



NOJOSHING

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Notes

Vision and Leadership for 2023–2027

With the arrival of spring and new life beginning to come forth, the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi gathered for their General Chapter, held every four years. At the Chapter, the Sisters enter into prayerful discernment to set direction for the congregation and to elect a new Leadership Team.

Through March 1 – 4, 2023, Sister Mary Catherine Redmond, PBVM, led the Sisters in a reflective process around the question, “What is God calling us to at this time in our history?” The Sisters responded by formulating the following Vision Statement:

“As Franciscans, living the Gospel and trusting in God’s providence, we strive to practice hospitality as reflected in our care for every person and care for all creation.”

On April 28 -30, 2023, Sister Mary Catherine facilitated the election of the congregation’s new Leadership Team. The



(l to r) Sisters Charlotte Roost, Joanne Schatzlein, and Sylvia Anne Sheldon

Sisters chose Sister Joanne Schatzlein as the congregation Director, Sister Charlotte Roost as Vicar/Associate Director, and Sister Sylvia Anne Sheldon as Associate Director.

They will lead the congregation for the next four years. As part of their overall responsibility, they will see that the Vision Statement is implemented and acted upon.

Sisters and Associates gathered for Mass on June 11, 2023, to

witness the installation of the new congregation Leadership Team. In a meaningful ritual filled with symbolism, each member of the new team – Sisters Joanne, Charlotte, and Sylvia Anne – accepted their call to serve.

The installation celebration continued after Mass with a reception for Sisters in the Elizabeth Hall dining room, and an evening reception for staff, Associates, and friends of the congregation.



Sharing Our Blessings Campaign A Big Success

\$1 MILLION Match

The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi are extremely grateful to donors and friends who so generously share their blessings with them. Once again, their generosity came through, making the Sharing Our Blessings campaign a huge success.

Director of Advancement Nancy Ketchman announced that “We raised an astonishing \$1.3 million (net), successfully meeting the \$1 Million Sharing Our Blessings Challenge Match issued by the Molitor Foundation and We Energies Foundation. Together with the



\$1 Million Match, we raised \$2.3 million!” The Challenge Match ended on May 28, 2023 – the 174th anniversary of the congregation’s founding.

An additional \$1.14 million in other large Leadership Gifts and multiyear pledges was also raised. This puts the total amount raised for the Sharing Our Blessings campaign at \$3,399,323. This represents 14 percent of the overall campaign goal of \$25 million by December 31, 2032. These gifts go directly to support the health and retirements needs of our Sisters.

God’s abundant blessings be upon each one of you for your generosity to the Sisters!

Grant Funds New Van

*By Nancy Ketchman,
Director of Advancement*

The Sisters purchased a new wheelchair-accessible van in March 2023 with \$50,000 in funding provided by Silver Spring, Md.-based Support Our Aging Religious! (SOAR!). This national organization raises and provides funds to congregations serving retired and infirm Catholic Sisters, Brothers, and priests.

The new van offers safe and comfortable transportation to and from medical appointments and other trips for Sisters in wheelchairs. Prior to having our own van, we had to reserve a van in advance from an outside agency, making us dependent on van and driver availability. Or, Sisters had to be transferred from their wheelchair into a car passenger seat, often with considerable pain and discomfort. The new van safely accommodates two wheelchairs, a driver, and an attendant.

To celebrate the new van, the Leadership Team invited Father Tom Suriano to perform a special blessing of the vehicle on Wednesday, March 8, 2023.



Sisters showed their appreciation to SOAR before the new van was blessed.



Father Tom stands on the ramp of the new van and sprinkles holy water in blessing.

Potluck Celebrates Unity Between Sisters and Nursing Staff

Sisters at St. Francis Convent were treated to a beautiful, delicious, and multi-cultural potluck lunch on April 13, 2023, courtesy of the nursing staff. The meal was planned to celebrate unity with the Sisters, and it did not disappoint!

Buffet tables included everything from homemade Mexican tamales, to fruit salad, to sloppy joes, and sweet and sour pork. Other selections included deviled eggs, shrimp, pizza, egg rolls, wings, pasta salad, beans, and fresh veggies and dip.

It was a feast enjoyed by all!



Honoring Special People

Spring... a time when Mother Nature nurtures the life hidden in the earth and calls it forth to delight us with its beauty. During this season we invite those on our direct mail list to remember the love and care of family, friends and others who have made and continue to make a difference in their lives.

Since the spring of 2020, we have gathered by the Persian lilacs near the St. Francis Grotto when they are in full bloom with their beautiful white sprays of flowers. It is the perfect setting for our Tree of Life Dedication.



On June 22, we hung our 2023 plaque on the tree in honor of those names that were submitted to us. As Jan Parrott, direct mail manager, held the basket containing the names, Sister Mary Kemen of donor communications said a prayer of blessing upon the tree and all those who were honored by their loved ones.



“O God of all life, we ask for your blessing on this tree, those we remember, and each one of us. May all of us blossom forth in goodness and give witness to your love in our midst. Blessed are you, God of abundant goodness, who continues to enrich our lives through the love and care of our friends and loved ones.”

Cupcakes Made With Love For Casa Maria

Guests at Casa Maria Catholic Worker House in Milwaukee received a little joy and blessing on May 17, 2023. Resident Sisters baked cupcakes for lunch-hour delivery to Casa's four houses on 21st Street. These houses help women and children in need of short-term housing, refugees, asylum seekers, and families with longer-term needs.

The cupcake crew was dynamic as always: Sisters Eleanor Smith and Rosalynn Dzikonski made the yellow cake batter; Sisters Mary Hau and Clara Wang mixed the devil's food; Sister Lenore Steilen whipped up buttercream frosting from scratch. Sister Clara topped the cupcakes with rainbow sprinkles. Each cupcake was placed in a gift bag with a few candy treats and Sisters Kathleen Denevan and Mary Jerome Lacy added a peace prayer card to each bag.

Before taking them to Casa Maria, the bakers prayed that each recipient would know the Sisters love and care for them.



Sister Kathleen Denevan



Sisters Eleanor Smith and Rosalynn Dzikonski

Capuchin Walk for the Hungry

According to Feeding America, 147,430 individuals in Milwaukee County are food insecure. Food insecurity is defined as "uncertain access to food that supports a healthy, active lifestyle." (USDA, 2020)

In response to this reality, for the 16th year, the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi participated in the June 9, 2023, Capuchin Walk for the Hungry. Of the 51 Sisters who signed up for the congregation's team, 34 participated in the walk around St. Francis Convent.

Others walked in their neighborhoods or



joined other walkers at the live walk in the evening at Polish Fest on Milwaukee's lake-front Summerfest grounds.

The annual event raises money for Capuchin Community Services in Milwaukee, and this year's walk raised close to \$50,000. The money raised helps support St. Ben's Community Meal and House of Peace Emergency Food Pantry located in Milwaukee, Wisc.

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