“My training is to listen with my heart and discern where spiritual distress is present and what the nature of it is, so that I can offer appropriate support. It is in listening that healing comes ...”
Suited to Serve

From an early age, Sister Donna Maria Moses felt called—and she has responded with service to God, country, her community and congregation.

After graduating from Harvard University, S. Donna Maria chose a teaching career, but limited jobs during the 1990 recession convinced her to leave New Hampshire. Relocating to California, she taught at Notre Dame High School in Salinas and converted to the Catholic faith.

To supplement her income and respond to the need for more women role models in the services, she was commissioned a Naval Officer and assigned to reserve duty with the Naval Coordination of Shipping Organization in Oakland.

Completing a Doctorate in Education at the University of San Francisco School of Education, she encountered the Dominican Sisters. S. Mary Peter Traviss directed the program and several Dominican Sisters were on the faculty.

Discerning a vocation to religious life, S. Donna Maria made vows in 2001 with the Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose.

Today S. Donna Maria is a board-certified member of the National Association of Catholic Chaplains and a multi-faith chaplain in the Diocese of San Jose. She coordinates spiritual services for Santa Clara Valley Health and Hospital Systems, ministering to patients, families and staff in the county’s 731-bed trauma center. She also supervises spiritual care for O’Connor Hospital in San Jose, St. Louise Regional Hospital in Gilroy and associated clinics and county facilities.

S. Donna Maria felt drawn to pastoral ministry after serving as prioress for 30 Dominican Sisters living at the Motherhouse. These experiences and her community leadership prompted her to enroll in the Clinical Pastoral Education program at John Muir Medical Center in Walnut Creek, CA where she completed her residency in 2012.

S. Donna Maria’s chaplaincy training explored world religions and beliefs, yet growing up in a dual faith family also shaped her ministry. “We were raised to live a good, Christian life and not argue about the details,” she recalled, with parents from two Christian traditions. Only after their deaths, did she discern her own spiritual path, embracing Catholicism and religious life.

S. Donna Maria’s respect for all faiths animates her ministry. “All God’s people are in need of spiritual care and a peaceful, loving presence, whether they are Catholic, Christian, Buddhist, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, adherents of some other tradition or without any faith system at all.”

The impacts of COVID-19 have transformed the hospital’s spiritual services, eliminating in-person visits. Staff support is also a priority as S. Donna Maria and her colleagues deliver care, protecting personal and family health at home. “For the first couple of months, we were in crisis mode. As cases kept rising with no end in sight we worried about getting a spike that would overload the hospital.”

Grateful that did not occur, Sister’s prayers continued. “Early on I prayed for courage. ‘Be brave but be careful’ was my motto.” Today she prays for “patience and perseverance,” as the flu season approaches and COVID-19 continues. “We all need to remain cautious and be patient with one another.”

As an educator and pastoral minister, S. Donna Maria endeavors
“All God’s people are in need of spiritual care and a peaceful, loving presence, whether they are Catholic, Christian, Buddhist, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, adherents of some other tradition or without any faith system at all.”

to safely serve God and her hospital community in the pandemic. She also believes this virus has lessons for us. “It’s so important for us to share our supplies — and a potential vaccine and the earth’s resources. It’s time to show compassion for everyone in God’s human family.”

Ministry Impact

“On a weekly basis my colleague and I ...”

• Arrange spiritual care for 100-200 patients admitted to the hospital
• Initiate 30 pastoral calls, offering prayers and calming presence
• Attend 2-3 patient deaths
• Respond to 3-5 emergency hospital codes
• Participate in daily interdisciplinary rounds on 8 inpatient units
• Advise physicians in medical ethics and surrogate decision-making discussions
• Monitor 10-12 patients on comfort care, palliative care and end of life
• Facilitate staff debrief sessions as needed for critical incidents or cumulative stress
• Coordinate spiritual care for patients who tested positive or under investigation for COVID-19
MESSAGE FROM SISTER CECILIA

What a year for all of us! A pandemic. Recession. Fires. Political factions and looming election. Children schooling from home. Closed churches and gathering places. Systemic racism ravaging our nation. We are living in an extraordinary time!

Through it all, our Loving God and Heart of the Universe, continues to bless the Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose. Our current reality reminds us to: Widen Our Heart and remember God’s tender mercies toward us; entrust ourselves in God’s providence; welcome the emerging new of the gospel; and discover in the challenges of our time, God’s ever-present and strengthening grace. (Echoes of our General Chapter prayer recited daily by the Sisters.)

