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HOW does the Legacy continue?

Jean McNamara is a 1972 graduate of the former School of the Brown County Ursulines. Jean's educational history took her from English, to immunology to a graduate program in computer science. She drifted into the high-tech world that eventually led to 30 years in software engineering at Intel Corporation in Portland, Oregon. Jean took advantage of a provided sabbatical year opportunity which changed her life and her career. She fulfilled a childhood fascination with Africa by travelling to Uganda with a small grassroots team to build a medical clinic in a small village there. Her experience in Uganda gave her a calling - a constant nagging feeling that she should do something else; something meaningful, something that will make the world a little more fair. She landed on a "crazy" idea to take an early retirement offer from Intel and to follow the pull of God's call to pursue a nursing career at the age of 56. In another response to God's call she was led to volunteer in a free-clinic in downtown Dayton. There she met Dr. Sylvia Esser-Gleason. After treating a Rwandan patient, they talked about Africa and the nonprofit Dr. Esser-Gleason founded five years earlier called Project Congo. "This was my door to Africa", Jean explained.

In 2014 Jean made her first trip to Goma in The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). There she found a war zone where 1000 women are raped a month, abject poverty born of government corruption,

***"They showed us by
example that we too could be
capable and
accomplished women"***

exploited natural resources, lack of vegetation and whole communities living on gray lava rock. Goma is a refugee city, filled with victims of war in Congo and surrounding countries. In 2014 US News and World Report named Goma the most dangerous city in the world.



Jean McNamara (center) in Goma

It is to this area that Jean travels to serve as a nurse in two clinics that border Lake Kivu. Hindered by lack of electricity, clean working conditions, and disease, Jean and Dr. Esser-Gleason, through the fundraising efforts of Project Congo, bring much needed supplies and hope to the women, men and children of Congo.

When asked what drew her from Intel to a life of service, Jean responds: "It was a push-pull experience. I worked for many years in a high-tech public company where profits to investors and cranking out products more cheaply became a constant cycle. In the long view, some of these products may be seen as value to the world, but in my daily life it was just work affording me a good living but not enough energy to do anything else. The trip to Uganda was a huge interruption in the cycle. I went from a high powered, high pressure job to a place with no water, no electricity, dirt roads, no birth or death records, no post office. This eye-opening experience set in motion a dissatisfaction with the life I was living on a corporate treadmill. The push of my decision came as I began to ask myself why should I dedicate

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my life to a job that became more of a grind to make money. My years at Intel allowed me to take early retirement and turn my life to something more meaningful.

The pull came from my experience in Uganda. When I returned from that first trip it was a culture shock. I came from a place where people were just eking out an existence to a baseball game in an air-conditioned arena just for sports and games. Suddenly, the unfairness and imbalance in the world were blinding and I felt called to do something for those who have nothing, not just in Africa, but everywhere. I volunteer with Hope Emergency in Brown County and Reach Out, a free clinic in Dayton's inner city. I serve, but I am feeding myself daily with something so much more self-fulfilling than the business treadmill."

When reflecting on the role the Ursulines of Brown County played on her life, she says, "Life at Brown County was an important formative experience. It was not just what the Sisters said, but they were role models. They were hard working all the time, always engaged with us students. They showed by example that we too could be capable and accomplished women. I especially felt it at Intel as a female in a male-dominated business. As a student, I was part of outreach programs at the original Hope Emergency in nearby Fayetteville. We were engaged in many service projects including weekend visits to nursing homes. We took away from school an extremely well-developed sense of responsibility for the needy, the poor and the disadvantaged. And in all, we felt and continue to feel the love and support of the Sisters."

Jean continues her support of the Ursulines as a Core Team member of the Companions and a member of the School's Alumni Board.

***St. Martin Deanery
Catholic Rural Life
Celebrates
Year of Mercy
on the
Land***

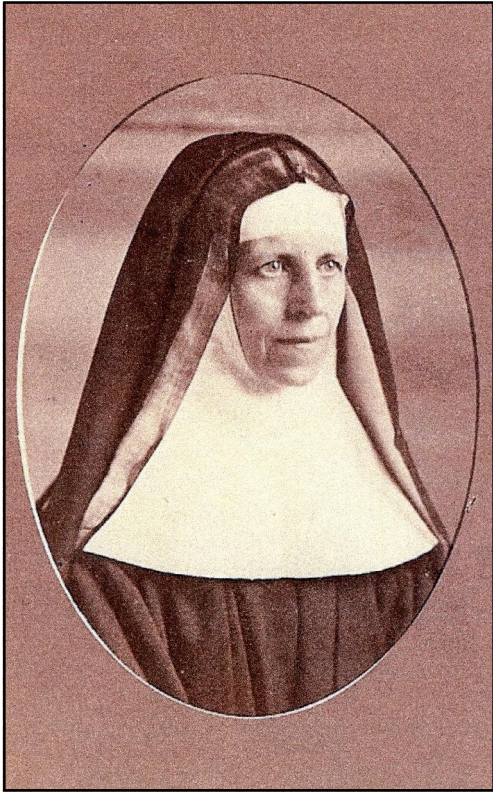


Rural Life Pilgrimage in Ursuline Graveyard

The St. Martin Deanery Catholic Rural Life in collaboration with the Cincinnati Archdiocesan Catholic Social Action Office and the Ursulines of Brown County, sponsored a Walk of Mercy for the Land and its People on Sunday, October 23, 2016 at the Motherhouse grounds of the Ursulines in St. Martin, Ohio. The Walk was planned in response to Pope Francis' call to observe a jubilee year of mercy. Fr. Dohrman Byers, pastor of St. George, Georgetown, St. Mary, Arnheim and St. Michael, Ripley presided at the Walk. Fr. Byers introduced the day with the following words: "With his encyclical 'Laudato Si' (Care of Our Common Home) the Holy Father has reminded us that our life and the natural environment on which our life depends are gifts of God's mercy, so are they also a charge, a stewardship laid upon us. We are called to be channels of God's mercy, both to one another and to the land, the water, the plants

