

# GOOD NEWS FROM AFRICA



Winter 2019

## IN THIS SEASON OF "giving thanks"

Lord, thank you for walking with us through the seasons of our lives.  
For the winter, when we are held safe in your arms through the darkness.  
For the hope of spring, as we are filled with new promise and life.  
For summer time, full of warmth and color  
And for autumn days as leaves fall to seed new growth.  
You are always with us. Amen.

*(a short prayer of thanksgiving from www.lords-prayer-words.com)*

**I take this opportunity to thank each of you for the ways you reach out to our SSND ministry in Africa. Through you, we have been able to reach out to many, alleviate some pain and suffering, give hope and share life and God's love. May God continue to bless your efforts, bless your families and those you care about as you continue to support our SSND mission.**

*Sr. Oyinoza Asishana, Provincial Leader*



## We stand at a threshold!

As a congregation we have just celebrated the 186th anniversary of the foundation of the School Sisters of Notre Dame having begun in Bavaria on October 24, 1833. It is a time to reaffirm God's work in establishing SSND, bedrock of our foundation.

The Province of Africa is preparing to enter its fiftieth year as SSND missionaries first went to Africa in 1970. In those 50 years, 139 SSNDs from US, Canada, Poland, Germany and Hungary have responded to the call for service in Africa. Since 1990 when we began formation, we have welcomed 85 young African women to join in the mission by becoming SSNDs!

In Africa celebrations begin with an acknowledgement of the ancestors. As School Sisters we share many common ancestors whose attributes, strengths, hopes and values are core to who we are today: a vision for loving and caring communities, a passion for the poor and the transformation of society through education -- all of these attributes fortify the foundation on which Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger, Mother Caroline and all subsequent School Sisters of Notre Dame have and continue to build.

I want to draw from an African symbol of the Akan tribe in Ghana, The Sankofa bird symbolizes a mythical bird with its feet firmly planted forward with its head turned backwards and sometimes carrying a precious egg in its mouth. The Akan believe the past serves as a guide for planning the future. They believe that there must be movement and new learning as time passes so the knowledge of the past must inform our present reality, it is this wisdom in learning from the past which ensures a strong future. Help us thank God for the continuity that has served SSND so well for 186 years and begin to celebrate the passage of our ministry in Africa into Golden years!



**SANKOFA**  
*(Go back to fetch it)*  
*Symbol of the Wisdom in Learning from the Past in Building the Future.*

# A NEW MISSION: RURAL MINISTRY IN NIGERIA

## EXCERPTS FROM SR. MONICA BENEDICT STORY.

In a desire to offer holistic education, we School Sisters of Notre Dame in Nigeria responded to a call in 2018 to serve in Corpus Christi Nursery and Primary School, Anwule-Oglewu, a school located in a rural settlement on the outskirts of Otukpo, Benue State, Nigeria. Sr. Monica Benedict, Sr. Esther Bassey and Sr. Dorothy Enang were the three pioneer Sisters sent to open the school for the Diocese of Otukpo. As School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND), we gladly answered the call to serve in Anwule. Our conviction that we can transform the world through education always propels us to go to the tiniest village where there is a need and to reach out to all, especially women and children and youth. The people of Anwule received us whole heartedly and have been very supportive of our ministry in their village.



Amidst the joys of ministering in a rural settlement there are challenges. Raining seasons are often very difficult times for our pupils as most of them walk many miles from their villages to attend school. The village where we are is a farming settlement. Most of the families depend on the sales of their farm produce for income. Seeing their struggles, the Sisters, as well as the diocese has made efforts to support needy children.

In line with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, SSNDs seek to foster peaceful, just, and earth friendly activities. Since our school is new and the compound is relatively bare, the children are excited to plant trees to beautify the compound.



We look forward to times when the school will have electricity, a stable water source year round, as well as a viable library. Despite the challenges we face in this rural community, we are happy ministering to God's people in Anwule. To achieve our educational goals we must be willing to make the sacrifice to go into the tiniest villages and put smiles on the faces of the children.

Sr. Monica's complete story can be accessed at [www.Gerhardinger.org](http://www.Gerhardinger.org).





