

The

Mountaineer

**From the President:**

Dear Friends,

As the leaves turn golden and ruby and the winds become brisk and filled with the aroma of fall (at least here in Nebraska), my thoughts turn to some of my favorite feasts, that of All Saints and All Souls. These are the day when the Church remembers and celebrates the unsung heroes of holiness throughout the millennia. Above all, I like to celebrate those saints “with a small s” that I knew personally: my Lutheran grandfather Ole, Terese from my institute who literally brought people into the Church through her conversations over homemade bread, an auxiliary bishop so humble and caring.

In *Gaudete et Exsultate* Pope Francis reminds us that saints are not perfect:

“To recognize the word that the Lord wishes to speak to us through one of his saints, we do not need to get caught up in details, for there we might also encounter mistakes and failures. Not everything a saint says is completely faithful to the Gospel; not everything he or she does is authentic or perfect. What we need to contemplate is the totality of their life, their entire journey of growth in holiness, the reflection of Jesus Christ that emerges when we grasp their overall meaning as a person.” (22)

Isn’t that hopeful? It encourages us to believe that even we can - and should - become saints who will one day be celebrated on November 1. After all, that is our mission as

consecrated persons, to reflect the life of Christ, to radiate his love, to serve as he served. Our circumstances are different, but God has determined an original way for each of us to climb the mountain of sanctity.

Many of you will remember the days when we made numerous trips in and out of church, and back in again, to pray for the deceased on All Souls Day. Now the Church has given us an octave to gain indulgences for them (November 1-8), just by visiting a cemetery and praying for them. I make it a point to alter my drive home to pass by a cemetery, pulling over to pray. In a special way we want to pray for all the deceased members of secular institutes, remembering that we build on their shoulders.

And that said, I want to let you know that in the past two months I have received inquiries from three different people who are interested in founding new institutes. Perhaps it is the Holy Spirit blowing those fall leaves around.

Wishing you a blessed time of harvest and thanksgiving,  
Marcia Vinje, President

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## The United States Conference of Secular Institutes Annual Meeting 2019

The United States Conference of Secular Institutes (USCSI) held their annual national meeting **September 13-15, 2019**, at the Marytown Retreat Center in Libertyville, Illinois. The theme of this year's gathering was **"Heart Speaks to Heart."** The keynote speaker for the weekend was **Father Marcel Caron, ISPX**, Director General of the Pius X Secular Institute, President of the Canadian Conference of Secular Institutes and a member of the Executive Board of the World Conference of Secular Institutes (CMIS).

On Thursday, September 12 the **executive committee**, including Marcia Vinje, Fr. George Hazler, Jessica Swedzinski, and Deacon Paul Lang, arrived at the retreat center for their board meeting prior to the national meeting.

Marytown is a beautiful old building with so much character and religious atmosphere. At one time it had been a Benedictine convent and there was much evidence of their legacy in religious art in the hallways and meeting rooms. **The attached church is absolutely gorgeous and is host to perpetual adoration.** Marytown is now owned by Conventual Franciscan Friars and their Franciscan heritage imbues the place.

The meeting opened with dinner on Friday evening for the **twenty delegates from eight secular institutes.** This was followed by a welcome from the president and Holy Mass for our deceased members. Fr. Caron (on right) was the celebrant of the Mass assisted by Deacon Lang.



Afterwards there was an optional social at which old friendships were renewed and new ones made.

On Saturday Father Caron spoke about the theme, "Heart Speaks to Heart." He first apologized for his English skills (which were flawless). He grew up in a French speaking family in the English speaking part of Canada and spent twenty years in Colombia for his institute, so English is his third language. We could not tell!

**The word "heart" occurs over 1,000 times in the Bible, making it the most common anthropological term in the Scripture.** Everything starts with an encounter and it is through the heart that an encounter occurs. This is not only with people but also with places. He quoted Pope Francis:

**Invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unflinchingly each day.** *Evangelii Gaudium* #3.

**We encounter God in prayer; in prayer of the heart, in the prayer of the Church, and in prayer with the Word in Scripture.** He spoke of these three elements as the basics of "secular" prayer which are available to all members of secular institutes throughout the day.

As members of secular institutes we also need to encounter the world, for example, personal experience with refugees – think of our Institute members from other countries – or with people suffering from climate change like our farmers, or with people who suf-

fer from depression and lack of purpose in life, or with the lonely. This truly is heart speaking to heart.

