



ACS

Assumption's Current Sharings

Assumption College for Sisters ♣ June 2016

Assumption College for Sisters Commencement 2016

On May 14, Assumption College for Sisters held Commencement ceremonies where nine students earned AA degrees and three students were awarded Certificates in Theological Studies. Commencement exercises took place in the Christopher H. Thomas Gymnasium in Morris Catholic High School followed by a reception in the MCHS Dining Hall. Rev. Carmen Buono, Chaplain at MCHS, gave the invocation.



Graduates pictured from left to right: Sister Anna Loan Nguyen, LHC; Sister Therese Duong Phan, FMV; Sister Cesilia Martinez Zoto, OMO; Lauren Wagner, SCC; Sister Fides Nijimbere, BM; Sister Florentina Mapambano, FSSB; Sister Mary Dung Khong, FMSR; Sister Maria Tram Phan, FMV; Sister Theresa Lien Pham, LHC

Dr. Michael St. Pierre, President of Morris Catholic High School, delivered the commencement address. Dr. St. Pierre holds a BA in Philosophy from the Catholic University of America, a MA in Theology from Seton Hall University, and a Doctorate in Education from the College of Saint Elizabeth. Dr. St. Pierre has served as President of MCHS since 2009.

In his commencement address, Dr. St. Pierre spoke to the graduates about the benefits of making personal connections. He remarked, "my hope today is that your experience at Assumption College for Sisters has been a deeply personal one. Your friendships are most likely just as powerful as the things you have

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With his career spent in faith-based organizations, prior to his role as President at MCHS, Dr. St. Pierre held positions as the Dean of Students at Oratory Prep in Summit and Director of Fransiscan Youth Ministry at the Archbishop Curley High School in Baltimore. He has published articles in various outlets including *Give Us This Day* and *Today's Parish* and volunteers as Regional Coordinator at the Missionary Cenacle Apostolate.



Dr. Michael St. Pierre



Students earning the Certificate in Theological Studies pictured from left to right: Sister April Hoffman, FMA, Sister April Cabaccang, FMA, Sister Katie Flanagan, FMA

Commencement cont. from Page 1

learned in class.” He continued, “For us, too, those of us especially who take America for granted, its freedoms and blessings, you have made other parts of the world personal for us. We now have a face, utterly faithful faces; each one reminds us that a Catholic education is a powerful tool, a passport that no one can take from you and that you can now bring back to others.”

President Sister Joseph Spring, SCC recited Robert Frost’s *The Road Not Taken* and challenged the graduates and Certificate recipients to “make a difference in the lives of all you touch.”

Each year during the graduation program a member of the graduating class shares some personal reflections on her class’ experiences during their three years of study at ACS. Sister Fides Nijimbere, a Sister of Bene Maria, offered this year’s remarks. On behalf of the graduates, Sister Fides expressed gratitude to everyone at ACS who worked “tirelessly to give the special gift of education, care, love, and all opportunities that were given both inside and outside the classroom.”

Gratitude to Former Faculty and Administration

ACS is grateful to the following Sisters of Christian Charity for their contributions, expertise, and faithful service:

ACS Class of 2016

Associate in Arts Degree recipients:

Sister Fides Nijimbere, BM: *Univeristy of Scranton, Scranton, PA*
Sister Anna Loan Nguyen, LHC-NT: *College of Saint Elizabeth, Convent Station, NJ*
Sister Therese Doung Phan, FMV: *Return to Vietnam for Community Ministry*
Sister Maria Tram Phan, FMV: *College of Saint Elizabeth, Convent Station, NJ*
Sister Florentina Mapambano, FSSB: *Felician Univeristy, Lodi, NJ*
Sister Mary Dung Khong, FMSR: *D’Youville College, Buffalo, NY*
Sister Cesilia Martinez-Zoto, OMO: *College of Saint Elizabeth, Convent Station, NJ*
Sister Theresa Lien Pham, LHC-NT: *Return to Vietnam for Community Ministry*
Lauren Wagner, SCC: *Continue in initial formation for the Sisters of Christian Charity (Canonical Year)*

Certificate in Theological Studies recipients:

Sister April Cabaccang, FMA
Sister April Hoffman, FMA
Sister Katie Flanagan, FMA

Welcome New Faculty

Sister Kathryn Conti, SMIC: *Instructor, ESL Advanced Reading*
Una Doddy: *Instructor, Health & Wellness*
Stephanie Melick: *Instructor, Developmental Psychology*

Sister Mary Catherine Slattery, SCC

Sister Donna Marie Kemberling, SCC

Sister Bernadette McCauley, SCC

ACS Honors 2016 Alumna of the Year

Mother Lilly Perapadan, a member of the Franciscan Sisters of Saint Elizabeth, and ACS graduate of the class of 1993, was this year’s recipient of the Alumna of the Year award.

