

# *Our* Journey

living the Gospel

CELEBRATING 125 YEARS

FOUNDED 1891



**FRANCISCAN SISTERS**  
OF LITTLE FALLS, MINNESOTA

Fall 2016 • Vol. 35 No. 1

# Franciscan Sisters respond to recent acts of violence



Following the recent violent deaths of equally innocent police officers and African-American men, the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls joined in a statement previously made by Franciscan Action Network, a network of Franciscan congregations engaged in social justice actions. As followers of Jesus Christ and St. Francis and St. Clare, we Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, Minnesota, know that violence is never the answer.

“We are horrified by the shooting of five police officers in Dallas, and the fact that someone took advantage of a peaceful Black Lives Matter protest to cause chaos and violence.

We are horrified by the shootings of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile by police in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and just outside St. Paul, Minnesota.

We deplore violence in all its forms. Our patron, St. Francis of Assisi, who followed in the footprints of Jesus, commanded his followers not to bear arms and to greet others with 'Peace and All Good.'

Violence is not the solution to violence. We hold in prayer all these victims of senseless violence and their loved ones.

But now we must do more than pray.

As Catholics and people of faith who support a culture of life, it's important for us to stand up and speak out against these acts of violence.

We must demand more transparency and training for our law enforcement, in order to ensure that people of color are not killed by police for just being pulled over, having a broken taillight, or for selling CDs in front of a store.

We must demand expanded comprehensive background checks and a ban on high capacity weapons and magazines.

We must once again start seeing each other as children of God, all created in God's image.”

We invite you to urge your members of Congress to do something about these acts of violence. Urge your state legislators to act to eliminate differences in treatment based on race. Then, pray.

## Our Journey

FALL 2016 • VOL. 35 No. 1

*Our Journey* is published three times a year by the Community Relations Department of the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, Minnesota, for donors, associates, friends, relatives and employees. This publication shares the journeys of our sisters and associates as they work in joyful service in the spirit of Saints Francis and Clare.

### Editorial Team:

Deanna V. Boone,  
director of Community Relations  
Elizabeth Mahoney Rydeen, editor  
Jan Roering, editorial assistant  
Amanda Frieler, graphic designer  
Julie Hanson, direct mail specialist  
Sister Rose Margaret Schneider  
Sister Elise Saggau  
Sister Carmen Barsody  
Associate Geri Dietz

Printed by: Spectrum Marketing  
Services, Little Falls, MN

### To receive this publication, please contact:

Community Relations Dept.  
Franciscan Sisters  
of Little Falls, Minnesota  
116 8th Avenue SE  
Little Falls, MN 56345  
Phone: 320-632-2981  
info@fslf.org • www.fslf.org

Cover: Artwork by Sister  
Lillian Kroll.

### Our Mission:

We, Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, Minnesota, are a community of women religious whose members are called to live the Gospel joyfully and to reverence the earth and all of God's creation. In the spirit of Saints Francis and Clare, we embody a life of prayer, simple living and service to those in need.

We are committed to nonviolence as we recognize the need for healing in ourselves and in our world. We seek to build communities of peace and justice wherever we are called to serve.

© September 2016  
Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls,  
Minnesota



## Dear Friends,

As I write this, we are rejoicing in our delightful 125th Anniversary Open House. Nearly 300 people came to tour, visit and enjoy a loving welcome by our sisters, staff, associates and volunteers. They came from near and far, some with a previous connection to us and some simply because they were interested in learning more about our Franciscan community. It was a wonderful day of remembering the past, learning about the present and feeling our hope in the future.

We have had a tremendous year of celebration! In July, we celebrated with alumnae from St. Francis High School, from which 2,358 women graduated. The school operated from 1926-1977; many extol the great education they received. The building now serves as our administration center and is home to St. Francis Music Center and St. Francis Health and Recreation Center.

We are looking forward to three final events this fall. On September 30, there is a sold-out benefit concert by liturgical musicians David Haas, Marty Haugen and Michael Joncas. On October 4, we celebrate the Feast of Saint Francis, when we will join together as sisters, associates and guests to make merry with a great liturgy and dinner. And on October 16, we've invited our former members to gather with us for a reunion that will celebrate the gifts of God that have come to so many others through our lives.

Another special event this year was honoring the women who have served as president of the Franciscan Federation of the Third Order Regular, the national organization of women and men, living in community and offering service to God's people and also of Franciscan-hearted persons, married and single, all of whom follow in the footsteps of Francis. Sister Paula Pohlmann served as president from 1981-1983 and Sister Rose Mae Rausch from 1996-1997. They are part of a long line of great women who have helped us strengthen our Franciscan presence in our Church and world.

As you read through this issue of *Our Journey*, you will see that there is much life and ministry happening in so many different ways. God continues to guide and draw us into opportunities to serve persons young, old and all in-between. In everything we do, we seek to develop relationships that open us all to the goodness of God alive and active in each person, in creation and in loving communities of care.

Thank you for journeying with us these 125 years. As we continue on, we count on your companionship and pledge to you that we will be with you in prayer and service.

Peace and all good,

*Sister Beatrice Eichten    Sister Rose Margaret Schneider*  
*Sister Susan Knutson    Sister Grace Skwira*



Sisters Paula Pohlmann, Bea Eichten and Rose Mae Rausch. Sisters Paula and Rose Mae were honored as past presidents of the Franciscan Federation.

# Third Order Regular Franciscans and the Consecrated Life: Prayer

Sister Elise Saggau

In the last three articles in this series on the qualities that characterize the Third Order Regular way of life, we considered minority, conversion of life, and poverty. Now we turn our attention to *prayer*. Franciscans aspire to be present at all times to the Trinitarian God “who is present to all creatures.” We do not “see” the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit; and yet we believe and find evidence in our lives that this dynamic loving reality is at work. For us the Trinity is not a mathematical problem, but a mysterious experience of relationship. Belief in the Trinity lies at the root of all Christian prayer. Saint Francis calls the whole Christian community to prayer:



With our whole heart, our whole soul, our whole mind, with our whole strength and fortitude with our whole understanding, with all our powers, with every effort, every affection, every feeling, every desire and wish, let us all love the Lord God Who has given and gives to each one of us our whole body, our whole soul and our whole life, Who has created, redeemed and will save us by His mercy alone. . . . Wherever we are, in every place, at every hour, at every time of the day, every day and continually, let all of us truly and humbly believe, hold in our heart and love, honor, adore, serve, praise and bless, glorify and exalt, magnify and give thanks to the Most High and Supreme Eternal God, Trinity and Unity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Earlier Rule, 23:8-11).

