

URSULINE

DOME

*Continuing
the Legacy
of Spirituality
and Service*

A PUBLICATION OF THE URSULINE SISTERS OF LOUISVILLE • WINTER 2025



60 ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

YEARS IN PERU

HEARTS WITHOUT BORDERS: THE URSULINE SPIRIT IN ACTION

On the Cover

High school students from Santa Angela Merici School in Carmen de la Legua, Peru, perform a traditional Peruvian dance in costume during the “gran celebración” on Saturday, October 11, 2025. The celebration commemorated the 60th anniversary of the school, which was founded in 1965 by the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville. Students from all grades performed, along with a group of alumni. You may read more about the school, its history, and future on pages 4–9.

About this Issue

During this season of celebrating the infant Jesus’s birth—born in a strange land, far from home, his parents relying on the kindness of strangers—we celebrate “Hearts without Borders: The Ursuline Spirit in Action.” The Ursulines of Louisville have a history of going to serve the stranger: from starting a brand-new school in an impoverished area of Peru, as Sisters Lee Kirchner and Mary Martha Staarman did, to Sister Julia Davis welcoming visitors in her hospital ministry, to the late Sister Paula Kleine-Kracht pioneering a Catholic school for at-risk urban youth. The late Sister Donata Kokot, like so many Ursulines, went where the need was for teachers—to Pennsylvania, Maryland, South Carolina, and Mississippi, as well as Louisville. Three of our Ursulines who served or are serving in Peru reflect on the heart of service that our new pope, Leo XIV, has, and Sister Yuli Oncihuay, in the Leadership letter, celebrates the “very human connection between one another that can transcend borders and unite all people in a shared purpose.”

—Kathy Rice, editor

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The Ursuline Sisters of Louisville appreciate the support of those who share their financial resources with us.



A PUBLICATION OF THE URSULINE SISTERS OF LOUISVILLE



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¡Vida Vencera! And Life Will Win Out!

Hearts without Borders

Celebrating 60 years of our Santa Angela Merici Parish School reaffirmed many values that reflect our charism in action, which are Respect, Community, Leadership and Service.

The celebration signified the union and solidarity of our students, teachers, parents, families and alumni who share values and common experiences, going beyond individual differences. It represents the idea that together we form one big family: "The Angeline Family" and the very human connection between one another that can transcend borders and unite all people in a shared purpose.

In a celebration such as our anniversary, it is necessary to mention that joy and hope are woven together, celebrating not only 60 years of history and tradition, but also the promise of a shining

future. Joy was reflected in the smiles of the students, teachers, parents and former students who gathered to commemorate unforgettable moments and accomplishments. Hope is manifested in the dream of new generations who will become part of this educational community, ready to face the challenges and take advantage of new opportunities. Together, joy and hope inspire us to walk together, to move forward, strengthening the mission and vision of our school. 🎓



Yuli Oncibuay, OSU

Sister Yuli Oncibuay, OSU
Councilor, Ursuline Sisters of Louisville

Hearts Without Borders: The Ursuline Spirit in Action

60 Years of Santa Angela Merici School in Carmen de la Legua, Peru

BY KATHY RICE

On a Tuesday morning in Carmen de la Legua, students clad in blue and plaid uniforms begin arriving at school, some walking, some being dropped off. Parents linger, visiting with each other at the entrance of the school.

The inner courtyard of the school fills up with students: little ones in preschool all the way up to high school, being greeted by staff and school administrators, including Sister Sue Scharfenberger, who is promoter of the school, and Sister Yuli Oncihuay.

The week of October 6-11, 2025, was a special one, as it marked the celebration of the school's 60th anniversary. On Monday evening, there was an anniversary Mass with Callao Archbishop Luis Alberto Pacheco in the school's courtyard.

The rest of the week, students were busy practicing for the other two events this week—a play about the life of St. Angela Merici, and the grand finale: “Create, Love and Act!”

