

REFLECTIONS

&  
*Connections*

SEPTEMBER 2022



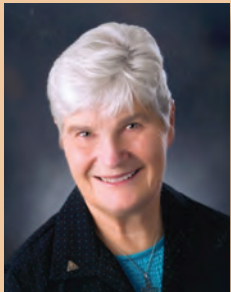
STORIES OF MISSION  
& MINISTRY



**CSA**

Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes  
Promoting Justice, Building Community

# Dear Friends,



“What God does first, best, and most is to trust people with their moment in history. God trusts us to do what must be done for the sake of the whole community.” This quote from Walter Brueggemann speaks eloquently to my experience in leadership in CSA over the

past nine years. I have experienced the trust of God, of the teams that served with me, and of the Sisters of St. Agnes who continue the mission that has been entrusted to us since our founding. Each day is an invitation into the mystery of life and an encounter with the realities that present themselves. The ups-and-downs of the past five years challenged all the sisters to “embrace with

courage our call to articulate the identity of CSA as it interweaves with the reality of the 21st century.” Through God’s grace, we did interweave with all that came our way. Now a new chapter in the life of CSA invites us to “embrace our transformative journey with an expanding cosmological awareness [as we] respond to the needs of God’s creation.” Following the footsteps of our founders while paying attention to the needs and revelations of our times, CSA is and will be about responding in our own time to those whose faith life or human dignity is threatened.

In the peace and love of Christ,  
Sister Jean Steffes, CSA  
*General Superior, 2013-2022*

## ON THE COVER:

**Jubilee Joy** – Jubilarian Artwork by Doris Klein, CSA

*“It is said by indigenous people in many lands that the hummingbird brings joy and opens hearts to love. This hummingbird represents the Graced presence of God’s Love over the lifetimes of those celebrating Jubilee, freeing them to joyfully serve. We share in celebration of them and the multiple ways they have brought joy to so many with their service, inspiration, and encouragement. With gratitude we honor and bless the wonderful, colorful beauty of their wisdom and presence in our world today.”*

# Contents



## Editorial Board Members:

Sister Jeremy Quinn, Sister Jean Perry,  
Sister Patricia Hayes, Sister Cyndi  
Nienhaus, Dusty Krikau,  
and Suzanne Flood.

- 3 Humbled & Grateful
- 4 CSA Jubilarians 2022
- 6 Sisters of St. Agnes Elect New Leadership Team
- 7 In Memoriam... Walking with God
- 8 Welcome New Staff



# Humbled & *Grateful*

*W*e, Sisters Sharon, Peg, Madeline, and Lael, are humbled and grateful for the trust that our CSA sisters have placed in us in electing us to be the new Leadership Team. We express our thanks for the tremendous service of the former General Council members. Their dedication and insightful planning make us, and our sisters, associates, and partners in ministry more ready to embrace our CSA transformative journey.

Our General Chapter in June challenged us to respond to the needs of all God's creation with contemplative, compassionate, courageous, and caring hearts. We trust that the Spirit of the living God will continue to bless us as we strive to further Jesus' Mission.

Our Jubilarians, as all of us, have experienced the radiating Energy of Love Itself. With receptive hearts, and global hearts, may we be transformed by the God of Love. Our response to the Divine can only be from hearts of compassion reflecting the goodness of God and with voices of justice, mercy, and peace in collaboration with others.

May you be blessed with deep peace, abundant joy, and sustaining love,

Sisters Sharon Pollnow, Peg Spindler, Madeline Gianforte, Lael Niblick  
*CSA's Leadership Team, 2022-2026*



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Sister Sharon Pollnow, incoming General Superior, receives the seal of the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes from outgoing General Superior, Sister Jean Steffes.

# CSA Jubilarians 2022

Each year, CSA celebrates the anniversary of religious profession of sisters and the first commitment of associates.

On June 26, 2022, CSA sisters, associates, families, and friends honored the nine sister Jubilarians and six associate Jubilarians during a joyous Eucharistic Mass held at Holy Family Church in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Close family and friends joined together for the bilingual event with Father Patrick Heppie presiding. Sister Dianne Bergant, CSA, gave the reflection. Readers were Sisters Christi Ann Laudolff and Guadalupe Aguilar. Sister Mary Christine Fellerhoff presented the Prayer of the Faithful.

The Jubilee Mass, which was livestreamed, can be viewed at [www.csasisters.org/jubilee](http://www.csasisters.org/jubilee). Individual profiles for each sister and associate celebrating Jubilee can also be found there along with the option to donate to the congregation in their honor.

