East-West Province - Sponsorship Office
SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR
Making known God's goodness

December 2025 | Issue 11 | Sponsorship Office Newsletter

Many of us for sure have our favorite books, songs, even television specials that we return to each Christmas. One such book for me is Jan Brett's *The Mitten*. I remember reading it to my children and laughing wildly when the bear sneezes, sending all the animals tumbling out of the mitten. What strikes me now is how this Ukrainian folktale, through its simple narrative and beautiful illustrations, conveys enduring themes of community, cooperation, and the grace of making room for one another. May we remember this season to stretch ourselves in small but meaningful ways, offering kindness and hospitality and wrapping others in the "cozy love" of a mitten.

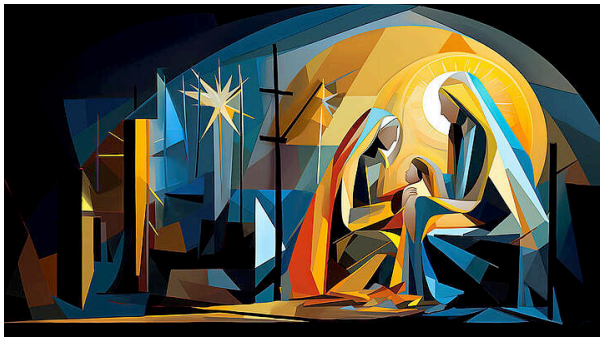
Wishing you a wonderful Christmas filled with an abundance of blessings, love & laughter that carries through the New Year.

Peace,
Katie Colin, Kim Weckbacher, Julie Dowd, Katie-Sue Scullin & Amy Jobin

Mission Moments

Prince of Peace

by Joyce Rupp



Peace. The seed of it in every heart, every nation.
The possibility of a life and a world of nonviolence.
Prince. Ruler. Desiring harmony for one and all.
But peace cannot be forced on anyone,
Not even by you who reign with ultimate authority.
Peace evolves as individual minds and hearts change,
Willing to lay aside what causes dissension,
Open to discuss differences and divisive difficulties,
Ready to listen generously to another point of view.
Prince of Peace, may you reign in our hearts.

Rooted in Mission, Responsive to the Moment: SNDdeN National School Leaders Gathering in Baltimore

Our 2025 School Leaders Conference in Baltimore was a meaningful and energizing gathering of leaders from across our Notre Dame de Namur Learning Communities, centered on the theme *Where Mission Meets the Moment*. Through prayer, presentations, and honest conversation, participants reflected on the realities of leadership today and the Sisters' wisdom that "muddling through" with grace and perseverance is not only acceptable, but faithful.

The conference also offered rich opportunities to experience Notre Dame de Namur mission in action through visits to three Baltimore-area SNDdeN schools. At Maryvale Preparatory School, participants engaged with a student panel and heard school leaders reflect on the history and legacy of Notre Dame de Namur education in the region. At Sisters Academy, attendees toured the facility and chapel and were inspired by a presentation from Monica Arguetaan, an alumna now serving as a staff member. The gathering concluded with a visit to Trinity School, where participants celebrated Mass in the school's beautiful chapel. Together, these experiences deepened connections, affirmed shared purpose, and reinforced the importance of creating space for learning, reflection, and dialogue within our own communities at every level.

As we continue to lead where mission meets the moment, we invite you to reflect on our shared time together through this video of conference highlights. May it serve as a reminder of the relationships, insights, and shared commitment that carry this experience forward into our daily leadership.

Happenings Across the Province

Be sure to check out the SNDdeN social media accounts - **Instagram** & **Facebook** - to learn what's happening within our sponsored ministries! Links also at bottom of newsletter.

NDE Names Sara Maennle as Principal

With the full endorsement of the Notre Dame Elementary Board of Directors, Sara Maennle has been appointed Principal.

Sara has been part of the NDE community for many years – as a student herself and serving as faculty and administrator for over 20 years. She stepped into the interim principal roll in late August following the unexpected move out of state by the former principal. Sara is an Associate of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, is fully committed to our mission and the future of NDE.