A History of Service and Faith

The Ursuline Sisters of Louisville have been in Peru for over sixty years, beginning in 1964 when several Sisters were sent to teach Peruvian children at a Navy school, and Sister Lee Kirchner and Sister Mary Martha Staarman were to start a school, Santa Angela Merici School, from the ground up in what was then a slum area of Lima—Carmen de la Legua in the Callao district outside of the city. None of the Sisters knew Spanish or the culture. After a three-month crash course in Spanish, the Sisters set to work.

In 1965, after a lot of red tape and many obstacles, Sisters Lee and Mary Martha were able to open Santa Angela Merici School. They began with 75 children in two first-grade rooms, one box of chalk and two erasers! Enrollment quickly grew, as it was the only Catholic school in the area. Sister Mary Martha recalled the humble beginnings: “60 years ago I never imagined

“

...I am thankful to God that I could be a small part of it. We lit the spark, but the people carried it and are carrying it. I am not just grateful to them; I trust in their dedication and ability to carry this vision forward.

—Sr. Lee Kirchner

”

those two little rooms given to us to start a school would turn into the magnificent SAM that stands today. An acorn that grew into a towering tree, nourished by all those who followed.”

When asked about the early years of hard work and sacrifices, Sister Lee said, “It wasn't all sacrifices—there were so many graces. I am thankful to God that I could be a small part of it. We lit the spark, but the people carried it and are carrying it. I am not just grateful to them; I trust in their dedication and ability to carry this vision forward.”

Despite many obstacles, including political revolutions, the Ursulines persevered in their mission. The co-ed Santa Angela Merici School now serves 420 pre-k through high school students. Carmen de la Legua has grown to become an urban area of homes, shops and businesses, and is part of the emerging economy of Peru.

Principal Edmundo Gamarra Gomez reflected on the lasting impact of the Ursuline charism: “I am convinced that the presence of the Ursuline charism in Carmen de la Legua over these 60 years has been vital to the community. I have been personally formed by this charism, as have the teachers who work here at the school. All of us have become part of this ministry.”

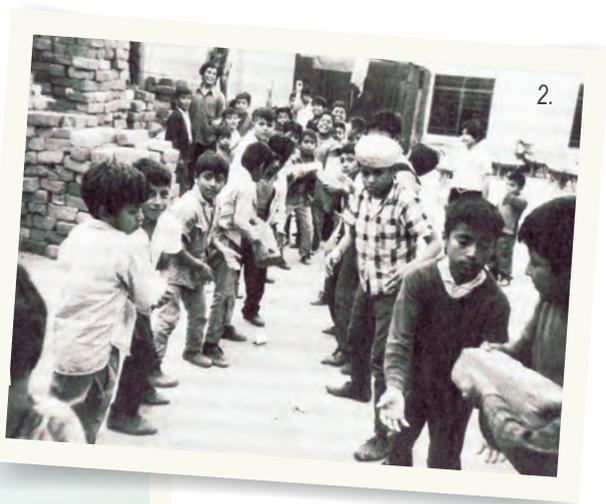
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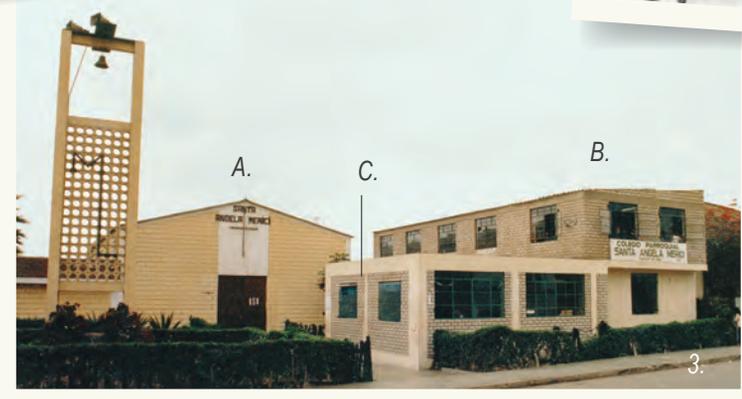
Above: Principal Edmundo Gamarra Gomez with high school students, 2025.



1.



2.



A.

C.

B.

3.

