



Sisters of  
St. Francis  
of Assisi



# NOJOSHING NOTES

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3221 SOUTH LAKE DRIVE, ST. FRANCIS, WISCONSIN 53235-3799 [www.lakeosfs.org](http://www.lakeosfs.org)

*NOJOSHING is an Indian word. It means "Straight Tongue."*

*In 1849, the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi built their Motherhouse on land that was called Nojoshing by the Indians, because it protrudes out into Lake Michigan like a straight tongue.*

## 15 Sisters Celebrate Jubilees Senior Jubilarian, Age 100, Marks 80 Years

Each summer on the last Sunday in July, the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi gather to celebrate the Silver, Golden and Diamond Jubilees of our sisters. This year we celebrated with 15 sisters.

Our Jubilee celebration is equivalent to a wedding anniversary. After a time of preparation, like an engagement time for couples, sisters take the vows of poverty, obedience and consecrated celibacy in a public ceremony just as married couples vow to love one another and be faithful to each other in a ceremony with witnesses.

So that the families and friends of the Jubilarians may join us, we hold our Jubilee Liturgy in a Parish Church

large enough to accommodate everyone. St. Rita Church in West Allis (pictured below with the Jubilee invitation) has hosted us for the past several years. This is followed by a reception at Serb Hall, which is close by.

This issue of Nojoshing Notes will introduce you to the 2008 Jubilarians.

*Continued inside*



# “I pray for the world, that God will bless the world”

*Continued from cover*

**Sister Joannette Lenz**, age 100 and our oldest Jubilarian this year, celebrated 80 years as a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi. What is special about this Jubilee for her? She said that the Lord is giving her all this time to grow closer to Him and to prepare her heart to love God more fully. “The circumstances of aging mean that I can’t do what I could do before so now I can spend time in the

80  
Years



Adoration Chapel praying. The past is past. I want to dwell in the present moment, step by step, day by day. I praise God for everyday, and I pray for the world, that God will bless the world.”

One of the ministries sister did before she retired was teaching the lower grades in school. At times in the smaller rural areas she had as many as two to four grades in a classroom. In addition to teaching the regular basic subjects, there were some fun aspects as well. She recalls that in the classroom she always had a gold fish bowl with some greenery in it and some geranium plants. The geraniums got the fish water when they were dry and the fish got fresh water. All thrived very well. Sister also remembers that there were always art activities like drawing and even weaving baskets.

Living with other sisters gave her the opportunity to exercise her cooking skills at times. Sauerkraut was a specialty because she grated a potato into the kraut and added caraway seeds. This resulted in a delicious dish. Baking was not her specialty, but the one time she had to make a birthday cake she attempted a chocolate cake with seven-minute frosting. “It was perfect,” sister said with a smile.



Her hobbies were tatting and crocheting. She still has a couple of the Christmas ornaments she made at one time, but no one knows for sure how many hundreds she has made over the years. “At this point I can’t tat anymore because my hands cramp up, but I could help show someone how to tat,” sister remarked.

Now that Jubilee has passed, Sister Joannette said she is

# Retired Sisters Maintain Their 'Presence' to Others

going through her Jubilee cards and rereading them with great gratitude for the love shown her. "I praise the Lord and offer my prayers for those who are struggling to do what is right. I am also trying to learn to be more gentle so my bluntness isn't misunderstood."

In October, sister turned 101. This is another landmark for her, and we can be sure that her prayer that day was one of gratitude for all that God gives her.



75  
Years



**Sister Dorine Berg**, pictured at left at her 70-year jubilee, was gifted with a beautiful singing voice, and she taught the love and skills of music to many students during her years of active ministry.

Wherever sister lived, she chronicled each day's events, for a love of history was another of her talents.

Sister Dorine always enjoys visits, especially from the sisters who shared in her ministry of music.



70  
Years

Now that **Sister Ann Mildenberger** (pictured on the back page with her classmate) is retired from active teaching, she and her sister, Sr. Elizabeth Ann Mildenberger

have more opportunity to share time with each other and stay connected with family and friends. Many sisters and others are the recipients of their birthday and holiday greetings.

**Sister Augusta Nickel** may be short in stature but she has always ministered in gigantic ways. At one time she was the baker for the Motherhouse complex



which included more than 200 sisters. Now she sews up hundreds of items (photo above) for children who are living in poor situations.

*Continued on next page*

# Sisters Served Across Continents



**Sister Cecilia Suee**, shown outside her home in Taiwan, was born in China and entered the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi there. In 1948, she came to the United States with all of the women who had entered the community

in China. In the late 1960's, she went to Taiwan and one of her ministries there was teaching English to Chinese students of all walks of life.



## **Sister Mary Ann Belland**

is an avid quilter, always quilting for someone else or for a benefit raffle. It offers her time for reflection and she shared these thoughts on Jubilee.

60  
Years

“I have worked in a variety of ministries. I have done the best I could wherever I have been assigned. I’m grateful for all the opportunities given me. Many were challenging! Some were tough and difficult – but somehow I got through it with God’s help.” She is pictured (top of next column) with her sister, Sr. Jean Margaret Belland (left) with her *Morning Glories in a Bed of Diamonds* quilt.

**Sister Mariella Boehmer** has been and is an energetic woman. She has never been

afraid of tackling new ministries if she could be of service to others. Currently she does volunteer work in Religious Education in a parish in South Dakota.

Below, Sister Mariella Boehmer (left) poses with classmate Mary Ann Belland (center) and 50-Year jubilarian Marianne Muscott (right) at the Jubilee Liturgy.



