

ST CAMILLUS CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL CARE  
1911 ZONAL AVENUE  
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Please consider St Camillus Center in your estate plan: call Kimberly Jetton, 213-637-7504 or email [PlannedGiving@la-archdiocese.org](mailto:PlannedGiving@la-archdiocese.org)



From all of us at St Camillus Center, to all of you,  
Happy Christmas, Happy Holidays and Blessings of the Season!

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
Our Annual  
ST CAMILLUS CENTER AWARDS LUNCHEON  
is on Sunday, March 4, 2018,  
at the San Antonio Winery.  
Please contact us for sponsorship opportunities!

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SAINT CAMILLUS CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL CARE

STCAMILLUSCENTER.ORG



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## CALENDAR

December 1, 12:05 p.m.:  
World AIDS Day Mass, Fr Chris Ponnet, presider  
Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels

December 6, 10:00 a.m.  
Los Angeles County Burial of Unclaimed Dead  
County Cemetery, 3301 E 1st St, at Lorena St

December 10, 4:00 p.m.  
St Camillus Center Annual Advent Celebration  
(see back page for invitation)

December 10, 4:00 p.m.  
Deadline for Donations, Acts of Kindness Quilts

December 19, 9:00 a.m.  
Acts of Kindness Quilts to Patients  
LAC+USC Hospital In-Patient Tower, Chaplains office

### 2018

January 1: World Day of Peace

February 11: World Day of the Sick:  
special masses at St Camillus on February 11 and 12.

March 4, 12:30 p.m.:  
St Camillus Center Annual Awards Luncheon  
San Antonio Winery, 737 Lamar St, Los Angeles CA

March 16-18: (Youth Day, March 15)  
Los Angeles Religious Education Congress  
Anaheim Convention Center, recongress.org

### DAILY

Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.: Staff Reflection, St Camillus

Monday-Friday, 12:05 p.m.: Mass, St Camillus Chapel

Friday, 12:05 p.m.: Mass, LAC+USC Chapel

### WEEKLY

Sunday, 9:30 a.m.  
Mass, LAC+USC Medical Center, Auditorium Room A  
(8:30 a.m. volunteers needed to help transport patients to/from auditorium)

### MONTHLY

1<sup>st</sup> Saturday, 10:00 a.m.: Catholics Against the Death Penalty

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 2:00 p.m.: Pax Christi So Cal Leadership Meeting: [paxchristisocal.org](http://paxchristisocal.org)

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 6:00 p.m.: Parish Council meeting  
(every other month\*)

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.: HIV/AIDS Council meeting  
(every other month\*)

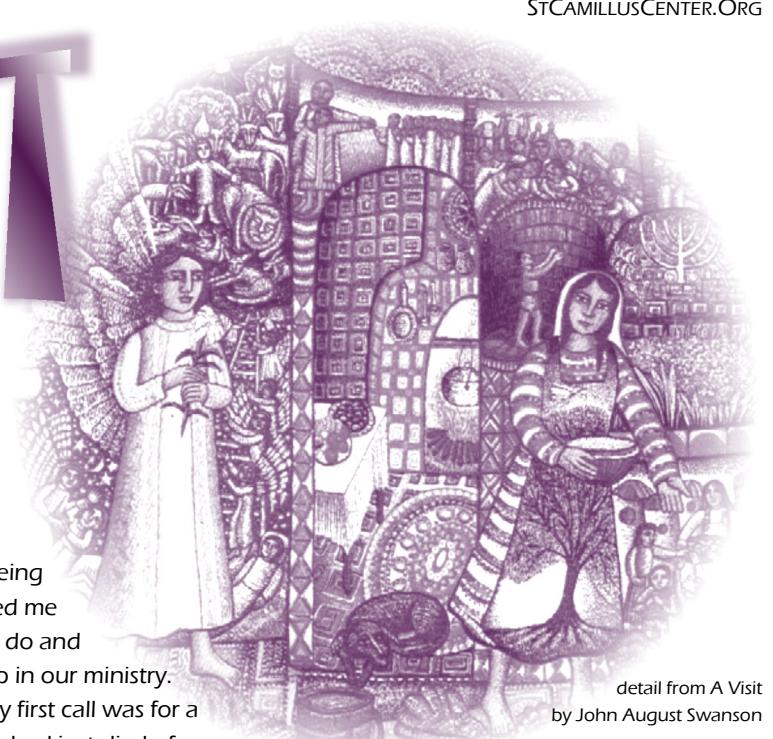
3<sup>rd</sup> Friday, 10:30 a.m.: Angel Interfaith Network council

