

*'The elderly are trees that
always bear fruit and people
who continue to dream.'*
—Pope Francis

Generations of Faith & Love

HOWARD LIPIN

FAITHFUL SUPPORT: A congregation of religious women provides care for the residents at Nazareth House, an assisted-living facility in San Diego. Sister Rose Hoye, who leads the facility, greeted one of the residents, Ernestina Cerda, after the daily Mass on June 7. Read their story on Pages 4 and 5.

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SPECIAL DAY: Pope Francis has chosen the theme “I am with you always,” for the first World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, to be celebrated July 25.

Pope to Grandparents: ‘You Are Needed’

By Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Writing to his peers, Catholics who have reached a venerable age like he has, Pope Francis told older Catholics that God is close to them and still has plans for their lives.

“I was called to become the bishop of Rome when I had reached, so to speak, retirement age, and thought I would not be doing anything new,” said the pope, who is 84 now and was elected when he was 76.

“The Lord is always — always — close to us. He is close to us with new possibilities, new ideas, new consolations, but always close to us. You know that the Lord is eternal; He never, ever goes into retirement,” the pope wrote in his message for the Catholic Church’s first celebration of the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly on July 25.

The message was released at the Vatican on June 22 in anticipation of that day’s celebration, the Sunday closest to the feast of Sts. Joachim and Anne, Jesus’ grandparents.

Pope Francis’ message acknowledged how much many older people around the world suffered and continue to suffer physically, emotionally and spiritually because of the COVID-19 pandemic. But he also insisted that the Christian call to share the Gospel is as pertinent now for all of them as it ever was.

“Think about it: What is our vocation today, at our age? To preserve our roots, to pass on the faith to the young and to care for the little ones,” he wrote. “Never forget this.”

“It makes no difference how old you are, whether you still work or not, whether you are alone or have a fam-

ily, whether you are still independent or need assistance,” he said. “There is no retirement age from the work of proclaiming the Gospel and handing down traditions to your grandchildren. You just need to set out and undertake something new.”

A better future, he said, must be built on the pillars of “dreams, memory and prayer,” pillars that “even the frailest among us” can help erect with God’s help.

While it is true that the energy and enthusiasm of the young is needed to help set the global society on a new path, “our dreams of justice, of peace, of solidarity can make it possible for our young people to have new visions,” the pope wrote. “You need to show that it is possible to emerge renewed from an experience of hardship.”

As examples, the pope cited the experiences of many older people who have lived through a war or needed to emigrate.

Sharing “the painful memory of war,” he said, is important “to help the young to learn the value of peace.”

“I also think of my own grandparents, and those among you who had to emigrate and know how hard it is to leave everything behind, as so many people continue to do today, in hope of a future,” he said. “Some of those people may even now be at our side, caring for us. These kinds of memory can help to build a more humane and welcoming world.”

Pope Francis also spoke of the importance of prayer.

“Your prayer is a very precious resource: a deep breath that the Church and the world urgently need.”

Grandparents Serve as Loving Bridge to Faith

Mark your calendar, all you grandparents and elderly men and women, because Pope Francis has designated the fourth Sunday in July — this year, July 25 — as the “World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly.” In so doing, he recognized the important role these men and women play in passing along their faith in our Catholic Church.

Look around you the next time you get to Church. You will surely notice, as I have many times, the number of elderly people present, often leading the way in for the whole family. Yes, children sometimes wonder, “Why am I here? I could be out playing.” And parents may have their problems as they scurry to meet all the challenges of the day. It’s the grandparents who often best recognize the importance of getting to church, having learned so after years of struggle and after coming to their own realization of the importance of their faith in God in their lives.

Yes, we often forget about our grandparents and the long lives they have lived. Sometimes, they live far away. But when we come together, we love to hear their stories, stories about being soldiers or nurses in “the War” and how God spared their lives, about how their grandparents came together, about everyday miracles as they survived in good times and in bad before there

Father Charles Fuld

Editor Emeritus of
The Southern Cross



were computers or iPhones. Maybe they told stories about how they received their First Communion and suddenly felt so close to God, or how they felt as they witnessed the baptism of their first child.

For some years now, I’ve been working on a book I call *Grandpa’s Stories*. I’ve asked a dear friend to see to it that it is published someday after I’m gone. No, I don’t expect it to be a “best-seller” or anything like that. It would be a privately published book that I want to pass on to my kids and grandkids (yes, I’m one of those widower priests) so that those stories (about being a youngster, a Naval officer, a husband, a parent and, eventually, a Catholic priest) will not be lost or forgotten and be of some use to them as they seek out what is truly important in their lives.

Your stories are a great gift to all those you dearly love. And it’s up to kids and grandkids to listen, and not just on World Day for Grandparents.

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Generations of Faith

For the Holgrens, serving the Church is a family affair.

Father Daniel Holgren was ordained to the priesthood June 11 at St. Michael Parish in Poway. His father, Deacon Bob Holgren, has been a permanent deacon since 2009. Because ordination to the transitional diaconate is a precursor to priestly ordination, that meant that for a span of eight months, both father and son were ordained deacons.

Bishop Robert McElroy acknowledged the unique situation near the start of Father Holgren's priestly ordination Mass, at which the older Holgren stood at the bishop's right hand as the deacon for the Mass. The bishop called the younger Holgren to join them briefly in the sanctuary.

"I could not stand to go without one last moment of the two Holgren deacons (together)," the bishop said.

Last fall, the younger Holgren reflected on the important role his parents, Deacon Bob and Julie Holgren, had played in his spiritual and vocational journey — especially through the power of their example.

