

# ACS

## Assumption's Current Sharings



Assumption College for Sisters ♣ July 2015

## Congratulations to the Class of 2015

On May 9, eight students from Assumption College for Sisters received their AA degree, one student received her ARA degree and five students were awarded Certificates in Theological Studies. Commencement ceremonies took place in the Chapel of Mary Immaculate, Motherhouse of the Sisters of Christian Charity. The invocation and celebration of Benediction was given by Rev. Hilary O'Leary, OSB, Director of Formation and a teacher of Religious Studies at Delbarton School, Morristown, NJ.



Graduates pictured from left to right: Sister Martha Mary Thuan Doan, LHC, Sister Pelagia Karengi-Tsere, DM, Sister Teresa Quyen Ha, LHC, Sister Lucianna Le, SCC, Sister Maria Lourdes Cerisola, SDV, Sister Lydia Chege, CPS, Sister Teresa Suong Dang Tran, LHC, Sister M. Yovina Mpale, OSB, Sister Cecilia Frank Athumani, CPS

Dr. Jeanne Gradone, Director of Student Services at Morris Catholic High School, Denville, NJ, delivered the commencement address. Dr. Gradone holds a BA in Mathematics and Education from Montclair State College (now University), an MA in Educational Administration with a principal's certificate from Seton Hall University, and a PhD in Educational Leadership with an emphasis on Catholic School Leadership from Fordham University.

Dr. Gradone has also assisted at workshops at the NCEA Convention in Boston, the Wisdom and Witness Workshop at the University of Notre Dame, and at several Catholic high schools in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York.

As Dean of Guidance at Morris Catholic High School she works with seniors throughout the college process, visiting colleges to introduce the Admissions staff to Morris Catholic and individual students, and she champions the partnership with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and Morris Catholic as one of the original principals chosen to help create a global high school solidarity initiative.

In her commencement address, Dr. Gradone remarked to the graduates, "You are now prepared to continue on your journey that will take you to additional education and to your ministry on four continents. Bring with you this luminosity wherever you go as you continue to bring the Light of Christ to the world. You have reflected the Light of Christ to us. I am certain that everyone you met at Assumption College for Sisters has reflected the light of Christ for you."

Through her association with CRS, she has been blessed with the opportunity to join two delegations to the Holy Land and Malawi to personally see the work that Catholic Relief Services is doing to help the poorest of the poor. Working with the CRS staff since 2010, she has developed a program which launched nationally at the National Catholic Educational Association Convention in April in Orlando, FL, with the hope of engaging all Catholic high schools to join this initiative.

A highlight of ACS' graduation program each year is a brief talk by one of the graduates who reflects on her class' experiences during the three years of study at the College. This year's presentation was given by Sister Cecilia Frank Athumani, CPS.



Dr. Jeanne Gradone



Students earning the Certificate in Theological Studies pictured from left to right: Sister Hae Jin Lim, FMA, Sister Myriam Meus, FMA, Mr. Nicholas Zayatz, Sister Lillian Foxx, FMA, Sister Christina Chong, FMA

## ACS Class of 2015 Scholarship Recipients

- Sister Cecilia Frank Athumani, CPS – Reading Area Community College
- Sister Lydia Chege, CPS – Felician College
- Sister Martha Mary Thuan Doan, LHC – Divine Word College
- Sister Teresa Quyen Ha, LHC – Divine Word College
- Sister Pelagia Karengi-Tsere, DM – Georgian Court University
- Sister M. Yovina Mpale, OSB – Mount Marty College
- Sister Teresa Suong Dang Tran, LHC – Divine Word College

## 2015 ACS Alumna of the Year

Sister Mary Dominic Kopitar, SCC, who graduated in 1982 from ACS, was the recipient of the 2015 Alumna of the Year award bestowed at the 2015 Commencement ceremonies.



Sister Mary Dominic Kopitar, SCC

Sister Mary Dominic Kopitar, a member of the Sisters of Christian Charity, is a native of Passaic, NJ, where she was a parishioner at Holy Trinity Parish. After obtaining her AA degree, she received a BA degree in Elementary Education from Felician College in Lodi, NJ.

Sister Mary Dominic ministered in Catholic education for eleven years in the Scranton and Paterson Dioceses. Presently, Sister has been serving the community as Provincial Secretary. It is in this position that she is recognized by the entire North American Eastern Province of the Sisters of Christian Charity for her cheerful generosity of service and meticulous attention to detail. In addition to her secretarial duties, Sister mentored postulants for several years and was a member of the Sister of Christian Charity leadership team as a provincial councilor for two years. She has served as Secretary at several international meetings of the congregation including the previous two General Chapters.

