Dear friends,

No matter what the weather says, we are indeed in Spring and headed toward Summer! Spring brought with it much activity and June promises even more.

As you who are parents and grandparents or otherwise related to younger people find yourself at First Communions, Confirmations and Graduations, we thought it appropriate to fill this issue of Endeavor with stories related to the Sisters’ history as educators. There are stories of academic successes and the difference that the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur have made in the lives of today’s students—and those now “young at heart.”

Three schools in the mid-Atlantic states, founded and long staffed by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, are featured. The recognized excellence of students from our “heritage schools” gives testimony to the continued importance of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur’s educational focus in ministry. You will also read about new ways in which the Sisters are continuing their educational outreach, especially among people of limited economic means, through the Cristo Rey School in Lawrence, Mass. and the Notre Dame Mission Volunteer Program.

You will read, too, how the Sisters are engaged in global thinking about education and how seriously they are taking their responsibility to support the administration and faculty of the “heritage schools” in continuing to live out the hallmarks of a Notre Dame school.

The physical presence of the Sisters is limited in these school; nevertheless, they do all they can to provide spiritual and moral support, through service on the Boards of Trustees and attendance at school events.

Many of you were able to join us during the past year in celebrating the 175 year presence and educational ministry of the Sisters. We are hoping for another 175 years! Thank you so very much for your continued support.

Warm regards,

JoAnne deBettencourt
Director of Development
Tri-Province Development Program

~ Julie Billiart
At each event, JoAnne deBettencourt—Director of the Tri-Province Development Office—offered a few words of thanks and introduced the video prepared for the 175th Anniversary of the arrival of the Sisters in the New World!

Alumnae from Notre Dame Academy, K Street—about 150 strong—gathered for Mass and a luncheon on April 2 to celebrate the classes ending in 1 and 6. (Above) A few members of the Class of 1961 renew friendships and wonder where the 55 years have gone!

An informal gathering of friends from the Trinity Preparatory School class of 1959 reminisced over lunch about their SNDdeN teachers and delighted in stories told by Sister Eileen Sweeney (above, second from left).

The Academy of Notre Dame, Rittenhouse Square alumnae gathered for Mass in the Mansion of the Academy in Villanova, Pa. and enjoyed socializing at a luncheon held in the neighboring Overbrook Country Club on April 23. Pictured left, classmates from “The Square” Class of 1966 with a display about their class and the school’s closing (left to right): Maryann Roth Amici, Helen Quigley, Mary Dowd Gallagher, Kathleen Long Dynan, Patti Devereaux McAleer and Sue McCorkendale Super.

LEAVING A LEGACY TO THE SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR

Many of our generous supporters included the Sisters in their legacies. These gifts ensure that the Sisters’ mission will continue for generations to come. If you would like to remember the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in your will, please contact me at joanne.debettencourt@sndden.org.

Planned gifts can be made simply through a life insurance beneficiary designation, a planned stock transfer or by naming the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in your will.

The Tri-Province Development Program is also very pleased to accept IRA transfer donations in accordance with federal tax laws. Our friends who commit to making a planned gift to the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur are inducted into our St. Julie Billiart Heritage Society. Membership carries special privileges along with the daily prayers of our Sisters. You do continue to make a difference in the lives of our Sisters! All gifts assist our Sisters in achieving the goals of their mission. We are grateful for your continued support and kindness.
STUDENTS STILL EXCEL IN SNDdeN SPONSORED SCHOOLS

Maryvale

Maryvale  The Archdiocese of Baltimore recently announced Maryvale’s Gabby Pfeffer ’16, Lonnie Garrett ’16 and Claire Noppenberger ’16 as Archdiocesan Distinctive Scholars. This distinguished honor is awarded to the top three students with the highest GPA in their graduating class. Receiving this honor is a momentous accomplishment for high school students.

Sisters Rosemary Donohue, Edithann Kane and Catherine Phelps serve on the Board of Trustees at Maryvale.

Academy of Notre Dame, Villanova, Pa.

We are proud to announce that Juniors Merry Gu and Julia Walton have been selected for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Diocesan Scholars program. The program honors students who excel academically and who would benefit from the academic challenge of college-level work during their senior year.

Congratulations to our Diocesan Scholars!

Sisters Helen Bellew, Edithann Kane and Shawn Marie Maguire serve on the Board at the Academy of Notre Dame, Villanova.

Trinity School Class of 2016 Awarded $474,000 in Scholarships

Nineteen students in the graduating 8th Grade Class of 2016 at Trinity School have been awarded 33 scholarships for a total of $474,000 over four years. Additionally, several 8th grade students were accepted in a number of specialty high school programs including STEM programs and Project Lead the Way PreEngineering programs.

Sister Catherine Phelps, SNDdeN continues to serve as Principal at Trinity School. Sisters Regina Pellegrini and Shawn Marie Maguire serve on the Board of Trustees.