"My parents have always been my biggest fans and my greatest support," he said. "Both of my parents were instrumental in raising me in the Catholic faith and showing me how to be a Christian by how they lived their lives.

"I watched my dad give himself to the Church at his ordination in 2009," he continued, "and his selflessness in the Church and in his marriage have helped teach me how to give of myself."

The Southern Cross



FAITH-FILLED FAMILY: At his priestly ordination, Father Daniel Holgren stands in the sanctuary with his father and Bishop Robert McElroy, and is seated with his mother and siblings.



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SPIRITUAL SUPPORT: A feature of Nazareth House is the chapel, where Auxiliary Bishop John Dolan celebrates Mass weekly. Though it's a Catholic seniors' home, the facility welcomes people of all faiths.

By Lola Sherman

“Jesus is here.”

That’s how Sister Rose Hoye sums up what makes Nazareth House different from other assisted-living facilities.

That difference lifted its residents in the last year as they lived dark days of isolation and fear as the coronavirus cut through society, several residents and staff members said.

Sister Rose, as she is known, is the

American Superior of the worldwide Congregation of the Sisters of Nazareth, which founded Nazareth House in San Diego nearly a century ago. Today, she leads the six Nazareth sisters who live in the complex that overlooks historic Mission San Diego de Alcalá.

“We provide service for the entire person — soul and body,” she said. “It’s absolutely faith-based. It’s the core of who we are. What else would

sustain us but prayer (during the pandemic)?”

In mid-June, 80 residents lived at the Catholic facility, which offers various levels of care and health-related support, including independent, assisted living and hospice and palliative care.

Four centenarians live at the house, with two residents being 103 years old. Most residents are in their eight-

ies. One resident has lived at the facility for 11 years.

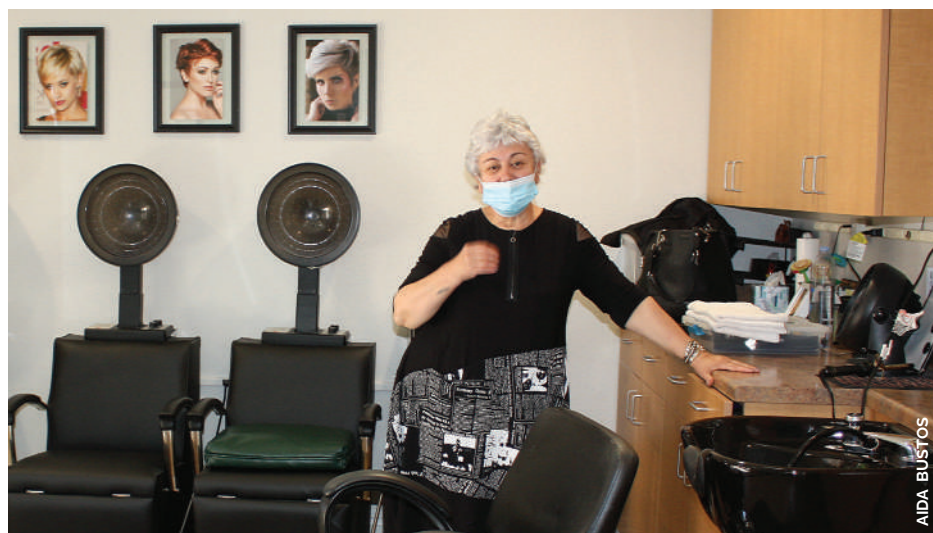
It’s clear the house is a place of faith even from the parking lot, which has bright-white statuary of the Holy Family greeting visitors.

An especially wide corridor gives the house an open feeling, and small hand-painted murals along the walls provide a mission-like setting — as

Continued on Page 5



HELPING HAND: Sister Loreta Matila assisted Jane LaDuke, after the daily Mass on June 7.



BEAUTY SHOP: The staff includes Arina Babayan, who takes care of the residents’ hair needs.



FELLOW FAITHFUL: The facility is staffed by a core of employees who share the faith, including Mohammad Ahmad, who attended the daily Mass on June 7.



AIDA BUSTOS

SPECIAL TOUCH: The facility's staff, including Sister Rose Hoyer, celebrated the birthday of Mary Kapalla in one of the two dining rooms during a lunch meal on June 14.

Continued from Page 4

does the central courtyard for sitting or meandering. Every resident's room opens to a garden.

There's a chapel, with its stained-glass windows, where Mass is celebrated daily. Bishop Robert McElroy celebrates Mass there frequently, and Auxiliary Bishop John Dolan does so once a week.

Several retired priests and religious women also are residents at Nazareth House. One of them is Father Michael Ortiz, a retired Army chaplain who also served parishes in the diocese. He volunteered to celebrate Mass four times a week at the House.

Another resident is Rita Houser, who moved into the care home from Banning, in Riverside County, just as the pandemic erupted. She was buoyed by the faith that it was able to maintain for all its people, she said.

COVID-19 disproportionately hit long-term care facilities, and Nazareth House was no exception. But as the pandemic is easing, and most residents are fully vaccinated, friends and family members can now visit the residents, with some restrictions.

The facility is taking applications once more and its staff is giving in-person tours to prospective families. Rates at the House are comparable to other assisted-living facilities.

Barbara Anne Crowley, chief executive officer for the Nazareth Houses in America, said a "great faith-based" employee core helped the house weather the pandemic.

Crowley has been with Nazareth Houses for 33 years — first as a volunteer, then a caregiver, then a registered nurse.

"I gradually worked my way up the

ladder" to become CEO two years ago, she said.

The greatest change, she said, has been in the growth of the "servant leadership" of the 85 employees. Most are long-term, she said, with very little turnover.