Congratulations Sara!

Notre Dame Health Care Celebrates 25 Years of du Lac Assisted Living at Annual Fall Fundraising Event

Notre Dame Health Care's Annual Fall Fundraising Event marked the 25th anniversary of the du Lac Assisted Living Residence with a celebration of mission, service, and community.

The Awards & Recognition Celebration included honoring Sister Marna Rogers, SNDdeN, with the *Sister Jon Julie Sullivan, SNDdeN Mission Award*, recognizing her many contributions to Notre Dame Health Care and the greater Worcester community in ways that embody the spirit and creativity of the award's namesake, the late Sister Jon Julie Sullivan.

Also honored were Julie Lian McDonald and the Board of Directors of the Juniper Outreach Foundation, who received the Notre Dame Health Care *Quiet Hero Award* in recognition of their selfless support of the greater Worcester community.

In addition, the *Notre Dame Health Care Saint Julie Billiart Award* was presented to NDHC staff member, Denise Carroll, Director of Life Enrichment. While this award is traditionally given during an on-campus employee event in the fall, this year the 25th anniversary celebration provided a fitting opportunity for this special recognition.

This annual fundraiser helps to support Notre Dame Health Care's mission-driven programs and services, and the work that makes NDHC a special place for residents, patients, students, families, and employees.

Called to Say “Yes”: Notre Dame San Jose's Sr. Gillian Wallace, SNDdeN, Reflects This Advent

On the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the Notre Dame San Jose community gathered at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in downtown San Jose. The celebration included a reflection by religious studies faculty member Sr. Gillian Wallace, SNDdeN, who professed her perpetual vows with the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur earlier this year.

During the liturgy, Sr. Gillian reflected on her own “yes” to God’s invitation and invited the NDSJ community to consider, like Mary, the power and impact their lives can have when they respond affirmatively to God’s good work within them.

Networking for Mission IV Conference - Save the Date!

Save the date for Networking for Mission IV, July 22–25, 2026, at Emmanuel College in Boston. This gathering will bring together colleagues from across the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur ministries for keynote speakers, workshops, and meaningful opportunities to connect.

Watch for more information in the new year!

Download Flyer to Share

Honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe

On December 12, the Notre Dame Long Term Care Center (Worcester, MA) dedicated their renovated chapel to Our Lady of Guadalupe on her feast day, reminding those who pray there of the enduring love, mercy, and compassion of Mary, the mother of God. St. Julie Billiart held a special devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe, and this dedication continues that spirit, offering a sacred space of comfort, hope, and welcome for all who enter.

Photo: Sisters Kathryn Keenan and Patricia O'Brien, SNDdeN take part in the dedication ceremony of the chapel at the Notre Dame Long Term Care Center.

Strengthening Futures - A New Path to Emmanuel College

Emmanuel College is deepening its commitment to accessible, values-based education through a new partnership with 15 Catholic high schools across Greater Boston. Beginning in fall 2026, the Saints Catholic Connection Guarantee will offer eligible students assured admission and merit scholarships—opening wider pathways for young people formed in Catholic education to continue growing in faith, leadership, and academic excellence. Among the participating schools are four sponsored ministries of the U.S. East-West Province of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur: Academy of Notre Dame–Tyngsboro, Notre Dame Cristo Rey High School, Notre Dame Academy Hingham, and Notre Dame Academy Worcester.

To explore program details and the full list of participating schools, visit ***Emmanuel's announcement***. We are grateful to be part of this growing network of Catholic educational partners working together to expand opportunity for students.

Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice

Our Notre Dame de Namur school communities were grateful to participate in the 2025 Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice, a powerful space for learning, connection, and solidarity. We cherished the fellowship among our schools and the opportunity to connect with new friends committed to faith and justice.

Calendar | Upcoming Events & Meetings

Please reference and bookmark our Calendar of Events page on the EW SNDdeN website to access more information about our events, download our At-A-Glance calendar, access registration links when they go live and additional event listings.

