

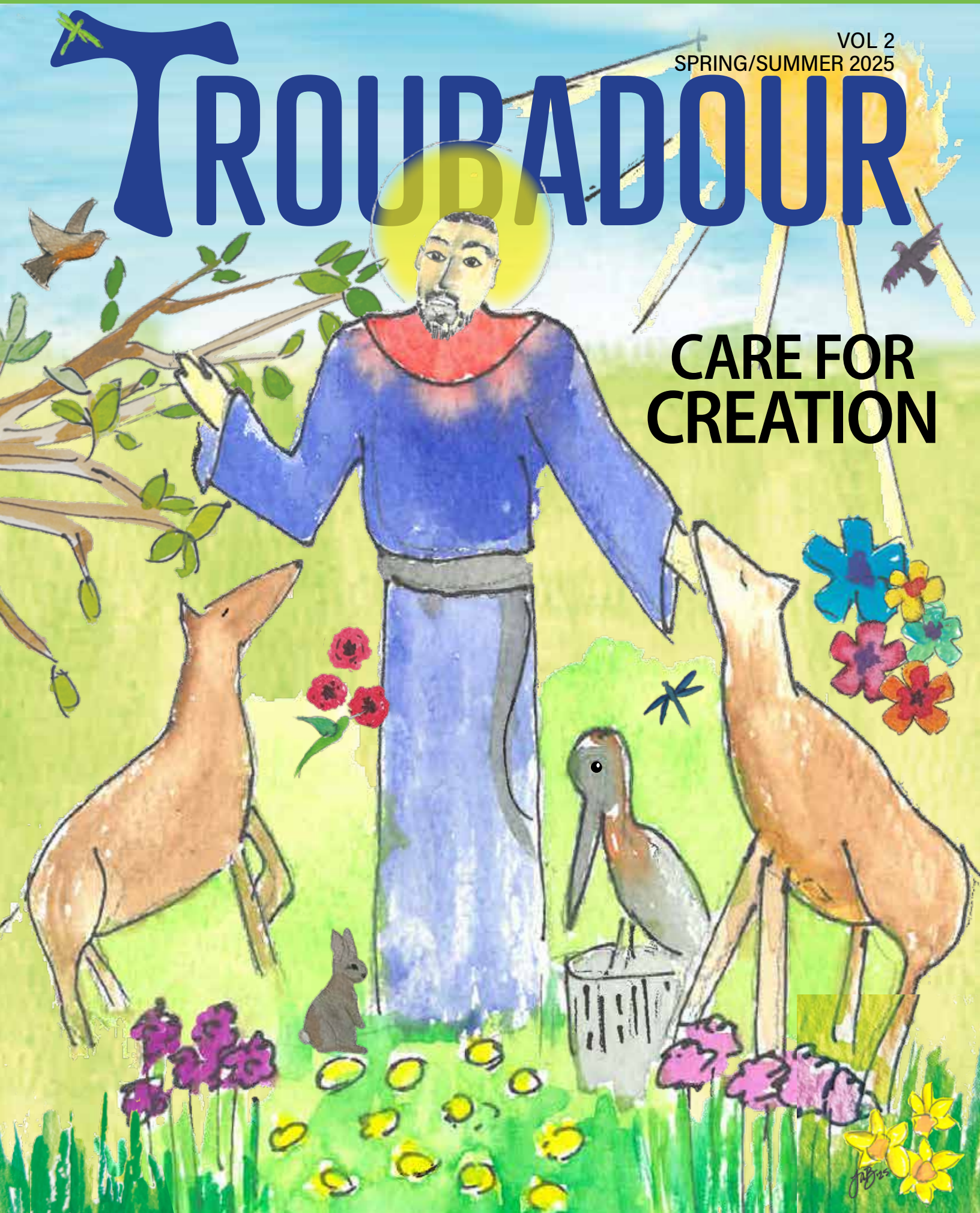
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TROUPADOUR

**CARE FOR
CREATION**



TROUBADOUR

Spring/Summer 2025
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What are the servants of
God if not his troubadours,
who must move people's
hearts and lift them up
to spiritual joy?
– St. Francis of Assisi

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page 4

Inside

4 COVER STORY
Lessons of *Laudato Si'* Flourish on
Convent Grounds

6 Pet Prints
The Curative Power of Dogs
The Canticle of the Creatures

7 Franciscan Musings
A Back Porch Canticle

8 Care for Creation
Sisters Enjoy Many Benefits of Bird
Observation

9 News and Events

12 Ministry in Action
Border Experience Reveals Human
Side of Migration Crisis

13 Poets' Corner
A Poem by Sister Ruth Mary Costello, OSF



page 8



page 10

14 In Memoriam

16 Sister Profile
Sharing the Gift of Artful
Celebration

17 Giving

- Campaign Update:
Sharing Our Blessings
- Our Wish List for the Care of Our
Retired Sisters
- Meet Our Advancement Team
- Our Giving Societies
- Bequests with Gratitude





Celebrating Creation As a Pathway to God

For this issue of *Troubadour*, we have chosen "Care for Creation" as the theme because it is the 800th anniversary of "The Canticle of the Creatures," sometimes referred to as "The Canticle of the Sun." This poem, which is printed on page 6, was written by St. Francis in 1225, the year before he died. In it, he describes his relationship with all creatures, considering them all to be a pathway to God.

This is an incredible understanding, for creation is not just for our use or pleasure or something to be dominated. Rather, creatures are pathways *through* which we see God to whom all glory and praise belong!

Sister Joanne had a recent opportunity to view several of God's creatures in the Happy Valley below Santa Ynez, Calif. She was there to teach about St. Clare to young Franciscans living at San Lorenzo Novitiate, located at the edge of this valley. During her stay, she had two memorable and beautiful encounters with God's creation.

The first was an encounter with a very long snake – a creature she has feared all her life. Brother snake raised its head above the green grass but never looked at her. Instead of backing away, Sister Joanne became curious. This snake was over three feet long – the largest she'd ever been close to. Praising God was not on her mind, but ultimately, as it ignored her and made its way toward a statue of St. Francis, the message became clear. This snake had become a brother!

The second encounter was when she gazed at the splendor of the starry night, beyond human light and in the vast darkness. The Big Dipper and Orion were so close it seemed she could reach up and touch them. Each night she experienced a journey through this immense sky into prayer with God.

In addition to flowers, wind, stars, sun, and moon, Francis added two stanzas at the end of his poem. One expresses the need to seek peace and reconcile with each other, and the last stanza embraces death as a Sister. Throughout this issue of



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

Troubadour you will read stories that share how members of our Franciscan family have found their pathways to God through the beauty of creation. We wish you a deeper relationship with all creatures, and through them, may you join with St. Francis, echoing the final words of his poem: "Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility."

Peace and all good,

Sister Joanne Schatzlein, OSF
Sister Charlotte Roost, OSF
Sister Sylvia Anne Sheldon, OSF



ON THE COVER

This issue's cover features a watercolor by graphic designer Lisa Bergman, who serves as the congregation's creative services specialist. It is a colorful, light-hearted portrayal of the metal relief that graces the east exterior wall of St. Francis Convent in St. Francis, Wis. The painting represents the spirit of St. Francis in his care for creation, which is embodied by the Sisters, and Lisa herself, in their daily lives.

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.

