

## **“Remember-Celebrate-Believe” theme flows through USA National Associate Gathering, Chardon, USA**

Nearly two hundred Associates and Sisters of Notre Dame gathered at the Notre Dame Provincial Center in Chardon on the weekend of October 20-22, 2017. Coming from Ohio, Florida, Kentucky and California, the group, most of whom had never met before, bonded quickly in the common ground of their Associate Relationship with the sisters.

The theme: “Remember – Celebrate – Believe,” flowing from the hymn of the same name, was developed by the presenters and carried through in the prayers, discussions and activities of the three-day gathering.

Sister Mary Kristin Battles, SND, Superior General of the almost 2000 member international congregation of sisters, headquartered in Rome, Italy, gave the keynote address. She encouraged the group to make God’s love come alive in our world through four simple means: caring for creation, making family a priority, getting involved in our faith community, and connecting with our neighbors.”

Sister Mary Ann Culpert, SND, Assistant General, and liaison to the Associates of the Sisters of Notre Dame worldwide, shared her findings from her recent visits to associate women and men in the seventeen countries on five continents where the spirit of the Congregation flourishes. A formal associate program, however, is germane to the United States, where 600 sisters and 485 associates live and work intentionally to share with all they meet, the “Goodness and Provident Care of God.”

In his homily at the Vigil Liturgy on Saturday evening, the Most Reverend Roger Gries, OSB, bishop emeritus of the Cleveland Diocese, reiterated this call to praise. His statement, “God is good,” evoked the thunderous response, “All the time!”

Sister Mary John Paul Bobak, SND, and Sister Regina Davala, SND, together with associates Claudette Matero and Pamela Waitinas co-directed the event.

