

# E-VOC

*evoke: 1. to call forth 2. to re-create imaginatively*



*Sisters of Charity*

of Cincinnati

## CALENDAR

**Nov. 1, 2011**

Feast of All Saints

**Nov. 2, 2011**

Feast of All Souls

**Nov. 27, 2011**

First Sunday of Advent

**Jan. 2-7, 2012**

Service and Spirituality in New Orleans, La.

*For more information about the above events, contact S. Janet Gildea at [janetsc@juno.com](mailto:janetsc@juno.com).*



A small group of women took part in the Sisters of Charity Federation Come and Serve weekend at the House of Charity in New Orleans, La., over the Labor Day weekend. The women participating offered a day of service in the Lower Ninth Ward, and afterwards reflected and prayed together on discernment themes in the context of our Charity charism.

"It was a time for me to quiet my inner self and take time to be present and reflect on the different life directions," participant Kristen Hernandez said.

## BECOMING THE PERSON God Created Us to Be

*By S. Janet Gildea*

*"Faith lifts the staggering soul on one side,  
Hope supports it on the other,  
Experience says it must be  
and Love says let it be." - Elizabeth Ann Seton*

**E**lizabeth Seton was a woman who knew how to lean on God. From early childhood she found in God a place of refuge and a source of strength. The loss of loved ones in her life – her mother, her husband, her sisters-in-law, her own children and her Sisters in the early years of the community, as well as prolonged times of separation from friends – often sent her soul staggering. Criticism and disapproval of family, friends and religious leaders weighed heavily at the time of her conversion to Catholicism and again during the efforts to found the Sisters of Charity.



Who of us has not second-guessed ourselves in big decisions when others challenged our choices? We can feel tossed about like a leaf in the autumn winds, especially when those we respect and whose opinion really matters question our sense of where God is calling us in ministry, in relationships, in life-direction. Elizabeth struggled for more than one year with her decision to become a Catholic. It was a decision with tremendous consequences, not just for herself but for her children and for her ability to provide for them. There were moments when the idea seemed absolutely crazy – and there were many who thought she had lost her mind. Others worried that she would lose her soul. She had similar worries for herself!

In the discernment process we can expect moments of doubt and turmoil. St. Ignatius advised that we must learn to understand the movements of the spirits of consolation and desolation that accompany our efforts to know God's will. Feelings of anxiety, sadness and confusion generally fit into the "desolation" category whereas consolation increases our sense of faith, hope, love, joy and peace. Discerning these movements is often a challenge. Even considering a simple question like "What do I really want?" can become complicated by the internal and external forces that influence our understanding of what is good, right and true for us.

We lean on God in those times, asking for faith and hope to steady our resolve to seek God's will. We look back on our life experience and the many times that Providence has led us on the right path. Spiritual directors, mentors and trusted friends can listen along with us to affirm or question the insights we discover. At last, after much sifting of the information we have gathered and processed, we must come to a moment of decision. It is reassuring to remember, at that point, that the decision itself is not the goal but only a means to gaining the end for which each of us was created. When "Love says let it be" we are falling back into the God who created us in love and for love. The decision is but one more step on the journey to becoming the person God created us to be.

# Where Are the Sisters Today?

## S. Mary Alice Haithcoat



S. Mary Alice Haithcoat is the principal of Piqua Catholic School, a kindergarten through eighth grade consolidated school in Piqua, Ohio. To learn more about Sister's current ministry, [click here](#).

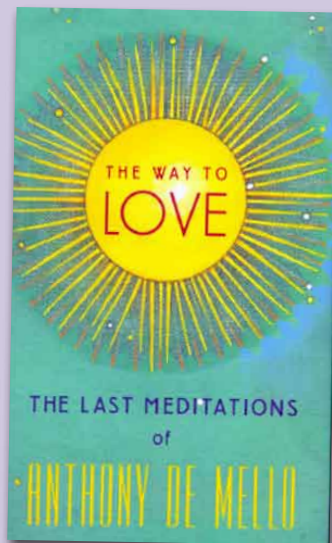
## A Good Read

### The Way to Love: The Last Meditations of Anthony de Mello

This is a book to keep by the bedside – but not because it will put you to sleep! Indeed Fr. Anthony de Mello was an Indian Jesuit who dedicated his life to helping people pray and become more aware. ‘Wake up and see what is real!’ is the theme of much of his writings. This book of brief reflections is a helpful resource reflecting on your day, your work, your relationships, to see where you can become a more loving person.

Here's a sample of de Mello's Zen-like zingers:

*“If it is peace you want, seek to change yourself, not other people. It is easier to protect your feet with slippers than to carpet the whole of the earth.”*



## MEET OUR SISTERS – S. Pat Marie Bernard

**What do you enjoy most about being a Sister of Charity?**

What I like most is the challenge ever before me to grow in relationship with God, to live this forward in health care and spirituality ministries, and to be constantly challenged to keep reaching outward to the suffering world, especially now to our immigrant brothers and sisters.

**What is the best thing about Community life?**

Community life places me with multi-talented and gifted women – each a unique image of God. Community life has stretched me and continues to call me to be my best self. Community life has empowered me to take time for personal and professional growth through the years.

**What do you do for fun?**

I love nature – hiking and backpacking in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of New Mexico to the trails of Ohio's parks. I love the venture of identifying trees, birds and wildflowers, and the creative ventures into wood sculpture and haikus. I also enjoy good books and movies.

**What is your favorite way to connect with God?**

Through centered stillness: knowing God's Presence within, and allowing the Divine physician to work in me. I also communicate with God through journaling.



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E-Voc is the electronic newsletter from the Vocations Team of the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati for single women wondering what new thing God is calling forth in their lives. To unsubscribe [click here](#).

If you are interested in learning more about life as a Sister of Charity, visit our Web site at [www.srcharitycinti.org](http://www.srcharitycinti.org) or contact S. Janet Gildea at (513) 535-1624.