## SISTERS



### 70 Years (1952)

L to R: Sisters Agnes Scott, Cecile Marie Kees, Emily Schug, Mary Ann Schippers, and Michele Welch



### 60 Years (1962)

L to R: Sisters Donna Gottschalk, Florence Magnan, Josephine Braun, and Mary Christine Fellerhoff



**50 Years (1972)** ▶

L to R: Sisters  
Christi Ann Laudolf  
and Clare Lawlor



**15 Years (2007)** ▶

Sister Guadalupe Aguilar



## ASSOCIATES

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**25 Years (1997)**

Kay Kuykendall (not  
pictured) and Linda Miller

**15 Years (2007)**

Mary Ketterhagen,  
Michael Ketterhagen, Judy  
Mugerauer, and Renee  
Waters



L to R: Michael Ketterhagen, Mary Ketterhagen,  
Linda Miller, Judy Mugerauer, and Renee Waters





## Sisters of St. Agnes Elect New *Leadership Team*

During their General Chapter 2022, delegates for the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes discerned their direction for the next four years and the new team of sisters who will lead their efforts. Sister Sharon Pollnow will serve as General Superior with Sister Peg (Margaret) Spindler as General Vicar and Sisters Madeline Gianforte and Lael Niblick as General Councilors. This Leadership Team will serve the congregation from 2022-2026.

Sister Sharon Pollnow is originally from Milwaukee, WI. She holds a B.S. in education from Marian College in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin; an M.Ed. from the University of Minnesota; and an MSW from the University of Michigan. She is a licensed clinical social worker with certifications as a spiritual director and a grief and trauma specialist. Sharon's ministries have included time as a teacher, principal, parish staff member, adjunct university instructor, diocesan board member, spiritual director, and clinical social worker/counselor. She has previously served CSA on the General Council and as a District Coordinator for Illinois and Indiana. In 2021, Sister

Sharon retired from her counseling position at Sophia Center in Sylvania, Ohio, which she helped to establish in 1993, and subsequently moved back to Wisconsin.

Sister Peg Spindler grew up in Cedar Lake, Indiana. She earned a B.S. in biology with a minor in secondary education from Alverno College in Reading, Pennsylvania, and has two Master's degrees, one in secondary school science from Villanova University in Pennsylvania and another in pastoral studies from Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, Illinois. Her previous time in ministry was divided into two segments of 24 years each with the first 24 years serving as a teacher in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, and Indiana and the second 24 years serving at Sojourner Truth House in Gary, Indiana, which she helped to found in 1997. Upon retirement in 2021, Sister Peg continued to volunteer with the Continuum of Care Network in Northwest Indiana and to advocate for those experiencing homelessness in the region.

Sister Madeline Gianforte is from Bensenville, Illinois. Her education includes a B.S. in education from Illinois



Benedictine College in Lisle, Illinois, and a Master's degree in holistic health from John F. Kennedy University in Pleasant Hill, California. Her first ministries were based in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and Canton, Mississippi. In 2002, she helped found CORE El Centro on the south side of Milwaukee to serve those of limited income. CORE El Centro is a natural healing center which provides services including massage therapy, energy work, acupuncture, holistic exercise, nutrition, and gardening classes. As she joins the General Council, Sister Madeline will also continue serving with CORE El Centro while she transitions the organization to a new Executive Director.

A native of Fort Wayne, Indiana, Sister Lael Niblick received a B.S. in education with minors in theology and science from Marian College in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and a Master's degree in religious education and youth ministry from St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota. In addition to her degrees, she has received over 20 certifications in a wide array of topics including religious education, advanced scripture, alcohol and drug intervention for teens, prevention of child sexual abuse, satanic cult awareness, parish management, racism, prison reality, fundraising, and even clown ministry. Since 1967, Sister Lael has served in many ministry locations: Fond du Lac, Wisconsin; Bensenville, Illinois; La Ceiba, Honduras; and Bluefields, Nicaragua. She comes to leadership directly from her most recent ministry in the Diocese of Jackson where she was a Lay Ecclesial Minister for St. Helen Parish in Amory, Mississippi.

The congregation introduced their new leadership team during an installation Mass on Saturday, August 27, 2022. Please keep CSA in your prayers during the transition to this new leadership team and as they work toward the objectives outlined during the General Chapter.