– Chapter 2023

Mission

Our Mission as Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi is to further the coming of the reign of God:

- to live the Gospel;
- to be faithful to the rule of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis and the Constitutions of Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi;
- to carry forward the dependence upon the Father, prayerfulness, simplicity, and hospitality which marked the foundation of the Congregation in Milwaukee; and
- to be available in service to the Church, at home and abroad, in those areas of concern and need that call forth the corporate and personal gifts of our members.

– Call and Response
para. 19, 1984

Lessons of *Laudato Si'* Flourish on Convent Grounds

The picturesque lakeshore home of The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi is a bountiful and inviting oasis where wildlife roam, dogwalkers stroll, sunrises shimmer, and the 175-year-old St. Clara Bell tolls. Gardens, reflection areas, and walking paths – all planned with reverence and care – express the Franciscan heart that beats in time with the seasons of life.

Since the founders first set foot on this land in 1849, generations of women and men have tended and tilled each acre with great devotion. As a continuation of this sacred work, a 2009 environmental resource assessment led to the formation of the Land Use Committee under the direction of the Office of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC). Sisters, Associates, and community partners met and drafted “Earth Echoes,” a plan to increase the biodiversity of natural systems, adapt land practices to climate change, practice sustainable water and energy use, and exercise mindfulness in using resources.

With the help of local experts, organizations, volunteers and grant funds, the Sisters brought greater intention to maintaining the land “in a mindful, natural, and spiritual way. We serve as a model for sustainable urban land use and strive to leave a legacy of best practices for future generations.” (“Earth Echoes” strategic plan)

The Sisters were validated in their work and vision when Pope Francis released his encyclical, *Laudato Si'* (Care for Our Common Home) in 2015. They remain committed to the “care of our common home,” as expressed through their acres of forest, fields and wetlands. In 2022, the congregation joined the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform, an initiative of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

“As Franciscans, we are attuned to the beauty of creation and appreciate the fragile sanctuary that God has entrusted to our care and keeping,” said Sister Florence Deacon, OSF, former director of the congregation during the early years of the Land Use Committee and current director of JPIC. “We recognize our particular responsibility to model sustainability, conservation, Earth Healing and interdependence as we undertake intentional land use initiatives that nourish our community and the surrounding neighborhood.”

What follows is a tour of the grounds to learn more about the Sisters’ approach to land use and their commitment to Pope Francis’ call for responsible care for creation.

1 URBAN FOREST Developed in stages since the first tree was planted in 2012, this corridor from Seminary Woods to Lake Michigan provides habitats for birds, insects, and mammals; includes plantings that remove carbon dioxide from the air while adding oxygen; and nurtures the soil to become more porous, allowing rainfall to seep downward and replenish the water table. Located on land previously used for the St. Mary’s Academy athletic field, the Urban Forest plantings restored the site to its ancestral identity as part of the Lake Michigan coastal forest. Anticipating the effects of climate change, the forest also features southern climate plantings including the Kentucky coffeetree and the pawpaw tree.

2 ORCHARD Fruit trees provide fresh bushels of apples, plums, cherries, pears, and peaches to be served with meals, made into sauces and juices, and baked into pies and desserts.



Sister Mary Lou Schramer peels apples from the convent orchard.



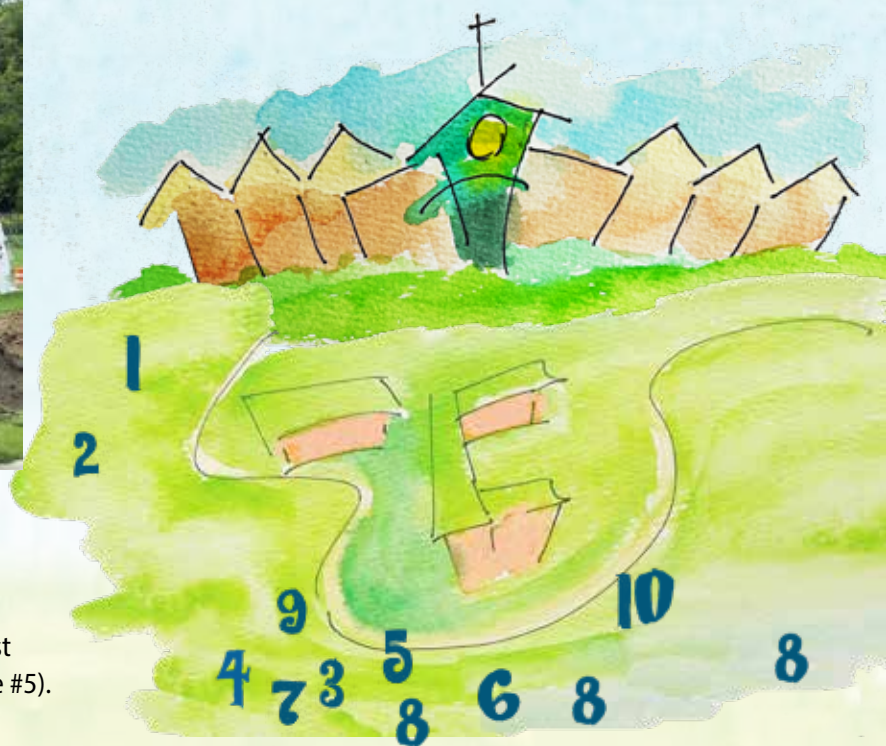
3 HOOP HOUSE Constructed by convent staff in 2013, the hoop house enables gardeners to jumpstart the growing season, providing a protected environment for seedlings and young plants first brought to life in the basement of the Carpenter Shop (see #5).

4 ORGANIC VEGETABLE GARDEN Every year, Sisters and volunteers harvest thousands (yes, thousands!) of pounds of produce from the organic gardens. Vegetables and fruit can be picked for same-day use or are canned, pickled, preserved, frozen, or blanched for later. Residents enjoy these spoils throughout the growing season as the kitchen staff prepares recipes incorporating just-picked vegetables, with everything from asparagus to zucchini.

5 CARPENTER SHOP The lower level houses shelving that holds dozens of lighted seed trays where flowers and vegetables are teased to life under the care of Sisters Helene Mertes and Margaret Kruse, with some planted as early as January. This building is the oldest on the grounds, built in the late 1800s.



6 PERENNIAL FLOWERS Sisters and volunteers tend the perennials in a large garden plot and at locations throughout the grounds that bring pops of color to the landscape, around the buildings, and along the walkways.



7 COMPOST PILE Convent land is used in a circular economy, based on the reuse and regeneration of Earth's resources. This seed-to-compost ethos ensures that food waste is composted for use as fertilizer.

8 WETLANDS A 2.5-acre restoration effort required a tireless crew of the volunteer "Habitat Healers" who rid the Deer Creek bed of invasive species that had choked off native plants. With guidance from the DNR and after acquiring her invasive applicator license, Sister Helene Mertes sprayed the wetlands following the mowing and disposal of dumpsters full of invasive plants. With seasonal spraying, native plants now grow and allow the wetlands again to flourish as a sustainable habitat.

9 RAIN GARDEN The Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District partnered with the congregation in 2016 to plant a 12-by-20-foot rain garden featuring 175 native plants that absorb downspout waters. Interns from local colleges added new rain barrels in 2024.