# Jubilarians Express Joy with Their Ministries

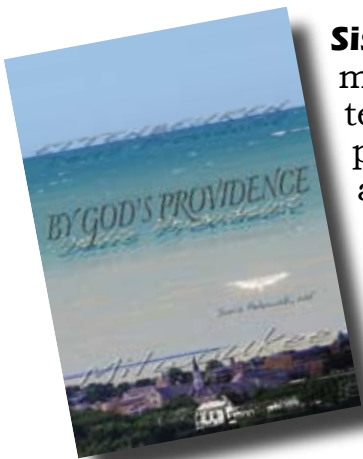
**Sister Magdalena Paul** began her retirement with this Jubilee celebration. After 42 years at St. Coletta and Cardinal Cushing Schools in Massachusetts she has decided it is time to change the pace of her life but she will miss the opportunity of meeting new students. As part of her farewell celebration, the staff dedicated a peace garden to the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi, and Sr.



Magdalena is pictured in front of the St Francis statue that overlooks it.

Of her ministry there she states: “Working with special needs people brings one closer to God, and one thanks God each day for the gifts that one has been given. [And

in addition] having had the honor and privilege of being a Eucharistic Minister for the elderly was a great opportunity to practice the Franciscan values.”



**Sister Doris Pehowski** ministered as a teacher, administrator, pastoral associate and, as her most recent work, wrote the history of the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi which was published last year. In the photo at the top of the right

column she is holding the first copy of the printed book the day it was delivered in September of 2007.

**Sister Edna Mae Weldgen** looks back over the years and tells us that, “It was just great being a primary teacher for 34 years and directing a school library/learning center (pictured below) for eight years.



I also enjoyed my formation years and most of my community experiences. I was especially glad to be active in Peace and Justice events, especially going to the School of the Americas [to demonstrate].”



*Continued  
on next  
page*

# Jubilarians Involved in Diverse Ministries

## Sister Betty Wolcott

is an ardent committee member in a number of local and national groups that work for systemic change to promote justice and peace. She recognizes so clearly how our earth is the foundation for every issue that affects our lives and in the late 1980's established the Woodlands Ministry in northwest Wisconsin. Here she offers education and volunteer opportunities (at right).

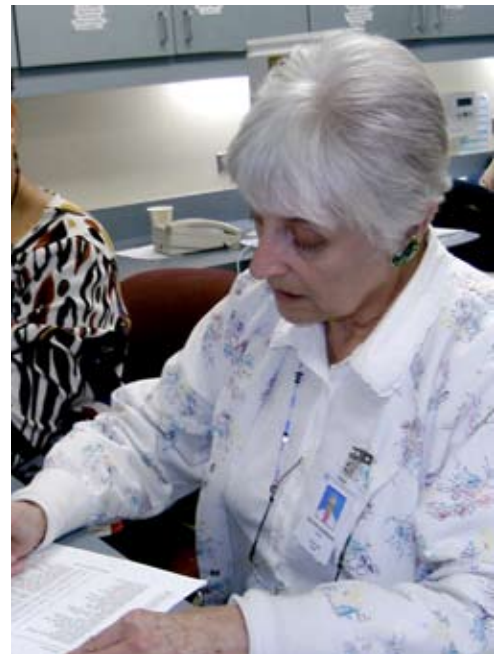


50  
Years

Throughout her life, **Sister Kathleen Denevan** (below entering the Jubilee Liturgy) has ministered to persons in need. She earned a master's degree in social work from Catholic University of America. After working for many years with special needs students, she is involved now in prison ministry and working to help prisoners turn their lives around.



**Sister Barbara Faris** is shown at the right at St. John's Hospital in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where she is a chaplain. Early on in her ministry she was a classroom teacher and then spent 11 years working with Native Americans in Montana. Later she trained as a hospital chaplain and finds this to be a ministry in which she can be with others who need a supportive presence in their lives during illness.



*Continued on next page*

## “Dance with God”



**Sister Ruth Marie Soens** (left) currently volunteers in the Archives of the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi in addition to the many other ways in which she helps others.

In her reflection on Jubilee, she wrote:

*My life has been blessed with:*

- wonderful people,
  - a variety of ministries,
  - enriching experiences, and [now]
  - a great retirement home and ministry
- I give thanks each day.*

**Sister Marianne Muscott** began her ministerial life as a classroom teacher which evolved into religious education and retreat work, and then transitioned to counseling in order to help students and others understand their lives better, especially the religious dimension. She is pictured (right) giving a Jubilee reading.

The joy of the Jubilarians is evident in their lives. As a final note on this year’s celebration, a poem of Sr. Marianne’s speaks to the meaning of Jubilee. God invited each of these women many years ago and still invites each day.

**Dance with God**  
And God said,  
“May I have this dance?”  
Lovingly I ran and  
Fell subject to God’s gentle lead.  
I choose to dance  
Until our steps are one and  
The music is within.

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## Jubilarian Class Pictures - 2008



*70 Years*

*(Above, left to right)*  
Sisters Ann Mildenberger  
and Augusta Nickel



*50 Years*

*(Above, clockwise from top left)*  
Sisters Ruth Marie Soens,  
Kathleen Denevan, Marianne Muscott  
and Barbara Faris

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*60 Years*

*(Above, left to right)*  
**Back row:** Sisters Mariella Boehmer,  
Betty Wolcott and Doris Pehowski  
**Front row:** Sisters Edna Mae Weldgen,  
Magdalena Paul and Mary Ann Belland

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