Father Ortiz remembered when, long before he was a resident, the care home was staffed primarily by the sisters. Similar to what has happened in Catholic schools, lay personnel now are in the majority.

Nazareth House does, in fact, run a school as well — the adjacent Nazareth School. Some 317 children are enrolled in pre-kindergarten through 8th grade. It's the only school operated by the congregation in the U.S.

Established in 1924, the house represented the foothold of the Sisters of Nazareth in America and started out as an orphanage.

The congregation was founded by a French nun, Victorine Larmenier, after she immigrated to England in 1851. The sisters also own Nazareth Houses throughout the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and Africa. There is a total of 39.

Three of them are in the U.S., in San Diego, Los Angeles and Fresno. One in San Rafael had to close earlier this year, Crowley said, because of finances — it couldn't enroll new residents during the pandemic, and housing in the area is too expensive for its employees.

Father Ortiz has remodeled his independent unit, he said, by adding a Murphy bed, so it can serve as a bedroom at night and an office in the daytime. He is the author of a couple of books, including *Green Beret Chaplain*, of his experiences in Vietnam. He also was a chaplain at Cathedral Catholic High School for four years.

He said he checked out other assisted-living homes when his nephews insisted he no longer live in his condo after he had fallen and lain unconscious all day.

Others might seem cheaper, he said, but they aren't when you factor in they don't offer laundry services or medication assistance and charge additional fees.

"Common sense tells me this is about the best place," he said. "I'm very happy now. The biggie is that it's a Catholic place."

Lola Sherman is a freelance journalist based in Oceanside.



AIDA BUSTOS

LIVING ROOM: The house features several expansive areas where the residents, such as Father Michael Ortiz, can socialize.

More information about Nazareth House is available by phone at (619) 563-0480, email at info@nazarethhousesd.org, and on its website, sistersofnazareth.com/service/nazareth-house-san-diego.

PERSPECTIVE: Avoid These Financial Pitfalls in Retirement

By Deacon Frank Reilly

After decades of hard work, the prospect of retirement can be exciting. Once retired, you will finally have more time to spend with family, volunteer at your favorite charity, travel, work on your golf game, or simply relax. However, retirement can also bring with it several financial pitfalls.

Below are four major pitfalls you may face as well as helpful tips for successfully navigating them.

Medicare

Because Medicare eligibility begins at age 65, retiring earlier means you may face a gap in coverage. Then once you reach age 65, delaying Medicare enrollment can result in a permanent premium increase. Original Medicare, known as parts A and B, offers basic healthcare coverage but may not meet all your needs.

If retiring before age 65, have a plan to obtain healthcare coverage until then through either the private or public market. Once approaching age 65, start the Medicare enrollment process as soon as possible (three months ahead of time) to ensure you don't experience coverage gaps or penalties. Consider consulting with a Medicare specialist to review your situation and supplemental coverage options.

Social Security

Taking Social Security before your full retirement age (age 66–67, depending on year of birth) results in a permanent reduction in monthly benefits.

Benefits increase by approximately 8% each year you delay Social Security past the federal Retirement Age (FRA) until reaching a maximum benefit at age 70. If you or your spouse has an above-average life expectancy, depending on your personal situation, it may be optimal to delay taking Social Security to maximize lifetime benefits.

Retirement Account Withdrawals

You may hold traditional IRAs, Roth IRAs, and taxable brokerage accounts, and it can be confusing deciding which accounts to pull funds from. It may be enticing to withdraw Roth IRA funds first to meet your living expense needs, as these distributions will typically be tax-free.

Particularly before you start receiving Social Security benefits and taking required minimum distributions from traditional IRAs at age 72, your tax rate may be relatively low. Thus, it may be more sensible to allow your Roth IRA to grow while withdrawing funds from traditional IRAs (taxable as ordinary income) or taxable brokerage accounts (which may be subject to capital gains taxes once sold). It may even make sense to implement a Roth conversion, which moves funds from your traditional IRA to your Roth IRA. A conversion is taxable as ordinary income in the year it is made, but the Roth IRA funds then grow tax-free.

Not Making a Plan

Perhaps the single worst retirement mistake is not making a plan. Failure to plan could allow you to misallocate resources or — at worst — cause you to run out of money entirely.

It's vitally important to create and



LINDA PARKHOUSE

IDEAL: Retirement, with secure finances, requires informed decisions before a person stops working.

periodically update a financial plan to clearly identify your goals, financial resources, and key risks. From there, you can develop a path toward reaching those goals, better managing any risk that may arise. With a well-prepared financial plan in place, you may even discover you can accomplish more than you previously thought!

Deacon Frank Reilly is president of Reilly Financial Advisors. This material is for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal, tax, or financial advice. For more information, please visit rfadvisors.com/disclosures.

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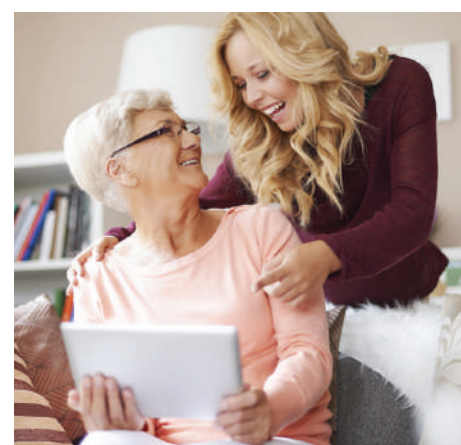
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PHOTOS BY ROMAN FLORES

Agency Delivers Food and Friendship in Desperate Era

HOMEWARD-BOUND: Apolinar “Polo” Salazar manages Catholic Charities’ Senior Nutrition Program. On June 9, he showed the food to be delivered to residents at Desert Villa Apartments in El Centro.