10 GRAPE ARBOR A grapevine with 113-year-old roots combined with new cultivars winds through a long and idyllic arbor, ripening each fall with fragrant and plump fruit. ■





The Curative Power of Dogs

By Sandy Waters



Do you have a pet story to share?

If you have a story to share about your pet or animal companion, we'd like to hear from you! Submit your story to Editor, *Troubadour* magazine, 3221 S. Lake Drive, St. Francis, WI 53235, or send an email to mdoyle@lakeosfs.org.

Not until burning out in the business world did I learn the power of dogs to do good. Years ago, I took my two Shetland sheepdogs to a 50-bed nursing home to visit patients. After volunteering for a short time, the director hired me and I was trained to become their activities director.



Sandy and Jessie at the bench where they greet college students.

One patient delighted in taking one of the dogs around the home with me. The residents responded positively with smiles, petting the dog. I learned that a dog can bring out the best in a person even if that person has difficulty relating to others.

After 10 years, the home's administration changed and necessary construction was scheduled. My job was over.

My husband passed away a few years later, then my dog died, and I was experiencing the

isolation of COVID. I needed a dog. Each one I wanted had been adopted, but the shelter owner phoned one day and said she had a dog she hadn't "posted" yet. That dog is my Jessie, who was transported from Texas to Maryland, was missing fur, and was overweight. She needed a home. I needed a dog. This is the story of the greatest of all my dogs.

Each day, our morning walks take us through a university campus near my home. I sit on a specific bench; Jessie lies on the bricks. Over time, it came to pass that students would walk by on the way to their classes wanting to pet her. Jessie loved it. She responds well to everyone, even fellow canines.

Over time, more students walked by, so appreciative of moments with her. Some have said it makes them feel better, often after a difficult exam. Sometimes they like to tell me they just took a test and think they did so well that they want to pet her. Jessie shares their happiness. She is there for them, making each person feel special. That is her gift.

I profit, too. I get to know many students; some even sit on "my bench" to talk long before their classes begin for the day. They socialize with this elderly grandmother-type and each one enriches my days, too.

Never underestimate the wagging of a dog's tail, and its eagerness for attention. Dogs can enhance and even change lives. I know they've changed mine. ■

Sandy Waters is a donor who lives in Baltimore, Md.



The Canticle of the Creatures

Most High, all-powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor, and all blessing,
To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no human is worthy to mention Your name.
Praised be You, my Lord, with all Your creatures,
especially Sir Brother Sun,
Who is the day and through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor;
and bears a likeness of You, Most High One.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,
in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind,
and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather,
through whom You give sustenance to Your creatures.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water,
who is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night,
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.
Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth,
who sustains us and governs us,
and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs.
Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your love,
and bear infirmity and tribulation.
Blessed are those who endure in peace
for by You, Most High, shall they be crowned.
Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death,
from whom no one living can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin.
Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will,
for the second death shall do them no harm.
Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks
and serve Him with great humility.

St. Francis of Assisi



A Back Porch Canticle

By Sister Rose Sevenich

Francis Bernadoni lay in the darkness of the Portiuncula chapel in Assisi. Though he was nearly blind, Francis quietly sang a poem he had written describing the beauty of Earth's creatures that he believed was a reflection of God's presence. The verses were his song of praise for all of God's gifts.

This poem, known as the "The Canticle of the Creatures," was written 800 years ago this year.

Fast forward to 1849. In the small village of Ettenbeuren, Bavaria, a



Sister Rose Sevenich

group of Franciscan Tertiaries – six lay women, five lay men, their pastor and his assistant – were among those in their parish church, Our Lady of the Assumption, who listened intently to Bishop John Henni from the United States of America. He invited them to join him in the pastoral care of the German immigrants flocking to the Midwest. He called them to become missionaries in the Diocese of Milwaukee, Wis. Bishop Henni's words moved their hearts to action. This small group of Tertiary Brothers and Sisters evolved into The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi.

Today, we Sisters continue to reside on and care for the land our founders and foundresses purchased. Back then, it was acres of virgin woods now known as the City

of St. Francis, Wis.

I live on this land in a 1909 house. It has a back porch overlooking a vegetable garden and remnants of the original woods where creatures that reflect God's presence dwell and sometimes show themselves. I often recall "The Canticle of the Creatures" as I enjoy their presence.

For example, one day a young doe, in search of food in the newly harvested garden, was unaware of a young fox curiously coming closer to see and snatch what the doe had discovered.

The garden became a playground as the two played tag, running toward and away from each other for 20 minutes or more. Eventually, they trotted off in the same direction before going their separate ways.

What was a potential for conflict over food was transformed into fun!

Another example: One afternoon, I became aware of an insect crawling on me. Sitting still, I saw a brilliantly colored black and orange boxelder bug walking determinedly down my blouse.

With no thought at all and a flick of my fingers, I caused it to roll until it stopped on the hem. After checking itself for injuries, it straightened and addressed me with its antennae, gesturing rapidly. I realized I was being sternly "chastised!"

When it finally calmed down, I took the opportunity to address this creature. "I think you must be of high rank in your colony," I said, "because you are larger and your color more brilliant

than I have ever seen. I see you are not pleased with me. I apologize for tripping you up, causing you fear. On the other hand, you did not first ask permission to walk all over me!"

There was a pause. No movement from the insect. No sound from me. The bug slowly continued its route down my leg and disappeared.

The silence of this encounter was broken as I heard laughter from the nearby hoop house. The Habitat Healers – hardworking volunteers who help on the convent grounds – were enjoying a break from tending to the garden. I realized that their joy and peace-filled spirits were another gift from God.

As I was enjoying these inspired musings, I felt prompted to christen them, "A Back Porch Canticle." There is such beauty in our natural surroundings and in those with whom we share Mother Earth. Rather than dwell on the sadness of climate eruptions, abuse of land, wars, and other violations of our sacred duty to care for creation, words of "The Canticle of the Creatures" planted their seeds of comfort and hope within me:

"Praised be you, my Lord, through those who give pardon for your love and bear infirmity and tribulation.

"Blessed are those who endure in peace." ■

Sister Rose Sevenich is currently retired. She is a former member of the congregation's Leadership Team and throughout her years of ministry served as a music teacher, liturgical minister, and in various pastoral ministry roles. Her assignments took her to Illinois, South Dakota, Alabama, and Wisconsin.





Sisters Enjoy Many Benefits of Bird Observation

By Marian Doyle

You could call them birdwatchers, birders, or ornithologists. But for Sisters Mary Kemen and Judy Placzowski, observing birds is more than just, well, for the birds. It provides many personal benefits as well.

The two Sisters live on the grounds of St. Francis Convent, near the Lake Michigan shore. They work with birding resources offered by Cornell University to record birds that come and go throughout the year. Sister Mary sends her visual observations to aid research at Cornell. Sister Judy listens for birdsong for her own pleasure and to add birds to her life list.

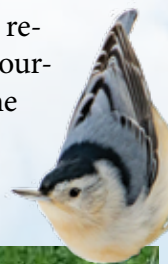
Contributing to Research Provides Incentive

It all began during the COVID lockdown in 2020 when Sister Mary read an article in the American Association for Retired Persons (AARP) magazine about an opportunity for seniors.

“The article was about Citizen Scientists, a program where seniors can participate in research projects. I saw one called Project FeederWatch. I was isolated in the house, so I wanted to do something outward-reaching and something of value to others,” she explained.