Recognizing Sister Mary Dominic's clerical skills, she has been appointed as Secretary General of the congregation and will minister at the Generalate in Rome beginning in 2016.

Assumption College for Sisters and the entire SCC community are grateful for Sister Mary Dominic's service and wish her congratulations!

## June 28... Mass of Thanksgiving and Blessing

To conclude the academic year of ACS at the Mendham location, Msgr. John Fell celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving and Blessing recognizing ACS Board of Trustees whose terms have expired as well as members of Administration and Faculty who are retiring from ministry at ACS. The Mass concluded with a blessing for Administration, Faculty, and students who will continue at the Denville site.

Hymns reflecting the mission and multicultural nature of the college were sung: "Around this table new hope is born..." (Gather the People) and "Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard..." (All are Welcome)

## Special Guest Speakers in Hi 102 World Civilization II



Rev. Hubertus R. Drobner, STD, DD

The Rev. Hubertus R. Drobner, STD, DD, on January 9, enriched the World Civilization class with a lecture on the Fathers of the Church. Father Drobner is a priest of the Diocese of Mainz, Germany, and professor of Ecclesiastical History and Patristics in the Diocesan School of Theology, Paderborn, Germany. He holds doctorates from the Universities of Mainz and Oxford, the Patristic Institute "Augustinianum" and the Pontifical Institute of Christian Archaeology in Rome. He is the author of numerous books including *The Fathers of the Church, a Comprehensive Introduction*. Instructor Sister Mary Veronica Kulsar, SCC together with the students

agreed that the lively presentation on the Fathers of the Church, especially St. Augustine, was clear and interesting. Many expressed an interest in pursuing the topic further.

On Friday, April 17, 2015, Hi 102 students and instructor Sister Mary Veronica Kulsar, SCC, welcomed Russian Orthodox priest Rev. George Hasenech, former pastor of Holy Trinity Church, Randolph, NJ.

Father Hasenech presented the students with some history of the Russian Orthodox religion including the underground Church during the years of Communism and the resurgence of faith after 1989.

The class was able to see some of the difference between Roman and Byzantine services and worship through samples of icons, leavened bread, vestments, crosses, prayer beads, etc. Understanding the meaning of symbolism not used in the Roman Catholic tradition was enriching for the students.

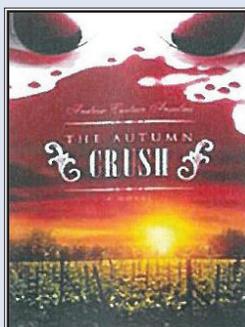


Rev. George Hasenech

## ACS Board Chair Turns Author

The first lay person to serve as Chair of the ACS Board of Trustees is the author of a new novel, *The Autumn Crush*. It is a story of the Italian American immigrant experience coupled with a powerful family drama and murder mystery. It is the first of a trilogy.

In *Primo*, a magazine for and about Italian Americans, there was a feature article about Andrew and his novel. In part, the article read, "Anselmi is an exceptional writer who relies on dialogue, in part, to define a variety of characters in the novel. As a practicing attorney, he knows well the legal system and is able to effectively utilize the murder mystery genre to explore the cultural conflicts that come from Italians climbing the economic and social ladder in America....The "Autumn Crush" is a fast-paced novel that takes time to reflect on the ever-present confrontation between family preservation and social changes." Congratulations Andrew!



# Culture and Health Enriching Field Trips

On April 21, Sister Mary Veronica Kulsar, SCC, Sister Marie Cecilia Landis, SCC, and Dr. Jo Anne Sylva accompanied the Hi 102 World Civ. II and ESL 108 students on a field trip to experience some of the religious, architectural, and cultural wonders of Newark, New Jersey. The first objective was to view one of the glories of history and the Catholic Church—the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart which Saint John Paul II visited on October 4, 1995 and, overwhelmed by its beauty, designated as a Minor Basilica.



a professional photographer, Jimmy Cavallo, who took several pictures of the group.

The field trip concluded with a luncheon at the Casa Seabra Portuguese Restaurant in the Ironbound Section of Newark. Here the students had the opportunity to sample one of the many cuisines that are expressed in the State of New Jersey. They marveled over the great variety of selections including seafood paella and barbecued meats. Several commented that however far away their countries are, some of the tastes remind them of being home again. They seemed to realize that the people of the United States do, indeed, come from every corner of the world.

