



# Ursuline Sisters HIV/AIDS Ministry

VOLUME 21, ISSUE 2

DECEMBER 2017

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### HIV/AIDS Ministry

Sr. Kathleen Minchin,  
*Director Emeritus*  
Brigid Kennedy  
Daniel Wakefield  
Kevan Sullivan  
Teaquan Cospier  
Linda Titus  
Terry Mitchell  
Bonnie Clark  
Lisa Kiriazis  
Floyd Williams  
Marlene Forney  
Donna Bellino  
Gina Larkins  
Lauren Handwork  
Kelly Dahman  
Robin Finger  
Jerry Wolfe  
Sr. Martha Reed

## From the Director's Desk

On November 9th, the Ursuline Ministries Board appointed Daniel Wakefield as the next Director of the Ursuline Sisters HIV/AIDS Ministry. Dan has worked with the Ministry since 2000, when he began as a tutor at Casa Madre. Since that time, he has worked as a clinic assistant, child advocate, and since 2014, as special projects coordinator and associate director of the Ministry.



Dear Friends,

Throughout my 17 years with the Ministry, I have had the privilege of meeting some of you and, in many cases, working alongside of you. On behalf of our Ministry and those served by it, I thank you for your continued support and prayers for the work that we do.

Our Ministry has experienced numerous changes over the past six months, from Sr. Kathleen Minchin's retirement, Brigid Kennedy's promotion to president of Ursuline Ministries, and the continued work on our new office space at the Ursuline Center. Although change can be scary, we find strength in our faith in God, and in recalling the brave and dynamic work of the Ursuline Sisters in the Youngstown community and beyond. We also are grateful that we have you, our loyal friends and supporters, along this journey with us.

Pope Francis has said that we need to "Ask Jesus what He wants from us, and be brave!" The latest edition of our newsletter will demonstrate the ways that our Ministry has done just as Pope Francis advises. Whether we have sought out solutions to better serve the children at Casa Madre, planned strategies to assist clinic patients who are most in need, or continued our work at providing housing services for those in our Ministry who have struggled with homelessness, our Ministry has responded to God's call and has addressed challenges with bravery and determination. Throughout all of these initiatives, our Ministry has been blessed with the efforts of both devoted staff and dedicated supporters.

As we enter the Advent season, a time characterized by waiting, we recognize that many served by our Ministry continue to wait as well. They might be waiting for housing, for better health, for a better future for their children, for compassion, or for an end to their isolation. *In many of these instances, they have been waiting for us.* Thank you for making the work of our Ministry possible. You help make the difference in the lives of those we serve.

Our Ministry wishes you and your loved ones a peaceful and enjoyable holiday season. We are grateful for your support and join the Ursuline Sisters in hoping that the New Year brings health, happiness, and God's continued blessings to you and those you love.

Sincerely,

*Daniel Wakefield*

# Counseling at Casa Madre

This past summer, the staff of Casa Madre discussed ways that we could better meet the needs of the children in our program. We noticed that many of these children, in addition to being touched by HIV/AIDS, were experiencing social and emotional issues and most were not currently seeing a counselor to assist them with these issues.

Following some additional research, we noted that many school districts throughout the country were also experiencing something similar. In response, many of these school districts had begun to provide counseling services on-site at the schools. Our Ministry decided that we would pursue this option for the children at Casa Madre.



This past summer, the Mahoning County Mental Health Board generously agreed to cover half of the cost of bringing a licensed counselor from Alta Behavioral Healthcare to Casa Madre. Since the beginning of this school year, Barb Pagani has been visiting Casa Madre twice each week. Since that time, Barb has met with some children who have experienced recent trauma in their lives, and some who are working through some emotional issues. Barb has even been able to meet with some of the kids who have experienced a rough day at school to assist them with working through these problems and developing healthy solutions. Barb has also offered advice to our staff and, as a result, we have been better able to meet the varied needs of the children in our program. We are grateful for this partnership, and have already witnessed some progress with the children in this program.

## Ursuline Ministries

The Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown have created a new corporation, Ursuline Ministries, to oversee their major ministries, including the Ursuline Sisters HIV/AIDS Ministry. Brigid Kennedy, longtime director for our Ministry, has been named president of that corporation. "I'm excited and honored by this opportunity to lead and support these ministries," said Brigid. "We have a great team of ministry directors who embrace the mission and are enthusiastic about working together going forward," she said, "and we are blessed too with a Board who were chosen because of their loyalty and commitment to the Ursuline Sisters and our ministries." Brigid will continue to lead some initiatives for AIDS Ministry as she transitions to her new role. Ursuline Ministries will also include the Ursuline Preschool & Kindergarten, The Ursuline Center's adult education, spirituality and wellness programs, and Ursuline Sisters Senior Living.