As an answer to these challenges we should create a culture of encounter, seeking one on one contacts. How often do people in the checkout lines get addressed by name? Can we really listen to them from the heart? Finally, Fr. Caron addressed the encounter with our vocation and charism as members of secular institutes. **The Church recognizes that we have a new manner in which we link the encounter with God and the encounter with the world.**

In the afternoon Father shared about the life of **the Canadian Conference of Secular Institutes**. The institutes in Canada are mostly French speaking and live in the province of Quebec. Thus it is much easier for them to come together more often, even for a day, since no one has to drive more than three hours. Once a year they have a business meeting with a few hours of spiritual input for the leadership of the institute, and they offer an annual retreat for all members of secular institutes. It is his hope that we can have more exchange between the institutes of North America although the language will be a challenge. In any case, he plans to attend our meeting in 2020 as a participant to facilitate more interaction.

Fr. Caron also spoke about the work of the World Conference of Secular Institutes. **He sees his role as representing the interests of all of North America and also of helping the European institutes to be more open to the vast richness of institutes.** According to Father Caron the North American experience of Church and of secular institutes is different. The day before he had shared with the officers that when he was elected to the CMIS board, one of the outgoing members told him he should not accept the position because he was a priest, assuming that only laity could belong to secular institutes.

With pride he pointed out that there are **three cardinals who are members of secular institutes**; namely, the secular institutes of Pius X, Schoenstatt Fathers, and Voluntas Dei. Also a new secular institute called the Marian Alliance was just approved in France. It is one of only a handful of new institutes in this century.

**Marytown is the national shrine of St. Maximilian Kolbe so on Saturday evening we had a presentation about his life and a tour of the museum.**



Brother Donald who led us on the tour obviously has a living relationship to his fellow friar and could speak for hours about him as if he knew him personally.

To end the evening on a more joyful note **we celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Secular Institute of the Missionaries of the Kingship of Christ**, one of the larger secular institutes in our conference.

**Sunday morning we prayed Lauds with the Friars and then had Mass with the parish/pilgrim community.** It was very solemn liturgy at its best. After brunch we concluded our weekend with the business meeting. Among other things **we re-elected our vice-president and councilor.**

From the comments of the participants they were very grateful to have a speaker from a secular institute who really understands our vocation.

**One thought that stayed with us was his comment that our vocation is not our gift to God, but God's gift to us. We are called to unpack that gift and discern God's will, always asking if we are "on track" with the founder's charism. The world is so in need of us.**

## Photo Album of USCSI Meeting



Pearline Archer & Marline Holman from Jamaica enjoy Mundelein's Marian Pillar.

Kay Lawrence, Sue Larkin, and Jane Lynch with the 100th Anniversary cake of their Missionaries of the Kingship of Christ Institute.



## FEATURED SECULAR INSTITUTE MEMBER:

### **Annmarie Wacker, Schoenstatt Sisters**

My introduction to our institute, the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary, began this way: When my sister made her First Communion, my family invited her teacher to the party. She invited me to go with her to Madison, for the dedication of a shrine. I had no idea what it was, but I agreed – and later found out that this shrine is a replica of the Original Schoenstatt Shrine in Germany, dedicated to the Blessed Mother under the title of Mother Thrice Admirable. From it developed an entire lay movement that began with a group of minor Pallottine seminarians in Vallendar, Germany, under the guidance of Father Joseph Kentenich (a story in itself).

Later that summer, this teacher invited me to a Day of Recollection at the Pallottine Parish. The priest giving the day was Father Kentenich. It was given in German and translated by another priest. I was not used to this, and only remember there was a story about a little dog.

Sometime after this my parents were invited to meet this priest who had been in Dachau. I realized that this was the same priest whom I had met. I also was reacquainted with one of the members of our Institute whom I had met in Madison. I was able to meet with our founder occasionally, and to have him for my spiritual advisor!

My parents became part of a Schoenstatt couples group, which was able to meet each week with our founder for several years, receiving much guidance for their family life. The Blessed Mother in the shrine became a favorite place to visit.

During the late 1950s, I joined the Secular Institute of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary and am a member of the first course in the USA. This has been interesting to be part of the exciting development from the

beginning in our country.

After completing my undergraduate major in Biology at Marquette University, I taught at a parish school our institute helped start in Milwaukee. In building up the science program, I was called “Warden Wacker” because of all the keys I had to carry for access to the equipment.