The project is offered through the well-known Cornell University Lab of Ornithology. The lab provides a packet of information as a guide to tracking different types of birds that appear at backyard feeders.

From November 1 to April 30, Sister Mary selects two days each week to observe birds who feed in her yard. During winter, she watches the feeder from a window nearby. It provides a perfect, unobtrusive viewing perch for her to record each type as they nourish themselves during the colder months. She also records snow depths, other types of food



sources available for birds (such as trees and berries), water sources, and other feeders. She uses binoculars to track the occurrence of a certain eye disease observed in some bird families.

If she doesn't know a particular bird, she looks it up with Merlin (a phone app) or eBird (a citizen-science project that gathers observations from birders around the world). Merlin is powered by eBird. Both resources were developed by Cornell.

Since she first started with the project, Sister Mary has identified dozens of types of birds, from the common chickadee and cardinal, to juncos, woodpeckers and white- and red-bellied nuthatches. She has observed their migratory patterns as well. Some birds appear in spring, disappear for summer, and return in the fall for their flight along the Lake Michigan shoreline to southern destinations.

“With our location on the lake, we benefit from being on the migration roadway,” she said.

Listening to Birdsong

While Sister Mary makes visual observations, Sister Judy uses the Merlin app to identify birds by their calls. She is new to birding, having started with Merlin in spring 2024. In just a few months, she tracked 103 different kinds of birds. Unlike Sister Mary, she does not report the sound recordings; she listens for her own enjoyment.

“I take my cup of coffee to the bench near one of our feeders. It is very relaxing. And because I'm



Sisters Judy (left) and Mary at their backyard feeder.



Picnic Celebrates Historic Link With Saint Francis de Sales Seminary

On September 15, 2024, 83 seminarians and staff from Saint Francis de Sales Seminary walked down their long main drive to visit their neighbors, The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi. The men were invited for a special picnic planned for them as part of the Sisters' celebration of their 175th anniversary year. It was a historic event for both the seminary and the Sisters.

Throughout the anniversary year, the Sisters marked the milestone with gatherings for various groups with whom they share special connections. The Sisters' link to the seminary is the oldest connection of all, literally going back to their founding in St. Francis in 1849, on ground shared with the bishop and seminary beginning in 1852.

The picnic on September 15 was a celebration of that relationship. Since the early 1850s, members of the congregation have served the seminary in various ways. One of the earliest accounts of their labor describes the firing of bricks in the kilns on their land. The bricks were used to build the seminary's Henni Hall and the house that serves today as Archbishop Jeffrey Grob's residence. Sisters worked various domestic jobs for the priests and seminarians and, in later years, were appointed to positions on the seminary faculty. To this day, there is a Sister of St. Francis of Assisi serving on the seminary's Board of Trustees. ■



Seminarian Timothy Heyrman with Sister Richelle Ranallo

only listening, I don't worry about finding the bird. It grounds me in my spirituality and puts me in the right place for the rest of my day," she said. "Listening to the birds can improve well-being. If you sit in the morning, it can have an eight-hour stress relieving effect. It has also helped people with depression. It can be an intellectual stimulant as you age. There are many benefits."

Her bench sits at the edge of the urban forest on convent grounds. She believes she hears more from that vantage, as many birds live in the forest and offer their beautiful birdsong from the safety of their cover. One day, however, she spotted a Baltimore oriole that emerged from the woods and perched in a tree in front of her, at the edge of the forest path. His orange color was vibrant against the lush green leaves.

She likes the Merlin app. As someone who suffers from slight hearing loss, the app is a valuable aid. She has heard many unusual birds, including the hooded merganser, Cape May warbler, Mexican violetear, and Northern Parula. She's also recorded indigo buntings, cedar waxwings, ruby-crowned kinglets, and American goldfinches.

Sister Mary realizes the scientific importance of her findings, but reaps more benefits from a personal standpoint.

"You feel a connection to nature," she explained. "You feel part of it. It is such a wonderful pastime. I feel more grounded when I watch the birds." ■

Come to the Quiet at the Rieti Hermitage

The Rieti Hermitage, located on the grounds of St. Francis Convent in St. Francis, Wis., across from Lake Michigan, is available as a place of solitude for those seeking time away for spiritual renewal or quiet reflection. Situated next to a historic grape arbor on the edge of the woods, the Hermitage is a studio cottage that may be used year-round by individuals or couples for a nominal fee. For information, contact Sister Mary Kemen at hermitage@lakeosfs.org. Watch the next issue of *Troubadour* to learn more about this special place for reflection and contemplation. ■





St. Clara Bell Rings Once Again

The 1850 St. Clara bell that hung in the old St. Francis Chapel returned home October 17, 2024, to a new tower installed in Convent Park. The tower was placed on the spot where the bell hung in the original chapel before it was taken down six years ago and stands as a memorial to the original chapel.

A blessing ceremony, attended by some 50 Sisters, included a prayer service led by Father Jim Schroeder, SCJ. The bell tolled at various points during the service, and again when Sister Helene Mertes read a poem that she wrote especially for the occasion.

The restoration of the bell and the construction of the tower were made possible through donations, including a contribution from Karyn Odway, daughter of Mary Odway, who was a major donor and board member at St. Coletta of Wisconsin. Darla Wack also made a donation to honor her sister, Karen, and former St. Francis Convent staff member Larry Willkomm, a close friend. Larry was an early proponent of the restoration and oversaw the safe storage of the bell after the chapel was deconstructed. He died in 2023.

The Verdin Company of Cincinnati, Ohio, restored the bell and designed and constructed the tower.

Many thanks to the Preservation and Design Committee that planned the restoration of the bell. The group included Sisters KD Strandell, Joanne Schatzlein, Stella DeVenuta, Jeanne Carrigan, and Helene Mertes. Facilities Director Jim Guinta served as a consultant during the planning and installation. ■



Congregation Given Special Honor During Installation of Milwaukee's New Archbishop

Archbishop Jeffrey S. Grob was installed as the twelfth leader of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee on January 14, 2025. During his Mass of Installation, Sister Joanne Schatzlein, director of The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi, was chosen as one of two Sisters to represent the institutes of religious life in the archdiocese. She and Sister Carmelita de Anda, R.M., officially greeted the archbishop on behalf of the religious institutes. It was a wonderful honor for the congregation and a meaningful recognition of women religious.

Archbishop Grob was informally introduced to The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi prior to that, on the day he was announced as the new archbishop. The Sisters were the first group he visited and to whom he gave his blessing during an impromptu stop at St. Francis Convent. He spoke to Sisters in the Elizabeth Hall dining room and greeted staff and Sisters during a quick



Sister Joanne Schatzlein greeted Archbishop Grob during his Mass of Installation.

tour through the main hall of the convent. It was the beginning of what is hoped will become a warm relationship with the Milwaukee archdiocese's new leader. ■

New Leader Named for St. Ann Center For Intergenerational Care

Sisters Joanne Schatzlein and Sylvia Anne Sheldon led the missioning ceremony for Derek Goodman on March 11, 2025, as he was officially installed as the new leader of St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care. The two were joined by Sister Edna Lonergan, founder of the center, Tim Sullivan, chair of the board of directors, and clients and staff who joyfully welcomed their new president and CEO.

