

OH! HOW GOOD GOD IS!

*Joyfully Making Known
God's Goodness*

An invitation to reflection.



SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR
Making known God's goodness



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A Note to Our Supporters

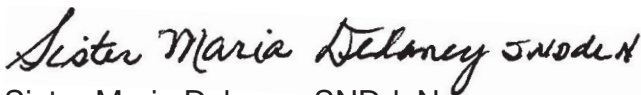
Dear Friends and Benefactors of
the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur,

Thank you for your enduring support of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. As women with “hearts as wide as the world,” we are deeply grateful for your partnership in carrying forward St. Julie’s legacy of love and service.

This year, we are reflecting on what it means to live joyfully as we respond to the gospel call. Even in times marked by upheaval, suffering and division, we are called as women religious to be a joyful presence in our world, and we invite you to share in that spirit with us.

In these pages, you will find reflections on joy inspired by our history, mission and ministry. We hope they offer moments of prayer, encouragement and renewal – and that they bring you joy as well.

In Notre Dame,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sister Maria Delaney SNDdeN". The script is cursive and elegant.

Sister Maria Delaney, SNDdeN

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sister Kathryn Keenan SNDdeN". The script is cursive and elegant.

Sister Kathryn Keenan, SNDdeN

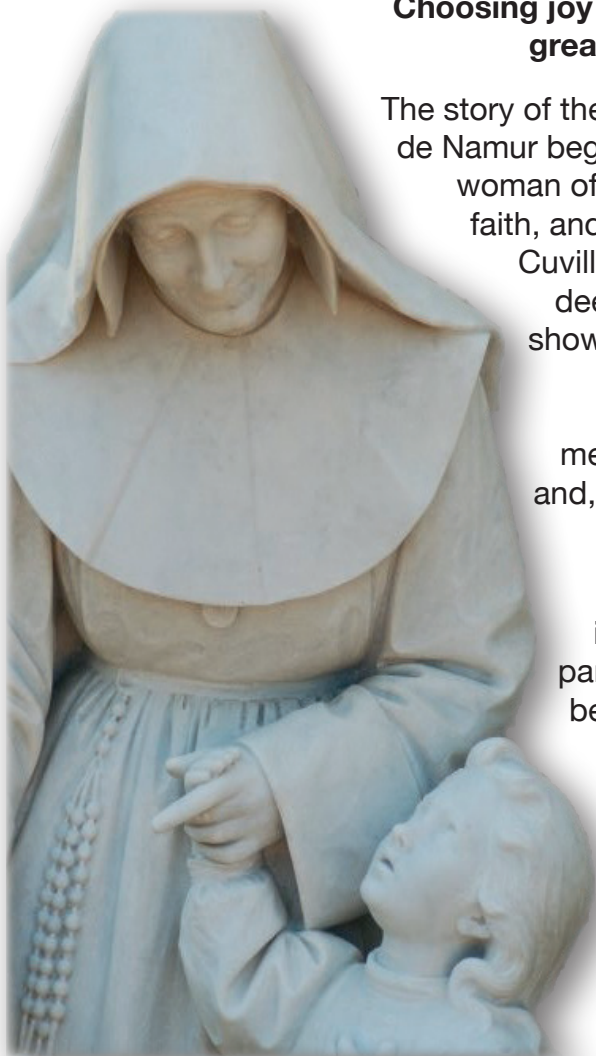
For the Leadership team
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, U.S. East-West Province

St. Julie Billiard: The Smiling Saint

Choosing joy even in the midst of great challenge

The story of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur begins with Julie Billiard - a woman of extraordinary courage, faith, and vision. Born in 1751 in Cuvilly, France, to a poor but deeply faithful family, Julie showed remarkable spiritual depth even as a child. By age seven, she had memorized the catechism and, more importantly, lived its message with joy.

At 22, a mysterious illness left Julie partially paralyzed and confined to bed for more than twenty years. Yet her suffering never diminished her faith. From her bedside, she prayed, encouraged others, and shared an unshakable belief in the goodness of God.



Centering Prayer

Find a quiet place to be with God. Slowly recite St. Julie's invitation, allow the words to sink in with each breath:

Oh! How Good is the Good God.

Oh! How Good is God.

Oh! How Good.

Oh!

“Oh! How Good God is!”

“Everything came together — their joy, their intellect, their community and that deep desire to make known God’s goodness.”

- Sister Gillian Wallace, SNDdeN on becoming a Sister

Julie lived in turbulent times and we live in turbulent times. She saw joy and goodness in her work and we continue to advocate for the marginalized.

During the upheaval of the French Revolution, Julie’s courage only deepened. Forced into hiding because of her faith, she continued to teach and inspire others, trusting that even in uncertain times God was at work.

In 1804, Julie and her companion Françoise Blin de Bourdon founded the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, dedicated to educating those most in need - especially young girls – teaching them what they need to know for life and helping people everywhere know God’s goodness.



Reflection

Joy is not the absence of suffering, rather a purposeful loving response to God’s goodness. How can consciously choosing joy, like St. Julie, be a catalyst for positive change within and around you?

Joy is in all of God's Creation

“... in collaboration with others we can do amazing things to reveal the goodness of God and the goodness and preciousness of God's beautiful world. ”

- Sister Eileen Burns, SNDdeN

Grounded in the belief that all creation reveals God's goodness, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur live their commitment to *Laudato Si'* by caring for our common home through education, sustainable practices, and community partnership.

At the Cuvilly Arts and Earth Center, early-childhood programs bring together ecological education, regenerative farming and environmental justice.