Francis is certainly holistic. We must respond with “our whole heart, soul, mind, strength, with our whole understanding, with all our powers, with every effort, every affection, every feeling, every desire” to the One who has given us our “whole body, our whole soul, our whole life.” For Francis, the body, with its feelings and affections, must be involved in prayer. And desire is fundamental: “let us desire nothing else, let us want nothing else, let nothing else please us and cause us delight except our Creator, Redeemer and Savior, the only true God” (ER 9).

Francis’s biographer offers a striking description of Francis’s prayer:

With all his soul [Francis] thirsted for his Christ. . . . He always sought out a hidden place where he could join to God not only his spirit but every member of his body. . . . He would direct all his attention and affection toward the one thing he asked of the Lord, not so much praying as becoming totally prayer. . . . Even on the road . . . he would stop in his tracks as he turned a new inspiration into something useful. He did not receive grace in vain (2C 94, FAED: pp. 308-10).

The fruit of such prayer is sweetness and, surprisingly, *usefulness*. One does not receive grace for oneself alone, but for the common good.

Prayer can be like that for us. But we must desire it with our whole being, body and soul. In this way, one is never not praying, because prayer is not an act, but a way of life. It is being in relationship not only with God but with all creation. Francis never prays alone. Wherever he is, he is always part of a vast created reality that responds to God with praise and thanks. In his *Canticle of the Creatures*, Francis witnesses to his sense of unity with all creatures in their proper response to the Creator. He calls them brothers and sisters and joins them in singing God’s praises. Thus he sets an example of how our prayer is “material” because we are material.

-Continued, Page 5

And this is most important—if our response to God cannot be separated from matter, our image of God cannot be separated from the Incarnation. God truly became one with us IN OUR FLESH, OUR MATTER. God in Jesus Christ knows our joys and sorrows, our fears and hopes, our profound sufferings and our limitless desires and, finally, our inevitable death. God knows these, not by observing them from a distance, but by entering into them and making them God's own.

Franciscan prayer life, then, does not have neatly structured times for prayer and for engagement. There was only one time for Francis and it was God's time. It is always God's time. The soul that desires God will be led, by the grace of God, to wisdom, which is understanding who we are and who God is. When we know this, we know how to live and how to pray.

---

## 125th Open House – a SUCCESS!

*Sister Cordy Korkowski, director of Donor Relations*

People came from far and wide to attend our 125th Open House—estimated attendance: around 300. Displays, artifacts, maps and hundreds of photos told the stories of the sisters' past and present ministries. Over 50 sisters were strategically placed throughout the campus eager to share stories and interact with visitors. As one sister commented, "We love to see our friends, and we always enjoy sharing hospitality."

People rode a bus or walked the grounds to see the community gardens, cemetery, peace garden and convent gardens. Inside they toured Sacred Heart Chapel, St. Clare Library and the former St. Francis High School, which now houses St. Francis Music Center and St. Francis Health & Recreation Center.

It was heartwarming for me to meet friends and donors who have partnered with us for years. One remarked, "We have received communications and written to each other often and today we are meeting, what joy!" Another said, "I have never been to Little Falls, but I am very impressed with the Franciscan mission and focus. I wanted to be here today."

It was an exhilarating couple of hours, matching names and faces and being able to say thank you in person. We are deeply grateful for all who honored us with their presence, adding a richness to the wide circle of friendship we have enjoyed over these 125 years.



Former missionary Sister Maurita Bernet (right) discusses a display with Associate Cheri Hample and her granddaughter, Makya Turcotte.

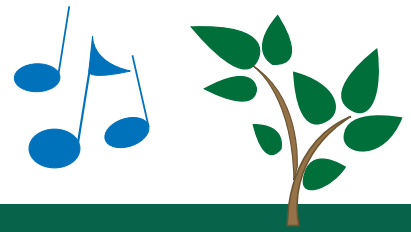


Sister Paula Pohlmann (center) toured St. Francis Health and Recreation with Frank and Jan Soenneker, generous supporters of the ministry at Clare's Well. They loved their experience at the open house because, even though they had visited our motherhouse frequently in the past, they learned things totally new to them and went home with full hearts.



Sister Tonie Rausch (right), "The Art Room was a real escape for students at St. Francis High School, especially those with a flair for creativity!" Today, the Art Room is still abuzz, and the enthusiasm for painting and the arts endures.





## Green Fair turns 10!



1



2



3



4



5



6



7

The 2016 Green Fair Folk Festival welcomed over 1,000 people who enjoyed family activities, interesting exhibits, unique vendors, great food and live entertainment—all with a green message.

1. The St. Francis Preparatory Orchestra and Concert Orchestra, under the direction of Bobbi French, performed a fun collection of music.

2. Five URock bands rounded out the entertainment: The Daydreamers, Astrix, Musically Present, JAM'N! and The Hash Slinging Slashers.

3. Electric guitar skills showcased.

4. After they performed, URock musicians signed posters, exclusively designed for each band.

5. Saint Francis (a.k.a. Associate Greg Spofford) always makes an appearance.

6. A horse-drawn wagon provided tours throughout the campus grounds.

7. These cuddly creatures became family at the Teddy Bear clinic and stuffed animal adoption center.



# Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday

## Sister Bernarda celebrates!

Friends and family gathered August 14 to celebrate Sister Mary Bernarda Sanoski's 100th birthday. Sister Bernarda, originally from Minneota, entered the convent January 3, 1935. She worked in the health care field for 41 years as an RN, clinical instructor and hospital administrator. She served as a member of her Community Board from 1980-1984, then became a certified pastoral associate and worked in pastoral care in South Dakota, Wisconsin and Minnesota. In her semi-retirement, she was involved in parish ministry in the Swanville and Flensburg communities, returning to the Motherhouse in 2014. Sister Mary Bernarda has been a Franciscan Sister for 81 years. Congratulations and Happy Birthday!



