

Sharing Our Blessings

A CAMPAIGN FOR OUR SISTERS



A Letter from Our Administrative TEAM

Dear Friend,

For nearly 175 years, the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi have been a powerful force for change. With trust in the Providence of God, we have dedicated our lives to those in need. We have worked tirelessly in the face of overwhelming challenges and engaged in a variety of ministries—from pastoral care, chaplaincy and spiritual direction to social work and education—to meet the needs of the people of God.

Through it all, our congregation has served with love, faith, and compassion to keep one essential promise: To help others become the persons God created them to be.

Today we are embracing new realities for our future. Declining numbers in religious life as we know it today has affected hundreds of Catholic religious congregations. We are no exception. Our congregation is moving toward fulfillment. We estimate this will occur in 30 to 35 years, when our youngest Sister (currently age 60) turns 95.

In October 2022, we successfully reached our \$11 million *Spirit of St. Francis* capital campaign goal for our new convent. This goal was one-third of our overall financing plan for our new \$36 million convent, which opened in May 2019. Raising \$11 million is a huge accomplishment made possible by the many prayers and generous financial and in-kind gifts from individuals, businesses and foundations. Thank you.

With the many blessings of our new convent, we face a new financial reality. Rapidly rising costs and an aging congregation – combined with a lifetime of low wages in active ministry – have strained our savings. An updated financial analysis revealed that an additional \$25 million in savings is required to ensure that all of our Sisters – particularly our current middle-aged and senior Sisters not yet fully retired – have sufficient funding to meet their health and retirement needs.

This is where we need your help. **The *Sharing Our Blessings* Campaign is our final major campaign in support of our Sisters. Our goal: raise \$25 million to ensure that all of our Sisters, to the very last one, receive the care that they have given others throughout their lives.** We invite you to prayerfully consider how you can share your blessings of abundance to honor the legacy of our Sisters who have made such a profound difference in the lives of others.



Sr. Diana De Bruin, OSF

Sister Diana DeBruin, OSF
Director of the Congregation

Sr. Ellen Carr, OSF

Sister Ellen Carr, OSF
Associate Director

Sr. Kathryn Dean Strandell, OSF

Sister Kathryn Dean Strandell, OSF
Associate Director

174 Years of Service

1849: Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi founded when a group of lay Franciscan women and men arrived from Bavaria to minister to German immigrants in North America.



1881: Franciscan Sisters of Baltimore founded when four Sisters from the Franciscan Sisters of Mill Hill (England) arrived in Baltimore to minister among the African-American community in the city of Baltimore.

1881: St. Elizabeth Orphanage founded by Franciscan Sisters of Baltimore to serve African-American orphans in Baltimore. Closed in 1950.



1899: St. Mary's Academy (St. Francis, Wis.) founded. Closed 1991.



HISTORY

The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi is the first congregation of vowed Franciscan women established in the United States. Arriving from Bavaria in 1849, a small group of Franciscan women and men settled just south of Milwaukee on the shores of Lake Michigan to minister to German immigrants in Wisconsin. In 2001, the Franciscan Sisters of Baltimore, who have provided ministries to African Americans and people living in poverty since 1881, merged with the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi. Our Sisters have served wherever needed, always reflecting the Franciscan values of:

