



A Proclamation on Juneteenth 2021

Presidential Actions

The following are excerpts from a White House proclamation declaring Juneteenth as a national holiday which commenced as of this year:

On June 19, 1865 – nearly nine decades after our nation’s founding, and more than two years after President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation – enslaved Americans in Galveston, Texas, finally received word that they were free from bondage. As those who were formerly enslaved were recognized for the first time as citizens, Black Americans came to commemorate Juneteenth with celebrations across the country, building new lives and a new tradition that we honor on this day. In its celebration of freedom, Juneteenth is a day that should be recognized by all Americans. And, that is why I am proud to have [designated] Juneteenth as our newest national holiday.

Juneteenth is a day of profound weight and power.

A day in which we remember the moral stain and terrible toll of slavery on our country. A legacy of systemic racism, inequality and inhumanity.

But it is a day that also reminds us of our incredible capacity to heal, hope, and emerge from our darkest moments with purpose and resolve.

On Juneteenth, we recommit ourselves to the work of equity, equality, and justice. And, we celebrate the centuries of struggle, courage, and hope that have brought us to this time of progress and possibility. That work has been led throughout our history by abolitionists and educators, civil rights advocates and lawyers, courageous activists and trade unionists, public officials and everyday Americans who have helped make real the ideals of our founding documents for all.

Psalm 30 proclaims that “weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” Juneteenth marks both the long hard night of slavery and discrimination, and the promise of a brighter morning to come.

Juneteenth not only commemorates the past. It calls us to action today.

I call upon the people of the United States to acknowledge and celebrate the end of the Civil War and the emancipation of Black Americans, and commit together to eradicate systemic racism that still undermines our founding ideals and collective prosperity. ~ *Joseph R. Biden, Jr.*

To read the full text please click [here](#)

Dual Celebrations at Cabrini of Westchester



The Feast of the Sacred Heart is a most holy day on which the Missionary Sisters renew their sacred vows. From left: Missionary Sisters Romualda Molon, Alfonsina Gomes, Catherine Garry and Arlene Van Dusen recite their vows in the Cabrini Chapel at Cabrini of Westchester in Dobbs Ferry, NY.

Cabrini of Westchester celebrated The Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on June 11th with a special liturgy led by Pastoral Care Director, Fr. Thomas Vadakemuriyil in the Cabrini Chapel. We were fortunate that several Missionary Sisters and Cabrini Lay Missionaries were present. They were able to recite their vows and commitments in front of the few that were physically gathered in the chapel and the residents who were watching the Mass from their rooms via television.



On the Feast Day, CLM Director Lorraine Campanelli (l.) CLM and Cabrini of Westchester CEO and President Patricia Krasnausky (r.) renew their commitment as Fr. Vadakemuriyil listens.

A festive luncheon, prepared by Cabrini's Food Service Department, was held in the Board Room for those Missionary Sisters who reside in the nursing home.



The Missionary Sisters enjoy a festive Feast Day luncheon.

As a happy coincidence, Sr. Alfonsina Gomes celebrated her birthday on this day! Sr. Alfonsina lives in the Cabrini convent and ministers to the residents as a



Happy Birthday, Sr. Alfonsina!

Pastoral Care Associate. After the Mass concluded, Sister was serenaded to the tune of "Happy Birthday" and a birthday cake was served at the luncheon!

A wonderful Feast Day was had by all! ~ submitted by Susan Herceg, Cabrini of Westchester

National Endowment for the Humanities Grant Funds New Mother Cabrini Exhibition

A federal grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) will fund the next phase in a Cabrini-led effort to digitize and exhibit artifacts telling the life story of University namesake Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini. Totalling nearly \$150,000, the grant affords access to critical hardware, software, and data storage tools, as well as professional photography, supporting the creation of an online exhibition titled “America’s First Citizen Saint: The Saint Frances Cabrini Collection.”

“Everyone can relate to something in Mother Cabrini’s life, whether it’s her spirituality, love for Christ, or her work with immigrants, the poor, and orphans,” said Anne Schwelm, Director of the University’s Holy Spirit Library. “It’s such a compelling story, and this project will help it to be told.”

The project is expected to be completed in spring 2024, though the Holy Spirit Library began digitally cataloging photographs, portraits, letters, and other documents related to Mother Cabrini for [The Cabriniana Collection](#) in 2019. Much of the work to date has been supported through contributions to a fund named in honor of Sister Mary Louise Sullivan, MSC, PhD (?63), a former Cabrini President and Mother Cabrini historian.



