2022 (VP)



PRESENTED BY:
Rev. Seán A. Loomis, Chaplain
to Deaf Apostolate in Philadelphia

A convert to the faith, Fr. Seán Loomis completed his seminary studies at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary. After years of studying American Sign Language and engaging Deaf culture, in 2013, Archbishop Charles J. Chaput ordained Fr. Loomis to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia where he currently serves as the chaplain to the Deaf Apostolate. As an advocate for the Deaf community, Fr. Loomis works to ensure full access to the riches of the Catholic faith for all Deaf individuals and families with the hope that all will come to know the joy of the Gospel, which he discovered himself as an adult.

Make check payable to Deaf Apostolate, and mail to:
 Deaf Apostolate | Attn: Fr. Christopher Klusman
 3501 S. Lake Drive, PO Box 070912
 Milwaukee, WI 53207-0912

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email _____ VP Number _____

Parish _____

Special dietary or allergy needs: _____

Yes, I am willing to share a room. I'd like to share a room with: _____

INTERPRETED & ASL *Masses* THROUGHOUT THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE

- ASL SUNDAY MASS -

St. Matthias Parish

9306 W. Beloit Rd, Milwaukee, WI 53227

Time: 9:00 a.m.

E-Mail: info@stmatthias-milw.org

Website: stmatthias-milw.org

Note: If no ASL Mass, then will have an interpreted Mass in the main church.

- INTERPRETED SUNDAY MASS -

St. Andrew Parish

714 E. Walworth Ave, Delavan, WI 53115

Time: 9:00 a.m.

E-Mail: deafministry@saspcatholics.org

Website: standrews-delavan.org

St. Joseph Parish

1619 Washington St, Grafton, WI 53024

1st & 4th Saturdays at 4:00 p.m. / and 3rd Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

E-Mail: parish@stjosephgrafton.org

Website: stjosephgrafton.org

St. Mary's Immaculate Conception

1610 Monroe St, West Bend, WI 53090

2nd Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Email: rprim@wbparishes.org

Website: stmaryparishwb.org

St. Paul the Apostle Parish

6400 Spring St, Racine, WI 53406

Time: 10:00 a.m.

E-Mail: svrana@stpaulracine.org

Website: stpaulracine.org

St. Peter Parish

2224 30th Ave, Kenosha, WI 53144

Time: 10:30 a.m.

E-Mail: stpeterskenosha@gmail.com

Website: stpeterskenosha.com

Shepherd of the Hills Parish

W1562 County Road B, Eden, WI 53019

1st & 3rd Sundays at 8:15 a.m.

E-Mail: sgitter@sothparish.org

Website: sothparish.org

- CLOSED CAPTIONED MASS -

St. Clare Parish

7616 Fritz St, Wind Lake, WI 53185

2nd Saturdays at 4:00 p.m.

E-Mail: bulletins@tds.net

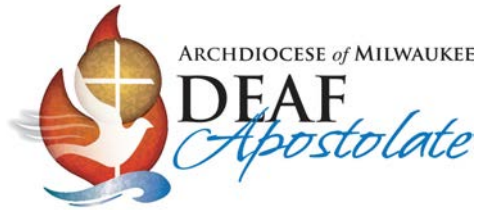
Website: stclarewindlake.org

Times Listed Are Subject to Change

As of March 1, 2019



▲ St. Francis de Sales, patron saint of the Deaf, signs "Church" with Martin, a deaf person.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Office Hours: : Tuesdays to Fridays
(Fr. Christopher is off on Sunday early evenings & Mondays)

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EMERGENCIES Only: Text Fr. Christopher at: (414) 793-1369

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Two ways to get the Hand in Hand newsletters:

- (1) **E-mail:** Cost is FREE and will be delivered to your mailbox. Please fill out the online form to get your Newsletter at: <https://www.archmil.org/deaf-apostolate/offnav/Subscription-Form.htm>
- (2) **By Mail:** Fill out registration form below & send form and check to information provided below:

MAILED (PAPER COPY) SUBSCRIPTION

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Address: _____

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Cost: \$8.00 for 4 Newsletters from Jan. to Dec. 2020.

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