By Roman Flores

EL CENTRO — In normal times, staff from the Senior Nutrition Program deliver about 170 meals per week to homebound individuals across the Imperial Valley. That number soared to 670 deliveries a week during the pandemic.

“That is the disheartening truth in

one of the country’s poorest counties — and hardest hit by the pandemic,” said Appaswamy “Vino” Pajanor. He leads Catholic Charities, Diocese of San Diego, which operates the food program that provides low-cost or free meals to people age 60 and older with limited income.



HEALTHY MEALS: The program’s head cook, Armando Leon, showed a tray of freshly packaged vegetables loaded onto a delivery truck on June 9 in El Centro.

Yet even as the number of home deliveries spiked, the total number the program served dropped in the last year, from about 1,600 to 1,100 at the end of May.

One of the reasons?

So many seniors died of the coronavirus, said the program’s manager, Apolinar “Polo” Salazar.

Of the 735 COVID-19 related deaths in Imperial County since March 2020, 81 percent were people age 60 and up, according to the Imperial County Public Health Department.

The nutrition program provided a lifeline to individuals such as Billie Pope and Anthony Souders. Not only do the staff deliver nutritious meals to their homes, they are often the only regular human contact the seniors have, all the more important in the isolating era of COVID.

On a recent day, Souders, who turned 77 on June 9, reflected on the difficult road that led him to El Centro, and left him needing food assistance.

Originally from Philadelphia, he became a Marine and was stationed at Camp Pendleton for years. After the service, Souders began a business selling restaurant equipment based in Los Angeles near what is now the Staples Center.

Later, he decided to move to Mexico. There, he said he had a dangerous run-in with some bad men, who assaulted him one day, leaving him bloody, broken and missing teeth.

He ended up living in El Centro. While dining at a restaurant in Braw-

ley, his car was stolen. Having just moved, as the car went so went the rest of his belongings, including his clothing and money.

His bad luck continued.

In El Centro, he fell on uneven sidewalk, injuring his back and splitting his left knee cap. On another occasion, he forgot to use his cane and fell, fracturing his left shoulder.

Even though he’s a former chef, Souders can’t stand long enough to cook anymore. That’s where the food program came in. He does not hesitate to describe its impact.

“I can’t tell you how great it is, it’s so great it’s unreal,” he said of the food delivered to him three days a week.

“The food is perfect because it’s not too much, it’s not too small. The amount of food is just perfect,” he said. “It’s always around 10 o’clock. My (delivery) driver is so nice and he’s always on time. Everything is beautiful.”

Souders said he is thankful to Catholic Charities, Christ Community Church and others in the Valley that have helped him reset his life after the series of devastating events he’s endured.

“The people of the Imperial Valley have taken care of me.”

Billie Pope, another client of the program, also has endured a string of devastating setbacks. The Catholic Charities’ CEO, Pajanor, shared her story recently through his organization’s website.

Continued on Page 9

Continued from Page 8

"She is an example of a quiet crisis in America that was growing before COVID and has since accelerated during the pandemic: middle-class hunger," he wrote.

Pope is 68 years old and became a widow a decade ago. She lives by herself in Holtville on her late husband's pension. That income bumps her just above the low-income threshold for many assistance programs and disqualifies her from certain aid, she said.

Her son died at the age of 19, and she has a grown daughter who only recently began to come back into her life. Pope said she had no one to care for her for a long while.

Even the neighbors she met in Holtville when she first moved to the Valley from Oakland decades ago had moved away, leaving new neighbors who keep mostly to themselves.

She used to manage a video store until she had a car accident, plunging over a 300-foot cliff, breaking her back, her neck, and leaving her with partial vocal cord paralysis. As she attempted to recover on her own at home, she fell one night when getting up from falling asleep in her chair, breaking her femur and knee.

Afterward, Pope couldn't even reach her bed due to its height, so she slept on her couch nightly — "just me and my cats" — for about two years as she tried to recuperate. She even-

tually found out she also had a broken hip, she said.

"I had no help whatsoever. Nothing," she said. "There was no food in the house. I usually keep a very nice pantry full of food and that had been depleted."

She lost 40 pounds from undernutrition in an 18-month period. She resorted to eating some of her cat food at times.

As she underwent physical therapy, she was referred to the county's Area Agency on Aging, which led her to the nutrition program.

"It seemed like all of a sudden someone came out of the woodwork and said, 'Hello Billie, we're here,'" she said, faux-knocking as if on a door, in a video message. "'We're here to help you.'"

She began to get meals delivered to her home and developed a nice friendship with the former driver, she said.

"I've always believed in God, in Jesus His Son, and I know He's there again in my life where I thought He had disappeared for a very long time," Pope said. "It's funny how (God) appears in different forms, in different people, (and) in different charities."

Her broken bones have mended, she is able to walk without using a walker, and has been partaking in telephone counseling, she said. She has reconnected with her daughter. She has



PHOTOS BY ROMAN FLORES

HOUSE CALL: A driver for the nutrition program, Mariana Alcaráz, delivered a meal to Billie Pope on June 15 at her home in Holtville.

even ventured out "way more than before" to go to doctors' appointments, shopping, or to a movie theater.

She said though she usually donated the \$2 suggested donation per meal, she has had financial hardship in the past two months. Yet, Catholic Charities has continued to deliver meals to her.

"That is a huge plus in my life."

The state lifted most COVID restrictions on June 15. The program's manager, Salazar, said his team wants

to re-open as soon as possible the other part of the service the agency traditionally provides, "congregate meals." These are served at sites where seniors gather daily or weekly, depending on location, for nutritious food and warm friendship.