Sisters Joanne and Sylvia Ann presented Derek with a San Damiano cross and a specially made framed certificate that entrusted him with the care of the Franciscan values that are the foundation of St. Ann Center. ■



Derek Goodman

Gathering Reunites Sisters and Former Members

Seventeen former members of the congregation and 14 Associates joined the Sisters on October 13, 2024, for Mass and a special 175th anniversary St. Francis Day celebration at St. Francis Convent. Sisters were reunited with former classmates and friends whose presence brought another element of joy to the year-long anniversary celebration that began for the congregation in May 2024. ■



(l to r) Sisters Margaret Kruse and Judy Placzkowski with Mary Messer Sundberg and Mary Jean Kais

Sisters Recognize Staff at 175th Anniversary Appreciation Dinner

During a memorable evening on March 20, 2025, Sisters honored congregation and Franciscan Shore employees at a dinner event at the Knights of Columbus Hall in South Milwaukee, Wis. Over 110 current and former employees attended. The Sisters thanked all who serve the congregation each day with attentive care and excellent service and also recognized those who planned and organized the various celebrations during the anniversary year.

The evening began with a warm welcome from congregation Director Sister Joanne Schatzlein, followed by a delicious dinner, a raffle, and an entertaining program presented by members of the congregation. The dining hall was beautifully decorated with spring colors and flowers at each table. All in attendance enjoyed a special evening of sharing and fun.

Sister Joanne presented each employee with a copy of “The Canticle of the Creatures” as a special gift from the congregation. The parchment copies were purchased in Assisi and blessed by Pope Francis. ■



Current and former employees enjoyed the dinner on March 20.



Sisters blessed the staff as they read a poem specially written for the event by Sister Mildred Rothwell, OSF.



Border Experience Reveals Human Side of Migration Crisis

By Marian Doyle



This mural hangs in the migrant aid center in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico. It was created by a local artist named Wences and depicts actual migrants who passed through the center.

Sister Diana De Bruin's sabbatical year was bookended by two very different experiences. It began with a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 2023, which was a spiritual journey to the holy sites. It concluded in October 2024 with a very different type of spiritual experience that found her immersed among migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border. Both were rich with meaning. But the faces of the migrants and the desperation of the families at the border left a different kind of mark on her heart.

Sister Diana spent September 2024 as a volunteer with the Kino Border Initiative, a program founded by the Missionary Sisters of the Eucharist from Mexico. Today, the Diocese of Tucson, Ariz., the Archdiocese of Hermosillo in Mexico, and Jesuits from the U.S. and Mexico also sponsor the effort. The mission of Kino is "to promote humane, just, and workable migration through holistic accompaniment." Volunteers learn how to journey with migrant families as they seek legal status in

the U.S. Their ministry to the most vulnerable is a true expression of caring for God's creation on a most basic level.

Sister Diana felt called to be involved in the Kino Border Initiative at the end of her sabbatical year.

"I truly believe that we're all one and when people are being treated so unfairly, that it's wrong and very unjust. I wanted to do my part to let them know that they have value and worth. In a small way, I could be the presence of Jesus there for one month. I felt a strong call that this, for me, was the right thing to do."

She worked in the Kino shelter in Nogales, in the Mexican state of Sonora. It is across the border from Nogales, Ariz., one of the largest ports of entry between the U.S. and Mexico.

The Kino Border Initiative offers migrants food and clothing, legal and medical assistance, and shelter (10 overnight stays allowed per family, accommodating 90 people each night). There is a social worker and psychologist available. Migrants who exhaust

their 10-day limit in the shelter can return anytime to take advantage of other services. These individuals and families often seek out others like themselves with whom they can rent a nearby room while waiting for their cases to be processed.

Some arrive at the border seeking asylum to escape the violence and lawlessness that is prevalent in many parts of Mexico and other countries. Others are migrants who have been sent back to Mexico after crossing the border illegally.

"These are good people who are seeking a peaceful, safe life for their families," said Sister Diana.

Their asylum quest for a better life can take months. She explained that the asylum process needs reform and has not been examined since World War II. Families become exhausted, confused, and disheartened by the requirements and the uncertainty of what lies ahead.

Many of those she met suffered trauma at the hands of gangs, members of drug cartels, and other violent perpetrators. Much of the



crime is overlooked by local law enforcement and government officials. Many who arrive at the shelter have witnessed terrible atrocities and carry the baggage of those horrors with them.

Sister Diana said, "For many, it's hard for them to talk about their experiences. They are people who are treated as though they're not important. We at Kino saw them as real human beings who were suffering and we treated them with care and compassion."

She worked in the shelter preparing food and sorting and distributing clothing to the families. She learned basic Spanish as she prepared for the experience, but said language was never an insurmountable barrier, as she communicated in other ways if needed.

"You could use the language of love...expressing that you cared through eye contact and other ways to show respect. I learned to tell them '¡Tu Vales!' That means 'you matter, you have worth!' It was important that they experienced that," she explained.

Sister Diana said, "The migrants are faith-filled people. At meal-times, during prayer, it got so quiet you could just feel the presence of God in the room. They believed their God was with them even after all they have

gone through."

Her experience included a day's sojourn into the desert with a local group, leaving water, blankets, and food at a designated location for those on their journeys to the border. The rough terrain and extreme temperature shifts in desert air is not an easy path. "People have to be desperate to try to cross the desert," she said.

Though her scheduled time at the border has come to an end, the migrants will be with her always.

"I was able to say goodbye to four families as they were leaving the shelter, after I had served them during their time there. I prayed, blessed, and hugged them. Then I had to watch them leave, not knowing what would happen to them."

Sister Diana has shared her experience with parish groups in the Milwaukee area, raising awareness and funds for the Kino Border Initiative's outreach. ■

Grace seeps in among the rocks,
the gravel, the rigid stones.
Hard things that would never change.
It isn't their nature.

Grace seeps in anyway.
She doesn't seem to know the rules,
doesn't seem to care that
this rock has held its place for years,
maybe centuries.

Inch by inch, drop by drop
grace comes, sometimes slow as a glacier,
sometimes sudden as a thunderbolt,
sometimes just steady in contrast.
Always there,
always seeking the least opening
to soften the hardness of heart.

Sister Ruth Mary Costello, OSF



The Corporate Ministries Sponsored by The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi

St. Coletta of Wisconsin, Jefferson, Wis., provides residential, day, pastoral care, and vocational programs for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities and other challenges. Founded 1904.

St. Coletta's of Illinois, Tinley Park, Ill., provides residential, educational, vocational, medical, and pastoral care programs to children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Founded 1949.

St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care, Milwaukee, Wis., offers intergenerational day care for children and adults at two sites. Founded 1983.

Canticle Court and Juniper Court, St. Francis, Wis., are two separate ministries that provide affordable

housing and independent living for older adults. Founded 1987 and 1994.

St. Elizabeth School, Baltimore, Md., is a special needs elementary, middle, and high school serving students with intellectual, emotional, and physical disabilities. Founded 1961.

Cardinal Cushing Centers, Braintree and Hanover, Mass., provide residential, vocational, educational, day programs, and supportive care for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Founded 1947.

Franciscan Shore, St. Francis, Wis., offers assisted living residence for seniors on the grounds of St. Francis Convent along the Lake Michigan shore. Established 2024.





We pray in remembrance of and thanksgiving for our Sisters who have entered eternal life.