1. Sisters Lee Kirchner (L) and Mary Martha Staarman (R) with lay teacher Carmen de la Cuba Laurel (far right), Peru, circa 1960s. Carmen, a 2022 Angeline Award winner, has been with the school for over 50 years!
 2. In the 1960s, students helped construct a one-room library for the school.
 3. The church building was built in 1964; the school building, far right, was built in 1971; and an addition (center) was added in 1984. A new school building was constructed in 1996.



...Many generations have passed through our school, and they have become successful people with strong values, character and are committed to what is important.

—Principal Edmundo Gamarra Gomez



He emphasized the school's broader community impact: "What has also been important is the formation of families and the dedication the Sisters have shown in promoting the participation of women in the neighborhood. In their communities and homes, women have been encouraged to take an active role, as have our students. Many generations have passed through our school, and they have become successful people with strong values, character and are committed to what is important."

The Mission of the School

In the anniversary program for Saturday's event, the school stated its mission: "Six decades of leaving indelible marks of service, hope, and love for others, always guided by the Gospel and the example of Saint Angela Merici.

"Each step along this journey reflects the dedication, effort, and faith of all who have been part of this great Angelina family: students, teachers, religious sisters, parents, and the parish community.

"Through the years, we have learned that education is not only about teaching but about shaping hearts with faith and conscience—hearts capable of loving, serving, and transforming their surroundings with hope."

Today, the school reaffirms its four institutional pillars that give meaning to its mission: Community, Respect, Service and Leadership.

A Community Celebration

Sister Sue Scharfenberger reflected on this year's anniversary celebration: "It takes a village. This is what the anniversary celebration brought home to me. It was

not just Sisters Sue or Yuli, Edmundo or Carmen. It was every teacher, every student, every parent and every child. It took everyone expressing in words and actions the becoming of a community, the sharing of hopes and dreams, gifts and talents. We celebrate 60 years of growing together in respect, community, leadership and service. We don't do any of this alone. Everyone's gifts are needed and valued."

Saturday's celebration, "Create, Love and Act," was a spectacular show that included each grade performing choreographed dances to songs representing various values and mottos of the school, including "Choose Peace," "Respect," and "Leadership."

Alumni were represented in one of the dances. A special video message from Sisters Lee and Mary Martha, the school's founders, received rousing applause. The evening ended with the entire audience and students dancing together in a joyous celebration.

The dancing that concluded Saturday night's celebration—with students, teachers, parents and administrators all participating together—captured the essence of the school. It's a place where community, relationships, and faith-based education matter.

A Living Legacy

The school continues to serve families from Carmen de la Legua and surrounding areas of Callao. Each morning, the scene at the entrance repeats itself—parents dropping off students, conversations among families, students from the youngest preschoolers to the oldest secondary students moving to their classrooms on campus.

Sisters Sue Scharfenberger and Yuli Oncihuay continue the work that began 60 years ago, supporting the school's commitment to its founding principles while adapting to serve students and families in the 21st century.

From two small rooms to the thriving institution it has become, Santa Angela Merici School stands as a witness to what Sister Lee described: the people carry the spark forward. As the school enters its seventh decade, that same spirit of dedication continues, preparing students capable of loving, serving, and transforming their world with hope. 🌍



Photos, top to bottom:
"60" decorations.

Callao Archbishop Luis Alberto Pacheco.

Anniversary Mass.

Sister Yuli Oncihuay, right, with her former student, who now teaches at the school.

Sister Sue Sharfenberger with students.



60 Years of Santa Angela Merici School

April 1965

Santa Angela Merici School opens with two classrooms and 75 children. By its second year, there were four classes and six teachers: two sisters, one papal volunteer and three Peruvian teachers (one paid by the school and the others paid by the government).

December 1970

The school has its first graduating class of 25 students.

January-March 1972

Three new classrooms are constructed on the second floor of the school. One of these is for special education, taught by Sr. Kathy Neely.

1973

Enrollment tops 500 students.

October 1989–October 1990

A year-long celebration is held for the 25th Jubilee of the Ursuline presence in Callao.

December 1994

Santa Angela Merici School is visited by Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori, who promised the government would help construct a new building for the school.