For information about the Senior Nutrition Program is available at (619) 323-2841
CCDsd.org/senior-nutrition



THANK YOU! A participant of the nutrition program, Anthony Souders, gave a small gift to his favorite meal delivery driver, José Luis Barrientos, on June 9 in El Centro.

At 108, Sister Says God 'Just Wants Me Around'

By Gregory A. Shemitz

EAST WILLISTON, N.Y. — To put Sister Francis Dominici Piscatella's extraordinarily long life into historical perspective, consider that Pope Pius X was pontiff and Woodrow Wilson was U.S. president when she was born in 1913.

Nine popes and 18 presidents later, Sister Piscatella, a member of the Sisters of St. Dominic of Amityville, N.Y., is defying the aging process while living independently in a condominium apartment she shares with another religious sister at a Long Island village.

Sister Piscatella celebrated her 108th birthday April 20.

Data collected by the Gerontology Research Group, an organization that tracks centenarians globally, said Sister Piscatella is the second-oldest woman religious in the United States. Only Sister Vincent de Paul Hutton, a Dominican Sister of Peace, at 110, is older. She resides in a long-term care facility managed by her community in St. Catharine, Kentucky.

Sister Piscatella told *Catholic News Service* she doesn't feel her age.

"I'm just living a normal life, thinking normally, reading and doing things an old lady would do," she said.

"Normal" isn't the word most observers would use to describe her. "Incredible" may be more accurate.

Sister Piscatella remains in exceptional physical and mental health 90 years after entering religious life.

Her daily activities include praying, reading, solving word-search puzzles and watching TV. Weather permit-



ting, she attends daily Mass with fellow Dominican Sister Francis Daniel Kammer, 81, with whom she lives and who drives her to church and other appointments.

Remarkably, Sister Piscatella manages to get around without the use of a wheelchair, walker or cane.

Born and raised in Central Islip, N.Y., she has proven to be strikingly resilient, having lived through two World Wars, the Great Depression, the Spanish flu and COVID-19 pandemics, among other challenges.

At age 2, Sister Piscatella's left forearm was amputated after she sustained a serious hand injury. She later recovered from a car accident that resulted in a shattered right arm and bounced back from a near-fatal brain bleed suffered when she fell at age 102.

Sister Piscatella, one of seven chil-



90 YEARS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE: Sister Francis Dominici Piscatella is the second-oldest sister in the U.S. She joined the Sisters of St. Dominic in 1931. At her 105th birthday party, she celebrated with Msgr. Edward Ryan of the Diocese of Brooklyn, N.Y., in 2018.

dren of Italian immigrants Salvatore and Angela Piscatella, credited her mother for developing her drive to overcome personal obstacles.

"My mother made me completely independent. When I went to the convent, I had to prove to my superiors that there was nothing I couldn't do."

Sister Piscatella joined the Dominicans in 1931 after other religious communities turned her away because of her physical disability. She responded to the call to serve the Church as an educator, preparing for that career at St. John's University, where she earned bachelor's and master's degrees.

Sister Piscatella excelled as a math teacher and tutor at several grade schools in the Diocese of Brooklyn,

N.Y., and subsequently at Dominican Commercial High School in Queens and Dominican-run Molloy College in Rockville Centre, where she worked for 52 years before retiring at age 84.

Sister Kammer was one of the thousands of students inspired by the beloved nun. She was taught by Sister Piscatella at Dominican Commercial and later asked her to sponsor her when she applied to enter the order. Between the two of them, they have recorded 156 years of religious life.

Her secret to longevity?

"I guess God doesn't want me yet," she said. "He just wants me to hang around."

Catholic News Service



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Telephone Calls That Inspire Me Every Day

During my final year at the University of San Diego, I had the opportunity to make wellness calls to senior citizens from St. Brigid Parish who were isolated at home during the pandemic.

My professor, Dr. Wendell Callahan, the director of the Counseling Program at USD's Department of Counseling & Marital and Family Therapy, was a parishioner and reached out to a group of graduate students, like me, to see if we would be interested in making these calls to supplement our counseling experience.

Initially, I was calling Mary, Jim and several others weekly to check how they were doing and if they needed anything. With Mary and Jim, our relationship has continued — even after I graduated last August. While I do not have the flexibility in my schedule to call weekly, we remain in contact on a monthly basis. I have learned so many valuable lessons from them.

Jim has taught me to find the beauty in every day. I have truly never met a man who has the passion and zest for even the most mundane aspects of life. On days when “May gray” and “June gloom” had taken over San Diego, Jim would find the one patch of blue in the sky and ask me if I could see it from where I was.

Jim never let his health get him down. He would get into the ocean or walk up the hills of Kate Sessions Park as if he were still in the best shape of his life.

I find that when my own inner voice is telling me that I'm too tired or too busy to engage in activities that bring me joy, Jim's voice reminds me that there is always time in each day to honor myself and my own needs.

Mary has taught me that it is never too late to learn, to adapt, and to care — for others and for oneself. Mary has a large family, and she demon-

Laura Todd

USD Class of 2020



strated ways to show her care and love despite the restrictions and isolation. Nearly every time we spoke, she was coming up with some sort of care package, card or surprise for her family members near and far.

Mary also consistently remembered details of my life that I would mention in passing conversations, asking me about my cat, my paintings, my family members, or events that I was looking forward to in the weeks ahead. To this day, Mary still calls me on special days to wish me a “happy holiday.”