Sister Generose Willkomm
(December 28, 1925 – November 3, 2024)

Sister Generose was born in Paris, Wis., the daughter of Nicholas and Josephine, and the twelfth of 16 children. She professed final vows as a Sister of St. Francis of Assisi in 1948.

Sister Generose attended St. Mary's Academy as an aspirant and postulant. From her early days in the convent, she was influenced by the writings of St. John Henry Newman. She was devoted to St. Kateri Tekakwitha, who died at age 24. Sister Generose thought that she, too, would die young. God had a different plan for her, as she was 98 years old at the time of her death.

During her years of ministry, Sister Generose served as a teacher and principal in Catholic elementary schools in South Milwaukee and Delavan, Wis., Franklin Park and Peterstown, Ill., and Longmont, Colo. She earned two degrees from Cardinal Stritch University: a bachelor's degree in philosophy-English; and a master's degree in education. In 1988, she was one of 26 teachers honored by the Milwaukee Archdiocesan League of Home and School Associations.

Throughout her life, Sister Generose had a deep commitment to bettering society through justice and equality. Family and friends remember her as joyful, with a sharp sense of humor.



Sister Marianne Muscott
(April 7, 1941 – November 12, 2024)

Sister Marianne was born in Queens, N.Y., to Benjamin and Frances Muscott. She had a half-brother, Howard. Sister Marianne professed her vows as a Sister of St. Mary's Abbey, Mill Hill, England (later the Franciscan Sisters

of Baltimore) in 1964. She worked as a teacher in grade schools and high schools in Virginia, New York, and Baltimore until 1974, when she became the vocation director for the Franciscan Sisters of Baltimore.

Sister Marianne was active with a number of parishes and institutions in the Baltimore area for nearly three decades, including the Franciscan Center, Francis House, St. Clare School, and the Instrument of Peace Ministries. She served in various ministries, including spiritual direction, retreats, counseling, and pastoral psychotherapy. She held a bachelor's degree in English from the College of Notre Dame in Baltimore, a master's in religious education from Fordham University, and a master's in pastoral counseling from Iona College in New York. Her primary interest was the integration of spirituality and psychology.

The Baltimore congregation merged with The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi in 2001. In 2003, Sister Marianne moved to the Milwaukee area, where she served as a pastoral psychotherapist for clients of St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care. She provided home visits and individual and family counseling there for 15 years.



Sister Leonette Gertner
(July 27, 1929 – November 30, 2024)

Sister Leonette was born at home in Iliff, Colo., to John and Anna Gertner, the seventh of 13 children. Her parents and their families had emigrated from Volmer, Russia, and settled in Colorado.

Sister Leonette attended public schools through high school. Her only contact with Sisters growing up was in her parish's religious education classes. When she decided to enter the convent, she approached Sister Bede Brielmaier, whom she knew from class. Not realizing that there were many congregations of Sisters, Sister Leonette relied on her teacher's guidance, and Sister Bede took it from there. Sister Leonette entered The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi on December 26, 1950. She professed her first vows in 1953 and final vows in 1956.

For 49 years, Sister Leonette taught children in grades 5-8. Most of her teaching ministry was in smaller cities and rural areas in Wisconsin: South Milwaukee, Brighton, Mauston, Jericho, Sheboygan, Paris, and Lancaster. For 15 of her teaching years, she also served as principal. She held a bachelor's degree in education from Cardinal Stritch University and later received an advanced certificate in religious education.

Sister Leonette retired in 2001 but remained active in volunteer activities at the Motherhouse and at St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care in Milwaukee.



Sister Rose Martin Weldgen
(February 13, 1938 – November 26, 2024)

Alice Louise Weldgen was born in Fort Atkinson, Wis., to George and Mary Huber, the youngest of 14 children. Both of her parents died before Alice was 13. In 1956, Harry E. Weldgen

legally adopted her. Her new family included one of her teachers, Sister Edna Mae Weldgen (†2015), and another adopted sister, Sister Barbara Weldgen (†2009). Sister Rose Martin wrote that she felt special to have two families as the youngest of 14 and the youngest of five.

Alice entered The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi in 1957 and made her first profession in 1960 and final profession in 1965.

Her ministries began with education. She was an elementary school teacher and principal in Milwaukee, Franklin, West Allis, and Sheboygan, Wis. She was the director of Daystar for Battered Women, served at Marian Franciscan in Milwaukee, and was a health care activities therapist at Villa Clement and Marina View Manor, also in Milwaukee. After retiring in 2009, she volunteered in health care as a companion for the elderly and for congregation on-call emergencies.

Over the years, Sister Rose Martin served on the board of directors of St. Aemilian-Lakeside in Milwaukee. She held a bachelor's degree in education from Cardinal Stritch University and a master's in administration and leadership from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Among her many worthwhile interests, she volunteered in October 2009 along with more than 80 Sisters from 18 religious congregations in the inaugural "Nuns Build" event to help in the rebuilding of houses devastated by Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, La.



Sister Janet Dielen
(August 11, 1935 – December 4, 2024)

Sister Janet was born to Peter and Marie Dielen in South Milwaukee, Wis. She had two younger sisters, Nancy Dielen Dinauer and Sister Rose Marie, who is also a Sister of St. Francis of Assisi. The girls attended St. Mary Parish grade school. Janet attended South Milwaukee High School and entered St. Mary's Academy for her senior year, when she was an aspirant in the congregation. She made her first profession of vows in 1956 and professed final vows in 1959.

Sister Janet was a musician and liturgist. She earned a bachelor's degree in piano from Cardinal Stritch University and a master's degree in music education from Northwestern University.

She was a music teacher and parish organist at Sacred Heart of Jesus in St. Francis, Wis.; St. Agnes and St. Sebastian in Milwaukee; St. John in Jefferson, Wis.; Holy Apostles in New Berlin, Wis.; and St. Anthony in Sterling, Colo.

In 1979, Sister Janet transitioned to full-time director of liturgy and music and served parishes in Wisconsin and Colorado through the early '90s. Sister Janet retired in 2018.

Determined to broaden and deepen her knowledge of liturgy, for several summers she went to summer school at the University of Notre Dame and earned a certificate in liturgical studies in 1987.

Throughout her life, Sister Janet was known for her attention to detail and protocol. She was a gifted musician and respected liturgist who shared her gifts freely and faithfully during her many years of service.



Sister Cor Marie Lowrie
(July 29, 1930 – January 14, 2025)

Sister Cor Marie was born in Park Falls, Wis., to Neubert and Violet Lowrie. She was the oldest of three children, all of whom attended St. Anthony School in Park Falls, where Sister Cor Marie met Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi. She entered the congregation in 1947, made first profession in 1950, and final profession of vows in 1953.

Sister Cor Marie worked early on in food service and childcare, and as a catechism teacher, then turned to nursing. From 1964 to 1965, she studied at Sacred Heart School of Practical Nursing in Milwaukee, Wis., and earned her certificate as a licensed practical nurse (LPN).

Her assignments included Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. School in Palos Park, Ill., where she was first missioned as a childcare provider and worked in food service. She returned to the school to serve as a nurse several years later and continued using her nursing skills with students with developmental disabilities at St. Coletta School in Hanover, Mass. (now known as Cardinal Cushing Centers).

In the mid-1970s, Sister Cor Marie returned to Milwaukee and served at St. Ann Health Center, Marian Catholic Home, and Mary Hill Retirement Center. In 1995, she transitioned to a role as dental assistant/receptionist at St. Francis Convent until her retirement in 2004.

