

Newsletter
Vol. 37, No.2
July, 2017

pastoral ministry
NETWORK

Seminar: *Peacebuilding: Global & Local*

Keynote Speaker – Mr. Gerard Powers, JD

On July 19, more than fifty School Sisters of St. Francis, Associates and friends gathered in St. Joseph Hall for the biannual Pastoral Ministry Network Seminar, this year entitled “Peacebuilding: Global and Local.” Months of confrontations and shootings on American streets coupled with accelerating terrorist attacks around the globe gave the topic – chosen over a year before – a painful urgency.

Keynote speaker Gerard Powers, JD, came to us from the Catholic Peacebuilding Network (centered at the University of Notre Dame) with the big picture: “The Peacebuilding Church: Global.” While the more familiar term “peacemaking” denotes efforts during a conflict to bring opposing sides together, the United Nations has coined “*peacebuilding*” as a broader idea. The CPN uses it to



describe all the relationships between the many actors and factors before, during, and after a violent communal conflict, marshaled to bring about “justpeace.”

Professor Powers argued that the Catholic Church is more of a peacebuilding church than we realize, but it could do even more. As evidence, he shared slides and stories of exemplary Catholic peace workers making and leveraging connections from Northern Ireland to Uganda to the Philippines.

He also pointed out some great assets Catholics have in the work of peacebuilding:

1. a transnational, hierarchical institution with “ubiquitous presence”;
2. beliefs, norms and rituals which support forgiveness and reconciliation;
3. people power: over one billion church members around the world.

While we take these things for granted, they can actually be wonderful “soft power assets” for building attitudes and situations of peace.

Mr. Powers went on to describe “peacebuilding opportunities” we have in our own local churches. He recommended that we continue the pastoral work we already do, but with a conscious shift toward weaving the relationships that bring peace. For example,

- In faith formation, spread the stories of peacebuilding heroes such as he shared with us.
- Help one another be more “catholic” (world-aware) and not just parochial.
- Develop twin-parish relationships to support parishes, schools, and refugee camps in conflict zones.

Mr. Powers gave us a wealth of information, showered us with handouts, and directed us toward the Catholic Peacebuilding Network website to learn more.



Table discussion and large-group sharing gave participants a chance to process these ideas and share their own experiences of building peace and healing conflicts.

Afternoon Session

An afternoon panel recounted examples of building relationships of peace in three

familiar locales. Sr. Joan Wageman talked about her work and that of Sr. Maureen Connolly in the Alternatives to Violence Program in prison ministry in Omaha. Associate Maureen Hellwig discussed her work at Erie House in Chicago. Father Tim Kitzke shared the many dimensions and challenges of being the designated Vicar for Urban Ministry in downtown Milwaukee.

The day was framed by beautiful prayer services at beginning and end, including one of the “Dances of Universal Peace.” In the closing prayer, participants were challenged to name one action they will take home to build peace around them in the months to come.

Reported by Sister Jane Russell

the Church's "ubiquitous presence" belief in reconciliation, & immense "people power" constitute great "soft power assets" for peacebuilding.

2016 JoAnn Brdecka Award to *Sisters Noel LeClaire and Roseann Wagner*



One of the happiest moments of any PMN Seminar is the Award Banquet, at which we honor one or two of our members for emulating the “pioneering” spirit of Network founder S. JoAnn Brdecka.

In 2016 the Network once again found two worthy recipients in Sisters Noel LeClaire and Roseann Wagner.

Sister Noel was celebrated especially for her social outreach work over many decades in Kentucky and Mississippi, displaying such skills as empowering people, creativity, networking, collaboration, the ability to incorporate religion and music into daily living, and love of the poor.

Sister Roseann was honored for her many years of music ministry, training of cantors, formation work, and spiritual direction, especially her tenure as organist, liturgist and teacher of music at Sacred Heart School of Theology in Hales Corners.

After the formal citations were read, members attending had a chance to share their memories of each of these Sisters’ presence and work.

Thus, for their years of skillful and generous service, the Pastoral Ministry Network gladly awarded the 2016 JoAnn Brdecka Award for Pioneering in Pastoral Ministry to

Sisters Noel LeClaire and Roseann Wagner.

Congratulations, Noel & Roseann!

NEWSLETTER published one or two times yearly by the School Sisters of St. Francis Pastoral Ministry Network. Editor: **S. Jane Elyse Russell** (janerussell@bac.edu). Printing & mailing: Information Services, U.S. Province Office, 1515 S. Layton Blvd, Milwaukee, WI, 53215.