## *In Memoriam...* Walking with God



### **Sister Donna Marie Kleinsorge, CSA**

Sister Donna Marie Kleinsorge, CSA, formerly known as Sister Cornelius, died peacefully on May 13, 2022, at Nazareth Center in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Donna Marie was born on March 13, 1934, in Dresden, Kansas. She entered St. Agnes Convent in 1949 and made her first profession of vows in the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes as Sister Cornelius on August 15, 1954.

Sister Donna Marie's formal education and natural talents allowed her to serve in a wide variety of ministries and locations for sixty years in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, New York, Illinois, Kansas, and Nebraska. She was a classroom and music teacher, parish organist, homemaker, licensed practical nurse, music therapist, activity director, volunteer coordinator, adult day care provider, parish pastoral associate, and a minister of care at homes for the aged and infirm.

In July 2014, Sister Donna Marie returned to Fond du Lac and became a resident at Nazareth Court and Center where she lived with her CSA sisters and received care until the time of her death.



### **Sister Deborah Walter, CSA**

Sister Deborah Walter, CSA, died peacefully June 6, 2022, at Nazareth Center in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Deborah was born in Chicago, Illinois, on March 30, 1949. She attended St. Nicholas Grade School, Evanston, Illinois, and St. Mary Springs Academy, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, graduating in 1967. In September of 1967, Deborah entered St. Agnes Convent, and made her first profession of vows in the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes on August 15, 1970.

Sister Deborah earned a B.S. in Elementary Education from Marian College, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and an M. Ed. in Counseling and Psychology from Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois. In her 52 years of ministry, Sister Deborah served as elementary school teacher in Indiana and New York; pastoral minister and counselor in Indiana and Illinois; faculty member, counselor, and Working Families Grant program administrator at Marian University; and active volunteer in the Fond du Lac community. Her ministry also included Vocation Director, Development Director, and General Councilor for the Sisters of St. Agnes.

In May 2022, serious health issues caused Sister Deborah to resign her position at Marian and seek care at Nazareth Court and Center until the time of her death.



### **Sister Collean Walsh, CSA**

Sister Collean Walsh, CSA, baptized Mary Theresa, died peacefully July 6, 2022, at Nazareth Center in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Mary was born in Yonkers, New York, on March 23, 1925, and attended Sacred Heart School there from kindergarten through high school. In 1943, Mary entered St. Agnes Convent, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, where she made her profession of vows as a Sister of St. Agnes as Sister Collean on August 15, 1946.

Sister Collean earned a B.S. in Elementary Education from Marian College, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and an M.A. in Education and Administration from Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. After 57 years as an exemplary elementary school teacher and principal in various schools in Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, and Indiana, she ministered in the Foster Grandparent Tutoring program in Fond du Lac and volunteered at Holy Family Parish, St. Agnes Hospital, Salvation Army, and St. Vincent de Paul. Sister Collean remained actively engaged in life among the sisters with whom she lived at Nazareth Court and Center until her death in 2022.



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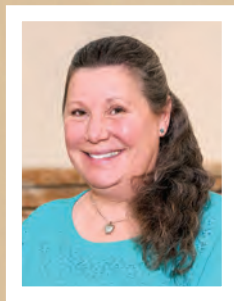
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# Welcome New Staff

CSA is pleased to welcome Amy Kirmse as the Personal Service Assistant (PSA) for CSA Sisters at Nazareth Court and Center and St. Francis Home and Sister Mary Noel Brown, CSA, as Director of Associate Relationship-U.S.

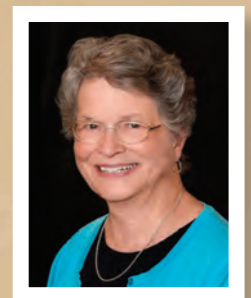
Amy returns to working with CSA after several years in other roles. She previously worked at Nazareth Heights in food service and at the Motherhouse from 2002-2008 in food service/housekeeping. Amy states, "It is so good to be back with the sisters." Her new role will utilize her CNA skills as she collaborates with other CSA staff on site to provide specific services that foster a life-giving environment and quality of life for each sister in this vital



**Amy Kirmse**

stage of her life, including assisting with on-call duties and offering personalized care.

Sister Mary Noel has served the congregation in many roles in the past, including serving as a mentor for associates in discernment. She brings a background in spiritual direction and retreat ministry. Sister Mary Noel is also very active in the development of the lay formation program for SSM Health, St. Louis, MO. She comes to her new role after much prayer and discernment and will serve as a collaborative partner with the Assistant Director of Associate Relationship.



**Sister Mary Noel**