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday, 1:00-3:45 p.m.: St Camillus Associates

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday, 4:00 p.m.: Pax Christi Peace & Justice Mass  
Catholic Ministry With Lesbian and Gay Persons Leadership Meeting\*

\* Please call 323.225.4461 x111 to confirm dates/times.

Artwork by John August Swanson appears by gracious permission of the artist. St. Camillus Center is very grateful for John's continuous generous support of our ministries.



detail from *A Visit*  
by John August Swanson

## ONE NIGHT

Fr. CHRIS PONNET  
PASTOR, CHAPLAIN

A recent night being on call reminded me why we do what we do and seek your partnership in our ministry.

That evening, my first call was for a person at Norris who had just died of cancer. The family greeted me and, after saying the prayers with them, they began to tell me of his life and kindness to all.

A few hours later my next call brought me to a woman at LAC+USC who was close to death with cancer. With her family and in Spanish, we offered prayers and support as they told the tragedy of a recent diagnosis and now her imminent death. Family had flown in from Mexico to be supportive to husband and children.

The next call came around midnight from Keck for a family elder who was being extubated after a long illness and, as we surrounded him with prayers, he passed away shortly after. I supported the family in their grief and they expressed gratefulness for the several visits of chaplains during his time at Keck.

Then the pager called me to ER for a young woman who had been dealing with cirrhosis of the liver for a few months. They had been to a local hospital the day before and now she was dying. The conversation between family members was about what she would want and what were the medical options. Their family of faith prayed and struggled with the difficult moment they were facing. Do we bring in the three children? Shortly, I had to leave to celebrate the 6:20 morning mass at Holy Family and

other chaplains took on the situation and provided support. After her death later in the morning, I returned to add some final prayers for the family as they left the hospital in pain and sorrow but also faith in the Resurrection.

As chaplains, we are blessed to be your presence for the sick and dying in our hospitals. During these sacred moments at the patients' bedside, oftentimes alone or with worried or grieving family members and friends, I am always mindful of our being "Together in Mission" and your continued prayers and financial support.

On behalf of all at St Camillus Center, blessings and joy to all of you in 2018! ■

*"Dear brothers and sisters – the sick, healthcare workers and volunteers – I ask you to join me in praying to Mary. May her maternal intercession sustain and accompany our faith, and obtain for us from Christ her Son hope along our journey of healing and of health, a sense of fraternity and responsibility, a commitment to integral human development and the joy of feeling gratitude whenever God amazes us by his fidelity and his mercy."*

POPE FRANCIS



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## ORDINATION AND CPE

JULIE KELLY, CPE GRADUATE AND RECENTLY ORDAINED LUTHERAN PASTOR

**W**hen I began Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) at St Camillus, I thought I was the one serving the weary and weak. It turns out CPE helped me understand just how much I was weak and weary, too. It is crucial for a pastor and chaplain to understand our own humanity and story so that we do not inflict our pain upon those we lead and care for.



First, I had to learn just how heavily burdened I was; then to name and own it. After that, healing and trust began to blossom. It changed the way I looked at patients of LAC/USC. Suddenly there was a deeper compassion and I was able to hear and hold their story, not mine, because mine had been cared for already...

Although my congregation only requires one unit of CPE, I chose to return to St Camillus for a second unit. I had already seen evidence of the change I underwent, as I was equipped through chaplaincy work as well as group and individual training required by CPE. The first step was learning about my own roadblocks so I could acknowledge them as I cared for others.