Membership & Subscription: (\$10 per academic year): **S. Carol Ann Jaeger** (4031 W Morgan Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53221). Other Steering Committee members: Sisters **Joelyn Hayes; Angela Ireland; Theresa Engel; Winifred Whelan (Chair);** Associates **Colleen Gulling and Maureen Hellwig.**
Provincial Liaison: **S. Marilyn Ketteler**

INTERVIEW WITH SISTER MICHELE DOYLE

---by Win Whelan



SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2016

Way back in the 1960s, when I wanted to join the Chicago province, I was assigned to St. Francis School in Yazoo City Mississippi to teach Latin and Religion. Our superior there and school principal was Sister Michele Doyle. It was an all-black school with all-white sister-teachers dressed in white habits. Discipline in the school was tough, but Michele did an excellent job of it.

It's almost 60 years later, and except for the eight years she spent in leadership, Michele is still bringing church to people of

It's almost 60 years later, & except for the 8 years she spent in GSSF leadership, Michele is still bringing church to people of the Jackson area.

the Jackson area. She lives a busy life. On the first Sunday of the month, she travels about an hour away to St. Mary's in Yazoo City to teach a class for the diocese to certify people to teach religion in that area. Wednesday mornings will find her traveling to St. Francis Church in Madison. October 4 was coming up on the calendar, so Michele decided to spend the class teaching about Sts. Francis and Clare. The group there had named itself "Martha and Mary."

Then on Wednesday evening, she teaches a class at Holy Family church in Jackson. This class also has people preparing to teach in the diocese as well as others in adult education. This group is all black. There are fifteen every week, including the pastor, a Norbertine. "If he's home, he'll be there. He's Indian. That's a nice group. They're all nice, they really are."

On Thursdays, Michele travels to St. Thomas Church in Lexington. This class begins with a pot luck supper at 6:15 and then class from 7:00 till 8:00. "That's just a little bitty group of about six," says Michele. "But I can't abandon them; their whole parish consists of 35 or 40 families."

In the past, Michele would stay overnight in Durant with Margaret Held and Paula Merrill and then drive home in the morning. On Thursday August 25, she was on her way to her area meeting when she heard the news of their deaths. The people at St. Thomas were so devastated by the Sisters' deaths that they could not discuss the materials that Michele had

...✠ the people at St. Thomas Church were so devastated by the Sisters' deaths that they could not discuss the materials Michele had planned. At her next few classes, all she could do was talk about death & commiserate with them. ✠✠✠....

planned. At her next few classes, all she could do was talk about death and commiserate with them. She realizes that if the Sisters had died on the following night, she would have been with them.

Michele works hard in her classes. She has definite plans for what she wants to accomplish and handouts for use in class or for further reading. When she's not teaching, she spends time reading and preparing. Each morning she attends Mass at St. Catherine Retirement Center where she is friends with the priests and sisters. In all of the towns and places she visits, Michele is highly praised and warmly welcomed. At "Fat Tuesday's" restaurant, she can have a meal any time and never see the bill. Bruce and Jan Evans often treat her to dinner. She seldom has to cook because of all the leftovers!



From 1983 to 1991, Michele served as U. S. Provincial for the School Sisters of St. Francis. "We had a good team," said Michele. "We got along well. The first team was Joann Riesterer, Rosalie King, Michaela Crowley, and Elaine Gremminger. The last team was Pat Bates, Leta Heese, Phyllis Vater, Marilyn Brodd and myself."

She started out in 1947 as a second-grade teacher in McHenry, Illinois, then graduated to high school in 1949 as a teacher and later became principal at St.

Francis School in Yazoo City. Except for her eight years as Provincial, she's been there in Mississippi ever since. "I'm back here 25 years," she noted. She stayed in Yazoo till 1969 when they closed the school. And then for seven years she taught religion part time at St. Joseph High School and taught history part time at Jackson State University. Then she worked for the Jackson diocese for eight years before she was elected to the Provincial Team.

Michele drove me to see St. Francis School in Yazoo City where we first met 60 years ago. It was a sad sight. The buildings have been neglected and the neighborhood is poor. I was remembering myself in my white habit decorating the chapel for Christmas. But the house was in no condition to enter. The high school was in the back and the church was just about to fall down. Part of the reason for closing St. Francis was because the public schools integrated. It was difficult but they did a good job. There was a good priest there who facilitated it. St. Mary's Church, where Michele goes on the first Sunday of the month to teach, is integrated also. Diane Melton, the religious education coordinator there, was delighted to see her.

☺ In all of the towns & places she visits, Michele is highly praised & warmly welcomed. ☺☺

When I saw the many Confederate flags along the road, I asked Michele whether people really believe in segregation. "It's tradition more than segregation," she thought. She said that people didn't think deeply about it. "It's just that it's always been that way." "Football," she said, "is more important to the people down here. I want to say it's after God, but maybe it's before God."