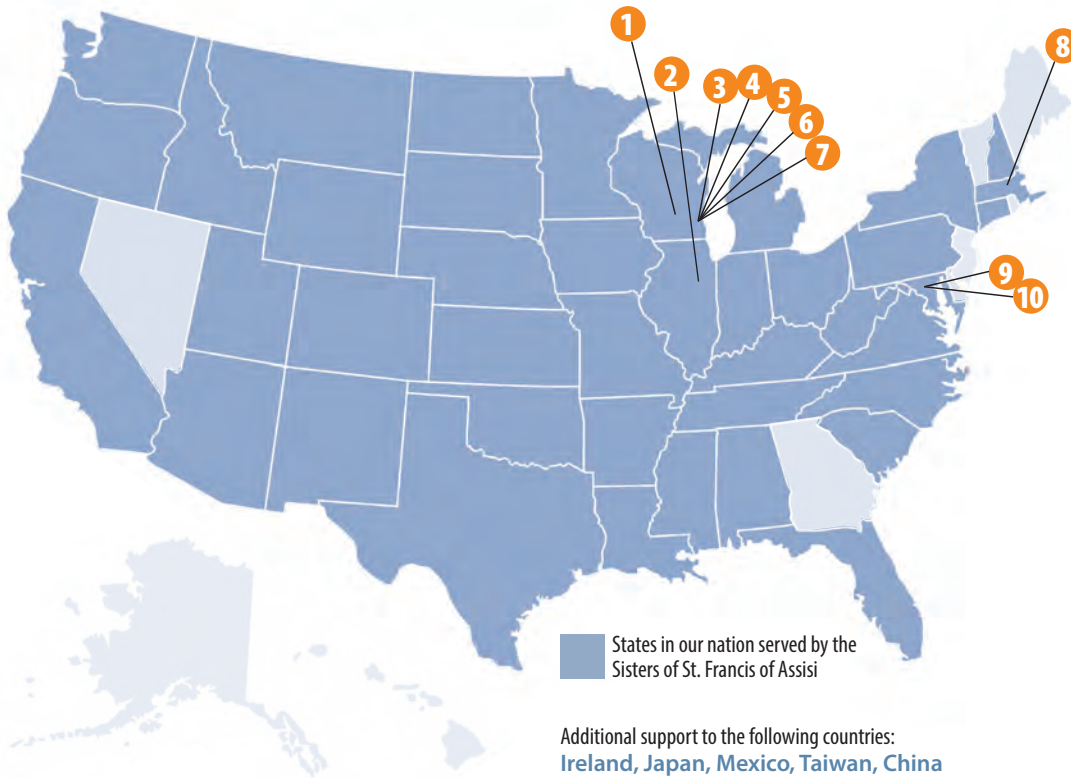
Regard for human dignity

Outreach to the poor

Promoting peace and reconciliation

Respect for the environment

Throughout our history, our Sisters created a remarkable legacy of service and sacrifice – rooted in a willingness to transform ourselves and our congregation in response to the needs of the community.



Corporate Ministries:

- 1 St. Coletta of Wisconsin, Jefferson, Wis.**
Founded 1904. Residential and vocational programs for persons with developmental and other challenges.
- 2 St. Coletta's of Illinois, Tinley Park, Ill.**
Founded 1949. Residential, vocational, medical, and pastoral care programs for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- 3 St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care, St. Francis and Milwaukee, Wis.**
Founded 1983. Intergenerational day care for adults and children, committed to serving the most needy regardless of faith, culture, or ability to pay.
- 4 Cardinal Stritch University, Milwaukee, Wis.**
Founded 1937. Coeducational institution serving students of all faiths and ages in four colleges.
- 5 Canticle Court, Inc., St. Francis, Wis.**
Founded 1987. Affordable housing and independent living for older adults.
- 6 Juniper Court, Inc., St. Francis, Wis.**
Founded 1987. Affordable housing and independent living for older adults.
- 7 Franciscan Shore, St. Francis, Wis.**
To open in 2023. Assisted living and memory care for lay older adults.
- 8 Cardinal Cushing Centers, Braintree and Hanover, Mass.**
Founded 1947. Residential, educational, vocational, day care, and supportive care for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- 9 St. Elizabeth School, Baltimore, Md.**
Founded 1961. Middle and high school for students with developmental disabilities.
- 10 The Franciscan Center, Baltimore, Md.**
Founded 1968. Emergency assistance and supportive outreach to persons who are economically disadvantaged.



Sharing Our BLESSINGS

Since 1849, our Sisters have shared our talents and blessings with children and families across the country. *Through our corporate and individual ministries, the Sisters have:*

Educated thousands of children, teenagers, and college students, instilling a love of learning, service, and faith;

Created homes and schools for orphaned children and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities;

Built affordable housing for low-income seniors and opened intergenerational day care programs;

Offered warmth, shelter, food, and friendship for the poor and disenfranchised;

Provided skilled and loving health, pastoral, and spiritual care to individuals and families;

Cared for religious sisters and brothers; and

Shared artistic gifts and advocated for peace, social justice, and care for all of creation.



As Franciscan women, we trust in God's providence and live the Gospel as we nurture a deep sense of the worth of every person and all of creation.

— Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi, *Charism Statement*, 2016

1961: St. Elizabeth School (Baltimore, Md.) founded.



1967: Chinese Sisters arrive in Taiwan to continue their mission of educating students.



1968: The Franciscan Center (Baltimore, Md.) founded.



1983: St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care (St. Francis, Wis.) founded.



1987: Canticle Court and Juniper Court (both in St. Francis, Wis.) founded.