Sister Cor Marie is remembered for her great sense of humor and a laugh that was infectious.



Sister Darlene Clippert
(April 21, 1932 – January 15, 2025)

Sister Darlene was born in Beloit, Wis., to James and Margaret Clippert, the second of three daughters. She attended Beloit High School and, on a trip to visit two classmates at St. Francis Convent, realized she wanted to join them. "I knew that day," she wrote, "that this is where I was meant to come." She professed her first vows in 1953.

Sister Darlene began her ministry at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary in Milwaukee and at the cardinal's residence in Chicago, as a domestic worker. After her fourth year of ministry, she was sent to St. Coletta School in Hanover, Mass., where she served for 11 years. She then moved to St. Coletta of Wisconsin in Jefferson, Wis., and worked in childcare. In 1970 she went to St. Joseph Children's Home in Torrington, Wyo. She served in the congregation's business office for 11 years and later worked as a resident trust coordinator at Marian Catholic Home and in parish ministry at St. Robert Parish in Shorewood, Wis.

Sister Darlene held an associate degree in childcare and a bachelor's degree in sociology from Cardinal Stritch University.

Throughout her life, she enjoyed sports, especially baseball, which she coached during her time at St. Coletta in Jefferson.



Sister Margaret Gardner
(January 27, 1921 – January 24, 2025)

Sister Margaret was born in Lubec, Maine, to Howard and Teresa Gardner, the second of four children. She entered the Franciscan Sisters of Baltimore in 1941 and professed final vows in 1946.

Sister Margaret, at 103 years old, was the oldest living member of the congregation at the time of her death.

Her life was one of dedication to justice and a zeal for doing the right thing. Sister Margaret spent 35 years as an elementary school teacher and principal, serving in New York, Virginia, North Carolina, and Maryland. From 1949-59, she was a house parent to boys at St. Elizabeth Home in Baltimore. Throughout her years of ministry, she taught in the African American community, ministered to boys who had multiple disabilities, and served in multi-ethnic parishes. Many of her students fondly remember her no-nonsense approach and caring heart.

After her years in education, Sister Margaret served as a pastoral associate in Virginia and was the assistant to the local coordinator at St. Elizabeth Convent in Baltimore and later became local coordinator.

Sister Margaret held a bachelor's degree from Mount St. Agnes, Baltimore, and a master's degree in special education from Loyola University Maryland in Baltimore. She moved to become part of the community with our Sisters in St. Francis, Wis., in 2017, and died peacefully at St. Francis Convent, where she resided.



Sharing the Gift of Artful Celebration

By Marian Doyle

The life of St. Francis of Assisi was one of joyful service and celebration. An ethos of joy permeated everything he did: it was in the way he cared for others; in his proclaiming of the beauty of God's creation; and in the relationships he had with his followers.

Among members of The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi, Sister Kathryn Dean Strandell embodies this spirit in a most creative and beautiful way. Known as a "mastermind of celebration," Sister KD (as she prefers to be called) elevates the experience of Franciscan joy in a way that has earned her a reputation for creating memorable environments for everything from congregation milestones, to pizza parties, to annual St. Francis Day celebrations.

She has a gift for knowing how to add the right touches to any gathering, with a keen sense of occasion. All of creation inspires her as she curates joyful environments. As a former teacher and school principal, her organizational skills were honed and perfected many years ago. With these skills, she brings intention to each table setting, purpose to each room design. And with the help of volunteers, events are carried off in seamless fashion.

"I want each person to feel that I was expecting them, that I prepared a table with them in mind," she explained. "In the passage from Luke (22:8), Jesus 'sent Peter and John saying, go and make ready for us the Passover, that we may eat.' The idea of making ready intrigues me...it inspires me."

Over the past year, she was the organizer behind celebrations marking the congregation's 175th anniversary. These included a picnic for the seminarians of Saint Francis de Sales Seminary, a reunion with former members, a staff appreciation dinner, and the June 23 reception after the special anniversary Mass held at the Basilica

of St. Josaphat in Milwaukee. That gathering drew some 140 guests, including corporate ministry leaders, Associates, members of other religious organizations, and friends of the congregation. All enjoyed a special



Sister KD Strandell dishing up delicious cake celebrating St. Francis Day in October 2024.

feast under a festive tent on the grounds of St. Francis Convent. It was a milestone event that put Sister KD's talents on full display.

No detail was overlooked. The theme of "175 Years of Caring for Others" was carried out using bright, seasonal colors and a nature-inspired flower theme for table settings and room decorations. Favorite foods and beer and wine were intentionally chosen for the occasion. The wine, for example, was a St. Francis-labeled variety sourced with a local vendor, and the beer was from states where Sisters served over the years (Colorado and Wisconsin), plus a German lager recalling the congregation's roots in Bavaria.

"My intention always is to create an environment that beckons, that says, 'come to the feast and enjoy!'" said Sister KD.

"One of my favorite images is the picnic that St. Francis and St. Clare shared together in Assisi," she said. "There was preparation needed; food to be made, a place to have the meal. It was a special time for them to be together, as their community gathered around them," she continued. "The picnic story is one of communal celebration, appreciating the company of each other in the beauty of nature."

Each of Sister KD's inspired celebrations recall that air of nature and joy and sense of community – always with a festive touch and feeling of welcome. ■

“
Come,
for the banquet
is waiting.

– from the hymn,
"Come to the Feast,"
by Henry Trickett



Campaign Update: Sharing Our Blessings

To date, we've raised \$14 million, 56 percent of our *Sharing Our Blessings* campaign goal of \$25 million. Learn about this 10-year campaign for the health and retirement needs of our Sisters at lakeosfs.org/blessings.



Meet Our Advancement Team



(l to r) Janice Sullivan, Nicole Duncan, Amy Dorman

Nicole Duncan, Director of Advancement

Nicole is the lead strategist and external relations figure for the congregation's fundraising efforts. She has been with The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi for over a year and brings more than 20 years of experience in advancement operations with her. She finds excitement working with donors to meet the needs of the Sisters.

Amy Dorman, Associate Director of Advancement

Amy is the operational manager for the congregation's fundraising efforts, leading the direct mail program and special projects. She has over 15 years of experience in fundraising and is delighted to join the team this year.

Janice Sullivan, Donor Stewardship Specialist

Janice is our frontline connection to donors. She ensures donors feel appreciated, informed, and engaged through communications and recognition, and has been with the congregation since 2019.

Our Wish List for the Care of Our Retired Sisters

Throughout the years, your generosity has been a true blessing, ensuring that our retired Sisters receive the care and support they need as they age. Many essential health needs—such as hearing aids, dental care, and home safety enhancements—are not covered by Medicare or Medicaid. Your monetary gifts help provide these necessities, allowing our Sisters to live with dignity and connection in a safe environment.

Every donation, large or small, helps provide:

- ✓ Assistive hearing technology so Sisters can stay engaged in conversation and prayer
- ✓ Dental care, including dentures, for a healthy, pain-free smile
- ✓ Adjustable hospital beds to improve comfort and mobility
- ✓ Electric stairlifts, grab bars, and wheelchair ramps to help Sisters safely age in place
- ✓ Computers with large monitors, cameras, and speakers to keep Sisters connected with loved ones
- ✓ Geriatric therapies to ease anxiety, pain, and stiffness from conditions like arthritis, neuropathy, and Parkinson's

Your kindness benefits our Sisters in both body and spirit. To donate, scan the QR code or visit lakeosfs.org/donate. A more complete list of needs can be found at lakeosfs.org/needs



Thank you for sharing your blessings!