She has taught me how to utilize my soft femininity as a strength, the ways I can honor myself as a woman in a world that may not always provide such grace. This year has been a challenge, eye-opening to say the least. Mary has shared with me the experiences she has lived through or witnessed over the years. And she has the uncanny ability to share her perspectives in a way that makes one want to hear more, with such humility, patience and tangible emotion.

I did not realize just how much of an impact these individuals would make in my own life. I am so grateful for St. Brigid's and Wendell Callahan for allowing me to provide a service that gave back twice as much as I contributed.

My advice for anyone who wants to help a senior citizen is to be prepared for them to help you just as much. What started out as wellness calls turned into conversations that prompted my introspection, challenged my biases and ultimately inspired me to me grow.

Read story about the wellness checks in:
thesoutherncross.org/032111



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ACTIVE IN FAITH: John Slood, 93, joined other pilgrims along a rural road near Champion, Wis., on May 1 during the annual Walk to Mary.

93 Years Old and Going Strong, One Step At a Time

By Sam Lucero

CHAMPION, Wis. — John Slood, 93, a retired farmer, lives by the adage of his late brother, Vincent, a marathon runner, who preached: “When you get near the end, you have to throw everything out of the closet.”

The adage loses some meaning translated from his native Dutch, but Slood uses the marathon runner’s expression to describe how he maintains his physical activity. The older he becomes, the more active he seems to have gotten.

In May, Slood and daughter Bernadette Quist of St. Cloud, Minn., took part in the Walk to Mary in the Diocese of Green Bay, Wis. They walked the final two miles of the 21-mile pilgrimage from the National Shrine of St. Joseph in De Pere to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help in Champion.

According to Pat Deprey, the organizer of the Walk to Mary, Slood was the oldest person to ever participate in the event, held each year (except in 2020) since 2013.

Slood has maintained a healthy lifestyle throughout his senior years — as well as a sense of humor.

“People ask me, ‘How do you do it?’” he told *The Compass*, Green Bay’s diocesan newspaper, in an interview before the walk. “I say, ‘I will tell you the secret. Just keep on breathing.’”

When he was in his 70s, he said he read in *Reader’s Digest* about the benefits of jogging. So he decided to start jogging around the yard of his 385-acre farm.

After tracking his progress, he decided to jog in public. And he jogged two miles every other day for 20 years.

“I never in my life felt better,” he said. “I was so

healthy and I could jump out of bed, put my shoes on and do my two miles. No problem. Then, I had some health problems and backed off.”

Spiritual health, like physical activity, is important to Slood, a member of St. Francis de Sales Parish in Winthrop, Minn. Growing up in Herwen, Holland, he recalls praying the rosary with his family.

“When World War II started and when it got hot near the end ... we were in the cellar every night. We would pray the rosary.”

Slood immigrated to the United States in 1953 at age 25. He settled in Minnesota Lake to work on the farm of a family who had sponsored his move from Holland.

Two years later, he returned to Holland and on Feb. 16, 1955, he married his childhood sweetheart, Minnie.

The Sloods became U.S. citizens in 1964. After renting a farm from their sponsor for 11 years, they bought two farms on 240 acres in Winthrop and later added 145 more acres. They mostly grew corn and soybeans and raised hogs.

John and Minnie raised 11 children on their farm, which they sold to their son, Harry, in 1994. Minnie died in 2015.

As he reached the finish line at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help with his daughter, Slood said he was sure he could have completed another mile.

“A lot of people my age, they walk with walkers and wheels,” Slood said. “I can still walk and jog a little ways. I don’t think I could beat you, but I can give you a run. Life is fun if you make it that way.”

Catholic News Service

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Senior Resources

Welcome to our annual senior resource guide. Below you will find a partial listing of services offered at several of our parishes. Please note that this is not a complete listing of the many resource-

es available. The best way to find out what your parish has to offer is to call the parish office or check the parish website, and one of the most valuable tools available to you is the parish bulletin.

PARISH RESOURCES

All Hallows, La Jolla

Homebound Eucharistic Ministry, La Jolla Meals on Wheels, La Jolla Friendly Visitors, Adult Formation Series and Parish Prayer Network. For more information, call (858) 459-2975 or email cbosh@allhallows.com

Ascension, Tierrasanta

(858) 279-2735; Bereavement Ministry, Ministry to the Sick, Single Seniors & Grief Support Group

Corpus Christi, Bonita

(619) 482-3954; Monthly luncheon for seniors

Good Shepherd, Mira Mesa

(858) 271-0207; Call for assistance

Guardian Angels, Santee

(619) 448-1213; Ministries/groups: Bereavement Ministry, Ministry to the Sick, Lay Pastors Group (an outreach ministry to contact all parishioners), Food Bank (Santee residents only), Women's Guild (open to women of all ages; meets 1st Tuesday of month September-June), Prayers & Squares Quilt Ministry (open to all ages).

Holy Family, Linda Vista

(858) 277-0404; Call for assistance

Holy Spirit, Oak Park

(619) 262-2435; holyspiritoffice@cox.net, Evangelization to the Homebound is a videocast of the daily Mass beginning mid-June on www.holyspiritsd.org, M – F 7:30 a.m., can be viewed any time after the broadcast

Holy Trinity, El Cajon

(619) 444-9425; Homebound Eucharistic Ministers; Senior Lunch (once a month); Food bank open 10 – 11a.m., M – F (El Cajon residents only)

The Immaculata, Alcala Park, USD

(619) 574-5700; Call for assistance

Immaculate Conception, Old Town

(619) 295-4141; Senior Ministry contact is Connie Rodriguez (619) 295-4141; Homebound Ministry, Senior's Group, Senior Lunches, Perpetual Adoration