Trinity School 8th Grade Class of 2016 scholarship recipients

Left to right, Gabrielle Pfeffer ’16, Londrea Garrett ’16 and Claire Noppenberger ’16

Merry Gu and Julia Walton with administrators

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur
As recently as 2004, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in Lawrence, Mass., founded Notre Dame Cristo Rey (NDCR)—a high school, under the leadership of Sister Mary Murphy, SNDdeN. This Notre Dame high school is part of the Cristo Rey network of schools. A unique aspect of the school is that one day a week, each student works in an office earning the majority of his or her tuition and experiencing first hand how the business world works. The Corporate Work Study Program is the driving force behind the academic growth, college preparation and life-changing success of NDCR students.

Michelle Oviedo

Michelle Oviedo is an alumna of NDCR from the first graduating class (2008). She went on to graduate from the College of Holy Cross in 2012 with a Bachelors in Psychology—Honors Program. Michelle attributes her success in achieving admission to the Harvard Extension program in pre-Med to NDCR and the Sisters. She writes: “…the school was small and it felt as though all there were a close-knit family. All came from similar backgrounds which make for a comfortable learning environment.”

“I felt really connected with the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur at NDCR during high school and after I graduated. They always encouraged us to keep working on our goals and I always know that I can ask them for something when I need it—that might be advice or anything else. This is mainly because I feel they have my best interests in mind and will not steer me in a wrong direction.”

As to the future, Michelle says: “I want to become a doctor. I look forward to mentoring pre-Med students from disadvantaged backgrounds once I receive my M.D. … All of my accomplishments I attribute to Notre Dame Cristo Rey High School and the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.”

Emilio Jourbert

Emilio Jourbert is an NDCR graduate of the class of 2015. He currently is attending Georgetown University, majoring in Government with a minor in Italian and a yet-to-be-determined second language. He needed financial help to attend high school, learned about NDCR, was admitted and “things were never the same after that day!”

Attending Cristo Rey gave Emilio an immense desire to succeed. Before NDCR he had dealt with many hardships. He wondered if things would ever get better. At Cristo Rey he learned about the opportunities that dedicating himself to education would grant him. This desire to succeed beyond what even he thought possible kept him at NDCR and is keeping him at Georgetown.

Emilio writes: “The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur have had a tremendous influence on both Notre Dame Cristo Rey and my life. Sister Mary Alyce, in particular, has been integral to my success. She has written recommendations for me, given me the opportunity to speak at numerous events, has run the Corporate Work Study Program and now is President of NDCR. In all this she does a fantastic service. Really the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur’s ardent dedication to education is a gift that Cristo Rey benefits from greatly.”

NDCR, Lawrence, Mass. is pleased to share that since they opened their doors, 100% of their students have been accepted to college. They have great pride also in learning and sharing that for the sixth time in a row, NDCR ranked the highest in workplace performance in their work studies jobs across all other Cristo Rey Network Schools (30 schools).
Three Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur—Maria Delaney, Maureen White, and Rita Sturwold, (center of photo above) joined more than 3,000 educators from 61 countries last November in Rome, Italy at the first World Congress of Catholic Education: “Educating Today and Tomorrow: A Renewing Passion.” Educators from every academic level gathered around the themes:

- Identity and Mission of the Catholic School,
- Leadership and Teacher Formation,
- Challenges of Catholic Education Today and Tomorrow.

On the final day, Pope Francis spoke to an extended group of 7,000 educators:

“There are three languages: of the mind, heart and hands. Education must move along these three roads. Go to the periphery! Reality is better understood from the peripheries than from the center, because the center is always covered, always protected. The greatest failure of an educator is teaching ‘within walls,’ educating within walls. ... We must rethink the 14 works of mercy, how to do them in education.”

Pope Francis, November 2015

Another way that the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur continue influencing lives through education is the Notre Dame Mission Volunteer Program, founded by the Sisters in 1992. Today over 400 young men and women serve in educational sites across the United States, as well as in SNDdeN missions overseas, primarily serving people who are economically disadvantaged. In the U.S., the volunteers accomplish this mission by promoting literacy and education. For the vast majority of the volunteers, this is a life-changing experience.

“I enjoyed my year of service, working with the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. They really opened up my shell, and brought out my true self. I still can’t fully put into words all this program has done for me. I do know that my one year of service really made me grow from a young boy with a dream to a man with a vision. I will carry this experience in my heart forever.”

— J.R.V.

“My NDA experience continues to shape my perspective and experience. I am so grateful to have served in Apopka, Fla. The experience changed my life and I still feel that I am part of the family I found there. My choice to become a teacher was absolutely influenced by my service in NDA.”

— S.S.
At Trinity Washington University, Sisters Remain on Board of Trustees

The Sisters living at Trinity Washington University are moving to new homes. As the Sisters prepared to move, President Patricia McGuire, in a letter to the Trinity “family,” offered strong words of gratitude:

The Sisters of Notre Dame are an integral part of the fabric of Trinity, and the values, faith and charism of the SNDdeNs that inform Trinity's mission are timeless. Trinity and the SNDdeNs will continue our inseparable partnership even as the sisters retire from residence on campus. Sister Patricia O’Brien chairs our Board and other SNDdeNs [Karen Hokanson and Mary Murphy] continue board service. Sister Mary Hayes remains as Trinity’s archivist. Sister Camilla Burns and Sister Mary Johnson are members of our faculty and leaders of the Billiart Center for Social Justice. … Our gratitude to the Sisters of Notre Dame is immense, and we look forward to continuing to enjoy their moral and spiritual influence, wise guidance and passionate commitment to social justice as we work together in advancing the mission of Trinity in the years to come.