Oct. - April
1st Mon.
2025-2026

Partnering in Mission

New Faculty/Staff Mission Orientation

Zoom Sessions | 3:45 & 6:15 pm ET / 12:45 & 3:15 pm PT

Partnering in Mission is an orientation program welcoming new teachers and staff into the network of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur sponsored ministries and schools. The program offers an in-depth view of the history of the congregation, its mission and purpose, Catholic social thought, Notre Dame de Namur Hallmarks, and the spirituality and vocation of a Notre Dame de Namur educator. Sessions include presentations and time for small group sharing and discussion. ***View program details, download flyer and access registration links here***.

January
22
2026

Register

West Coast SNDdeN Educators Symposium

Embracing Hallmark 5:
Mission and Inclusion in Notre Dame de Namur Education

Taube Center at NDNU | 4 to 6 pm
1500 Ralston Ave., Belmont, CA 94002

Join colleagues from across our Notre Dame Learning Communities for an interactive workshop on strengthening our capacity for civil discourse and deepening our commitment to dignity, inclusion, and justice. Together, we'll explore how we can reverence each member of our community and create systems of belonging rooted in the Seven Hallmarks of a Notre Dame de Namur Learning Community. Grounded in restorative justice principles, this session offers space for open dialogue, reflection, and practical strategies to build understanding and connection in our shared mission.

This is an in-person event.
Wine and appetizers will be served before and after the program.

Reach out to Katie-Sue Scullin, kscullin@ewsndden.org, with any questions.

February
24-25
2026

West Coast Hallmarks Retreat

The Notre Dame de Namur Villa Angelica, Carmel, CA | *Save the Date*
The Hallmark Retreat gathers colleagues from our five SNDdeN California learning communities and offers an opportunity to deepen understanding of the Hallmarks of a Notre Dame de Namur Learning Community, which are integral to the mission of each school. The retreat invites meaningful dialogue and the sharing of ideas that enrich both participants and their learning communities.

See your administrator or campus minister before registering. Reach out to **Katie-Sue Scullin** with any questions.

March
13
2026

East Coast SNDdeN Educators Symposium

Notre Dame Academy, Hingham, MA 02043 | 9 am to 2 pm ET | *Save the Date*
The Notre Dame Educators Symposium is meant to gather faculty, staff, and administrators from Notre Dame de Namur schools across the province to discuss important trends in education and how they impact our Notre Dame de Namur educational mission, as well as to take the opportunity to meet and network with one another.

March
24-25
2026

Register

East Coast Hallmarks Retreat

Spirituality Center, Ipswich, MA | *Register Now!*
Faculty and staff of Notre Dame de Namur schools during the first several years of their tenure are encouraged to attend this retreat to deepen their understanding of the 7 Hallmarks & connect with colleagues across the network.

Please reach out to Julie Dowd with any questions jdowd@ewsndden.org.

March
26-27
2026

SNDdeN and Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools Board Forum

Click image for full size.

May
7-9
2026

East Coast Healing the Healers Retreat

Spirituality Center, Ipswich, MA | *Save the date*

Any staff members from the Notre Dame de Namur health care facilities are encouraged to attend this day-long retreat for rest, reflection, and socializing with fellow staff from Notre Dame de Namur health care facilities throughout New England. Opportunities to learn more about the spirituality of the Sisters, and optional meditative walks, gardening, yoga, and art. Option to spend the night at the retreat center for those who would like.

July
19-22
2026

SNDdeN Student Leadership Conference

Emmanuel College, Boston, MA | *Save the date*
NOTE JULY DATE - Stay tuned for more to come soon!

This student leadership conference is an excellent opportunity for your students to interact with students from their school and students from other Notre Dame de Namur Learning Communities.

Sharing in the SNDdeNs' mission and learning about the Hallmarks will allow them to understand that they are all part of something bigger than themselves. Activities and programming will be designed for students involved in leadership roles at your school who may have untapped leadership potential and/or are difference-makers.

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