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Ursulines Celebrate First Parish School Staffed by the Sisters



Sister Pauline Furnell

On October 30, 2016 St. Patrick Parish in London, Ohio celebrated their 150th anniversary. London is part of the Columbus Diocese. The Ursulines of Brown County were invited to participate because our community, led by Sr. Pauline Furnell and assisted by Sisters Gabriel Dohan, Alphonse Costello and Anthony Griffith, established St. Joseph Academy in 1874. They continued to minister there until 1885. The original school held four classrooms and was demolished in 1956. The school later was named St. Patrick School. The Sisters bought their own convent building which was sold when they left in 1885. The Sisters of Mercy followed the Ursulines until they departed in the 1980's. Sister Debbie Lloyd, Archivist for the Ursulines, was instrumental in providing the parish with historic information.

Sr. Phyllis Kemper, Congregational Minister and Sr. Christine Pratt represented the Community at the celebration. Bishop Frederick Campbell of the Columbus Diocese presided at the liturgy in the small but lovely parish church in this rural community in Central Ohio.

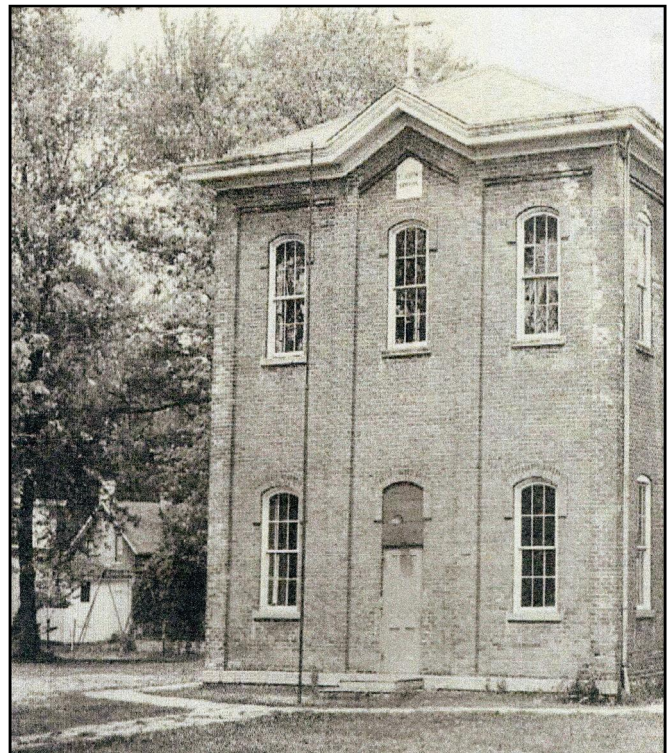
Despite the 131-year absence of the Ursulines in London, our legacy and connections continue to be felt within the community. There were several girls who attended our boarding school from that community, including two generations from one family. We found one former summer Ursuline camper and one sister of three Ursuline campers. The latter also shared that they had visited the Ursuline property in her youth when they drove many miles

to visit her uncle who was pastor of the Georgetown parish in central Brown County.

The parish was honored with citations for their spiritual leadership over the 150 years of its presence among the people in that small town. The Ursulines and the Sisters of Mercy were grateful to be remembered and honored during that same event.

In the early years after their arrival in St. Martin the sisters began a 'free school' for local children. Eventually, when the State of Ohio established public schools in the rural area, the sisters taught in the public school in St. Martin and Fayetteville. St. Joseph Academy was the first of many schools staffed by Brown County Ursulines between 1874-2011.

As the years went by some taught and others served as principal in schools of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati: St. Vivian, St. Peter, St. Louis, St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, St. Henry, St. James the Greater, Guardian Angels, St. Veronica, St. Boniface, St. Clement, Annunciation, Our lady of the Sacred Heart, St. Elizabeth Seton, Mary Help of Christians and St. Michael in Ripley. Some traveled as far as Atlanta Georgia, to serve at Our Lady of the Assumption School. Both Ursuline Academy in Cincinnati and the School of the Brown County Ursulines offered elementary education for decades.



St. Joseph Academy

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and animals that share our common home and which, indeed, make it habitable and hospitable. The human community is not separate or separable from the community of all living things and the resources we depend on.”

The procession of almost 100 persons visited historic and naturally beautiful sites on the grounds of the Ursulines of Brown County who came to this then wilderness in 1845. Four sites were chosen for stopping places on the walk. The farmland and waterway, placed in conservation easements in 2010 and 2015 respectively, were chosen as examples of mercy for the land. The Pioneer Cemetery, a burial ground for the early founders of the then St. Martin Church in 1823 was on the property later given to the Ursulines for their foundation in Brown County. Paul Holden, a direct descendant of William Bamber, donor of the land for the first church, read the description of the significance of that sacred space. Legend has it that this site was also a burial ground for the Native Americans who first dwelt here. The last site at which we prayed was the Sisters' cemetery where Archbishop John Purcell, all the Ursulines and friends and family have been laid to rest. The Walk ended with Benediction in the Sacred Heart Chapel. A reception at Chatfield College was provided by the women of St. Angela Merici Parish, Fayetteville.