Upon completion of a master’s degree in Biology, I taught general science and then biology at the junior high and high school levels for over 40 years. It was always a challenge to deal with adolescents at their transitional stage. The support from our Institute with the graces from prayer in our shrine

was always a great help for me.

One year I had the privilege of spending the summer in Bangalore, India, with some of our members from Kerala. They were studying education and I taught English (not taught there at that time) to aid them in their studies. It was a valuable experience which helped me understand another culture.

After I retired I continued to support educators by helping teach science with a 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. I was especially interested in supporting someone who was faithful to her Catholic religion with her family. In addition I volunteered at local museums, where I often dealt with school groups. I feel it is vital to promote activities that bring parents and children together exploring topics besides just watching a screen. I enjoy awaking an interest in learning and by supporting wholesome events with interaction; this will counteract negative forces in students’ lives.

All in all, I must not only thank my Secular Institute for their support, but especially our Blessed Mother for her help and guidance.



## The Lighter Side of our DeSales General Assembly



This past July the DeSales Secular Institute gathered for it's General Assembly in Augsburg, Germany. For those of you who have attended such gatherings, you know its a lot of hard work and nothing like the tourist excursion that most people envision you having. So we really enjoyed the lighter moments. Madeline Rice, one of our Associate members, was making her first appearance at the General Assembly and working hard to carry on a conversation with our Brazilian and German counterparts who didn't speak English.

The first morning we were there we spotted the Brazilians gathered in a circle and passing around a mug of....something. It wasn't a typical mug. It was shaped more like a flower pot and seemed to be filled to the brim with this very interesting,...um...grass type stuff. Every few minutes they would fill it with hot water and

then resume the passing of the cup, with each person taking a sip from the metal straw. They spotted Madeline and I spying on them and waved us over to join them. So we sat down with them and they eagerly handed the mug of "grass" to Madeline and encouraged her to try some. She looked at me and smiled. Nobody seemed in an altered state of mind. Happy but not high. So Madeline took her first swig of Goucho Tea and found it quite tasty! The ice was broken and we began forming bonds with our overseas Salesian sisters over Goucho Tea and communicating more through sign language than the spoken word.

We spent a week together, hashing through constitutions, elections and strategies in three different languages. We shared meals and Masses, quiet moments and socials with singing and wine. As important as bylaws and parliamentary procedures are, it's the things like sharing Goucho Tea and speaking through our eyes and smiles that makes us one in heart and mind.

*Kathy Tierney, Principal Officer, DeSales Secular Institute, Indianapolis, IN*

### **Executive Committee of the United States Conference of Secular Institutes:**

President:	Marcia Vinje, MN	marciaschoenstatt@yahoo.com
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**[www.secularinstitutes.org](http://www.secularinstitutes.org) & [www.cmis-int.org/en/](http://www.cmis-int.org/en/)**



## DeSales Secular Institute Celebrates Fifth Consecration Renewal and Two New Candidates

The DeSales Secular Institute held its annual retreat at Miramar Retreat Center in Duxbury, Massachusetts, from September 27 through October 3, 2019. Fr. Don Heet, OSFS, was the retreat master and celebrant at the Mass for vow and promise renewals.



**Kathleen Tierney made her fifth consecration renewal and Heather Triggs and Katherine Marsh became candidates with their direction of intentions. Francis Martin made her vow renewal as a consecrated member. Barbara Houghton and Madeline Rice renewed their promises as Associates.** Although we are small in number, it was a very meaningful, beautiful ceremony.

The topic of the retreat was the **Spiritual Directory**. Fr. Don Heet gave wonderful, insightful conferences on the history and development of the directory. It was a great spiritual gift to learn how the wisdom of St. Francis de Sales has been passed down to us through the Visitation order and the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales. We are even more grateful for the treasure we have in our Spiritual Directory.

Candidates Katherine Marsh (foreground) and Heather Triggs (left) share a moment on Duxbury Bay with Directress Kathleen Tierney.



From left to right: Kathleen Tierney, Fran Martin, Nan Bernardo, Katherine Marsh, Madeline Rice, Heather Triggs, and Barbara Houghton.