## A surprise visitor at Exodus

*Sister Joan Tuberty*

At Exodus Residence each day provides new experiences and new ways to encounter others. I'm grateful for this urban ministry and the people of the St. Olaf neighborhood.

Exodus, located in Minneapolis, is home to 95 single men and women in need of low cost and supportive housing. St. Olaf Catholic Church owns the building and leases it to Catholic Charities. I have lived here since 1992. Many of the residents are homeless, aged 55 or older, who experience acute or chronic health issues and receive nursing care coordination. Residents can stay in the program for up to two years and work toward permanent housing elsewhere.

One Saturday afternoon, someone knocked on my door on the second floor at Exodus. I asked, "Who's there?" No response. Usually I do not open my door if I do not know who the person is. I thought I recognized the voice and opened the door. Standing there were six people and a man stepped forward, extended his hand and introduced himself. "I'm Senator Al Franken, and I heard there was a Franciscan Sister living here and wanted to say hello." He was on a tour of Exodus to become aware of the need for health supportive housing in group living.

He asked me about my presence at Exodus and what part religion played as I interacted with residents. I gave him an example of how I see the goodness in each person and often appeal to that in supporting persons who are recovering and healing.



Sister Joan and Al Franken visited for about 10 minutes and parted with a warm hug of appreciation.

# In this Year of Mercy, sisters are called to bring love

Deanna V. Boone

Some days Sister Anita Jennissen just listens. Some days Sister Shirley Mueller needs to step back from her work and take time to cry.

Their work is at Sacred Heart Parish in McAllen, 10 miles north of the U.S.-Texas border where refugees—mainly from Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador—first land on U.S. soil. People left homes and families, because there was no hope, much violence or because they had to choose between their children joining gangs or gangs killing their children when they refused to join.

The sisters show mercy to people who have experienced horrendous trauma long before they arrive and who face more challenges in the time ahead.

In this Year of Mercy, these are acts of mercy to sisters and brothers in Christ. Sister Anita said, “It’s our call to bring love, to be a presence of support to hurting people. This is what Jesus did; this is what Francis did; this is what we must do.”

The pattern for refugees is predictable. They left home with only the clothes on their backs; most of their possessions were likely sold to pay the coyotes (smugglers) \$3,000/person for passage or stolen. Most are a parent with one or two children who have undertaken a trip through Mexico, crossed the Rio Grande River into Texas and, once there, hoped they would be found by the Border Patrol. “They come to the U.S. with confidence that they will be helped by immigration authorities and by family members who are already established here.”

Volunteers clap and call out “*Bienvenido*” as they welcome refugees to the parish where Catholic Charities has established the Refugee Center. In an orderly manner, each person and family is registered and given information about how to connect with their awaiting families. If there are babies, the parent is given a backpack with basic supplies like diapers and baby formula. Then they have a chance to quickly wash before a breakfast of cereal and half a banana. Each person is given a new set of clothes (their old clothes are taken and burned), takes a shower, dresses for the next leg of their trip, receives a sack of food (four ham and cheese sandwiches, two bottles of water, two juice boxes, two granola bars and bags of animal crackers and chips) and, if desired, a Bible and rosary. Then they board the bus or stay for a lunch of chicken soup and tortillas; the quantity of food is small because their

bodies cannot handle more when they haven’t eaten for days.

Sister Anita said, “My ministry with the refugees is to listen to their stories, give them information on what they might encounter on the bus trip to meet family members. Most do not speak English and need help to understand things they will encounter along the way.” She added, “My favorite thing is to cheer the scared children by giving them a toy to play with and keep.”

Some stay for less than a day and others for a few days, depending on arrangements with established family members. Separate tents with cots are set up for women and men; the facilities are heated and air conditioned.

The encounters between volunteers and refugees is brief, but “it is a big help,” Sister Anita said. “Our call is to walk with them in their pain and to give them comfort on their journey. Most of them leave with hope in their hearts and are appreciative of the human kindness.”



Sister Anita Jennissen entertains the children with stuffed animals. Holy Family School and parishioners in Sauk Centre donated several hundred stuffed toys to be given to the children who could bring nothing with them on their long, difficult journey to the Mexico border.



The sisters and the other volunteers are treated kindly, too. During Holy Week, a rabbi and his family along with four other families from the East Coast arrived and said, “You Christians need to celebrate Easter, so we will do your work.”

Sister Shirley said, “I dream about living in a circle, claiming each one’s gift and beauty and living God’s prayer for us, to be ONE. People on the margins have become the soul center of the universe with refugees being the poorest of the poor.” She prays, “Let’s respond to them to move the world toward compassion and love.”

What can people do to help? The sisters agree, “Become a sponsor by donating dollars to Catholic Charities and offer to help them start a new life where you live. These beautiful people need our help.”



“People on the margins have become the soul center of the universe with refugees being the poorest of the poor.”

—Sister Shirley Mueller

## Third annual St. Francis High School Gathering is well attended

On Sunday, July 17, the third annual St. Francis High School Gathering took place at St. Francis Convent in Little Falls. About 120 graduates, former students, faculty and staff came together to celebrate Mass, enjoy a delicious lunch and an afternoon of touring the former high school building and visiting. The goal of this event is to keep alive the relationships formed at SFHS and to nurture and promote the Franciscan spirit that was instilled during those special high school years.

This annual event will be held on the third Sunday of July for as long as there are persons to organize it and host it. It will be advertised in *Our Journey* and on the FSLF website. Direct invitations will be sent out only via email. Mark your calendar now for July 16, 2017.



Sister Adela Gross, '47, (center) visits with her nieces, Beth Gross Zimmerman, '77, and Adella Gross, '69, at the SFHS gathering. Their sister Ann Gross Karsky graduated in 1968, and their mother Lorraine Merkling Gross, now deceased, in 1944.

# Sisters in Mississippi say, ‘No more!’

Deanna V. Boone

Sisters Bev Weidner, Louise McKigney and Loretta Beyer were evicted from their rented homes five times for having African Americans eat with them and come in their front door.