Sister Lilly was born in South India in a small state called Kerala. Lilly attended Catholic School throughout her grade school and high school years taught by the Holy Family Sisters. When she was in 7th grade, she first had the desire to become a religious sister.



Mother Lilly Perapadan, FSSE

Following graduation from high school and after much thought and prayer and with the encouragement of her younger sister who had joined the same community the year before, Lilly decided to join the Franciscan Sisters of Saint Elizabeth.

She arrived in the United States of America on May 29, 1985 and entered the Postulancy. She then spent the following two years in the

Novitiate preparing to profess her first vows. Sister Lilly pronounced her first vows in 1988 and her Perpetual Profession of Vows in 1995.

Between the years of learning about religious life and serving the community, Sister Lilly pursued her education. After earning her AA degree from ACS, Lilly received her BSN from Union County College in Elizabeth in 1998. While studying nursing, Sister Lilly worked with the infants and toddlers at the Franciscan Sisters of Saint Elizabeth School and Child Care Center in Jersey City.

In 1998 Sister Lilly was transferred back to Parsippany, New Jersey to take charge of the community’s infirmary. At the same time she began to assist Mother Gina Maria, the Delegate General in the United States.

In 2005 Sister Lilly was appointed House Superior of the Delegate House and Novitiate in Parsippany and in 2011 she became Delegate General at the Delegate General house in Parsippany where she currently resides.

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ACS Honors Four at Annual Caring Basket Gala

In a festive spirit of gratitude, over 450 attendees gathered at the Assumption College for Sisters 15th Annual Caring Basket Gala on April 14, 2016 at the Hanover Marriott in Whippany, New Jersey.

The gala evening honored four outstanding honorees whose professional and personal endeavors foster service to the Church and community. The entire Assumption College for Sisters community and the friends, family, and colleagues of the honorees expressed gratitude to the honorees for their good works and the humble, selfless manner in which they go about serving others.



Sr. Joseph Spring with Monsignor Kenneth Lasch

The recipient of the Servant Leader Award was Monsignor Kenneth Lasch, a priest of the Diocese of Paterson and the retired pastor of Saint Joseph Parish, Mendham. Monsignor was honored for his outstanding pastoral care for the people of Saint Joseph Church and all those he continues to serve. His is a very active retirement.



The Lawless Family

Fred and Mary Alice Lawless, residents of Morristown, graciously accepted the Family Life Award. The Lawlesses are strong proponents of Catholic education, with each of the five children having attended Catholic schools and universities. Interestingly, all five

children graduated from the University of Notre Dame! The Lawlesses offer their personal and professional skills in service to the Church, most notably at Saint Paul's Inside the Walls, Madison, NJ.



Mrs. Kathleen Ginty Highland poses with Sr. Joseph Spring

Recognizing an extraordinary life of service, Mrs. Kathleen Ginty Highland was awarded the Spirit of the Heart Award. Kathleen's many roles of service include: former Mayor of Morris Township, co-founder and chair of TeenPride, Inc. and a member of the Board of Directors of Arc/Morris County Chapter.

Certainly one word that is often used to describe the gala is "fun." We at the college feel that the Sisters' true joy in pursuing their vocation and ministry is so evident, pervading the entire gala event.

The evening featured a silent auction, wine pull, gift baskets, a good, old-fashioned cash raffle, and a raucous live auction, conducted by Mr. Andrew Anselmi, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, Assumption College for Sisters. A top-earning "item" on the auction block was dinner with Monsignor Lasch! Additionally, attendees had the opportunity to "bid" on scholarships for the Sisters.

Gala guests also meet the Sister student, learning firsthand of the unique mission of Assumption College for Sisters - to educate women called to a life of consecration to God and of service in the Roman Catholic Church. Sisters welcomed the guests with singing, drumming, and dances from their respective cultures in Africa and Vietnam. During dinner the Sisters greeted each table of guests, providing the opportunity for the guests to learn

something special about each Sister.