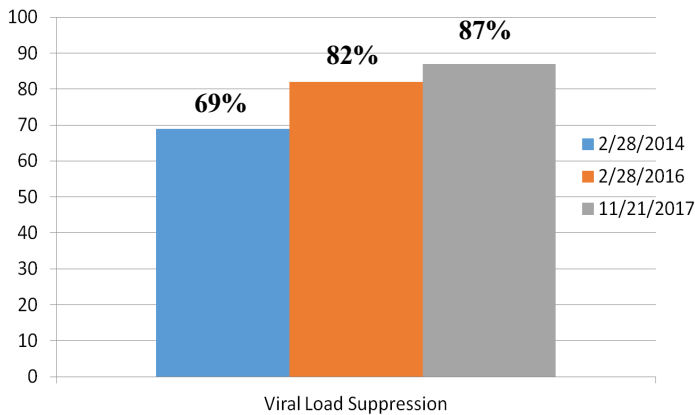
## 25th Anniversary

Next year will mark the 25th anniversary of the Ursuline Sisters HIV/AIDS Ministry! It is hard to believe that our Ministry has been providing services to the men, women, and children in our community for the last quarter of a century!

There will be information about how we will commemorate our 25th anniversary in next year's newsletters. In January, we will also officially launch our anniversary fundraising campaign. Do you want to help us begin our campaign early? Please see the donation envelope for two ways that you can help us reach our fundraising goal—either by donating \$25 in honor of our anniversary, or by doubling your donation! Thank you for your support for these past 25 years!

# Program Review and Resolutions

## Comprehensive Care Center



Our clinic continues to make strides with our viral load suppression rates (VLS). VLS is the ultimate goal of HIV care because it means that people living with HIV are healthier, and they are less likely to transmit the virus to other people. In February 2014, the VLS rate of the clinic was 69%. Currently, our VLS rate is 87%! Much of the progress is a direct result of the clinic staff and peer navigators working individually with clients and helping to educate and encourage them to take their medications. The clinic staff's 2018 resolution is to work with clients who have struggled with achieving

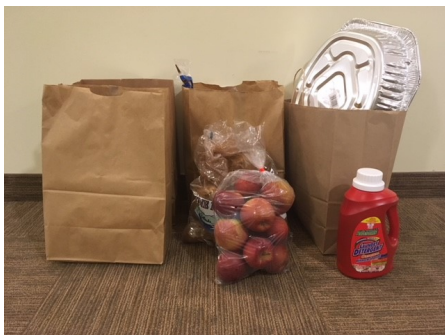
VLS and who are experiencing mental health and substance use issues. It is our hope that we can continue to make progress with our VLS rates and to assist all of the clinic clients with being healthier in the New Year!

## Housing Services

Our housing program continues to provide services for those who are HIV+ and homeless or unstably housed. We are currently housing seven individuals and two families within our housing program. In addition to providing physical housing, our housing program has also provided housing-related services, such as rental assistance, assisting with furnishings, helping clients search for housing in the community, and working to settle landlord-tenant disputes. This year, we have provided 30 people with housing-related services. Our housing staff's 2018 resolution is to expand our physical housing options both through acquisition and partnerships with local landlords, and to continue to provide compassionate care to those in our program.



## Café and Pantries



Our monthly Café has continued to be well-attended. This year, we served over 1,000 people at our Café, and distributed over 1,800 bags of groceries and household products! Between January and November 2017, we distributed over 17,734 pounds of food! This summer, we entered into a partnership with Aldi's, Marc's, and Pizza Hut. We have been accepting weekly donations from these locations and distributing to those served by our Ministry. We have also begun to deliver bread on Fridays to those in our Ministry who are in need. Our 2018 resolution for our Café and food program is to continue to increase the number of clients coming to our Café, and to continue our outreach efforts to those in our Ministry who are in need.

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## Help Wanted

### **What are some donations that are needed?**

We are always in need of paper napkins, paper towels, toilet paper, toothpaste and toothbrushes, tissues, lotion, bath soap and body wash, deodorant, cleaning products, detergent, and twin-blade razors.

### **Do you accept gift card donations?**

Yes! We always appreciate gift card donations, especially for gas stations and grocery stores.

### **Are there other ways for me to help?**

Definitely! We have a need for cooks and tutors at Casa Madre during the week. Please call Linda at (330) 788-0362 if you are interested!

### **Does the HIV/AIDS Ministry have a website?**

We do! To learn more about our ministry, please visit us at: [www.ursulinesistersaids.org](http://www.ursulinesistersaids.org)

### **Where can I find news about upcoming events?**

Besides our website, we also have a Facebook page.

You can visit us on Facebook at:

[www.facebook.com/hivaidsministry](http://www.facebook.com/hivaidsministry)

Please "like" our page, and stay informed about upcoming events and the latest news.

### **Can I get an electronic version of this newsletter instead of a print version?**

Yes! Please send a message to:

[dwakefield@ursulinesistersaids.org](mailto:dwakefield@ursulinesistersaids.org)

and let Dan know that you prefer an electronic newsletter!

**Save the Date!**

**13th Annual Beer & Wine Tasting  
Saturday, March 10, 2018, from 6-9pm**