I had to find language to understand God and spiritual care that was common for all of humanity; language that crossed barriers. In fact, I became so efficient in it that I was reproved in my ordination approval interview; I needed more direct language for God, more "Lutheran" language. While I treasure and uphold the Lutheran Confessions, I believe they actually point to the universal language of spiritual care- to meet the needs of creation where they are. CPE gave me that language and in the end as I live into this ordained role, it is the most faithful witness I can offer. ■

## ST CAMILLUS AWARDED GRANT FROM LILLY ENDOWMENT

IRENE RECENDEZ, CHAIR OF PARISH COUNCIL

**A**fter 34 years of priesthood ministry, Father Chris Ponnet is taking a much-earned sabbatical in 2018. Tied to this leave are many financial implications for the parish as well as for Father. Earlier in 2016, Father Chris found out about an organization that awards grants for what they call a clergy renewal program.



The Christian Theological Seminary (CTS) funds this program through the Lilly Endowment. The program is "designed to strengthen Christian congregations by providing opportunities for pastors to step away briefly from the persistent obligations of daily parish life and to engage in a period of renewal and reflection." The grant will cover the cost of a part-time chaplain to cover for Father Chris during his absence, administrative support, some of his traveling expenses, and a retreat for the members of the parish once he returns.

We are grateful to the Lilly Endowment/CTS for allowing us to continue providing service to the patients at all our hospitals and for also allowing Father Chris to take a much deserved break. ■

**MAY THE ROAD RISE WITH YOU, FATHER CHRIS!**

## AN URBAN MODEL OF CHAPLAINCY

SYMEON RANDEL YEE, CHAPLAIN

**A** unique experience that I'm blessed with is being able to bring the Urban Chaplaincy model to St Camillus Center. Apart from participating in ministry as a Chaplain, I also minister in a diverse, inner-city community parish. These roles of parish life and hospital ministry allow both places of experience to interact on many levels particularly when I facilitate and coordinate parish retreats at the center.

Each year, our parish holds two retreats at St Camillus. One is for the youths and the other for adult catechists as they prepare for the coming year of faith formation. The reception of St Camillus to host us is always one that I can count on. In this way, St Camillus Center truly lives out its vision, "we uniquely address the spiritual needs of all".



At an adult retreat, a couple preparing for our program of catechesis discovered healing as they reflected on the components of the spiritual care assessment that the chaplains use at the bedside with patients. At a youth retreat, a young lady spoke of her journey of hardship in the face of loss and grief. In finding her voice to speak of her experience, a sincere movement occurred within her. From a quiet and withdrawn teenager she experienced a deep encounter with hope, peace, meaning and forgiveness. The language and tools of Chaplaincy are not only with patients but for all contexts, even my urban parish.

My years of ministry have made me aware how I authentically approach each person in their sacred stories. Both the parish and the hospital symbolize a finely woven mat, an image that has always been the forefront of my theology. The mat is also an important symbol in my Fijian culture. Each person or group that I have accompanied and shared sacred stories with creates a moment to weave my mat. As the stories have been many, so has the cultural diversity and the colors that this brings, is a skillful invitation of each new thread to make room for another to take a weave. In Fiji, we use mats for all our rituals and important conversations take place on the mat. As my mat grows with the enriching colors of stories, I can only imagine how many more people can sit and share as we come each year to St Camillus as a community. ■

**O**ur outreach continues as we move beyond the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the HIV/AIDS Ministry and Catholic Ministry with Lesbian and Gay Persons (CMGLP). The leadership of the CMLGP met again with the Archbishop and had a great discussion of the various parish groups and education efforts. We are looking at how to provide assistance to youth in high schools asking many questions and the growing issues around transgender youth. How can we be a community of compassion and support while holding to our strong values around the sacredness of human sexuality? ■

## CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION

**O**ur ACPE accredited Clinical Pastoral Education training program for chaplains continues to move forward. We had our Spring and Summer units and now completing our Fall unit, a total of 17 students. Our ACPE Supervisor Rambhoru Brinkmann completed our Spring and Summer units but took a family leave to support her elderly parents. In the meantime, we have contracted with Gordon Hilsman to lead our Fall unit. Gordon is a Board Certified Chaplain and Clinical Pastoral Education supervisor, with extensive experience in the certification of chaplains and ACPE supervisors, and over forty years working in hospital, addiction treatment, mental health and hospice settings. We are presently negotiating our 2018 units in the context of Ram's family situation.

Early in 2018 we are preparing to have ACPE do a site visit with the hope that we will be getting accreditation as our own CPE center: URBAN INTERFAITH CENTER OF ST CAMILLUS. Your prayers for this process are most needed. ■

"The entire unique milieu of health care persists as highly pragmatic, humanistic, and decisive. In other words: 1) interdisciplinary team (IDT) members tend to focus doggedly on what works rather than what may be ultimately true; 2) they care for any human being who presents herself in medical need; and 3) they make dozens if not hundreds of decisions every day quickly, carefully, and effectively. Anyone purporting to be helping people religiously or spiritually in that culture will need to honor that milieu, embrace it, and learn to engage it on a human-to-human, here-and-now, concrete, and easily understandable level. That person will need to know her role and value it as making a contribution to humanity. And it is becoming increasingly clear that they will need common terms in which to do so."

Hilsman, Gordon J. *Spiritual Care in Common Terms: How Chaplains Can Effectively Describe the Spiritual Needs of Patients in Medical Records*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2017

**S**t Camillus was recently invited to be part of the Shelter Partnership. Established in 1989, the Shelter Partnership has secured new donated goods from over 600 companies, and has distributed over \$210 million worth of goods to more than 550 agencies that serve the homeless and very poor. Examples of goods are toilet paper, personal hygiene products, linens, clothing, diapers, toys, baby products, cleaning products, and so much more. By meeting immediate needs, the project enables participating agencies to focus their energy and scarce resources on case management, support services, and organizational capacity-building.



St Camillus will now receive four deliveries a year of items for the homeless patients of LAC+USC such as new baby items, adult sweats and shoes and socks. We will be partnering in distribution with LAC+USC Spiritual Care, LAC+USC Volunteers, CARES and Angel Interfaith Network. We have just received our first delivery of around \$54,000 worth of items. Thank you, Shelter Partnership! ■



EXCERPT OF POPE FRANCIS' ADDRESS TO THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT, NOVEMBER 10, 2017

A certain pessimism might make us think that "prospects for a world free from nuclear arms and for integral disarmament", the theme of your meeting, appear increasingly remote. Indeed, the escalation of the arms race continues unabated and the price of modernizing and developing weaponry, not only nuclear weapons, represents a considerable expense for nations. As a result, the real priorities facing our human family, such as the fight against poverty, the promotion of peace, the undertaking of educational, ecological and healthcare projects, and the development of human rights, are relegated to second place (cf. *Message to the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons*, 7 December 2014).

Nor can we fail to be genuinely concerned by the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental effects of any employment of nuclear devices. If we also take into account the risk of an accidental detonation as a result of error of any kind, the threat of their use, as well as their very possession, is to be firmly condemned. For they exist in the service of a mentality of fear that affects not only the parties in conflict but the entire human race. International relations cannot be held captive to military force, mutual intimidation, and the parading of stockpiles of arms. Weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, create nothing but a false sense of security. They cannot constitute the basis for peaceful coexistence between members of the human family, which must rather be inspired by an ethics of solidarity (cf. *Message to the United Nations Conference to Negotiate a Legally Binding Instrument to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons*, 27 March 2017). Essential in this regard is the witness given by the Hibakusha, the survivors of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, together with other victims of nuclear arms testing. May their prophetic voice serve as a warning, above all for coming generations! ■