The gala provides the majority of the scholarship dollars for Catholic Sisters from the developing world to attend Assumption College for Sisters. This year, the gala raised \$220,000, which, after expenses, will provide one-year scholarships for thirteen Sister students. Assumption College for Sisters is most grateful to all who supported the gala through their thoughtful generosity.

Una Doddy, a nurse educator and Gala Committee member, said at the gala: "Just one sister, over a lifetime career in service, will improve the lives of thousands of people. Teaching a sister is our way, yours and mine, of touching the world." Since the College's founding, 406 sisters have graduated with an associate's degree. The majority continue their education in bachelor degree programs, with a number going on to earn a graduate degree.

In Tanzania, one of the poorest countries in Africa, Sister Dativa Mukebita, FSSB founded the Village Angels of Tanzania to serve the unmet needs of the elderly poor. This program recruits and trains local unemployed young people in providing elder care. In addition to meeting the basic needs of the aged, the sisters are teaching job skills and providing employment to members of the community. Sister Dativa is just one example of the positive impact that our graduates are having upon the world!

Assumption College for Sisters thanks the 2016 Honorees for their support of the college. Sincere thanks are extended to all who generously supported the gala. Finally, deep gratitude is extended to the entire Gala Committee, with Mrs. Patricia McGrady, Mrs. Judy Milaniak and Mr. Louis Scarpa, co-chairs, who worked to insure that the gala was a smashing success.

Sister Joseph Spring, President of the college said, "The Caring Basket Gala, now in its 15th year, is well-known throughout the area as a means of providing scholarships to Sisters from developing nations. May God continue to bless all those who see Assumption College for Sisters as such an important mission in the life of the Church."

Field Trip to the Cathedral Basilica

On Friday, April 15, 2016, Sr. Marie Cecilia Landis SCC and Dr. Jo Anne Sylva accompanied the ESL 108 students on a field trip to Newark, New Jersey. Their first objective was to introduce the students to one of the finest French Gothic Cathedrals in the world, the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart. When it was dedicated in 1954, Most Rev. James McNulty called it, “A miniature of God’s Cathedral, which is the universe... God’s gift to us.” The group was joined by Fr. Armand Mantia who has been leading tours of the Basilica for thirty-nine years. He showed the students the stained-glass windows, which are considered among the finest in the world, and explained how in earlier times, the faithful learned about the saints by collecting clues from



the windows themselves. He then took the group to the five ambulatory chapels surrounding the sanctuary which reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of the Roman Catholic Church. Before leaving, everyone had the very special opportunity to pass through the Jubilee Year of Mercy Holy Door.

Continuing the theme of ethnic diversity, the Assumption group headed to lunch at Casa Seabra

Restaurant in the Ironbound section of Newark. In addition to enjoying the delicious Portuguese food, the students were interested to learn that the Portuguese language is spoken not only in Europe and South America, but also in six African countries including Angola, Mozambique, and Equatorial Guinea. As one of the students commented, “It is a small world after all!”

Visit to the Shrine of Blessed Miriam Teresa Demjanovich

On May 11-12, first and second year international students visited the shrine of Blessed Miriam Teresa Demjanovich (1901-1927), the first person to be beatified in the United States (October 4, 2014) and the only “blessed” from the state of New Jersey. Sister Mary Canavan, Sister Barbara Connell, and Sister Kathleen Flanagan spoke to the students about her life and holiness. At the conclusion, students prayed at the tomb of Blessed Miriam Teresa.



Visit to the United Nations

At the invitation of Archbishop Bernardito Auza, Permanent Observer to the United Nations, Sister Gabrielle Nguyen, SCC, and Sister Joseph Spring, SCC, attended a conference entitled *Ending Human Trafficking by 2030: the Role of Global Partnerships in Eradicating Modern Slavery*.

In his opening remarks, Archbishop Auza read from a letter sent to him on this occasion by Pope Francis, a strong proponent of eradication of this scourge: “As you reflect on the multifaceted issues that contribute to modern slavery and human trafficking, I encourage you to strengthen the bonds of cooperation and communication that are essential to ending the suffering of the many men, women, and children who today are enslaved and sold as if they were a mere commodity. In this way, solutions and preventative measures can be promoted that will allow this evil to be addressed at every level of society.”