Establishment of a 70-acre Land Trust in Ipswich, Massachusetts, reflects the Sisters' long-term commitment to protecting and stewarding the land entrusted to their care for future generations.



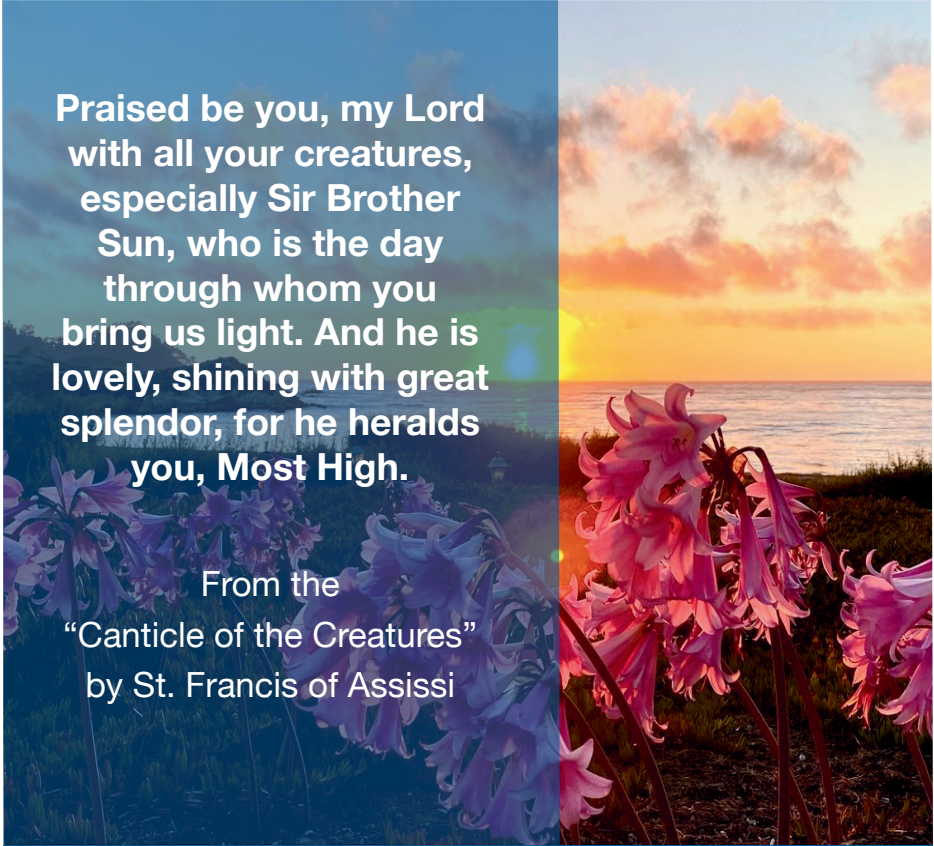
Reflection:

How can living in communion with all of God's creation awaken joy within you?

Joy is in all of God's Creation

“All of us are a part of a great Oneness. Let us pray for all of us and for all the world where we can all live – plants, animals, and human life – in peace and harmony.”

- Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN, advocate for the environment and human rights, martyred in the Amazon in 2005.



**Praised be you, my Lord
with all your creatures,
especially Sir Brother
Sun, who is the day
through whom you
bring us light. And he is
lovely, shining with great
splendor, for he heralds
you, Most High.**

From the
“Canticle of the Creatures”
by St. Francis of Assisi

Reflection:

When has the beauty of God's creation awakened joy within you and drawn you deeper in faith?

Joy is in Ministry

“I’m most grateful for the blessings that were given to me in my ministries through joy and sorrow, thick and thin, success and failures...there was always the blessing of being part of this ministry...”

- Sister Virginia Ann Unger, SNDdeN



Sister Virginia Unger, SNDdeN joins Moreland Notre Dame School students during a service-learning event.

Sr Joyce McMullen, SNDdeN with Staff of Project Care and Concern, Dorchester, Massachusetts: For over 30 years the project has served the residents of Harbor Point and Uphams Corner sections of Boston, responding to the needs of low-income families, youth and senior citizens.



Sr Kathleen O’Hagan, SNDdeN with students of Big Laurel Learning Center, Kermit, West Virginia: Working with the mountain community, the center strives to promote healing, social change, and environmental protection through education, outreach and spiritual connection.



Reflection

How might you steadfastly walk with others to make God’s goodness known and deepen your joy?

Joy is in You

“Your generosity makes it possible for us to continue St. Julie’s mission of spreading God’s goodness to our world so in need of hope and light for our future.”

- Sister Yvonne Bondi, SNDdeN



What joy it is to be in partnership and community with you! Your faithful and loving support of the Sisters and our mission is a constant source of encouragement as, together, we make God’s goodness known in our schools, ministries, healthcare centers and communities around the world. We thank you — and we pray for you — with joy.

Reflection

Where do you notice joy living within you?
How does gratitude open your heart to that joy?

Joy is in the Future



Guided by the prophetic wisdom of St. Julie and our charism, the mission continues because of partners like you. We continue to address unjust social structures and empower individuals to secure the essentials of life and human dignity. We see joy in the impact of our advocacy.

Joy is found each day and continues to grow through our Notre Dame schools across the country where thousands of students learn to embody the Hallmarks of Notre Dame Learning Community.

And for us, there is deep joy in knowing that you help carry forward Julie's courageous vision and ensure that education, hope and compassion continue to transform lives.

Reflection

Where do you see the Sisters' charism shaping a more hopeful and joyful future? How is God calling you to participate in our mission?

*Be like the sunflower
that follows every
movement of the sun,
and keep your eyes
always turned toward
our good God.*

- Saint Julie Billiart



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