## A DREAM COMING TRUE. . .

In marking 50 years of SSND’s in Africa, our dream of a HOME in Africa is a reality. Phase 1 of the construction of the Provincial House located on the outskirts of Accra in Ghana is now ready for occupancy. Moving will begin in December with relocation of Province Offices and living accommodations. (See picture A)

Work continues on phase 2 along with installation of the Solar system and completion of the water harvesting plan. Phase 2 will provide living quarters for guests for province meetings, etc. (See picture B with both phases completed hopefully within 2020.)



Picture A

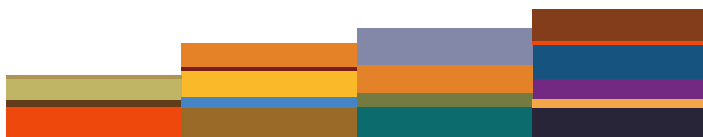
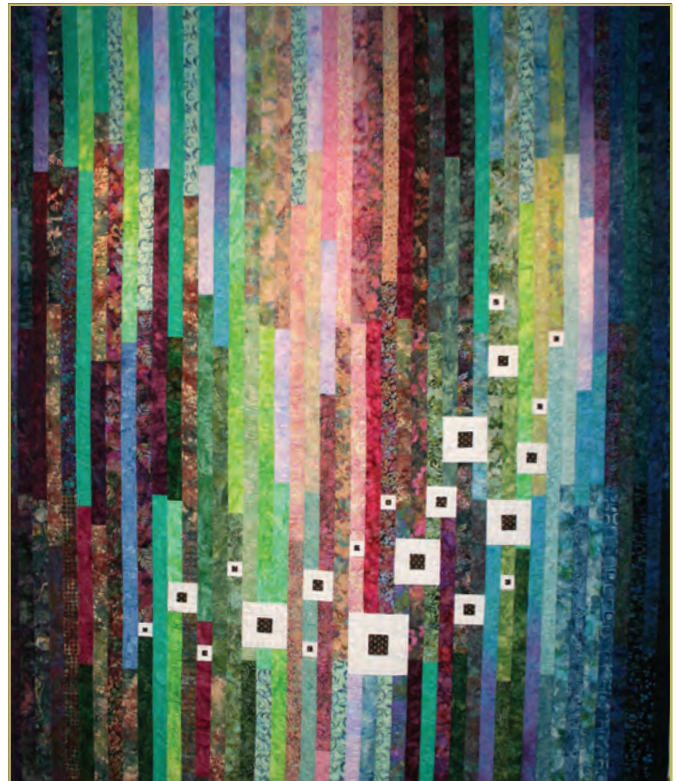


Picture B

## CONGRATULATIONS TO LAVERNE BEAUDRY OF ST. MICHAEL, MN!

We are very happy to report that the proceeds from the Great African Quilt Raffle will go a very long way in supporting the education of our Sisters in Africa. It is a lifelong investment in providing teachers, nurses and social workers for our missions.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our drawing this year for “Varied Verticals”. Special thanks to Sr. Josephine Niemann who is preparing the quilt for 2020!



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PO Box 16415  
St. Louis, MO 63125

Nonprofit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
St. Louis, MO  
Permit No.495



Good News From Africa tells the story  
of the School Sisters of Notre Dame  
in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone,  
and The Gambia.

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## Thinking of leaving something behind. . .

Surveys show that only 4 out of 10 Americans across all age groups have current wills. Estate planning provides a way to improve and stabilize the financial security of yourself and those you love. A will transfers more than just money. It transfers your love and your values to those you care about.

A current will provides you

- One last opportunity to express your values to your heirs
- A chance to care for your heirs according to their special needs
- The occasion to make a gift to charitable organizations that have touched your life.

We are hoping that in your estate planning you might consider a bequest to the School Sisters of Notre Dame, Province of Africa. A bequest is a unique gift. It holds promise for the future. It reflects your belief in our call to support God's work together.

You can contact our office for information on suggested language to include SSND in your will. Thank you!  
Ph. 314-633-7051 or email [ssndafrica@gmail.com](mailto:ssndafrica@gmail.com).