They were spit on while joining local African Americans in protesting in front of stores where they couldn't consider applying for decent jobs with decent pay. Sister Bev was jailed for chewing gum in city court (although county supervisors chewed tobacco and spit it in jars during their meetings) and, later, with a group waiting in city hall to meet with the mayor.

Sisters Louise and Loretta were pepper sprayed and thrown in jail, along with local African Americans. Their crime? Waiting to meet with the sheriff about a rape in jail, where the victim was immediately transferred to the state mental hospital and the inmates who reported it were immediately transferred to the state penitentiary, far from family.

Sisters Loretta and Louise stayed in jail until their trial, a month later. “The cell was dirty, with soiled sheets, and the shower room was filthy. Food was served with cockroaches on the plates,” Sister Loretta said. “It was dehumanizing to be treated like this, but it was even more dehumanizing to see Black people whose power was taken away.” Sister Louise, added, “Blacks were often beaten and raped in jail. It just wasn't right. Many people went to jail for no reason.”

“Welcome to Mississippi in the 1980s,” they agreed in chorus.

Legal action was arbitrary and haphazard at best. When Loretta and Louise, along with local African Americans, were in jail, Bev was on the outside where she coordinated responses with national church groups and helped to strategize local actions.

She initiated daily public prayer, standing in front

of the jail to pray, where Louise and Loretta could see them and hear the prayers. People on the Lexington Square would come to the jail out of curiosity and join the prayer. This irritated the jailers but they didn't stop it. After all, it was prayer and you don't mess with prayer in Mississippi. Prayers often included asking God's protection to whoever was coming to help and on daily events; thus, the prayers provided information and moral support to those in jail as to what was happening on the outside.

During this time of unrest, the sisters received little support from the white community, not even from their parish. “Our pastor called us to a meeting to address complaints that ‘the sisters had been seen on Beale Street (a predominately Black area) drinking beer!’ We agreed to attend—if the bishop and two sisters from our community were also invited. We did this so that all would receive first-hand information.” The bishop sent two diocesan priests in his place and Sisters Tonie



Sisters Louise McKigney, Bev Weidner and Loretta Beyer

*In the Shadow of His Wings* published; St. Francis High School closes

1977

*Music Center, Health and Recreation Program, Little Falls; Alverna Apartments, Little Falls.*

1978

*Hope Community moves to Hurrle Hall; Dwelling Place Retreat House to Sauk Rapids.*

1979

*The first issue of Our Journey published; “Food Pantry” on Motherhouse campus.*

1980

*“Franciscan Sisters Health Care, Inc.” (FSHC) established to operate healthcare facilities.*

1981



Rausch and Betty Berger came from our Franciscan Community.

“We had never been on Beale Street drinking beer,” Sister Bev said. “However, church members circulated a petition to keep us from attending the church, but few signed it.” The sisters continued to attend church but were not offered the sign of the peace from anyone and were essentially snubbed, especially by the women. Although uncomfortable, they continued to attend Sunday Mass. “Later, when the bishop of the Jackson Diocese was approached by the media, he said that the problems related to racism have always existed and the sisters brought them to our attention and sought action.”

The Franciscan Community supported the three in Mississippi who were living the charism of peace and justice. Sisters were present for jail times and trials and mailed letters of support. Plus, local African American attorneys, who took all protester cases at no charge, carried information and food from Sister Bev in their briefcases to deliver to Sisters Louise and Loretta.

In addition, a Black church in Jackson sent a Dubuque Franciscan Sister from their parish to live with Sister Bev when she was alone and to help plan actions to address the injustices. They also offered bond money assistance, if needed. “One of the first things Sister Lois and I did was to go grocery shopping in Jackson because we had no food in the house,” Sister Bev said. “We couldn’t shop in Lexington because those stores were boycotted. And, to top it all off, we were held at gunpoint while placing groceries in the trunk. We handed over our purses, although he would have done better by taking our groceries.”

In recent years, prominent white citizens in Lexington have told Sister Louise that they “were disturbed by what we were doing back then, but that it really was the best thing that could have happened.”

Sister Bev summarized, “Civil rights take time. At the midpoint of the 20th century, African

Americans once again answered the call to transform the world. The social and economic ravages of Jim Crow-era racism were all-encompassing and deep-rooted. Yet, like a phoenix rising from the ashes of lynch mobs, residential and labor discrimination and rape, the Black freedom movement raised a collective call of ‘No more!’”

Sisters Loretta, Louise and Bev joined in supporting the call for civil rights. It is a call that is as important today as it was 40 years ago.

**Sister Bev** is an R.N. and has been a foster mother to 17 medically fragile babies. She was granted custody and has been mom to three of the babies: Alex, Shamira and Domi. Alex is an assistant teacher at a Montessori School in Minneapolis, Shamira is married and works at Ulta in Madison, Miss., and Domi is a sophomore at St. Joe in Madison, Miss. Sister Bev assists others in providing food and making friends with homeless people at Smith Park in Jackson. She also provides transportation for many in need.

**Sister Loretta** has slowed down her work with the Rural Organizing and Cultural Center (ROCC) where she oversaw 40 young people who tended a three-acre garden. She organized the garden activity in order to give children something constructive to do during the summer. The children learned to cook the food they grew and provided food for their families. Sister Loretta still gardens at home and neighborhood people stop over to pick vegetables for their families.

**Sister Louise**, a dietitian by training, helped people to access social services. She also accompanied them to administrative hearings as a lay advocate. After 30 years of aiding people with disabilities, she now enjoys visiting with the people she once represented. In fact, on a recent train trip, she met a passenger who recognized her, took her to coffee and thanked Sister Louise for the good work she had done 30 years ago.

