



# THE WORD LIVES

2020 January

## 2019—2020 CHAPTER OF ELECTIONS

### SR. ANNETTE'S REFLECTION

This joyous Season's gospel proclamations present several "epiphanies" for our reflection. Several times the curtain of "ordinary" human presence is drawn back to reveal the saving presence and action of the divine.

One such epiphany, the Baptism of Jesus enjoys its own unique significance. In her writings, Mother de Matel often refers to this event with specific acknowledgment of the humility of those involved.

First, John's humility in objecting to the backward dynamic: "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?" (Mt. 3:14)

More obviously humble is Jesus' determination to be baptized by John into the mission he had been given from all eternity. His humility carries him even further—into the desert, the time-honored meeting place with God.

There he confirms his commitment by resisting the age-old temptations all humanity must face: desire for comfort (stone into bread); fascination with the spectacular (jumping off the pinnacle of the temple); hunger for power (using evil means to achieve our goals).

Do we recognize ourselves in this story?

We, too, have traveled through the waters of Baptism and received the Father's affirmation: "This is my beloved [child] in whom I am well pleased." (Mt. 4:16)

We, too, have been called and commissioned to proclaim God's unconditional love for all. We, too, must face temptations even as we seek to unite with our God.

May we, like John and Jesus, know who we are and who we are not. May we face our challenges with the same humility and reliance on God's plan!

**Sister Annette Wagner** was elected Superior General for a second term of four years during the Chapter of Elections held by the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament on December 22, 2019. Delegates met December 20-23 for the General Chapter's canonical election of the leadership of the congregation.

Also elected was The General Council who serve in the Leadership Team with the Superior General. Those elected for a four-year term beginning in June, 2020, are the following: **Sister Barbara Marie Netek**, First Councilor and Assistant, and three additional Councilors, **Sister Anna Marie Espinosa**, **Sister Rosa Maria Ortiz**, and **Sister Theresa Nguyen**.

The Sisters were elected after a period of discernment that began with letters of invitation to serve from the Sisters at large. Those who received invitations then participated in a weekend retreat of discernment where they prayed and shared together on qualities of leadership. During the Chapter of Elections, December 20-23, the delegate group prayed, shared, and interacted with the Sisters in discernment before the official balloting took place.

In responding to the challenge and call to continue into the future as "an Incarnational presence and a joyful, prophetic witness," Sister Annette encouraged the Council Elect and the Sisters "to give generously of their lives to prayer and service."



L-R: Srs. Theresa Nguyen, Anna Marie Espinosa, Annette Wagner, Barbara Netek and Rose Maria Ortiz



May the peace of God be with you, and the love of Christ the Son. May the fire of the Holy Spirit light your way and guide your heart.  
-Briege O'Hare, OSC





**Sr. Marilyn Grace Springs** was given an award at the Children's Christmas symphony concert that was held at the Texas A&M Corpus Christi Fine Arts Concert Hall, December 7. The award recognizes her for outstanding Leadership in the Girl Scouts of Greater South Texas.

**2020**

**February 21-23:** Pre-Chapter Meeting  
**April 24-26:** Pre-Chapter Meeting  
**June 13:** Leadership Installation  
**June 14-21:** Chapter Retreat  
**June 22-29:** Chapter of Affairs

**PEACE AND JUSTICE CORNER**

When we perceive the world as one in which there is enough and we are enough to make the world work for everyone everywhere, with no one left out, our money carries that energy and generates relationships and partnerships in which everyone feels able and valued, regardless of their economic circumstances.

-Lynne Twist

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“Our defense of the innocent unborn, for example, needs to be clear, firm and passionate, for at stake is the dignity of a human life, which is always sacred and demands love for each person, regardless of his or her stage of development. Equally sacred, however, are the lives of the poor, those already born, the destitute, the abandoned and the underprivileged, the vulnerable infirm and elderly exposed to covert euthanasia, the victims of human trafficking, new forms of slavery, and every form of rejection.”

-Pope Francis

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Ironically, the success of free enterprise capitalism depends upon moral values, such as honesty and compassion that are borrowed from elsewhere. Without such supporting values, free enterprise (or any other economic system) would eventually self-destruct through its own excesses.

-Arthur Simon

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I know with all my heart that the only way the world will change is if many more of us step forward, let go of our judgments, become curious about each other, and take the risk to begin a conversation.

-Margaret Wheatley



**ANNUAL ASSOCIATES ADVENT RETREAT**

Associates from Brownsville, Corpus Christi and the Upper Valley, along with several Sisters, attended the annual Advent Retreat Sunday, December 8, at the La Parra assembly hall in Sarita. Father Michael Howell of the Corpus Christi Diocese directed the retreat and presided at Mass.

Within the Advent theme, Fr. Howell focused on our call to extend the incarnation. During his presentation, he highlighted how the words of consecration can help us live our Incarnate Word charism.

“This is my body given for you” encourages us to see our lives broken open to welcome all who come to us in need. “This is my blood poured out for you” calls us to pour forth our life in service of others.

*The decree of the Incarnation was made in heaven but fulfilled in Mary.*

OG-04, Jeanne Chézard de Matel, *Spiritual Journal I*, Ch 153, p. 878.

**2020 Scheduled Texas Executions  
Prayer vigil gathering**

- Monday: January 13  
**Travis Runnels**
- Wednesday: January 15  
**John Gardner**
- Thursday: February 6  
**Abel Ochoa**
- Wednesday: March 11  
**Carlos Trevino**
- Wednesday: March 18  
**John Hummel**
- Wednesday: March 25  
**Tracy Beatty**
- Wednesday: April 29  
**Billy Wardlo**
- Wednesday: May 13  
**Randal Mays**

You are invited to join in prayer with the Sisters of the Incarnate Word, 5201 Lipps Blvd., at 6:00 p.m. on days when prisoners are scheduled to be executed by the State of Texas, and for the victims and the family members of the victims.