The group was very fortunate to join a tour of women from Central Synagogue in New York City, and their docent explained how religious toleration developed in New Jersey. She then gave the historical background of the construction of the Cathedral—a splendid building which is one of the largest in the United States and contains three spectacular rose windows. Finally, Ian Tomesch, Associate Organist at the Cathedral, presented a lecture on the origin and composition of the world-famous organ. He even treated the entire assembly to an elaborate baroque piece followed by a spirited rendition of “How

Great Thou Art.” To hear such gorgeous strains echoing throughout the entire length and breadth of this magnificent edifice is something one could never forget! God’s Providence came to us yet again when we met



*Seated: Sister Cesilia Martinez-Zoto, OMO and instructor, Therese Tully, RN  
Second row: Renee Trambert, RN, Sister Mary Dung Khong, FMSR; Sister Mary Mai Nguyen, LHC; Sister Therese Duong Phan, FMV; Sister Mary Kieu Nguyen, FMSR; Sister Theresa Lien Pham, LHC; Sister Maria Tram Phan, FMV; Sister Thea Michael Tarimo; CPS, Sister Anna Loan Nguyen, LHC;  
Third row: Sister Fides Nijimbere, BM; Sister Eusebia Nicholaus Urassa, CPS; Lauren Wagner, SCC; Sister Florentina Mapambano, FSSB; Sister Robertha Mmole, OSB; Diane Caruso, clinical coordinator for the center*

As part of the Ed 101 Health and Wellness course at Assumption College for Sisters, students visited the Carol W. & Julius A. Rippel Breast Center at Morristown Memorial Hospital. Students also toured the Chambers Center for Well Being, escorted by Leslie McDonald. Following the tour they were given a lecture and instruction on *JinShin Jyutsu* by Julia Milspaugh. They concluded their field trip with a session on integrative therapies for relaxation, given by Mary Loughran, RN. The students were given much useful information to keep them healthy in body, mind, and spirit.



*First Row: Sister Fides Nijimbere, BM; Sister Cesilia Martinez-Zoto, OMO; Sister Maria Tram Phan, FMV; Sister Mary Dung Khong, FMSR  
Second Row: Sister Florentina Mapambano, FSSB; Sister Theresa Lien Pham, LHC; Sister Mary Kieu Nguyen, FMSR; Sister Anna Loan Nguyen, LHC; Sister Thea Michael Tarimo, CPS; Sister Mary Mai Nguyen, LHC  
Third Row: Sister Eusebia Nicholaus Urassa, CPS; Sister Robertha Mmole, OSB; Sister Therese Duong Phan, FMV; Lauren Wagner, SCC*

## SPOTLIGHT ON ALUMNAE: Sister Mary Magdalen, FMSR

Sister Mary Magdalen, a Daughter of the Holy Rosary from Vietnam, after graduating from ACS in 2009 continued her studies at D’Youville College in Buffalo, NY, where she attained both a Bachelor’s and Master’s Degree. She is responsible for a dorm for forty female students most of whom come from the countryside and are studying at universities and colleges in Saigon City. Sister Mary Magdalen provides the students with a safe, stable environment to study while they are far away from their families. During the school year, Sister Mary Magdalen teaches English, Humanities, and Psychology while ministering to the students as a counselor in day-to-day life. Sister Mary Magdalen is also on the vocation team for her community and works with those students who are discerning a religious life. Also involved in music ministry, Sister serves as the choir director for a

choir of mothers from a local parish. “I love my current ministry and I am happy in my life. Living with students gives me a good chance to share everything I learned and experienced in the US,” Sister Mary Magdalen remarked.



## Most Successful Annual Caring Basket Gala to Date



The Fourteenth Annual Caring Basket Gala marked the greatest success of all previous ACS Galas! On March 26, 2015, ACS awarded three outstanding individuals who have been exemplary in the areas of service, education, and evangelization. A record crowd filled the room with excitement as the awards were presented to:

Servant Leader: Rev. Paddy O'Donovan, in recognition of his outstanding leadership through service to the Church in the Diocese of Paterson

Education: Antoinette Petrocelli, in recognition of her more than 30 years in education as well as her deep concern for higher education in the State of New Jersey and beyond

Spirit of the Heart Award: Timothy I. Duffy, Esq., in recognition of his outstanding service to the community, to the Church, and his steadfast commitment to value-centered education

Due to an added feature, a live auction item for scholarship donations, ACS gained three full scholarships for the international students. The Gala generated the greatest net income in its 14-year history, thanks to the efforts of the Gala Committee and this year's honorees.

*Thank you to all for partnering with us to “teach a Sister and touch the world”.*

## Drawing Class Visits Center for Contemporary Art, Shares Work in End-of-Semester Show

This spring, students of FA 101 Drawing class traveled to the Center for Contemporary Art in Bedminster, NJ, where they saw an exhibition entitled “Line, Color and Surface” and also met artists attending studio classes there. Sisters had the opportunity to see examples of some of the same kinds of drawings they had practiced in class, such as still life and landscape. They were able to examine techniques and compositions up close, giving them a greater appreciation for a finished drawing. Students also saw large and colorful abstract paintings, which generated strong opinions about the nature of art. Artists in two studio classes that happened to be meeting at the same time as the visit invited Sisters to see their works in progress. Students talked with painters and illustrators and asked them questions in an effort to better understand the creative process.