*New Third Order Regular Rule approved by Rome; Development Office established and first appeal sent out.*

*St. Camillus Shelter, Little Falls; Novitiate moved to St. Paul.*

*Associate program re-activated.*

1982

1983

1984

1985

1986

*SALFa project to help local poor, Little Falls.*

*Mission in Tanzania; Congregation takes a corporate stance on being a Nuclear Free Zone.*

# Franciscan Sisters established St. Gabriel's School of Nursing

Sister Jan Kilian

*"To be a nurse is to walk with God,  
Along the path that our Master trod;  
To soothe the achings of human pain,  
To faithfully serve for little gain, . . .  
To reach the soul through its body's woe  
Oh, this is the way that God would go.  
(Author unknown)*

St. Gabriel's Hospital admitted its first patient in 1892 in the original convent building of the Franciscan Sisters. A need for more nurses arose when a new and separate hospital was built in 1916 to accommodate more patients. To meet this need, St. Gabriel's opened a School of Nursing also in 1916, 100 years ago. Mrs. Regina Holst of Little Falls was the first director from 1916–1918. Mrs. Holst was followed by Sister Bernadette Trettel, under whom the first class graduated in September 1919. The newly graduated nurses to whom Sister Bernadette presented the class pins and administered the Florence Nightingale pledge were Sister Anselma Billig, Rose Bach, Agnes Warnert, Frances Vertin and Rose Hurrle.

The following are some doctors who participated in giving lectures in the early years of the school: J.B. Holst, obstetrics and gynecology; O.J. Brown, pediatrics; G.M.A. Fortier, anatomy and physiology; E.L. Fortier, bacteriology and urinalysis; D.F. Holst, fractures, dislocations, bandaging and skin diseases; J.G. Millspaugh, materia medica, physics and chemistry, dietetics and metabolism; L.M. Roberts, eye, ear, nose and throat, and venereal diseases. Reverend Charles Grunewald taught nursing ethics. As sisters and lay women were educated, more of them were added to the faculty but the medical staff was always supportive.

The students (and all staff) were expected to hold

doctors in high regard. Doctors were addressed as "Doctor" and their orders were to be followed exactly. Sister Paula Pohlmann remembers when a doctor approached a nursing station, nurses stood up. Nurses accompanied them when doctors made rounds to see patients, and the nurse carried the patient's medical chart for the doctor. (Perhaps you remember: "What is the difference between a nurse and a nun? A nun only serves one God!") However, the nursing school could not have succeeded without the doctors or the God the doctors also served.

Over the years graduates have held reunions; co-chairs of these events include many Little Falls nurses: Dolores (Dee) Hanowski, Carolyn Maurer, Helen Maurer, Margaret Johnson, Erna Schmidtbauer, Marie Mischke, Cecelia Nieman, Rosemary Wachlarowicz, Doris Batzer and Dolores Knopik. Marie Randall was in charge of OB for some time, and Alice Olson was head nurse on the Medical floor. Many of these women, trained by the sisters, are active members of the Little Falls community. Lisa Hanowski is now in charge of Home Care for Catholic Health Initiatives. Alice Piotrowski from Little Falls graduated from another of the sisters' Schools of Nursing, St. Francis in Breckenridge. Many sister graduates are also familiar to Little Falls area residents, including Sister Joan Gerads. It was Sister Joan who started the Home Care program. Another is Sister Bernarda Sanoski who taught obstetrics and labor and delivery. And Sister Vianney Weier was in charge of the operating room and, as was the case with other hospital sisters, she couldn't always be with the sisters for scheduled prayer times. Some of the tasks of the OR nurse included making up packs of surgical instruments and sterilizing them for re-use. Once a sister student assigned to Sister Vianney began to leave in the

Becker House, Chicago.

1988

Congregation takes a corporate stance against cutting off U.S. military aid to the government of El Salvador and against the Gulf War.

1989

Clare's Well, Annandale.

1990

Centennial Year.

1991

Candidacy moves to St. Paul; Clare Residence built, Little Falls.

1992



middle of a busy time. When Sister Vianney asked her where she was going, she answered, “To prayer.” She had to learn that hospital sisters not only missed sleep to be on call at night, but also missed sleep to make up prayer time at night.

St. Gabriel’s School of Nursing closed during the Depression years, 1934-1942, due to lack of patients. It re-opened during World War II and in 1943 it became a member of the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps with an accelerated program to train nurses for the military.

In 1956 the cornerstone was laid for St. Joseph’s Hall, a new residence for student nurses, now part of Unity Family Healthcare. The students previously lived at the original convent and moved to their own housing May 1, 1957. The school continued to flourish until four-year R.N. programs became the norm. The three-year diploma programs were gradually eased out, and St. Gabriel’s School of Nursing closed for good in 1970.

St. Gabriel’s graduated a total of 602 registered nurses between the years 1916 and 1970. These nurses were highly respected as quality nurses then—and still are today. The three-year R.N. program provided excellent hands-on patient care experiences and supervision by clinical instructors as well as by medical staff doctors. The school included six-month affiliations with hospitals in Duluth and Rochester to provide experience such as orthopedic and psychiatric nursing not readily available at St. Gabriel’s. Students were well prepared for state board examinations and licensure.

“To be a nurse is to walk with God along the path that our Master trod.” And so the Franciscan Sister nurses and all continue to walk.

---

This article first appeared in the *Morrison County Record* as part of a series on the history of the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, Minnesota. Reprinted with permission.



St. Gabriel’s School of Nursing, 1947. Front Row: Georgine Roethler, Rita Kuefler, Sisters Vianney Weier, Thomas Weyandt and Evangeline Stanoch, Colleen Manney and Dorothy Flanagan; Back Row: Sister Lenore Weier, Irma Hagedorn, Mary Agnes Freese, Mary Ann Steffes, Sybil Schlicht, Mary Schultz, Josephine Haiden, Wanda Kirchev, Patricia Hills, La Vonne Valker, Minnie Goll, Dorothy Huander, Marie Drahos and Sister Caroline Torborg.

*FSHC transferred to Catholic Health Corporation (CHC)*

1993

*Communications and Development departments become Community Relations Department (CRD); Common Franciscan Novitiate established, Winona.*

1994

*First Sister/Donor Delegation to Nicaragua.*

1995

*CHC merges with Catholic Health Initiatives (CHI)*

1996

*Internet access and e-mail become available at Motherhouse.*

1998

# Sisters as farmers performed sacred work

Associate Jeff Odendahl

Seven miles west of Little Falls in Pike Creek Township are 160 acres of land which for years was known as the sisters' farm. Following their founding in 1891, the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls soon had hospital patients, the elderly and orphans to feed as well as their own members. They had 80 acres on the south end of town on which they raised cows, pigs, chickens and an extensive vegetable crop. The cattle, in particular, required more forage than the 80 acres could sustainably provide. In 1896 the Kukloks, a childless couple, approached them. Joseph Kuklok was getting too old for farming, and his wife was seriously ill. In exchange for hospital and life care, the couple deeded the property to the Franciscan Sisters.