Mary, Star of the Sea, La Jolla

(858) 454-2631

Mater Dei, Chula Vista

(619) 656-3735; Health Resources Ministry, Healing & Comfort Ministry

Mission San Diego de Alcala, Mission Valley

(619) 283-7319; Mission Aires, 50+, monthly meeting, 3rd Tuesday, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m., \$15 annual membership, for more information contact Rozalynn (619) 587-0425

Mission San Luis Rey, Oceanside

(760) 757-3250; Social Concerns Ministry, Sick & Homebound Ministry

Most Precious Blood, Chula Vista

(619) 422-2100; Call for assistance

Nativity, Rancho Santa Fe

(858) 756-1911; Widows & Widowers Monthly (September – June)

Our Lady of Grace, El Cajon

(619) 469-0133; Senior Ministry contact is Rosa Hilgeman, (619) 469-0133; Hospital Eucharistic Ministry, Homebound Ministry, Women's Club/Guild/Group, Pro-Life group, 50s+ Club, Senior Lunches, Food Banks, Prayer Quilting

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Chula Vista

(619) 422-3977; Personas de la tercera edad, 55 and older, usually meets twice a month at the parish hall for tasty lunches and occasional guest speakers. For more information, contact Isabel (619) 925-4317

Our Lady of Guadalupe, San Diego

(619) 233-3838; Bereavement Ministry, Homebound Ministry, Social Concerns Minsitry, Pro-Life group, Altar Society

Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Lakeside

(619) 443-1412; Senior Ministry contact is Deacon Mark Silvia, (619) 729-6207 Bereavement Ministry, Hospital Eucharistic Ministry, Homebound Ministry, Social Concerns Minsitry, Women's Club/Guild/Group, Men's Club/Guild/Group, Pro-Life group, Senior's Group, Widows & Widowers Group, 50s+ Club, Senior Outreach Program, Senior Lunches, Altar Society, Rosary Makers, Prayer Quilting, Perpetual Adoration

Our Lady of Refuge, Pacific Beach

(858) 274-9670; Food Bank, Homebound Ministry

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, San Diego

(619) 280-0515

Our Mother of Confidence, University City

(858) 453-0222; Active 60's contact is Nancy Wesseln, (858) 847-0724; Adopt A Senior contact is Marty Rower, (858) 452-4201; Grandparents Prayer Group contact is Tony Doyle; Bereavement Ministry, Hospital Eucharistic Ministry, Homebound Ministry, Social Concerns Ministry, Healing Ministry, Senior's Group, Senior Outreach Program, Senior Lunches, Food Banks

Queen of Angels, Alpine

(619) 445-2145

Sacred Heart, Brawley

(760) 344-3171

Sacred Heart, Coronado

(619) 435-3167; Eucharistic Ministers visit the homebound and patients in medical facilities in the area. There is an Anointing Mass during the Lenten and Advent seasons. The Knights of Columbus invite seniors to a Christmas Luncheon in December. For more information, please call the Ministry Center.

Sacred Heart, Ocean Beach

(619) 224-2746; Homebound Ministry, Bereavement Ministry & Senior Outreach Program (resources & social). For information, contact Janice at teixeira@cox.net

St. Adelaide of Burgundy, Campo

(619) 478-1017

St. Anthony of Padua, National City

(619) 477-4520

St. Brigid, Pacific Beach

(858) 483-3030; Senior Ministry contact is Nancy Wesseln, (858) 483-3034; Bereavement Ministry, Homebound Ministry, Healing Ministry, Senior's Group, Senior Lunches, exercise classes, card groups, "Pacesetters"-weekly lunch and games, ACTIVE 60s+ Group, Monday Prayer Group, Trips to Barona 2X/month

St. Catherine Laboure, Clairemont Mesa East

(858) 277-3133; Hospital Eucharistic Ministry, Homebound Ministry, Healing Ministry, Senior Lunches, Food Banks, Rosary Makers, Prayer Quilting

St. Charles, Imperial Beach

(619) 423-0242; Senior Lunches, Exercise Classes

St. Charles Borromeo, Point Loma

(619) 225-8157

St. Columba, Serra Mesa

(858) 277-3863; Bereavement Ministry, Hospital Eucharistic Ministry, Homebound Ministry, Men's Club/Guild/Group, Pro-Life group, Senior's Group, Rosary Makers

St. Didacus, Normal Heights

(619) 284-3472; Eucharistic Homebound Ministry

St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Julian

(760) 765-0613; Local parishioners can call for assistance

St. Elizabeth Seton, Carlsbad

(760) 438-3393

St. Gabriel, Poway

(858) 748-5348

St. Gregory the Great, Scripps Ranch

(858) 653-3540; Adoration, Bible Study, Catholic Men's Fellowship, Communion to the Homebound, Computer Help Ministry, Connection 2 Christ Small Groups, Cooking Group, Cursillo, Daily Mass Ministry, Divine Dining, Divine Mercy Cenacle, Faith Formation – Adult, Family Cancer Support, Filipino – American, Film Fans, Helping Hands, Knights of Columbus, Mental Health Ministry, Military Friendship & Support, Music Ministry, Our Lady of Fatima Devotion, Prayer Wheel, Prayers and Squares, Rosary Cenacle, Rosary Makers, Women's Book Club, Women's Friendship Circle

St. James/St. Leo, Solana Beach

(858) 755-2545

St. John the Evangelist, Encinitas

(760) 753-6254

St. John the Evangelist, San Diego

(619) 291-1660; Hospital Eucharistic Ministry, Homebound Ministry

St. Jude Shrine of the West, San Diego

(619) 264-2195

St. Luke, El Cajon

(619) 442-1697

St. Margaret, Oceanside

(760) 941-5560; Legion of Mary Homebound Ministry, spending a minimum of two hours a week with each senior for prayer and fellowship.