## Company of St. Ursula in the United States

### Together in Maine

“Immense joy, Angela’s presence, and the gaiety of each member”: Marie Chantal describes our annual gathering for 2019, over Labor Day weekend. Welcoming a new sister added to the joy of being together - “insieme” - as St. Angela encouraged. (<https://companyofstursula.org/who-we-are/albums/>)

We were in Lewiston, Liliane’s hometown.

Left: Elena renews her commitment.  
Right: Rachael receives the medal of St. Angela, marking her admission to the Company.



“Angela’s Ladder” gave us food for reflection. Resting at midday during the olive harvest, the teenaged Angela Merici saw a ladder or staircase linking earth and heaven. Angels and maidens descended, singing and playing instruments. The vision, God’s call, took shape forty years later in the Company of St. Ursula (1535). Firmly on earth, pointing to heaven, the “ladder” reveals our vocation in the world, in the light of eternity, and guides our prayer.

Joy and consolation bubbled up as we prayed, cooked, ate, laughed, played, and shared.



### **Let's Pray!**

Saint Angela, thank you for your promise to be “always with us, helping us with our prayers.” Help us to continue to live by the vision. -*Mary Cabrini Durkin, Principal Officer*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 12, 2019



## **Secular Institute of Missionaries of the Kingship of Christ Celebrates 100th Anniversary on November 19, 2019**

One hundred years ago, on November 19, 1919, twelve women gathered in the chapel of San Damiano outside of Assisi to make their first profession as Missionaries of the Kingship of Christ. Germinating from an idea of the Venerable Armida Barelli and Franciscan Friar Agostino Gemelli, these women made their profession of the vows of chastity, and promises of poverty, and obedience, a profession to what would become a new vocation in the Church - the state of lay consecration.

Over the course of the next three decades, after many meetings, letters, and appeals to the bishops, cardinals, and Pope, the effort culminated in the issuing of the Papal *Provida Mater Ecclesia* by Pope Pius XII, in which this new state of lay consecration became part of canon law. Present in over twenty countries of the world, the membership number is close to 3,000 women who live lay lives but have dedicated themselves to the promotion of the Kingship of Christ through their prayer and actions.

At the height of World War I, Armida Barelli was involved in a great apostolate called Catholic Action, where efforts were made to enhance the education of women throughout Italy, both within the Catholic faith and in basic educational tools. In addition, Barelli promoted a devotion to the Sacred Heart that was accepted by the Italian army and engaged in a massive public relations campaign to promote devotion during the War.

Current members are located in many dioceses across the country. For more information, **visit [simkc.org](http://simkc.org).**

## News Briefs:

- ◆ **Fr. Scott Jones**, serving at the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Arnold, Missouri, sent this news for the *Mountaineer* and our website. **Take time to visit the new website for the Institute of the Heart of Jesus – Priests at [www.uspcj.org](http://www.uspcj.org).**
- ◆ **The next deadline** for our Christmas *Mountaineer* will be by the Feast of our National Patroness on **December 8, 2019**. Thank you in advance for sharing some life from your institute with the *Mountaineer* Readers!
- ◆ Each year Nancy Lappin works hard on getting the most up-to-date info in the book **A Guide to Religious Ministries for Catholic Men and Women**. The year 2020 will be the 41st annual edition. If you are interested in copies for your retreat centers or parish email: [info@religiousministries.com](mailto:info@religiousministries.com)



### USCSI Mission Statement:

- The USCSI shares in the mission of Jesus Christ in serving its member institutes by providing education, resources, and support for member institutes.
- The USCSI is an organization of member institutes committed to making known, understood, and appreciated the call to consecrated secularity in the Catholic Church.
- USCSI collaborates with other groups to present consecrated secularity as a viable option in today's Church.

- ◆ **One very brief but beautiful prayer** is commonly attributed to St. Augustine, a popular saint from the 5th century. What is unique about this prayer is that it not only prays for the person about to fall asleep, but also prays for their loved ones. The prayer entrusts them to God and asks his protecting grace to surround and comfort them.

*Watch, Lord, with those who work or wake or weep tonight.*

*Give the angels and saints charge over those who sleep.*

*O Lord Jesus Christ, tend your sick ones, rest your weary ones, bless your dying ones, soothe the suffering ones, pity all the afflicted ones, shield the joyful ones, and all for your love's sake. Amen.* Source: Aletia Aug 4, 2019

- ◆ Due to many of our institutes being of European origin, if you need a translator, check out **deepl.com** and if you need graphics and photos see **canva.com**