This addition allowed the cattle, and the sisters, some much needed breathing room. For many years, the cows were driven from the convent through town and down the old wagon road to the "farm" where they were kept from May through October. Leo Amyshefsky, one of the first orphans cared for by the sisters, was for many years the main "cowhand," doing the milking and much of the work at the farm.

By the fall of 1920, Sister Valeria Soenneker was assigned to handle the farm and gardens of the convent. Near the road leading to the farm house was a high hill where, shortly after they acquired the farm, the sisters erected a tall wooden cross as a reminder that this place was special—that it belonged to a group of women consecrated to the service of God and neighbor, that all labor—as long as it was done for God—was sacred. "To me," said Sister Valeria, "this cross was very special. I used to watch for it as we approached, for it could be seen for some distance."

The 1930s saw the addition of St. Francis High School with its boarding students and a continued increase in the number of sisters entering the community. This created a need for more and more



Sisters Virginia Dingmann and Barbara Heiling picking cucumbers in the sisters' vegetable garden, 1970.

food. Sister Boniface Maier, by this time in charge of the farm and gardens, was told to raise more chickens. She ordered and received a shipment of 400 chicks, but did not have a good brooder house for them. Instead, she stayed up nights, checking the temperature of the coal stove every hour to assure the desired warmth.

During World War II only one hired hand was available for farm work. This left much for the sisters to do themselves. The hired man drove the truck (at that date sisters weren't allowed to drive) and Sisters Angela Karsnia, Seraphine Stanoch and Boniface milked the cows. They rose at 3:30 a.m. to do the milking and other chores at the farm, so they could get back in time for 6:30 a.m. Mass. Because of Church Law in effect

*Sabbath House, Minneapolis;  
Welcoming House, St. Cloud.*

2002

2003

*Mission, San Rafael, Mexico.*

*Partnership with  
Franciscan Sisters of St.  
Joseph, Homa Bay, Kenya.*

2004

*Major renovation of St. Francis  
Convent and Mary Hall.*

04-06

*Two Mexican women enter  
Congregation.*

07-08



at that time they were not allowed to eat or drink until after the Mass.

The sisters even had “pig parties” where they cut up meat and prepared it for canning, smoking and other uses. Each fall meat was butchered and sent to St. Paul to the House of Studies where there was additional freezer space. Sister Roberta Zimmer, who managed the farm operation from 1948-1959, remembered driving the old station wagon to St. Paul when it was so heavy with meat that she couldn’t see out the back window.

By the early 1960s, increased regulations related to food safety led to the sale of the cattle and the farm. For a time, the sisters continued to raise chickens, but that also soon ended. However, food from the earth continues to be important to the sisters, and they have maintained a large garden which helps to feed the sisters, and now is also a mainstay of our local high school’s Garden-to-Cafeteria program.



Postulants working in the gardens, 1952.

This article first appeared in the *Morrison County Record* as part of a series on the history of the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, Minnesota. Reprinted with permission.

## Franciscan Girls Camp

“Swimming in God’s Love” was the theme for the ninth annual Franciscan Girls Camp held in June. Eleven girls, ages 12-13, enjoyed the three-day outdoor camp experience, learning about the values of Saints Francis and Clare, of course, spending time with the Franciscan Sisters. Cooking over a camp fire, painting T-shirts and a trip to Maple Island Park in downtown Little Falls were among the activities. This year’s group came from Albany, Alexandria, Bowlus, Carlos, Holdingford, Pillager and Verndale.



The campers and their leaders visited Maple Island Park. L to R front: Samantha Skwira, Dulce Bakker, Chloe Swanson, Keara Kern, Clara Pflueger, Sister Ange Mayers (camp director); L to R back: Alondra Hernandez (group leader), Lucy Strusz, Lesly Gonzalez (group leader), Makayla Beulke, Shayna Steidl, Madison Schmitz, Laci Gibbs, Juliana Strusz, Jena Kruckeberg (group leader).

Franciscan Community Volunteers (FCV), St. Cloud.

2008

Angela Community (Memory Care Unit) established in Clare Residence.

Visioning and Planning Committee set up to help future planning.

2011

Clothes Review ministry passed to Boys and Girls Club, Little Falls.

2014

125th anniversary of FSLF.

2016

# Across the nation, Franciscan Sisters ministered to migrant farmworkers

*Sister Gloria Haider, Sister Carolyn Law and Julene Ley contributed to this article*

Since the 1960s the Franciscan Sisters have worked with migrant farmworkers, starting with migrant families who came to the hospitals they owned and staffed. Families, mainly from Texas, traveled north to the Red River Valley to work in the beet fields. They lived in abandoned farm houses, converted sheds or sometimes trailers provided by the landowner. In addition to healthcare, there was a very natural response on the part of the sisters to attend to the other needs of the people in their midst. Sister Teresita Sobiech gathered and distributed used clothing in Breckenridge; Sister Pat Forster facilitated a dental clinic for migrant children when she worked in Moorhead. Sisters who were teachers spent their summers ministering in migrant camps preparing the children for the sacraments.

In 1968, the Conference of Major Superiors of Women called for religious communities to start healthcare clinics for migrant workers. Mother Yvonne Becker responded by sending Sister Antonette Ahles to join the East Coast Migrant Health Organization. As a public health nurse, she worked with migrants along the East Coast, Texas and Minnesota. She was a member of the National Migrant Workers Council, serving as secretary from 1991-1992. Motivated by her religious calling, she said, "I believe that the mission to migrants is an apostolate worthy of consideration by those whose Rule of Life begins, 'To observe the Holy Gospel of Our Lord Christ . . .'"

Sisters returning from international missions joined these national efforts as they wished to continue to use their language and multi-cultural skills. Outreach to migrants and immigrants spanned throughout the nation as sisters established new ministries along the

Rio Grande in Texas, and farther west into border communities in Arizona and New Mexico. Following are a few examples.