January 1996

Classes are temporarily held in three different places during the demolition of the old building and construction of a new one.

August 1996

Blessing of the new school building.

2001

Father Felipe Zegarra Russo, pastor of the parish and school, departs, leaving behind a strong legacy of peace and justice.

2020

For a year and a half, all classes are virtual due to the COVID-19 virus.

2025

Saint Angela Merici School celebrates its 60th anniversary.



We've included several photos from the school-wide celebration held on Saturday, October 11, on these two pages. It was a lively and festive event featuring music, drama and choreographed dances performed by students and alumni. St. Angela Merici made a special appearance, as did the pope, and the evening concluded with cake and more dancing!

Celebrating 60 Years of Santa Angela Merici





Create, love, and act!



To see more photos from the event, please visit: <https://ursulinesisterslouisville.org/photo-gallery/> or via the QR code.



It's a Small World

BY SISTER SUE SCHARFENBERGER

We awoke on October 10 to "We have a new president!" There were no elections. No campaigning, no flyers thrown in the street, no debates, no political fighting.

Just the headlines of every newspaper: "We have a new president!" Dina Boluarte was voted out of the presidency. And truly, her term as president was confusing and shaky from the beginning.

New elections are scheduled for next July, but somehow the violence that

has been attacking our streets just could not wait any longer.

Threats and questioning of her presidency plagued her term of office. But congress was comfortable doing what was to their benefit for the past five years, so they found no advantage in removing her until the recent killings of some favorite musicians in concert.

The extortions, bribery, threats of murder of one's family, or the destruction of one's business have plagued our neighborhoods in Lima and Callao, especially for the last

several years. "Not cooperating" has taken the lives of many a small business owner, driver of a local "combi," or owner of a taxi business.

On the other hand, our television news brings us in direct contact with the children of Gaza and Ukraine, and many other parts of the world.

Our school day is interrupted with the sound of chimes, a moment of silence, and a prayer for peace, as students come to the balcony or into the school yard for a moment of silence and connection





with our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world who experience war and hunger on a daily basis.

Our students from kindergarten to 5th year secondary school all learned the song “We Choose Peace” in English. It was a way of connecting with our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world whose lives are severely marked by war and famine.

As you will read in other parts of the DOME, our celebration of 60 years offered us a time of thanksgiving for what has been. And it is our responsibility now to prepare for the time that is—renewing our commitments to our values of respect, community, leadership and service. 📺

To view the video of the students singing the song, “We Choose Peace,” please visit the link via the QR code.





Then—Cardinal Robert Prevost shares a joyful moment with Pope Francis in 2023. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

Reflections on the election of Pope Leo XIV by three of our Sisters who have served in Peru

Pope Leo XIV holds a unique place in the hearts of Peruvians—not only is he the first pope from the United States, many consider him authentically Peruvian. His journey from Chicago’s South Side to becoming a naturalized citizen of Peru reflects a deep connection with its people, beginning with his arrival as a missionary in 1985. For a decade, he taught canon law in Trujillo before returning to Chicago, only to return to Peru in 2014 to serve in Chiclayo as apostolic administrator, bishop, and eventually archbishop. His deep immersion in Peruvian culture—living among the people, serving the poor, and embracing local customs—gave him a special bond with the people he served. The Ursuline Sisters of Louisville also share a deep connection to Peru, having ministered there for over 60 years. They established a school, Santa Angela Merici in Carmen de la Legua, a former slum area along the Rimac River that is now part of the port city of Callao, and have served in pastoral ministry in San Miguel in the Andes Mountains. On the next page, three of our Sisters who served in Peru offer their reflections on Pope Leo and his amazing journey.

Sister Sue Scharfenberger has ministered in Peru for over 40 years, and currently serves as mission promoter at Santa Angela Merici School, founded by the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville in 1965.

My experience with Roberto Prevost, now Pope Leo XIV, is mostly from a distance. I first learned of him when he was made bishop of Chiclayo, the diocese he greeted in his opening message after his election as pope.