While the collection resembles a digital catalog at this phase in its development, Schwelm said the NEH grant will allow us to expand from this foundation and “enable us to really create a digital exhibition that links the artifacts and puts them together to tell [Mother Cabrini’s] story.”

Schwelm said there is interest in collaborating with other archivists to link together Mother Cabrini’s archives with those of other saints. “We’d love to see this as one component of digitizing America’s saints,” she said.

The project has roots in academia, but Schwelm said she sees it making a broader impact in K–12 education, as well as with anyone who has an interest in American history. She said the collection’s primary sources offer an important look into the anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic prejudices Mother Cabrini faced, while underscoring students’ broader diversity, equity, and inclusion education.

Requests for access to artifacts have already come from Mother Cabrini shrines in New York City, Chicago, and Denver. In addition to the “First Citizen Saint” digital exhibition, the project will also be available through digital portals, including the Catholic Resources Research Alliance and Digital Public Library.

“The digital collection is so important because it will make the story of Saint Frances Cabrini and her legacy available to anyone who may be seeking information about her online,” said Sr. Christine Marie Baltas, MSC (?66), when the Cabriniana Collection opened in 2019. ~ *Cabrini U website*





The CLM Corner

This is an occasional feature where we highlight the Cabrini Lay Missionaries and their ministries.

In last week's Update we introduced you to the newest CLMs. In this week's edition and in the following weeks you will get the opportunity to learn more about each of them and learn their stories.

My name is Digna Merchan and I am an immigrant from Ecuador. Like many immigrants, I crossed the Mexican border to arrive in the USA following the love of my life. I was only 21 years old at the time. My life was not easy at the beginning. I did not know the language and I was away from my family and friends.

I got married and had my first child at 22, which, was exceedingly difficult. However, I learned to adapt to my new life. Five years later, my second son arrived. I have been married to my husband for 31 years.



CLM Digna Merchan

I now view the barriers I faced as an immigrant as opportunities that help me to grow into the woman I am today. When my second child was in 3rd grade, I decided to go back to school. It took me 10 years to earn my Associates degree. In 2013, I graduated with honors from Westchester Community College. In 2015, I graduated with honors from Mercy College earning my Bachelors in Social Work.

During my internship at Cabrini of Westchester, I was exposed to Mother Cabrini's life and love for the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In 2016, I graduated with honors from the City University of New York "Lehman College" earning a Masters of Social Work.

My life experience as an immigrant, my spirituality, and my bilingual skills have been extremely useful when meeting with the clients I serve.

I volunteered and worked at the LIFE Center in Sleepy Hollow with the RSHM (Religious Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Mary) Immigration Attorney, helping immigrant families. I believe that immigrant families need support and empowerment to become self-sufficient and independent.

I also worked in a shelter in Peekskill assisting homeless veterans for almost 4 years and volunteered at a local Food Pantry during Covid-19.

I am an active parishioner in my parish, Holy Name of Mary Church in Croton on Hudson, where I reside. I love to serve people in need, and I truly believe that serving people is a way to get closer to God.

Becoming a CLM has been a blessing for me, although I feel that becoming a CLM is a big responsibility. I am confident that my trust in God and in our Lady of Guadalupe, which are my strengths, will help me in my journey as a CLM. Throughout my life, I relied on them and I know they helped me as an immigrant and in my studies. Now, I know that Mother Cabrini will guide me

through my path as I continue walking further following her footsteps and developing a long-lasting relationship with the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

My hope to go to one of the Cabrini missions outside of the United States. ~ submitted by: Digna Merchan, CLM

Music at the Shrine Builds Community



Neighbors gather on the lawn at the St. Frances X. Cabrini Shrine in Upper Manhattan for a jazz concert series featuring the music of immigrant cultures.

As COVID restrictions have lifted in New York City, our neighbors near St. Frances Cabrini Shrine have hungered for a greater sense of community. The Shrine responded by developing a 5-part jazz series on our lawn for the month of June. Each Wednesday night we explore the immigrant influence of a different culture on jazz. The series has been enthusiastically received, with between 150 and 200 attendees each week.