In addition to Sister Antonette, Sister Donna Zetah also began her ministry to migrants with the East Coast Migrant Health Organization. Living as a migrant herself, she followed the families as they moved. She began in 1983 in New Jersey in a clinic serving Puerto Rican workers in the flower industry. After one season, she moved to Florida to serve workers in the fruit industry. In 1985, she joined the Midwest Migrant Organization and followed the Hispanic farmworkers from southern states up to Michigan. Sister Donna was part of a new effort to train migrant women farmworkers in leadership. Capable women were selected to be camp health leaders and, based on performance, received stipends for their work.

From 1991-1997, Sister Adela Gross served as coordinator of Pastoral Care for People on the Move, a program of the U.S. Bishop's Conference in Washington, D.C. She sees the migrant population "as an invisible army that moves across the country without anyone knowing about it." She returned to Minnesota and served as part-time coordinator of Multicultural Ministries for the St. Cloud Diocese from 1998-2007, and also ministered in various parishes with the Hispanic communities. Though retired, she maintains a strong relationship with the community in Brooten which sees a large population of migrants each year.

Today, Sister Audrey Jean Loher works with Humane Borders in Tucson, Ariz., which provides drinking water and other basic aid to migrants. Sisters Anita Jennissen and Shirley Mueller in McAllen, Tex.,

*-Continued, Page 17*

## ***Donating to the Franciscan Sisters:***

Please, feel free to express any wishes you may have for your gift. However, be advised that in order to ensure that donors will be entitled to federal income tax deduction, Franciscan Sister of Little Falls, Minnesota, is required by Internal Revenue Service rulings to retain full authority over the assets granted to it and cannot accept gifts that are required by the donor to be paid, or to be used, only to further the work of a specific individual or that are required to be used in another country by FSLF or another foreign charity or religious institute.



assist and offer hospitality to mainly Central American women and children who arrive daily, escaping drug violence and poverty in their own countries.

Ministry to migrants and to the broader Hispanic population in the St. Cloud Diocese is ongoing. Sister Carol Virnig founded Centro Hispano at St. Joseph's Church in Waite Park in 2002 to welcome and respond to the needs of Latino families moving to the St. Cloud area.

Sister Aurora Tovar, a native of Mexico, reaches out to families in Pelican Rapids, Long Prairie, Melrose, Cold Spring, Rockville, Albany, Upsala and Morris. As Franciscan Sisters are accustomed to do, she visits families in their homes, listens and becomes part of their

family life. Sister Aurora says: "Saint Francis taught that evangelization was not just to teach about the theology of our faith. He went out and asked the people about their well-being, looking to establish a relationship." In an increasingly multicultural world, the Franciscan Sisters will continue to offer their gifts to develop relationships of love, respect and friendship wherever their ministries might take them.

---

This article first appeared in the *Morrison County Record* as part of a series on the history of the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, Minnesota. Reprinted with permission.



Sister Donna Zetah working as a clinic nurse in Boynton, Fla., 1996.



Sister Antonette Ahles, working as public health nurse in Moorhead, Minn., 1969.

---

## Transitions in Community Relations Department

Elizabeth Rydeen, editor of *Our Journey*, will assume leadership of the Community Relations Department (CRD) in mid-October when Deanna Boone, current director, retires.

"This is a time of transition and, in this case, it's an opportune change," said Sister Rose Margaret Schneider, Leadership liaison to CRD. "We're saying farewell to Deanna as she leaves and we're continuing a long-time relationship with Liz. Both women live and breathe the Franciscan values."

Deanna came to the position in August 2005 after having moved from Wisconsin. She brought with her experience in communications and grew in development work, thanks to the stable CRD staff. "I have thoroughly enjoyed the chance to know these women and to promote their mission and ministries, so much so that I joined them as a Franciscan Associate. It is my intent to remain as a donor and supporter. They are deep in my heart," she said.

Grant writer and editor Liz Rydeen has served the Franciscan Sisters since 2000. "Her longevity with the sisters, together with her skills and her knowledge of the organization, make her a good fit for the position," Sister Rose Margaret said.



# God, indeed, answered my prayers

Associate Alice Vogel

The magic day came when I retired from my favorite and final career. Our next move was to sell the house and move to a new house in Little Falls. The year was 1998. That meant moving from our home of 34 years, leaving our faith community and a large number of good, faith-filled friends. My daily prayer was that God would give us new faith-filled friends and a good faith community.

Shortly after we arrived, we reconnected with some dear Franciscan Sister friends. One of these sisters sat us down one day and said, “Have I got plans for you.” Part of those plans included a special three-day weekend retreat.

After the TEC (Together Encounter Christ) retreat, we signed up to work on a REC (Residents Encounter Christ) retreat at the Morrison County jail. That weekend was a life changer for me. I experienced firsthand the power of prayer and many miracles. I remember one young man who came into the retreat with his eyes never leaving the floor. He had already lost custody of four of his children and was in danger of losing his wife and last child. Today, through the saving powers of Jesus Christ, both he and his wife are happily together, heavily involved in a church and jail ministry. They are also listed among our new faith-filled friends.

After our first REC retreat, my husband, Jim, and I decided we wanted to do more and joined a small group of Christians who visit the jail every Wednesday evening for two hours. The program “Your Choice” is open to both male and female inmates. It is their choice to come, and basically their choice to share. We do not

claim to be a Bible study, but each topic we introduce is scripture-based and pertains to all of us, both inside of jail and out. We all have the opportunity to share on the topic and scripture. Through the sharing we all get to know each other on a more personal level, which allows the inmates to see us as sinners also, and we get to love them as brothers and sisters in Christ instead of just inmates.

So how has it changed me? Well, as I look forward to probably the last quarter of my life, I see every prayer of mine being answered, and I have learned to accept the answer God has chosen instead of being disappointed in not getting it my way. Be careful what you pray for! It may be a wonderful surprise!