What appeared to be the highlight of the conference was the testimony given by a survivor of modern day slavery, Ms. Donna Hubbard. At the conclusion of her testimony the assembled body stood in support of her.



Students Participate in MCHS Special Liturgy

ACS students and administration were invited to participate in a special liturgy to commemorate the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes on February 11, 2016. Our Lady of Lourdes is the patron saint of Morris Catholic High School and the former convent, which is now the home of ACS. Our students participated in the offertory procession with cultural song and dance and the administration, faculty, and student body of MCHS were very appreciative. The mass provided a wonderful opportunity for ACS and MCHS to come together in worship and community.



SPOTLIGHT ON ALUMNAE: Sister Jacinta Mutisya, CPS

Sister Jacinta Mutisya, a member of the Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood congregation and ACS class of 2008 graduate is featured in our Spotlight on Alumnae article. Sister Cinta shares her affection for ACS and details of her current ministry below. We have received an update on the situation in the Nuba Mountains that St. Daniel Comboni school, where Sr. Cinta teaches, has been bombed. Fortunately neither faculty nor students were injured. For security purposes the sisters, children, and teachers were asked to leave the area but will return once the situation stabilizes. We will continue to keep Sr. Cinta and all of the people of the Nuba Mountains in our prayers.

It feels like yesterday when I was at Assumption College for Sisters. It is about eight years since I graduated from ACS and I still treasure the precious moments I experienced at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of Christian Charity. After completing my studies I went to Marywood and finished in 2011. The same year I went back and I taught Biology at Precious Blood Girls Secondary School, Arusha, Tanzania. In the year 2013, I started working in Nuba Mountains, Sudan where I am located now. I am involved in education whereby, I am the Principal of St. Daniel Comboni Catechists and Teachers Training Institute in the Diocese of El Obeid. The Institute started in 2011 and the same year it closed down due to civil war. It reopened in 2012 and I am glad to have witnessed the graduation of 28 students so far and the current enrolment is 40. Many people

here are illiterate and are deeply rooted in tradition. Therefore my work not only involves forming Nuba teachers for Nuba people, but also encouraging girls to be educated.

Studies at ACS have helped me a lot in my work especially computer skills, theology, public speaking among others. Also the community life at ACS has helped me to appreciate other people's cultures. Arabic is the official language and also education has introduced the English language. My other mission is visiting people in the villages. People are very friendly and welcoming, but behind their beautiful smiles lies the effect of a civil war. Many have died, others are maimed, many are orphans, others are widows and the bombing is still taking place. The courage and determination of the people here, who live in a world of their own, has challenged me to stay despite the war. We pray that one day our people in the Nuba Mountains will come to know true peace.

Sr. Cinta
Mutisya, CPS
May 9, 2016



Sister Jacinta Mutisya, CPS

ACS Welcomes Sister Teresa A. Bruno, SC, Ed.D.

At the start of the spring semester we welcomed Sister Teresa Bruno, SC as ACS Academic Dean. Sister Teresa is a native of New Jersey and a member of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey.

Sister Teresa received her BA in Education from the College of Saint Elizabeth, her MA in Administration and Supervision from Kean University and her Ed.D. in Educational Administration and Supervision from Seton Hall University.

In 2010 Sister Teresa joined the faculty of the College of Saint Elizabeth where she served as Program Chair of the Education Department. She currently teaches Sociology and other courses. She is also an Adjunct Professor at Fairleigh Dickenson University in their Education Department. Prior to this time she served as teacher and principal in schools in New Jersey and Florida. Sister also served as Associate Superintendent of Schools in the Dioceses of Camden and Metuchen.



Sister Teresa Bruno, SC with Sister Cesilia Martinez Zoto, OMO

Fall in Love

Attributed to Fr. Pedro Arrupe, S.J.

*Nothing is more practical than
finding God, that is, than
falling in Love
in a quite absolute, final way.*

*What you are in love with,
what seizes your imagination,
will affect everything.*

*It will decide
what will get you out of bed in the morning,
what you do with your evenings,
how you spend your weekends,
what you read,
whom you know,
what breaks your heart,
and what amazes you with joy and gratitude.*

*Fall in love,
stay in love,
and it will decide everything.*

In this ministry of education, she always found that being with students was energizing and rewarding. “As an administrator, whatever the level of education, if I ever felt weary or disenchanted, all I had to do was go into a classroom. Students change you. They bring out the best in you. I love the students and I enjoy every day of my ministry.” She adds, “I think you have to have a passion for your ministry or you will not do it well.”