~ submitted by Julia Attaway, Executive Director, St. F.X. Cabrini Shrine

The Vatican Releases Statement for World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly

~ by Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Writing to his peers, Catholics who have reached a venerable age like he has, Pope Francis told older Catholics that God is close to them and still has plans for their lives.

“The Lord is always – always – close to us. He is close to us with new possibilities, new ideas, new consolations, but, always close to us. You know that the Lord is eternal; he never, ever goes into retirement,” the Pope wrote in his message for the first celebration of the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly which will be celebrated on July 25, the Sunday closest to the feast of Sts. Joachim and Anne, Jesus’ grandparents.

“Think about it: what is our vocation today, at our age? To preserve roots, to pass on the faith to the young and to care for the little ones,” he wrote. “Never forget this.”

To read the complete Vatican statement, please click [here](#)



An elderly woman reacts with a smile as Pope Francis extends his hands in a greeting.

From the Guadalupe Province Vocation Team...

Intercultural Spirituality

~ by Sr. Sophia Park, SNJM in HORIZON, the Journal of the National Religious Vocations Conference

Intercultural spirituality involves both learning and unlearning. It challenges how we use language and even steps away from an emphasis on doing. Over the next few editions of The Update we will be exploring this important topic.

Part Four – From Doing to Being

While embracing fluidity and uncertainty, intercultural spirituality is far from a “doing” spirituality. It is more contemplative and perhaps less efficient. When I gave spiritual direction to a successful professional woman who was discerning God’s call, she said, “God does not say anything to me regarding my vocation.” I asked her whether she had any moments of peace in daily life. She responded, “Oh, sometimes for no reason, I feel relaxed and happy when I think of God’s calling, but that is it. But that is almost a useless moment. When I am ready to hear something, the moment disappears.” A useless moment, though, perhaps is the most valuable moment! I wonder if intercultural spirituality is like grace, like a useless moment. It may not stand for mission effectiveness, but rather, it is an abundance, for surprise and joy. Through encountering the other, we can see ourselves or a hidden part of ourselves. Through embracing others, we can see new life or a new dimension of religious life. In that sense, it can be joyful.

Thus intercultural spirituality is not a “doing” spirituality, which involves setting up a goal, discerning a particular direction, and taking an action. Instead, it is a spirituality of enjoying the



experience of unexpected mistakes and unknown parts of ourselves. For this approach, I suggest two significant elements: storytelling and listening.

When we tell a story, we and our listeners are invited to mutual transformation. Storytelling conveys one’s truth, including one’s vulnerability and history. There is no space for judgment in storytelling but plenty of room for questions, to probe deeper meaning. Also, in storytelling,

groups create a shared understanding. In intercultural spirituality, storytelling creates new stories of the group.

Storytelling and listening are two sides of the same coin. A best practice for intercultural engagement is attentive listening, including a person’s facial expressions, body movement, and even silence. Before we enter into a dialogue with a person from another culture, we would research that person’s culture and its values. It is also imperative to notice how the person is related to U.S. culture and religious life.

As religious communities develop an intercultural spirituality, it helps to emphasize the process of becoming intercultural beings. Interculturality is more a process of and commitment to ongoing transformation. It is a spiritual stance. The more that communities consciously engage with intercultural spirituality and awareness, the better prepared they are for intercultural mission, ministry, and communal life. At heart, to be intercultural is a matter of loving and learning with joy and surprise. ***This concludes the series on intercultural spirituality.***

Prayer Requests

Sophia Bialecki

Please keep Sophia, the mother of Madeline Bialecki, a past director of the Cabrini Mission Corps, in your prayers. Mrs. Bialecki is currently in hospice care at her home. Please pray for her comfort and serenity at this time and for strength for Madeline and her sister as they care for their mother.

John Catalanotto

Last week, we asked for prayers for John Catalanotto, the husband of Anita Catalanotto, a Cabrini University staff member. John was anticipating surgery on this past Tuesday. We are pleased to learn that John came through surgery very well and is expected to be discharged today or tomorrow. Let us continue to keep John in mind and prayer as he begins his recovery. The Catalanotto Family is so grateful for the prayers of the Missionary Sisters.

In Loving Memory

Teresina Venturin

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Teresina Venturin, the sister of Sr. John Giani, MSC and Sr. John's sister Lourdes. Teresina passed away in Brazil after a long illness. May she rest in God's eternal light. Please pray for Sr. John and Lourdes as they mourn the loss of Teresina.



June is the month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.