The second week of March, the newly redesigned website for the congregation went “live” at the same URL as the previous site – www.lakeosfs.org – and it features more than a new look.

One of the major goals was to develop a site that “resizes” for better viewing on a wide variety of devices, particularly phones and tablets. This was imperative because, as of last year, search engines began downgrading “static” sites, making it more difficult for the congregation to be found during a general search.

The ability to update content over time was another important aspect, and the new site offers considerable flexibility in changing verbiage, image and a good deal of the structure.

There are some important features to note on the homepage. At the upper left corner, there are three different sized As. By clicking on them, visitors can change the font size to improve their viewing/reading experience. To the right of the main copy is a sidebar that includes direct access to recent news, Poverello Creations, the ability to make donations, and the OSF publications that are posted on the site.

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.

NOJOSHING is an Indian word. It means “Straight Tongue.”
The video is to be accompanied by a word-for-word transcription. Upon completion, each student receives $500. The project is one of several sponsored by a $3 million grant from the Conrad Hilton Foundation.

Sr. Adele Thibaudeau initiated the project in late November, and Sister K.D. Strandell is conducting the classes with film instructor Tim Abler, who sends items digitally to Minnesota.

The sisters being interviewed are Joanne Nicgorski, Joanne Meyer, Evelyn Brokish and K.D. Strandell. They report they are enjoying the students, and the students say they are thrilled to get to know a sister. Some have been on the Franciscan pilgrimage and hope to learn more about St. Francis and his way of life from their sisters.

The students are part of a national blog, and post a new message each month on getting to know their sisters. Check out the blog at: https://www.sisterstory.org

Go to https://www.sisterstory.org/communitylocation/cardinal-stritch-university, and click on the names to read these stories

Clare Hall Retreat
Fr. Dan Crosby, OFM Cap., (shown at left) gave a retreat March 14 to 19 at Clare Hall, which is adjacent our Motherhouse. Most of the sisters who live there, plus sisters from other houses, participated. The theme was on mercy, in keeping with the Year of Mercy proclaimed by Pope Francis. These are some reflections by the sisters after the retreat:

- It is important to put on mercy which is a quality of life that is inside, not worn outside. In doing this, we move from just an understanding of Mercy as an idea, to living with Mercy as an attitude for life. Jesus is our model.
- When Mercy is in our hearts, life changes and the need to compare ourselves with others or judge others loses its grip.
- Everyone is able to bring God’s Mercy to the world whether we are in a wheelchair or active.
The founder of “Rhythm for Unity,” Tom Gill, pictured at far left, visited St. Francis Convent during December. He holds drum circles (rhythm circles) for all types of groups to spark creativity and teamwork.

Tom led a circle of sisters in creating rhythmic pieces using a variety of drums and percussion instruments, something for all to try. With Tom directing the sisters, they improvised rhythms, and the circle turned into a high energy, joyful celebration of being together.

The process of “music making” made it easy for all to “feel the beat” and discover how each person’s sound contributed to the whole group. This all happened regardless of experience or ability. Each sister’s drumming was unique and created a delightful sound. The sound carried throughout the convent and many left their offices to come and see what was happening. They were as happy to observe as the sisters were to participate!
Sisters Enjoy Dog Sled Rides

At the Annual Pet Blessing at the Motherhouse the past two years, the Door County Sled Dogs were present. Both years, the handlers offered sled rides to the sisters the coming winter, but this year was the first time that the weather cooperated for the scheduled event. So on January 20, despite the chilly temps, sisters who were willing to brave the cold had a chance to experience the dogs in action. It was a thrilling and exhilarating experience for the riders, and it shows in the faces of Sisters Marcia Lunz (l) and Diana De Bruin (r) below.

The “chariot” pulled by the dogs fits two people per ride, and the handler stands on a sled behind holding the lines. The dogs first had to become familiar with the route – which was a circle path created on the lawn near St. Francis Seminary. The lead dog was responsible for getting the other dogs to follow along and stay in line so they weren’t all pulling in different directions. Most definitely, distraction is an issue for dogs as well as people!

The sled dogs are all rescue dogs, and most are Huskies – though there are a few other breeds that join in and do well in the group. They are always adding new dogs, and as new dogs come into the pack, they usually need to learn how to be a member of the pack and the team. That means learning to mush, if they are able.

The Door County Sled Dogs group is active in the community and gives rides at Whitnall Park each winter (weather permitting) and sometimes at other locations and to other groups as requested. They are in the process of setting up the first Education & Discovery Center for sled dogs in Ephraim, Door County. The center is expected to be open the summer of 2016.

To make donations, order our cards & reach us via e-mail, visit: www.lakeosfs.org/support-us/donate-now/

Please remember the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi in your will. A bequest is a wonderful way to support our retired sisters and is a testimony of your care and concern for them.