Chiclayo had been traditionally an Opus Dei diocese, that focused on the upper class. There was no consideration for the “bases,” the comunidades de base, the organization of the parishes and church in general from the gathering of the people. Along with that, formal sacraments were given priority, not attention for the poor.

So when Prevost was made bishop, he already came into the diocese with a reputation for care for the poor and the involvement and organization of the people. He was to be a people’s bishop.

We learned later of his work in Trujillo with a borderline parish, still with emphasis on the participation of the lay community and the development of their leadership.

While bishop of Chiclayo, he was asked to be intermediary in the diocese of Callao, which had for years been entangled in corruption, struggles for power, and a very hierarchical structure. His calm but definite voice enabled the uncovering of many ills, which eventually led to a restructuring of the diocese.

Peru is glad and honored for the election of Pope Leo XIV.

Sister Kathy Neely ministered for over 50 years in Peru—first as a teacher at Santa Angela Merici; later, a founder of a school for children with special needs in Callao; and finally, as a catechist and pastoral minister in San Miguel in the Cajamarca region in the Andes Mountains.

I am happy for our global sisters and brothers whom Pope Leo XIV had the experience of living with and ministering to in Latin America, and especially in Peru. I too, have had the blessing of living and walking with the people of God there. Because I personally have the experience of having been taught by the Peruvian people, I know that our new pontiff also has learned from the people he served. I read that our new pope listens to his people, appreciates them, affirms them, thanks them and truly loves them, and they in turn love him as their own. This, to me, is what mission is about: sharing the Word of God in the daily lives of the people, mutually learning from each other. Walking with the people of God has helped to make our new pope the person that he is today.

I think his election is an affirmation to the Peruvian people that they must be doing something right! And I agree wholeheartedly. The people of Peru are doing many things right: forming basic Christian Communities, laity ministering as catechists in the cities and rural areas, participating in family soup kitchens, promoting the Peruvian culture of dance, music, art, poetry and more. Peruvians are humble, faith-filled, resilient people who suffer, learn and grow through it all. Our new pope has experienced all of this, and it will serve him well as our Christian leader.

In 1965, Sister Lee Kirchner was one of the co-founders of Santa Angela Merici School, which is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year. She lived and ministered in Peru for over 40 years, including pastoral ministry in San Miguel, and today is in prayer ministry in Louisville.

In general, Peruvian folks are very religious-minded, so having the newly elected pope in their midst was felt as a touch of God’s special love among them. I am thankful I shared my life with them. I happily rejoice with them again now.



Carmen de la Legua, Peru, circa 1990s: Front row: Sr. Sue Scharfenberger, left, Sr. Lee Kirchner, third from left, the late Sr. Betty Albers kneeling on right. Second row, fourth from left, Sr. Yuli Oncihuay. Rear: Sr. Kathy Neely.



Sisters in Ministry

The Wayfinder: Sister Julia Davis's Ministry of Presence at Norton Audubon Hospital

BY KATHY RICE

For Sister Julia Davis, retirement from youth ministry in 2008 wasn't the end—it was just the beginning of a new chapter. Her cousin told her about a new volunteer position called “Wayfinding” at Norton Audubon Hospital in Louisville. Sister Julia was immediately drawn to the idea of helping visitors navigate the hospital.

Now, at 88 years young and having celebrated her 70th jubilee as an Ursuline Sister of Louisville last year,

Sister Julia has become a beloved fixture at Norton Audubon Hospital, where she spends every Monday afternoon guiding visitors and offering comfort.

For Sister Julia, wayfinding is more than just giving directions—it's about accompaniment. “People are coming in stressed and worried,” she explains. “Some people just want directions, but others prefer you walk with them, and they truly appreciate your presence.”

Sister Julia typically arrives at the hospital at 11:30 a.m., attends Mass at noon, has lunch with one of her many friends there, and then takes her post at the main entrance from 1 to 4 p.m. When there's a lull, she actively seeks out those who might be lost. “I walk through the hospital finding people lost,” she says. “They're so relieved when you can tell them—or even take them—to the place.”