Our Giving Societies

Every generous gift lights the way toward a brighter future for The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi.

We invite any graduate of St. Mary's Academy or Cardinal Stritch University to join a legacy of service by becoming a member of one of our cherished giving societies.



Tau Society ▼

The Tau Society recognizes Cardinal Stritch University alumni who generously support the health and retirement needs of our retired Sisters, many of whom are former Stritch educators, artists, administrators, counselors, librarians, and archivists. Gifts from Stritch alumni reflect their profound gratitude to the Sisters for educating and empowering them, and for deepening their faith. For those called to make a steadfast commitment, the Tau Society offers a path to lasting impact. Your support acts as a pillar that upholds and advances our mission, ensuring that our outreach and services endure for generations to come.

Fioretti Society ▲

St. Mary's Academy (1899-1991) educated more than 8,000 young women during its nearly 100 years of operation. *The Fioretti*, the Academy's newspaper, was named after the 14th century book, *Fioretti di San Francesco*, which translates to "Little Flowers of Francis of Assisi." Just as one tiny seed blossoms into a radiant flower, your contribution to the Sisters as a Fioretti Society member nurtures hope and vitality. Every act of giving sows a seed of transformation, inspiring growth and well-being in our community.



“

"Through every act of giving back, we breathe new life into our cherished mission—empowering The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi to serve as the hands and heart of hope for our communities. Your support in the Tau Society isn't just a donation; it's an investment in faith, service, and legacy."

— Sister Mary Lea Schneider
President Emerita, Cardinal Stritch University



Which legacy will you help create?

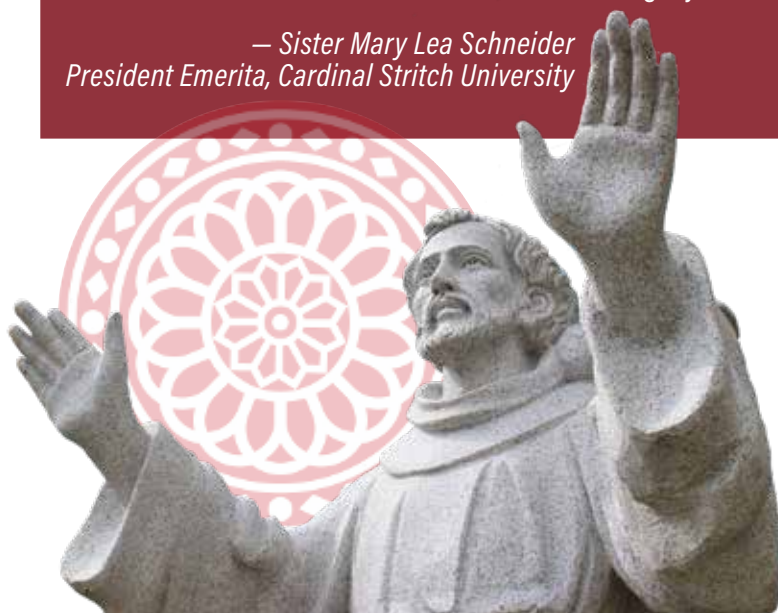
The legacies of these ministries – St. Mary's Academy and Cardinal Stritch University – will live on. Together, we can spread light, love, and hope throughout our communities!

Scan the QR codes to learn more and join our family of donors. Embrace the call—let your light shine!

Fioretti Society



Tau Society



If you are a graduate of either St. Mary's Academy or Cardinal Stritch University, please let us know your class year by sending an email with your name and graduation year to: enrollments@lakeosfs.org.

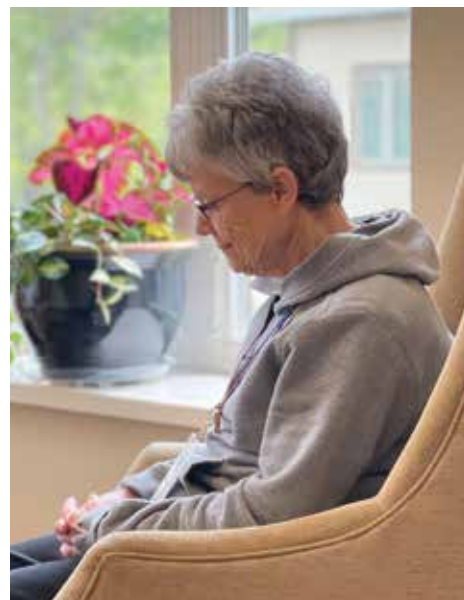
Watch for more info about society events coming in 2026!

Leaving a Legacy of Love for The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi



◀ St. Francis Society

Your generosity can make a lasting impact on our retired Sisters, who have dedicated their lives to serving others. By including the Sisters in your will or trust, you provide them with the care and security they deserve. Donors are honored as members of the St. Francis Society, receiving special recognition and benefits.



St. Clare Society ▶

Recurring gifts offer ongoing support, ensuring stability for our Sisters year-round. Join the St. Clare Society with a monthly or annual gift and make a difference every day.

WAYS TO GIVE:

- Include the Sisters in your will or trust
- Set up a monthly or annual donation
- Donate stocks, IRA gifts, or Donor Advised Funds

Start your legacy today!



BEQUESTS With Gratitude

A bequest is a wonderful way to show your care and concern for our retired Sisters. Between October 1, 2024, and April 1, 2025, The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi received bequests from the following generous donors:

Anonymous
Gloria J. Bloomer
Rita M. Bobin
Kent B. Hickman
Anne Horvitz
Harold Johnson Family Trust
Newhouse Family Trust
Jane M. Polasek
Rosalie M. Pyle
Elizabeth A. Rould
Helen J. Schultz Revocable Trust
Mary G. Souza
George S. Trovato
Carol Vysocky

To learn more, please visit lakeosfs.org/societies or contact Nicole Duncan, Director of Advancement, at 414-294-7329 or nduncan@lakeosfs.org.

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GIVING IN ACTION



TOGETHER YOU RAISED \$30,169!

Your Generosity on Giving Tuesday
Brought Comfort and Care

Thanks to you, Giving Tuesday 2024 was a beautiful testament to love and generosity! Your support provided funds for the comfort and care of our retired Sisters, honoring their lifetimes of devotion with the dignity they deserve.

Because of your kindness, rooms in Clare Circle, our enhanced care area, are now equipped with pressure-relieving mattresses, bringing greater comfort and restful sleep to our Sisters. This incredible gift is a direct reflection of your compassion and commitment to their well-being.

Giving Tuesday is an annual day of giving held on the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving.

SAVE THE DATE: Giving Tuesday will be held on December 2, 2025, this year.

GIVING
TUESDAY



Our Sisters are deeply grateful
and keep you in their prayers
especially during each Mass when
our donors are remembered.



THANK YOU FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

UPDATE YOUR
INFORMATION

We want to keep in touch. Please visit lakeosfs.org/contact-us or scan the QR code to update your name, address, email address, phone number, how you or your family know our Sisters, and how often you would like us to contact you.