THANK YOU, MICHELE, FOR SHARING WITH US.

PMN Steering Committee Reviews, Looks Ahead

The Pastoral Ministry Network Steering Committee met twice since last report: in October, 2016, at Clare House in Milwaukee and in May, 2017, at St. Patrick's Convent in St. Charles, IL. The fall meeting reflected on the 2016 Seminar (as reported above) and gave some thoughts to next steps. The spring meeting refined ideas for the 2018 Seminar, and engaged a keynote speaker. Attending the May meeting (pictured) were Sisters Tess Engel, Winifred Whelan (Chair), Carol Ann Jaeger, Angela Ireland, Joelyn Hayes, Jane Elyse Russell, and Associates Colleen Gulling and Maureen Hellwig, new to the Steering Committee.

Among other topics, the committee reflected on possible expansion of our understanding of "pastoral ministry," especially as more of our members retire from employment in this field. We wanted to shift emphasis more to the *attitude* of tender care & spiritual "feeding" of others, while not broadening the term so much as to lose all focus. The committee eventually agreed on the following description to incorporate into our revised membership brochure:



Pastoral Ministry Network Steering Committee
May 27, 2017

Network Membership. “Ministry” comes from a Latin word for *service*; “pastoral” (from the Latin for *shepherd*) adds the note of tender care, guidance and protection. This Network, originally designed for SSSF and Associates engaged in ministries of the Word, sacrament and liturgy, pastoral care, spiritual direction & faith-community leadership, welcomes *all interested service-giving persons* as members.

For our **2018 Seminar**, we wanted to extend the “Peacebuilding” theme as well as relate to the 2018 General Assembly theme, “Weaving Together a New Heart for Intercultural Life & Mission.” We came up with:

“Building Relationships across Cultural Divides.”



The divides are many, as we experience them in the U.S. today: black/white, Anglo/Hispanic/Asian, Christian/Muslim, etc. As we thought about speakers who could help us ponder this problem and what to do about it, we ultimately invited SSSF Associate Eleanor Fleming, PhD., DDS, MPH. Eleanor is a dental epidemiologist in the US Public Health Service working in Maryland. She was previously assigned to the North Carolina Division of Public Health, in the Chronic Disease and Injury

Section (especially working on diabetes prevention in impoverished communities). Eleanor has presented her work at national and international conferences, and used it to inform local public health policies. She tells us that she has been thinking a lot about our “cultural divides,” especially since a black honors student from NC was killed at a Maryland bus stop near her house.

Save the date! July 17, 2018

In other Network news, outgoing Treasurer Tess Engel reported that we have 67 members paid thru the 2016-2017 year, largely due to Tess’s persistent emails & phone calls to check on the status of unpaid members. (Thanks, Tess!) (See membership renewal form at end of Newsletter, to update your status.) Sister Winifred Whelan will chair the Steering Committee for the next two years, while S. Carol Ann will serve as Treasurer as well as recording secretary for meetings.



Responses to our 2016 Membership-Renewal Question

At the 2016 PMN Peacebuilding Seminar we asked you to put into practice the wonderful words of our speakers regarding the Gospel mandate to build peace, and then to share your efforts with us for the Newsletter. Hence this year’s **Reflection Question: “What has happened to your resolution to build peace after our 2016 Seminar? Your reflections:**

I will build peace by:

- **Sr. Marietta Hanus:** Prayer, peaceful interaction with others.
- **Sr. Joan Wageman:** Being grateful instead of judgmental.
- **S. Mary Garcia:** Here at the Motherhouse, where several of us share life together, there are opportunities to build peace. What I try to do is:
 - Share what I have and others can use.
 - Avoid arguments by *not* imposing my own opinions.
 - Participate in the weekly group reflections on the Sunday Readings.
- **Sr. Ruth Brings:** I wasn't at the Peacebuilding Seminar, but I can tell you what I am doing. After studying the materials on Human Trafficking sent to the parish by LCWR, I recruited a few people from the parish to look into this material as well. After some discussion, we decided to offer a presentation to the parish and the Janesville cluster parishes on this topic. Our target date is Feb. 2017

Thanks for these efforts! Every bit helps.

Book Review:

William Paul Young's *The Shack*



--reviewed by Sister Carol Ann Jaeger

Some of you may have seen the movie *The Shack*, based on a book by the same title. The author, William Paul Young (name he uses on the book) published this novel in 2007 as a Christmas gift for his six children. The story line is that Mack, actually Mackenzie Allen Phillips, takes his three children, Josh, Kate & Missy, camping at the lake. His wife was attending a pre-scheduled conference. While Josh & Kate are in a canoe, it overturns. Mack rushes to save Josh, but a perpetrator kidnaps Missy, takes her to a shack & kills her.