Sharing *Your* BLESSINGS

Together, we have been called into a mutual relationship of blessing. You have graced us with your gifts of prayer, partnership, advocacy, and generosity. As our Sisters have aged, we have come to increasingly rely on the generous blessings of abundance from donors like you so that our Sisters receive the loving care they deserve after a lifetime of devoted service to others. *Because of you, the Sisters:*

Receive high-quality assisted living and memory care services by skilled, nurturing caregivers, including a state-of-the-art neurosensory room for Sisters suffering from dementia or other cognitive disorders;

Live in a beautiful, new St. Francis Convent that is safe, warm, spiritual, and welcoming;

Stay connected to family and friends through gifts of technology;

Maintain important physical and emotional touchstones to historic, cultural, spiritual, and ministerial identities through the restoration and maintenance of historic artifacts such as statuary and stained glass;

Pray, contemplate, and maintain our mission of promoting human dignity and caring for creation through celebrations of the Mass and other Roman Catholic feasts and traditions, and participate in peace and justice programs and outings; and

Engage with the natural world and stay physically and emotionally healthy through regular use of accessible landscaping features such as sturdy outdoor furniture, shaded gathering spaces, and paved pathways.



As with many of you, the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi hold a special place in my heart. For me, it was through 12 years of life lessons and education. The Sisters prepared me for college and encouraged me to be whatever I wanted to be. Thanks to their teaching and guidance, I have had a blessed life. I am not alone. The Sisters have transformed the lives of thousands of individuals and families in the U.S. and abroad. Now, as our Sisters retire after a lifetime of caring for others, it is our turn to help them.

Lynn Molitor
Vice President,
MilwaukeeJobs.com (retired)
St. Mary's Academy,
Milwaukee, Wis.
Class of 1982

2001: Franciscan Sisters of Baltimore merge with the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi.



2015: Second St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care opens on Milwaukee's North Side.



2019: New St. Francis Convent building opens.



2023: Franciscan Shore (St. Francis, Wis.) providing assisted living and memory care services to lay persons.



Campaign for Our SISTERS

With the many blessings of the new convent, we face a significant funding gap for our Sisters' long-term retirement and health needs. Rising costs and an aging congregation – combined with a lifetime of low wages in active ministry – has meant that our Sisters' current savings is not enough to cover our health and retirement costs.

In spring 2022, we retained a third-party actuarial firm to update our financial analysis. We wanted to ensure that the retirement and health needs of every Sister, down to the last one, is fully funded through congregational fulfillment, which is estimated to take place in 35 years.

Using a National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) analytic tool that considers demographics, current cost of care, and existing savings, the actuarial firm identified the need for an additional \$25 million in savings.



AVERAGE COST FOR THE 65 SISTERS LIVING IN ST. FRANCIS CONVENT

Monthly	\$500,000
Yearly	\$6,000,000

Today we are launching
a 10-year campaign –
Sharing Our Blessings –
to raise \$25 million for
the Sisters.



Ways of GIVING

Every contribution to the campaign is significant. There are numerous ways to support the Sisters: single or multi-year pledges, gifts of stock and bonds, IRA charitable deductions for donors over 70½, Donor Advised Fund gifts, beneficiary designations, and more. We also have several naming opportunities available, ranging from \$40,000 to \$5 million.

All gifts are tax deductible. Depending on your tax bracket, the tax savings could be considerable. Our Planned Giving website highlights how you can tailor your charitable gift to your financial, tax, or estate planning objectives: lakeosfsgiving.org

OUR SISTERS

Number of Sisters	128
Average Age	85
Number of Sisters Living at St. Francis Convent	66
Number of Sisters Living Off-Site	62

SHARING OUR BLESSINGS \$25 MILLION CAMPAIGN



High-quality, innovative medical, social, and spiritual support services, programs, and equipment



Food, transportation, convent enhancements, and building maintenance



Paying down the new convent's remaining \$13 million in mortgage payments





Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi
3221 S. Lake Dr.
St. Francis, WI 53235

414-744-1160
lakeosfs.org

For more information on the campaign, including ways to give and Planned Giving options, please contact:

Nancy Ketchman, Director of Advancement
414-294-7329 or
nketchman@lakeosfs.org

OUR CAMPAIGN GOAL: \$25 MILLION

As you prayerfully consider supporting our Sisters, we hope you will reflect on the impact the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi have made in your community and your life. Your support of our Sisters' health and retirement needs ensures that each and every Sister will receive the care that they themselves devoted to others throughout their lives.

Peace and all good!

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The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi have counseled and guided countless individuals in their faith development and growth for nearly 175 years.

I've seen firsthand their dedication to the mission of serving others, and I'm grateful for the positive change they continue to make for people throughout our community.

I believe it is our responsibility – our duty – to support those who have dedicated their lives to helping others. This campaign deserves our wholehearted support.

Gale Klappa
Executive Chairman, WEC Energy Group

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