As we navigate our reality, we are comforted by the care and love of our dear friends, family members, benefactors and faithful mission partners! Because of you, your prayers and your faithful support, we are able to embrace our Dominican mission and act as “First Responders” in serving the young, the poor and the vulnerable. See for yourself in the stories found in these pages!

MEET A SISTER

Sister Angelica Velez writes:
I live in Tucson, Arizona and work in campus ministry and pastoral service to students from the University of Arizona. I also volunteer assisting migrants traveling from their country of origin to the US, many of whom have reached Arizona traveling through Mexico. My encounters with our migrant brothers and sisters have been transformational for me, teaching me new depths of compassion for others.

SPIRIT

Prayer for Our Country’s Elections

Loving God,
Creator of all
that holds Your Sacred Being,
we place our country before You.

We pray that all Americans take seriously our responsibility to vote for the leadership needed in our time to heal, support and reverence all people, that we might live in freedom, justice and peace upon this blessed land.

Forgive our past failures as we pledge anew to embrace the sacredness of our fragile planet, live in harmony with all of creation and bow in humble gratitude for this precious gift of life, so abundantly lavished upon us and freely given for ALL to receive.

Amen.

WE HONOR THESE DOMINICAN JUBILARIANS

75 Years: S. Mary Stephen Sartoris
70 Years: Hna. Estela Gómez Aranda, S. Mary Louis Seal, S. Stella Marie Goodpasture, S. Mary Christopher Miller
60 Years: S. Laurence Marie Diaz, S. Diane Bridenbecker, S. Mary Sean Hodges
40 Years: S. Denise Lazaro
25 Years: S. Helena Im, S. Verónica Esparza Ramírez
Fatima Morales was welcomed as a candidate on June 20, 2020 during an Entrance Ceremony at the Motherhouse in Fremont. Sisters in the United States and Mexico joined Morales’ family and friends via Zoom to celebrate the occasion. “I know it’s a strange time to enter. I don’t know what the future holds, but I do know God is with me and is taking care of me through the support of the Sisters and my family.”
What the Sisters Taught Me

Mission Advancement and Communication Director Stephan Pippen “met” with Lupe Valdez via Zoom to learn how the Dominican Sisters have impacted her life.

Tell me about yourself:
I grew up in Los Angeles in a neighborhood called Lincoln Heights. I went to schools that were operated by the Dominican Sisters: Sacred Heart Elementary and Sacred Heart High School. The Sisters were my teachers and friends. They ingrained in me that education was the key to sustaining yourself.

Tell me more about your school experience:
Sacred Heart was the center of the community, and its schools provided me a strong sense of family. During high school, the Sisters provided many leadership opportunities for me. I taught catechism, was in student government and collaborated with other Catholic schools on a variety of activities. I loved these experiences. Much of what I learned at Sacred Heart I’ve carried forward in my life.

After graduating from high school where did you attend college?
I attended the University of Southern California (USC) and majored in psychology.

What did you do after graduation?
I continued my education and entered USC’s Master of Public Administration program. The program emphasized work and leadership experience as much as classroom study. Students were required to hold internships while in school. I interned in Sacramento and Washington, DC. I was given a lot of responsibility at the internships, and because the Sisters provided me those leadership opportunities in high school, I did well.

Tell me about your professional career.
After graduate school, I worked for a short time in the nonprofit sector. I then moved into the government sector. Fifteen years ago, I came to Union Pacific Railroad where I now lead the company’s public affairs efforts in Southern California and Southern Nevada. I work with federal, state and local authorities, as well as the public, to make sure the company is meeting its safety and environmental objectives. I also provide grants to community organizations. Given the unprecedented impacts of COVID-19, I just helped expedite the distribution of COVID-19 relief grants to organizations addressing critical community needs associated with the pandemic.

How have the Dominican Sisters influenced you in your professional life?
The Sisters taught me to be a leader, make a difference in the lives of others, listen carefully and collaborate with others! 🌟
IN BRIEF

MISSION FOCUS

Dominican Mission Advancement

A warm welcome to new team members

NEW MISSION ADVANCEMENT FACES
In July 2019, we extended our gratitude and good wishes to Margaret McCarthy, who retired after eight years coordinating mission outreach, fundraising and communications. In January 2020, Stephan Pippen assumed leadership as Mission Advancement and Communication Director. Stephan seeks to sustain and increase partnerships, create a cohesive communications program and find new ways to connect with our donors and community. He has worked in the corporate, government and nonprofit sectors, including Catholic Charities of the East Bay. In September 2019, Gina Lee became our Database Administrator and Donor Stewardship Officer. Gina processes donations, manages social media and supports advancement projects, drawing on her nonprofit management, fundraising and communication experience. We are blessed to have S. Gloria Marie Jones, S. Francis Clare Fischer and S. Lynn Marie Gillanders as our Dominican colleagues in the office.