At the end of the spring semester, each student exhibited three of her best drawings for a class show. Also on view were student responses to the “Stravinsky Exercise,” a drawing task that prompts the right (creative) brain to take over from the left (analytical) brain. The College community enthusiastically supported all of the Sisters in this celebration of their artistic talent.

## Dance Students Experience Contemporary Ballet

The Fine Arts 101 Dance class had the opportunity to attend a ballet performance presented by Complexions Contemporary Ballet at the Mayo Performing Arts Center in Morristown on February 2. Accompanied by their instructors, Ms. Barbara Kelly-Vergona, Sister Mary Edward Spohrer, SCC, and Dr. Katherine Doyle, along with the Coordinator of Residential International Student Services, Sister Marie Cecilia Landis, SCC, the students viewed the performance entitled Innervations.

The performance consisted of three acts that each showcased the dancers' versatility and athleticism. The repertory included a fusion of styles from classical, modern, contemporary, and street dance which were all represented within the choreography.

The evening concluded with the dancers paying tribute to the music of Stevie Wonder. The audience sang and grooved along with the dancers as they performed to a variety of Stevie Wonder classics.

Complexions was founded in 1994 by Desmond Richardson and Dwight Rhoden, former members of Alvin Ailey Dance Theater. Their combined resumes include: E!, PBS, Fox's “So You Think You Can Dance,” Cirque de Soleil, Broadway, and The Joffrey Ballet. Complexions features dancers from different ethnic and dance backgrounds and a main theme of the company is to transcend the boundaries of style, period, venue, or culture and for the dance to reflect the multicultural, continually evolving movement of our world. It was fitting for the ACS students of multicultural backgrounds to witness dancers from all over the globe who work together to bring the art of dance to audiences around the world.

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



# A New Home for Assumption College for Sisters

We are happy to announce that we are settling into our new home within the Morris Catholic High School (MCHS) campus at 200 A Morris Avenue in Denville, NJ. Over the past six months we've been working closely with our on-site project manager to renovate the space and make accommodations for our students, faculty, and administration within our new location.

Our new facility has approximately 13,500 square feet which includes a spacious main classroom, computer lab, student lounge, dining room, chapel, and five offices for our administration. We also have a dedicated classroom within Morris Catholic High School as well as shared resources including access to their library and updated science lab.

Our association with Morris Catholic High School continues a longstanding tradition since the Sisters of Christian Charity were charged with the oversight of MCHS in 1961. Since that time several Sisters assumed either leadership or teaching positions there. Currently there is one SCC on the faculty, but the presence of the congregation is recognized through various memorials throughout the school and campus.

This relocation is an exciting opportunity for both Assumption College for Sisters as well as Morris Catholic High School. The administration and students of Morris Catholic High School look forward to the presence of religious women from the United States and developing nations on their campus and the ACS administration and students eagerly anticipate becoming part of the Morris Catholic High School community. Both institutions' commitment to God and to the highest quality of education will certainly continue as we embark on this new chapter in our 62 year history. As we acclimate to our new home we keep in mind a quote from Blessed Mother Pauline, "May God give us genuine trust in his divine Providence."



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## *Morris Catholic High School Welcomes Assumption College for Sisters*

On June 16, as a gesture of welcome, parents, faculty, administration, and trustees of Morris Catholic High School hosted a reception and "shower" for the Sisters, administration, and staff of ACS in anticipation of our relocation to the campus of MCHS, Denville. The event opened with remarks by MCHS President Michael St. Pierre and Mrs. Christine Douville, Trustee of MCHS. Sister Joseph offered words of thanks. In conclusion, Rev. Carmen Buono, chaplain, blessed all assembled. The students were thrilled to open their many practical gifts and everyone at ACS was touched by such a wonderful welcome to our new home.



# STAY CONNECTED WITH ACS!



ACS has a new website, blog, facebook, twitter and YouTube! Visit [acs350.org](http://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](mailto:secretary@acs350.org) with the subject Add Email and we will add you to our list. Thanks for helping us go green!



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*for Sisters*

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## **SAVE THE DATE! *The Fifteenth Annual Caring Basket Gala***

The  
Fifteenth Annual  
**Caring  
Basket  
Gala**

**APRIL 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**6:30 pm**

**The Hanover Marriott**

**Whippany, NJ**