Sister Teresa says that a well-known poem best expresses what she feels as she goes out each day to serve God and continue the mission.

AN EXCERPT FROM *Contemplation and Beyond: Phenomenology, Neuroscience and the Spiritual* delivered by Dr. Iain McGilchrist during the 34th Annual Symposium at the Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center of Duquesne University which was attended by Sister Gabrielle Nguyen, SCC

As finite beings, one’s grasp of the truth is always partial. The left brain dominant person refuses to accept this. The current crisis of thought and faith in Western culture can only be averted by reinstating the right brain to its proper place. To do so, McGilchrist suggests that one engages in the practice of contemplation and mindfulness by slowing down and simply be, keeping one’s mind open, being still, silent and receptive to a presence other than the self, attending to the oneness that sustains all things, and encountering others in relationship. Exposure to the arts, beauty, and poetry can also open the self to experiences of the divine. As Kierkegaard notes, one must take “a leap of faith” in order to arrive at the infinite.

ACS Partners with Morris Catholic H.S. to Offer Dual Credit Course



On May 10, ACS officially welcomed 8 Morris Catholic High School students into the Concurrent Enrollment Program (CEP) whereby high school seniors would take 3 college credits in Historical Introduction to Philosophy while at the same time fulfilling MCHS graduation requirements.

ACS Honors cont. from Page 2

Mother Lilly happily serves the community, overseeing the works of all of the convents and apostolates in the United States. In addition she keeps in close contact with the Franciscan Sisters of Saint Elizabeth's mission convents in India, the Philippines, and Indonesia.

Assumption College for Sisters is proud to acknowledge Mother Lilly's accomplishments and continued dedication to her ministry!

Dance Students Enjoy NJ Ballet Performance

The Fine Arts 101 Dance class had the opportunity to attend a ballet performance presented by New Jersey Ballet at the Mayo Performing Arts Center in Morristown on March 12. Their instructor, Ms. Barbara Kelly-Vergona, and faculty members Sister Gabrielle Nguyen, SCC, Sr. Marie Russo, SC along with the Coordinator of Residential International Student Services, Sister Marie Cecilia Landis, SCC, accompanied the students to the performance entitled *Highlights of Ballet in Opera*.

The two act performance featured repertory from *Porgy and Bess*, *Thais* and *Faust* which allowed the dancers to exhibit their technical virtuosity and athleticism. The dancers defied gravity as they executed complicated lifts, jumps and turns.

Carolyn Clark, Director of NJ Ballet and former ballerina with American Ballet Theatre, founded New Jersey Ballet in 1958. Not only has NJB performed for over 50 years all through NJ and the US, they have toured throughout the world including Bermuda, India, Italy, Russia, and Taiwan.

The students and faculty thoroughly enjoyed the show, especially since this was the first opportunity the students had to attend any live theater performance. The culturally enriching theater production will surely be remembered by the students for years to come.



Drawing Students Exhibit Work

For their last class, FA 101: Drawing students "curated" an exhibition of their spring semester work. Morris Catholic High School generously sponsored the almost three-week exhibit in late April and May by supplying a large bulletin board that was rolled into the library there. Aided by Prof. Katherine Rangoon Doyle (Art History and Drawing) and Mrs. Barbara Kelly-Vergona (Dance), the women religious chose their favorite drawings from among assignments in line, form, shading, composition, and perspective. Probably the most popular homework was shading an egg, but the Sisters and one postulant also shared aspects of their personal lives and devotion with drawings of the convent and objects from liturgy.



STAY CONNECTED WITH ACS!



ACS has a website, blog, facebook, twitter and YouTube! Visit acs350.org to view all of our social media links. We would also like to invite you to provide us with your email address, so that we can update our records and send occasional news happenings. Please send an email to secretary@acs350.org with the subject Add Email and we will add you to our list. Thanks for helping us go green!

ASSUMPTION COLLEGE *for Sisters*

200 A MORRIS AVENUE
DENVER, NJ 07834

SAVE THE DATE! The Sixteenth Annual Caring Basket Gala

The
Sixteenth Annual
***Caring
Basket
Gala***

March 23rd, 2017
The Hanover Marriott
Whippany, NJ