

Goodness in Action

*A monthly newsletter from
the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur
U.S. East-West Province*



January - February 2025 Updates

Celebrating Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN

February 12, 2025, marked a poignant milestone—20 years since the martyrdom of Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN, a fearless advocate who dedicated her life to uplifting the marginalized communities of Brazil's Amazon. Her unwavering commitment to justice and service in the face of adversity remains a powerful testament to her legacy. Sister Dorothy spent countless years nurturing a vibrant community, tirelessly organizing schools and healthcare facilities for those in need, embodying the spirit of compassion and resilience. Tragically, her life was taken as a direct consequence of her advocacy for the rainforest and the rights of its inhabitants. Yet, her spirit inspires us to champion the causes she held dear. As we reflect on her extraordinary life, let us embrace her courage and reignite our commitment to social justice and environmental stewardship.

On January 10, 2025, the Community of Sant'Egidio honored the life and legacy of honor Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN at a ceremony in the Church of San Bartolomeo all'Isola in Rome, Italy. Sister Dorothy's family attended this service with students from Mount Notre Dame High School in Ohio and Emmanuel College in Boston, Sisters, staff and friends. Sister Kathy Harmon, SNDdeN from the Ohio Province, presented a small container of blood-soaked soil from the place of her murder and one of her sweaters to add to a permanent memorial at the Basilica, a church dedicated to martyrs of the modern age. Sister Dorothy is the first woman from the U.S. recognized with this honor.





Pictured above are Sister Dorothy's family and Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.

Sister Dorothy's legacy is alive and well. Read more about events and tributes in her honor and learn more about Sister Dorothy [here](#).



Notre Dame Elementary student breaking ground for the tree.

Planting Seeds of Hope in Belmont

On Wednesday, February 12, in Belmont, California, representatives from the Sisters, NDNU, Notre Dame Belmont HS and Notre Dame Elementary planted a Brazilian rosewood tree at a ceremony honoring the life and impact of Sister Dorothy Stang. A plaque that stands by the tree reads Sister Dorothy's "...legacy lives on in the countless hearts she touched and the forests she worked to preserve."

May this tree flourish as a symbol of Sister Dorothy's legacy! Thank you, Notre Dame de Namur University, Notre Dame Belmont, and Notre Dame Elementary.

Learn more and watch a video of the ceremony

Remembrances



Remembering Sister Patricia Shanahan,



SNDdeN (1930 - 2024)

Sister Patricia was a beloved Sister of Notre Dame de Namur who directed catechetical programs for the poor in several U.S. states and Peru. There, she supported families through a home-visit program and cared for children with special needs. When she returned to the United States, she served as a Literacy Volunteer into her retirement years. **Sister Patricia went home to her good God on December 17, 2024.**

[Learn more about Sister Patricia](#)

News and Updates

Notre Dame Mission Volunteers Conference Builds Unity and Community

From January 24 – 26, more than 300 volunteers, staff, and Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur came together for the **Notre Dame Mission Volunteers Americorps** conference in Baltimore, Maryland. The theme of this year's gathering was "Unity through Community." Participants shared stories of their missions, participated in service projects, and attended workshops on various social justice issues.

[Learn more](#)



Sisters Meg Walsh and Ann Howard, SNDdeN with a NDMVA Member.



Belmont Book Club Welcomes Author and Legislator



Author and former congresswoman, Jackie Speier.

The Belmont Province Center book club welcomed author and former legislator Jackie Speier to discuss her memoir *Undaunted*. The book shares the story of the many difficult episodes she has experienced in her personal and professional life, told in a readable, compelling way. Her ability to face trauma, respond and work through it, and then work for ways to help others suffering similar events is genuinely inspiring. She has been a leader in working for gun safety, women's rights and sexual abuse in the workplace and the military, among other causes.

**Learn
more**



SNDdeN Feast Day Highlights 2025 Jubilarians

On Saturday, February 1, our communities gathered across the U.S. - from Baltimore and throughout New England to Belmont, California - for our Missioning and Feast Day Celebration - and many more joined online! The celebration highlighted our 2025 Jubilarians.

**Learn
more**



Sisters Judy Ward and Catherine O'Brien, SNDdeN at the Feast Day Celebration at Emmanuel College in Boston.



Sister Kathryn Keenan, SNDdeN Reflects on Global Leadership Conference

The Leadership Team of the Sisters of Notre Dame U.S. East-West Province recently attended the Global Leadership Meeting of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, which brought together Sisters from Japan, Peru, Brazil, Rome, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Africa, Britain, North and South



Belgium, and the United States.

[Read Sister Kathryn's Reflection](#)



The U.S East-West Leadership Team: Sisters Ginny Scally, Kathryn Keenan, Pat O'Brien, Maria Delaney, and Roberta Rzezniak, SNDdeN.



Sister Patty Chappell, SNDdeN Delivers Address at NRVC Convocation

The National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC) convocation was held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in November 2024, and Sister Patty Chappell, SNDdeN, was invited to speak. Her speech, "Embracing Transformational Values," focused on the misuse of power and a framework for embracing four values to help religious communities work toward justice.

[Learn more here](#)



Sister Patty Chappell, SNDdeN, at the NRVC Convocation.

Highlights from our Learning Communities

Celebrating Founders' Week



February 2 marked 221 years since the founding of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. During Founders' Week, the community celebrated with



Sisters and school staff celebrate Founders' Week at Notre Dame Academy in Hingham, Massachusetts.

Lecture at Emmanuel College Focuses on Sister Dorothy Stang

On February 5, Emmanuel College hosted a powerful lecture on the life and legacy of Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN. Sister Ellen Dabrieo, SNDdeN, spoke about the impact of Sister Dorothy's community building. She reflected on the throughline between St. Julie's emphasis on teaching students what they needed to know for life and Sister Dorothy's work to empower at-risk communities through practical education. Professor Laurie Johnston, professor of theology and religious studies, spoke on what it means to be a martyr.

Students who had traveled to Rome to attend the Church of San Bartolomeo all'Isola ceremony shared their powerful experiences.

Founders' Week, the schools celebrated with special Masses, service projects and more. We are humbled to see Saint Julie Billiard's legacy live on through the hallmarks of our learning communities.



Sisters, Emmanuel staff and students at the Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN Lecture.



Sister Ellen Dabrieo, SNDdeN.

Stay Connected

Catholic Sisters Week Coming Soon!

Catholic Sisters Week, running from March 8 –14, celebrates the impact of women in vowed religious life!



The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur's spirit of simplicity, goodness and compassion has profoundly shaped many lives. **We invite you to honor the unique contributions of these extraordinary women and celebrate their legacy by sharing a reflection, a note of gratitude, or a simple "thank you" to acknowledge a Sister's impact on you.**



2024

**Share your story
here!**

Throughout Catholic Sisters Week, we will share reflections on vowed religious life from our Sisters and more on our social media accounts! Make sure to follow us!



OUR CALL TO ACTION

JOIN US

WAYS TO GIVE

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