KINDNESS AND CARE
Certainly 2020 has been a challenging year. As we cope with the pandemic, extreme wildfires in California and the West continue. In August, our Motherhouse Sisters prepared to evacuate as the SCU Complex Fire approached Mission Peak. We are grateful that blaze and COVID-19 did not overtake our historic campus. Please join us in prayer as we take thoughtful actions to ensure the safety of our Sisters and our communities.

CENTER FOR EDUCATION & SPIRITUALITY
With the closure of our Motherhouse to outside visitors, in-person CES events have been postponed. Yet we are preparing several engaging online seminars, supporting your mind and heart. Visit our website for information at www.msjdominicans.org.

Orange smoke-filled skies at the Motherhouse.
**Education**

**DIGITAL LEARNING**

Most Dominican sponsored and affiliate schools are implementing distance learning, until in-person classes can safely resume. In Anaheim, St. Catherine’s Academy was approved to bring K-6 students back to campus. S. John Ellen welcomed the cadets with new equipment and safety protocols. The first day back was a blast!

**Rosary Heritage Building**

Our 90-year-old Rosary building holds a sacred place of honor at our Motherhouse. We are exploring ways to address the structural needs of the building to ensure its place in the future. We look forward to sharing more about this significant work and inviting you to join us!

**PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

Sustaining mission is identifying potential partners and mission collaborators to carry the Dominican charism forward. The committee includes three lay colleagues and three Dominican Sisters. S. Mary Liam Brock represents the Council and Bethany Jaeger of KEB Associates facilitates discussions. Committee recommendations will be presented to the Council and congregation in 2021.

**Motherhouse**

**ONLINE HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE**

This year the Holiday Boutique will be a remote celebration of Dominican crafts and products. Rather than booths and conversations, we invite you to visit us online, reserving your favorite baked goods, art and Dominican Sisters Olive Oil. We will miss your smiling faces, but we invite your Boutique participation to help us care for our elder Sisters and our Motherhouse. Details on back cover.

Rosary safety upgrades include fire sprinklers, wiring, roof repairs and adding bathrooms to Sisters’ 3rd floor rooms.

1. **Online Holiday Boutique**
   - Order your favorite Boutique gifts online
   - dsmsj-boutique.myshopify.com

2. **Support those impacted by COVID-19**
   - Contact: spippen@msjdominicans.org

3. **Sign up to receive our CES Newsletter**
   - Contact: ingrid@msjdominicans.org

Follow Us!

FACEBOOK.com/dominicansistersofmsj
Lifelong Responders to the Young, Poor and Vulnerable

S. Patricia Marie Walsh (1930-2019)
Teacher, Principal, Hospital Chaplain

S. Sheila Keane (1927-2019)
Teacher, Social Worker in the San Francisco Tenderloin

S. Mary Paul Mehegan (1923-2020)
Teacher, Principal, College Administrator

S. Mary Peter Traviss (1928-2020)
Teacher of Teachers for the Institute of Catholic Educational Leadership

S. Julian Dion (1930-2020)
Teacher, Principal, High School Business Manager

S. Frances Mary Pierson (1949-2020)
Teacher, Principal, Administrative Assistant
Sisters Make History

The COVID-19 pandemic did not stop the Dominican Sisters from gathering this summer. More than 100 Sisters from Mexico and the United States gathered via Zoom on July 1 and 2 for the 2020 Congregational Assembly.

Inviting the Sisters to participate in the event, Sister Cecilia Canales, Congregational Prioress, underscored the significance of the event, “This is the first time that we will be doing General Chapter preparation as a whole congregation and via Zoom technology.” She added, “We are making history as we continue to move from ‘I to We to One!’”
WE’VE MOVED ONLINE!

An abundant olive crop pressed into Dominican Sisters Olive Oil, your favorite baked goods and beautiful handcrafts are available to select and ship.

Add the Sisters’ love to your holiday celebrations with a one of a kind gift from our Boutique catalogue.

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Find Us!
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E-mail: spippen@msjdominicans.org

Environmental Benefits Statement
Since 2010 the Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose have saved the following resources by using recycled paper and printing in a green certified facility for the production and printing of this piece and other projects.

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LEARN MORE ONLINE
Lea...