St. Mark, San Marcos

(760) 744-1540; Women's Guild, meets the 1st Wednesday of the month at noon, St. John Paul II bldg., (September to June) meeting for fellowship and to support the ministries of the parish

St. Mary, El Centro

(760) 352-4211

St. Mary, Escondido

(760) 745-1611; Homebound Ministry

St. Mary Magdalene, Bay Park

(619) 276-1041; Bible Study, open to all ages

St. Mary, Star of the Sea, Oceanside

(760) 722-1688; Installed "The Loop" so hearingimpaired parishioners can hear the Mass. For information, contact Barbie at Barbie-stmarys@hotmail.com.

St. Maximilian Kolbe Mission, Pacific Beach

(858) 272-7655

St. Michael, Poway

(858) 487-4755; Homebound Ministry, Health resources Ministry, Women's Club/Guild/Group, Men's Club/Guild/Group, Senior Lunches, Prayer Quilting

St. Michael, San Diego

(619) 295-2157; Senior Ministry contact is Barb Mossinghoff, Parish Secretary, Homebound Ministry

St. Patrick, Carlsbad

(760) 729-2866; Home Visitation, for information contact Jayce at jmcclellan@stpatrickcarlsbad.com or call (760) 729-2869

St. Patrick, San Diego

(619) 295-2157; Homebound Ministry

St. Pius X, Chula Vista

(619) 420-9193; Senior Fridays, Homebound Ministry, Bereavement and Consolation Ministry, Mental Wellness Ministry, "That Man is YOU!" (TMIY) Men's Ministry, St. Joseph's Workers, Food Distribution, Altar & Rosary Women's Ministry, Crafters for Christ, (Multiple) Prayer Groups (English & Spanish), Telecare Ministry, Knights of Columbus Men's Ministry

St. Pius X, Jamul

(619) 669-0085; Quilting Ministry, weekly, open to all ages

St. Richard, Borrego Springs

(760) 767-5701

St. Rose of Lima, Chula Vista

(619) 427-0230; Senior program, Homebound Ministry & Senior Outreach

St. Stephen, Valley Center

(760) 749-3324

St. Therese, Del Cerro

(619) 582-3716; 55+ Social Club, call parish office for information

St. Therese of Carmel, Carmel Valley

(858) 481-3232 Senior Ministry contact is Nancy Wesseln, (858) 847-0724; Hospital Eucharistic Ministry, Homebound Ministry, Healing Ministry, Women's Club/Guild/Group, 50s+ Club, Senior Outreach Program, Senior Lunches, Altar Society, Perpetual Adoration. We are also working with the SAN DIEGO CATHOLIC ADULT COMMUNITY - ACTIVE 60s+ which provides activities to connect ACTIVE seniors from around town sandiegocac.org/active-60s/

St. Thomas More, Oceanside

(760) 758-4100; Senior Ministry contact is Jim & Marilyn Day, (760) 758-4100 X129. Bereavement Ministry, Hospital Eucharistic Ministry, Homebound Ministry, Health Resources Ministry, Social Concerns Ministry, Healing Ministry, Women's Club/Guild/Group, Men's Club/Guild/Group, Pro-Life Group, Senior's Group, Widows & Widowers Group, 50s+ Club, Senior Outreach Program, Senior Lunches, Food Banks, Scout Ministry; LGBTQ Ministry; Knights of Columbus; Blood Drive; CPR/AED Classes; Creation Care Team; Disability Facilitation; Jail Ministry; Mental Health Ministry

St. Timothy, Escondido

(760) 489-1200; Senior Ministry contact is Elizabeth, (760) 489-1200; Bereavement Ministry, Homebound Ministry, Healing Ministry, Women's Club/Guild/Group, Men's Club/Guild/Group, Pro-Life group, Rosary Makers, Prayer Quilting, Prayer Group

St. Vincent de Paul, Mission Hills

(619) 299-3880; Altar Society

Santa Sophia, Spring Valley

(619) 463-6629; Senior Club meets 1st Thursday of the month for 11a.m. Mass followed by \$8 hot lunch. Sept thru June, \$10 annual membership

Catholic Widows & Widowers of North County

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SAN DIEGO COUNTY SENIOR SERVICES

Inside San Diego County (800) 339-4661

Outside San Diego County (800) 510-2020

sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/ais.html
(this website contains a wealth of information)

Adult Protective Services (800) 339-4661

Caregiver Support (800) 339-4661

Cool Zones (800) 339-4661

Coordinating Care (800) 339-4661

Employment Training (800) 339-4661

Health Promotion (858) 495-5998

SanDiegoFallPrevention.org; Videos, local resources (exercise classes, PT's, home modification, medical alerts, etc.), Toolkit, and more!
HealthierLivingSD.org; link to program information and class schedules
AISEvents.org; includes information on aging conferences such as Vital Aging and Aging Summit

In-Home Supportive Services (800) 339-4661

Intergenerational Programs (858) 495-5769

Legal Services (800) 339-4661

Elder Law & Advocacy (858) 565-1392

Mental Health (800) 339-4661

Nutrition Services (800) 339-4661

sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/hhsa/programs/ais/documents/AllPrograms_COVID-19_062720.pdf

Ombudsman – Long Term Care

(800) 640-4661 or (858) 560-2507

Project C.A.R.E. – (Community Action Reaching the Elderly) (800) 339-4661 Project C.A.R.E. keeps seniors living alone from being totally isolated. It provides referrals to community resources, assistance with completing a Vial of Life, and reassurance calls, plus other services.

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Volunteers (858) 505-6399

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