On Sunday, April 17, 40 Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur gathered to celebrate 117 years of SNDdeN presence in the Trinity convent, to express gratitude for myriad ways in which they remember their Trinity experiences, and to offer a blessing for the members of the Trinity Community who will be moving in late Spring.

The celebration ended with a festive supper in the Trinity Community Dining Room.

The Trinity Community was blessed with the Trinity Blessing:

May the power of the Father govern and protect us
May the wisdom of the Son teach and enlighten us
May the love of the Holy Spirit renew and quicken us
May the power of the all Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Be with us now and forever, Amen.

Building a Foundation for Social Justice While Studying at Trinity Washington University

My name is Joseline Anne Araujo, and I am a Junior at Trinity Washington University (Class of 2017), majoring in Sociology and minoring in History. This summer I was very fortunate to be accepted to an exciting program called Just Advocacy Week by NETWORK here in the heart of the District of Columbia.

About five months earlier, Sister Mary Johnson, a Trinity Sister of Notre Dame de Namur, who is one of my favorite professors at Trinity Washington University, introduced me to this opportunity NETWORK was offering for a week in the summer. I was excited because Sister Mary’s honors Theology course had me very interested in the social justice movement, and what better way to join than with a famous organization right here in D.C.! Sister Mary provided me with the steps to apply … I did and was accepted to participate in June.

From the beginning of the program, there were many inspiring people … to learn from and share our views about different social justice topics. Automatically our group was united, motivated, supportive and fun! The entire goal of the week-long program was to become prepared with knowledge, personal experiences, and practice to lobby on Capitol Hill. There is much to be done in the community and this opportunity to build a solid foundation changed my perspective on how to fight for social justice.
Sister Bernice McCourt, a Baltimorean by birth, arrived in this life on October 8, 1930. She met the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur at Trinity Preparatory School in Ilchester, Md. and entered the community in August 1948. She didn’t have far to go from TPS to the novitiate building!

“When from Ilchester a whole new world opened for me,” wrote Bernice on the occasion of her 60th Jubilee. After teaching in schools in Washington, D.C., Pennsylvania, Maryland, North Carolina and Virginia, she moved into a ministry dear to the heart of St. Julie … Religious Education. Bernice had received her master’s in Religious Education at LaSalle University and was able to respond to parish requests for a Director of Religious Education. She directed programs at St. Philip Neri parish in Linthicum, Md. and then at St. Nicholas parish in Virginia Beach, Va.

Little did she realize how many years she would spend in the Richmond Diocese. She wrote: “I loved 30 years of ministry with laypeople in vibrant parishes, and learned what it means to celebrate Liturgy, study Scriptures, build community and reach out to the poor.” For nine of those years, Bernice was the Pastoral Coordinator of St. Mary’s Parish in Chesapeake, Va., taking on all that a pastor would do, with the exception of providing Mass and the Sacraments. She was a transformer and facilitator of parish life and is still remembered by grown children and adults for her loving and faithful dedication.

In her retirement years, Bernice was a regular visitor to St. Elizabeth Nursing Home. In 2014, declining health necessitated her move to Maria Health Care Center where she died on March 28, 2016. Sister Bernice was 85 years of age and had lived 67 of those years as a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur.
On September 17, 2016, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur will celebrate the special jubilees of 15 Sisters at Our Lady of Victory Church in Baltimore, Maryland.

75 YEARS 1941
Sister Therese McMenamin, SNDdeN  
*formerly Sister Therese Aloysius*

70 YEARS (PLATINUM) 1946
Sister Dorothy Beach, SNDdeN  
*formerly Sister Francis Mary*
Sister Paula Laschenski, SNDdeN
Sister Agnes Rose McNally, SNDdeN
Sister Marcella Missar, SNDdeN  
*formerly Sister Marcella Marie*
Sister Mary Adele White, SNDdeN

60 YEARS (DIAMOND) 1956
Sister Mimi Bodell, SNDdeN  
*formerly Sister Joseph Maureen*
Sister Josita Colbert, SNDdeN
Sister Patricia Hanway, SNDdeN  
*formerly Edward Patricia*
Sister Marcella Jordan, SNDdeN  
*formerly Sister Marcella Julie*
Sister Joan Kelly, SNDdeN  
*formerly Sister Catherine Francis*
Sister Therese Leddy, SNDdeN  
*formerly Sister Therese Martin*

50 YEARS (GOLDEN) 1966
Sister Ann Kendrick, SNDdeN
Sister Elizabeth Smoyer, SNDdeN
Sister Maureen White, SNDdeN