One of her most cherished friendships began when she helped Amy Nall, then vice principal at Sacred Heart Academy, find a department she was looking for. Upon learning Sister Julia was an Ursuline Sister, Amy was delighted. Today, Amy is an Ursuline Associate, and Sister Julia serves as her companion.



Sister Julia with Almedina Rizvanovic and Stacy Ogle at the hospital's welcome desk.



“As I come each day, I don’t know what to expect—what opportunities, what graces, what joys or sufferings I’m going to find.”

Sister Julia Davis

opportunities, what graces, what joys or sufferings I’m going to find,” she says. Indeed, St. Angela encouraged her companions to “be like a piazza”—be warm, welcoming, a person of hospitality, and accepting everyone who comes into your life.

“It brings me joy as I bring joy to others,” Sister Julia says simply. In the maze of hospital corridors, Sister Julia Davis has found her way—and in doing so, helps many others find theirs. 🙏

Left: Sister Julia in the hospital chapel. Below: Father Expedito Muwonge, hospital chaplain, shares a laugh with Sister Julia.

Affectionately known as “the sister in red” for her U of L Cardinals fan attire, she makes sure to greet each person on her route. She estimates she walks two to three miles during her shifts. It’s not just physical exercise, though—it’s a pilgrimage of sorts—connecting with others and walking beside them.

For Sister Julia, volunteering is a spiritual practice. She begins each shift with Mass, praying “for all the people in the hospital and all those who are caring for the sick.” Her prayers focus outward, toward others.

Drawing on the wisdom of St. Angela Merici, founder of the Ursuline Sisters, Sister Julia embraces the openness of each day at the hospital. “As I come each day, I don’t know what to expect—what



To view a video about Sister Julia’s ministry, please scan the QR code, left.

2025 Angeline Award Winners



L-R: Karen Cassidy, Mary "Missy" Bartlett

The Ursuline Sisters of Louisville presented their final Angeline Awards to two remarkable women during a special Mass on October 19, 2025, at 11 a.m. in the Motherhouse Chapel on the Ursuline campus. This ceremony reflected the historic significance of St. Angela Merici's 500th anniversary pilgrimage during this Jubilee Year: Pilgrims of Hope.

The Angeline Award was established in 1991 and named in honor of St. Angela Merici, founder of the Ursuline Order, recognizing individuals who exemplified the Ursuline values of education, service, and spiritual growth.

Karen Cassidy, Sacred Heart Academy alumna and director of Hildegard House, received the traditional Angeline Award for her transformative work in compassionate end-of-life care. As director of Hildegard House—Kentucky's only compassionate care home—she provides dignified end-of-life care for those who might otherwise die alone.

Inspired by a 2014 pilgrimage to Germany where she learned about Hildegard of Bingen, Karen founded Hildegard House in the former St. Joseph Convent on Adams Street. Her work embodies her life motto: "I am a feather on the breath of God."

Mary "Missy" Bartlett, theology teacher at Sacred Heart Academy, received the St. Angela Merici Pilgrim of Hope Award for her invaluable contributions to Ursuline education and charism formation. Missy has woven the Ursuline Charism throughout Sacred Heart Academy's educational mission, inspiring generations of young women to embrace lives of faith, service, and spiritual growth.

Her dedication to forming students in the traditions and values of Catholic education has left an indelible mark on the Sacred Heart community and highlights the enduring spirit of St. Angela Merici's vision for education rooted in love and service. 🌍

Sister Paula Kleine-Kracht



*Strive with all your
might to remain as you
are called by God,
and to seek and desire
all the ways and means
necessary to persevere
and make progress
to the very end.*

*—St. Angela Merici
Prologue to the Rule*

Sister Paula Kleine-Kracht OSU, 79, died in the 61st year of her religious life on October 31, 2025, at Nazareth Home-Clifton. A native of Louisville, Kentucky, she was the daughter of the late Joseph M. and Theresa Agnes (Herberman) Kleine-Kracht. Sister Paula graduated from Sacred Heart Academy. She entered the Ursuline Sisters in 1965.

Sister Paula earned a bachelor's degree in math from the former Bellarmine-Ursuline College (now Bellarmine University) in 1969, a master's degree from the University of Notre Dame, and a doctoral degree in educational leadership from the University of Chicago.