Three and a half years later, Mack goes to his mailbox and receives a note, "Mackenzie, it's been a while. I've missed you. I'll be at the shack next weekend if you want to get together. Signed, Papa." Still reeling in grief and guilt over Missy's death, the shack is the last place Mack wants to go. However, the note dominates his thoughts and he decides to go.

As the story unfolds Mack meets God, in the person of a black woman, Jesus and Sarayu, an Asian woman who represents the Holy Spirit. Gradually through many encounters with all three, Mack realizes he is loved by God. It was not his fault that Missy died and he comes to mend his relationship with his own father.



When I was the Adult & family Minister at St. James Parish in Menomonee Falls, WI, I facilitated a discussion of this book four times. It was very healing for many of the participants. They too realized God loved them and they could forgive those who had hurt them in the past. There was only one woman who said she had to drop out of the group, because she could not think of God in any other way than what she had been taught as a child. For the others it was very freeing to image God in some other possible ways – not just the judging, punishing God of their childhood.

...For many, it was freeing to image God in some other possible ways.....

At one point the author came to Elmbrook Evangelical Church in the Milwaukee area to give a talk. William P. Young's life was fascinating and tragic. He grew up in New Guinea where his parents were missionaries. Being an only child he often played with natives. They engaged in sexual rituals. When his parents realized this, they sent him to an all-boys boarding school at the age of 6. Unfortunately there the older boys sexually abused the younger boys. William buried the memories, grew up & became involved in church ministry. He married one of the young women in the youth group. They had six children, but he knew something was phony about his life.

When he had an affair with his wife's best friend, it was the needle that burst his identity bubble. He went into intense psychotherapy and was able to come to terms with his life. At the talk I attended, one woman asked him if Missy was his childhood that had been killed. He said, "Yes." So he used his personal experience as the backdrop for the story. He was amazed that a book he wrote to explain his experience to his children became so widespread – over 20 million copies (in many languages). That day at Elmbrook he had just come from a talk at a women's prison near Fond du Lac. He gives out copies of the book to prisoners. He said he is overwhelmed and praises God that so many prisoners come to the insight that they are loved and forgiven by God.

Some parts of the book delve into New Age ideas, but overall, it is a thought-provoking story that I recommend reading and discussing with others. There is also a good article on the movie by S. Rose Pacatte, FSP in the March 2017 issue of *St. Anthony Messenger*.

2016-17 Financial Report

2016 Seminar Income: \$1945.00
Expenses: \$1335.00*
BALANCE from Seminar: \$610.00

* (Expenses were lower than usual because (a) St. Joseph Center costs were lower than at Alverno, and (b) Keynote speaker Gerard Powers donated his honorarium back to us for the peacebuilding work of the Pastoral Ministry Network.)

Balance as of Sept., 2016: \$4368.13.
 Income: \$490.00
 Expenses (Travel + food costs for Steering Committee meetings) \$254.35
Balance as of 5/17/17: \$4603.78.

MEMBERSHIP: Everyone who is receiving this issue is paid for 2016-17, thanks to S. Tess's persistence in contacting you.

According to our records, the following PMN Members have also paid their dues for the coming year, 2017-18.

Sr. Mary Anne Albert	Sr. Mary Boyd	Sr. Kate Brenner
Sr. Mary Carroll	Sr. Maureen Connolly	Sr. Lynmary Ehrgott
Sr. Janet Guenther	Sr. Joelyn Hayes	Maureen Hellwig
Sr. Leanne Herda	Sr. Frances Hicks	Sr. Angela Ireland
Sr. Carol Ann Jaeger	Sr. Marilyn Ketteler	Sr. Kathleen Kluthe
Sr. Bernadette Luecker	Sr. Beth Lyman	Sr. Kathleen McNulty
Sr. Mary Ellen McRaith	Sr. Barbara Rowan	Sr. Jane Elyse Russell
Sr. Therese Thoenen	Sr. Joan Marie Wageman	Sr. Mary Jane Wagner
Sr. Winifred Whelan	Sr. Felicia Wolf	

If you're not on the above list and wish to remain a member of the Pastoral Ministry Network, please use the form below to send your dues by Nov. 1, 2017.. (Address any inquiries to S. Carol Ann Jaeger.) Thanks!

PMN Membership Form 2017—2018

Name _____
 Address _____
 Ministry _____
 Enclosed is _____ \$10.00 for 2017-2018

Mail to: S. Carol Ann Jaeger.

4031 W Morgan Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53221

Reflection Question (Please write a paragraph sharing your thoughts & activities, for publication in our Newsletter.) **America is living with a very controversial President these days. Whether or not you attended our 2016 Seminar on Peacebuilding: Global & Local, what have you been doing to foster "justpeace" in our country and world?**