Happy, HOPE-filled New Year! Continuing with the theme of our 2017 Christmas Appeal, we HOPE your new year is off to a wonderful start. We also HOPE you had the opportunity to view our video series that showcased how your generous contributions are bringing much-needed HOPE to those in need, especially in Chicago and Kentucky. (The videos still are available for viewing at www.adriandominicans.org/hope).

You certainly responded with love, care, and kindness to our Christmas appeal, and we thank you! We are touched by your personal notes. Our Sisters cherish your good wishes, and your generosity is so deeply appreciated. Many of the gifts we received this year were made in honor of or in memory of a Sister or a loved one.

As we know each person you remember is precious to you, be assured that each one is just as special to us. Thank you for inviting us to join you in celebrating and remembering your loved ones. We are truly grateful.

We also are honored that you trust us with your heartfelt prayer intentions. Please know that while we pray for you every day, your special Christmas intentions were prayed for by our Sisters during our Christmas Day Mass.

May your 2018 be blessed and may we all “dwell in hope” as together we journey ahead.

With Gratitude,

Amy Palmer, CFRE
Director of Development

Sister Joan Mary, OP, right, assists a student learning English at Aquinas Literacy Center in Chicago. Our 2017 Christmas video series on HOPE focuses on ways Sisters bring hope to those in need through their ministries.
Among you, our generous donors, are members of a very distinct group: former Adrian Dominican Sisters. A number of former Sisters continue to live out the Dominican charism, stay in contact with the Sisters, and support the Congregation through generous donations.

“I was gifted and so blessed from the very beginning,” said Nancy Mannausa, who entered the Congregation after being taught for 12 years by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Kalamazoo, Michigan. She followed a friend into the Congregation after being assured by her pastor that the Adrian Dominican Sisters would be a good fit for her.

A teacher all her life, Nancy learned as a high school student how to manage a classroom when she served as a volunteer catechist with Catholic students at a public elementary school. As an Adrian Dominican Sister, Nancy enhanced her teaching skills under the mentorship of a number of Sisters. She particularly remembers Sister Hilda Marie Gelegan, OP, a strict supervisor of teachers at St. Nicholas School in Chicago. Sister Hilda Marie instilled in Nancy the importance of coming into a classroom well prepared.

Her career has included teaching in public schools at all levels from elementary to college, serving as president of the teachers’ union, and working with student teachers and classroom teachers who had student teachers in their classrooms.

Nancy donates to the Congregation out of sheer gratitude for the Sisters with whom she entered and still remains in contact.

Patricia Sturk, also a former Adrian Dominican Sister, makes ongoing donations to the Congregation. “It is simply a ‘thank you’ in honor of and in memory of women from many years ago,” she said. “Giving to the Adrian Dominicans is a little, tiny way of saying ‘thank you.’” She said being a member of the Sustained Giving Circle — consisting of those who donate monthly — “is the best way I know to regularly and consistently say ‘thank you.’”

She added that the Adrian Dominican Sisters are an important part of her history because she was taught by the Sisters at Bishop Muldoon High School in Rockford, Illinois, from 1957 to 1961. “They were smart, engaging women. Their commitment was enhanced with a fine sense of humor. All of this was engaging to a young woman who had always wanted to be a teacher,” Patricia said.

An Adrian Dominican Sister from 1961 to 1972, Patricia retired from Clinton [Michigan] Community Schools in 2006 and continued as a substitute teacher. She also was involved for 10 years as a tutor and Board member with the Adrian Rea Literacy Center, one of the Congregation’s seven literacy centers. “The [Sisters] who taught me and with whom I lived were influential in helping to mold me as an effective teacher,” she said.

We are grateful to the former Sisters and to all who are so generous with their support of the Adrian Dominican Sisters.
Sustained Giving Circle Makes Donating Easy

If you’re like most people these days, you lead a busy life. We in the Development Office value both your generosity and your time. We invite you to be part of a caring group of donors who send monthly gifts to the Congregation – without having to think about it or write a check.

The Sustained Giving Circle is composed of generous donors who give monthly. Members indicate how much money they want to donate each month, and this amount is automatically charged to their credit cards or deducted from their checking accounts. Circle members have the option of indicating how they want their donations to be spent: for the retired Sisters, for Sisters in ministry through the Ministry Trust Fund, or for the area of greatest need. In addition, members can cancel their donations or increase or decrease them at any time.

For more information about the Sustained Giving Circle, contact Amy Palmer, Director of Development, at 517-266-3480 or learn more at https://tinyurl.com/sustainedgiving.

Sister Romona Nowak, OP

Sister in Annual Report Returns Home to God

We are saddened to inform you that Sister Romona Nowak, OP, who was featured in the 2016-2017 Annual Report for her valiant and peaceful approach to her death, returned home to God. Sister Romona died on November 8, 2017, nearly a year after she had returned to Adrian.

Sister Romona was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer in the summer of 2016 and decided to accept palliative care rather than aggressive treatment. With the support of the nursing staff at the Dominican Life Center in Adrian and the Sisters, Associates, and Co-workers on the Motherhouse campus, she survived well beyond the six months that doctors predicted.

Sister Romona spoke of her year in Adrian as a time of working on her PhD — “Preparing for a Happy Death.” She wrote: “Although I will not be physically cured, love is the strongest thing in the world. The cross doesn’t get lighter nor the suffering easier, but I can embrace the journey with the companionship of my Sisters, family, benefactors, friends, and all those who make the Dominican Life Center possible.”

Thank you for praying for our Sisters and for your ongoing support for their health care needs.

Why I Give ...

“I attended Detroit Dominican High School from 1961 to 1965. The sisters of St. Dominic — Adrian Dominican Sisters — informed my social and political beliefs. Income inequality doesn’t happen by chance; it happens by policy decisions. The Adrian Dominican Sisters are serving in some small way to bridge the chasm between rich and poor — to make the poor independent, self-sufficient citizens of the world.”

— Elaine M. Gerhardstein, Miller Place, New York
The Adrian Dominican Office of Development is pleased to re-introduce to you Sister Kathleen Schanz, OP, an Adrian Dominican Sister for more than 50 years. Sister Kathleen joins Amy Palmer and the Office of Development team as our Donor Relations Specialist. She has extensive leadership experience both in the Congregation and the local Lenawee County community.

A General Councilor for the Adrian Dominican Sisters from 2010 to 2016, Sister Kathleen has been a leader in congregational institutions; Director of ATHENA International, which seeks to develop and support leadership among women; and Executive Director of Lenawee United Way from 2004 to 2010.

“I am pleased and proud to serve in this important ministry,” Sister Kathleen stated. “Our Adrian Dominican development efforts that began in the 1980s continue today with an even greater emphasis on deepening those long-term relationships and building new and lasting relationships for the future.”

Sister Kathleen looks forward to meeting as many donors as possible to express the Congregation’s gratitude to you for your generosity and your willingness to join with us as we, together, bring hope into our world.

You, our donors, always have been incredibly generous in your gifts to the Sisters. Please consider helping us with some practical needs that are on our wish list to refurbish our dated Dominican Life Center beauty salon, where 250-plus Sisters living on campus receive care.

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Our wish list is continually updated on our website under “Ways to Give.” If you can help fulfill any wishes, please contact Amy Palmer, Director of Development, at 517-266-3480 or apalmer@adriandominicans.org.

Thank you.