Described as a “trailblazer in Catholic education,” Sister Paula co-founded Nativity Academy at St. Boniface, an independent, Catholic middle school in Louisville for underprivileged urban children, with Father Tim Hogan and Father Bill Fichteman in 2003. She served as executive director of Nativity until 2011.

In her 50 years in education, Sister Paula was principal of Sacred Heart Academy from 1994 to 2001, building the school's very successful International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme. She also served as principal of Angela Merici High School from 1978–84 when it merged with Bishop David High School to form co-ed Holy Cross High School in South Louisville.

Sister Paula also taught at Sacred Heart Academy and Angela Merici

High School in Louisville and Cardinal Newman High School in Columbia, South Carolina, in the 1970s. She was an adjunct professor at Roosevelt University in Chicago in the 1980s, assistant professor at the University of Delaware in the 1990s, an adjunct professor at Bellarmine University from 2011–2013, and a teacher in the Jefferson County Public Schools Adult Education program from 2013 to 2014. She served as Councilor on the Leadership team of the Ursuline Sisters from 2014 to 2020.

Sister Paula received the Msgr. Felix Pitt Award for principals in 1983; in 2001, she was honored with both the Archdiocese of Louisville's Catholic Secondary Education Award and induction into the Distinguished Gallery of Graduates of Bellarmine University; and in 2016, she was one of seven alumni recognized by the Catholic Education Foundation of the Archdiocese of Louisville at the annual “Salute to Catholic School Alumni” celebration.

Sister Paula also received an Honorary Alumnus award from Holy Cross High School in 2018. She was inducted into Nativity Academy's Hall of Fame in 2023, and the school named a scholarship in her honor that same year.

Sister Paula is survived by many nephews and nieces, great-nephews and great-nieces, as well as her community of Ursuline Sisters and Ursuline Associates.

Sister Mary Donata Kokot



*“Father, into
your hands
I commend
my spirit.”*

—Luke 23:46

Sister Mary Donata Kokot, OSU, 98, died in the 76th year of her religious life on June 26, 2025, at Baptist Health Louisville. Sister Donata was born in Daguscahonda, Pennsylvania, but grew up in Bretz, West Virginia. She entered the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville in 1949.

Sister Donata first met the Ursulines at age 7, when the Sisters traveled every summer to teach catechism lessons to the children of Bretz, West Virginia. Sister Donata, one of five children, said, “I had never seen nuns before. I told my mother I wanted to be just like them when I grew up. ...I thought they were dropped from heaven.”

The closest Catholic school was 14 miles away, so Sister Donata went to public schools. After high school graduation, she worked for 3½ years, first at a shirt factory, then at a Montgomery Wards store, and then as a telephone operator in Detroit. Sister says, “No matter what job I had, I still yearned to become a Sister. At the age of 21, I stepped out in faith and embraced the life of an Ursuline Sister of Louisville.”

Sister was a primary educator for 48 years, teaching first and second grade in Louisville for 10 of those years at Saints Boniface,

Therese, Helen and Clement parish schools, and at Sacred Heart Model School. She also taught at parish grade schools in Pittsburgh and Conemaugh, Pennsylvania, and in Cumberland, Maryland. Sister Donata and her dear friend, Sister Julienne Guy, taught together in Columbia, South Carolina. Sister Donata then taught for 22 years in Jackson, Mississippi.

After retiring from teaching, Sister Donata served as a medical records clerk at St. Dominic Hospital in Jackson, Mississippi, from 1999 to 2006, and later as sacristan at the Ursuline Motherhouse Chapel from 2012 to 2018.

Sister Donata earned a bachelor of arts degree from the former Ursuline College (now Bellarmine University) in Louisville, and a master’s degree in education from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. She received the Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year Award in 1997.

Sister Donata was the daughter of the late Mark and Anna Markovich Kokot. She is survived by her sister-in-law, Barbara Kokot, and many nephews and nieces, great-nephews and great-nieces, as well as her community of Ursuline Sisters and Associates.

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