*God, indeed, answered my prayers with this group of Christian jail ministers and all the inmates. He gave me many new faith-filled friends—friends He chose just for me.*



Associates Alice and Jim Vogel

## Feast of *Saint Francis*

**Transitus**  
Monday, October 3  
7 p.m.

**Eucharist**  
Tuesday, October 4  
11 a.m.

**St. Francis Convent**  
116 8th Avenue SE  
Little Falls, MN 56345

*All are welcome!*



**give**  
TO THE  
**MAX**  
NOV. 17, 2016



# St. Clare Library expands . . . to include seeds

Deanna V. Boone

**L**ibraries exist to make books available, at no cost, for borrowers to read, enjoy and return for others to repeat the learning cycle. Now borrowers can check out flower and vegetable seeds, grow produce and harvest seeds to return to the library for others to repeat the growing cycle.

Elise Carey, library coordinator for St. Clare Library at St. Francis Convent, grew the idea from a conversation about how some families face food scarcity, how eco-systems can be improved by plants that welcome pollinators such as butterflies and bees and how home-grown food simply tastes best.

She moved to Minnesota in June 2015 after serving for 23 years as a missionary in various countries, most recently in Latvia, with the organization Youth with a Mission. Her hobbies include cooking, hiking, kayaking, reading and, of course, gardening. “Potatoes in Latvia and potatoes in the States taste vastly different,” she said. “I think we lack varieties of plants that were once our food sources.”

Seeds circulated at lending libraries are usually regionally adapted and heirloom varieties. “A seed library encourages food literacy and education, increases knowledge of gardening and horticulture, helps with sustainability and promotes healthy living and eating,” Elise said.

Always a teacher, she said, “If children don’t like vegetables, help them to plant a few seeds, preferably cherry tomatoes and peas. Plant the seeds, water tenderly, watch the growth, notice the color changes and

eventually eat the produce. The child will see vegetables in a whole new light.”

As followers of Saints Francis and Clare of Assisi, the Franciscan Sisters and Associates are committed to caring for the environment, Mother Earth and all of creation. Franciscans strive for simplicity and sustainability in every aspect of their lives. “Creating a seed library mirrors these Franciscan values,” Elise added.

She offered a gardener’s joke that fits the mood of the seed library: “Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to garden and the whole neighborhood has tomatoes.” The seed library is just that. Borrow. Grow. Share.

“As caretakers of seeds, we cooperate with nature in carrying on priceless genetic material for future generations. Seeds are a sacred trust passed down to us by our ancestors. The seed library helps us to honor that gift,” she said. “By growing a plant from seed, eating its fruit and returning it back to seed, we become fully engaged in the rhythm of nature and grow more attuned to the world around us.”

If someone wants to contribute seeds from the garden, or perhaps some from a family’s heritage, Elise will be delighted to receive them. The only seeds not accepted will be hybrid seeds which change in composition after the first year’s growth.

St. Clare Library is open to the public Tuesday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.—for books and seeds.



“The purpose for our seed library is to provide an alternative to genetically modified seed, increase biodiversity and plant resilience.”

# New look, new equipment, new manager for St. Francis Health and Recreation Center

Earlier this year, St. Francis Health and Recreation Center, a sponsored ministry of the Franciscan Sisters, received somewhat of a facelift. While the swimming pool and hot tub remain unchanged, there are new, dedicated areas for weight training, circuit training and cardio-exercise equipment. There's a new room for yoga and fitness classes as well as accommodations for massage services. With help from a grant from Benton Telecommunications, the center has an updated, brighter look. New equipment has been added and additional classes are being offered.

In July, Jan Burley, a former general manager for America's Fitness Center of Hutchinson, joined the staff as manager of St. Francis Health and Rec. She earned a bachelor's degree in physical education with a minor in coaching from St. Cloud State University. With nearly 25 years of health and wellness experience, her career includes positions as a physical education teacher, fire fighter, public speaker and, most recently, fitness center manager and personal trainer.

She encourages people to “get on a bike, hike, walk, run, swim, skate, ski—and enjoy Minnesota. If you don't feel prepared to meet your goals, we'll train you here. It will give people confidence and a sense of accomplishment, no matter what a person's size.”

Jan received the Compestela certificate after completing the 600-mile pilgrimage across Spain, has crossed the Pyrenes, the Andes, and has finished five full marathons. She feels if there is a goal you want to accomplish, her team will help you achieve it.

The center offers a warm indoor swimming pool, hot tub, sauna, weight room, cardio room, gym, racquetball court, massage, yoga, swimming lessons and a full range of fitness classes. For seniors, the center offers the Silver & Fit and Silver Sneakers programs.

Jan's goals are to establish a FitBit challenge, a biggest loser group with emphasis on nutrition and weight loss, spinning class, pool parties and gym rental, a senior circuit training class, a kid's fit club, Pickleball club, Wiffle Ball, driving and putting area for golfers, creating a new spa-like area and many other initiatives.



Jan Burley: “I want to teach people to get outside their comfort zones, to discover a new comfort zone. Our body is a gift from God and we each have a responsibility to take care of it, maintain it, use it and honor it.”





# ADVENT DAY OF REFLECTION

*Advent: A Celebration of Hope in God's Cosmic Promise*

**Saturday, December 3, 2016 9:30AM–3PM**

St. Francis Convent, Little Falls, Minn.



During this day of reflection, we will consider the virtue of hope and its message for our dark times. We will reflect on what we mean when we say: “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” We will examine how hope motivates our continual conversion and moves us to make an ever greater place for the work of God’s Spirit in our daily life. Each talk will lead into a time of personal reflection and small group sharing as we consider the practical implications of Advent for living a life of faith today.

Elise Saggau, OSF, has a Master of Divinity degree from Loyola University in Chicago and a Master of Arts degree in Franciscan Studies from the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, New York. She has many years of experience in education and Franciscan formation. From 1995 through 2001, she was editor of *The Cord*, an international Franciscan spiritual review, and served as assistant director of Publications at the Franciscan Institute. She is now engaged in writing the history of the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls and continues to write and give talks, especially on Franciscan spirituality.

Register by November 30 by calling (320)632-0668 or email: [franciscanlife@fslf.org](mailto:franciscanlife@fslf.org).

## Fall schedule starts October 1.

Sign up for classes now!

- Adult Boot Camp
- Aqua Fitness classes
- Ball Class
- Biggest Loser Class
- Kettlebells
- Pickleball
- Senior Circuit
- Silver Sneakers/Senior Chair Yoga
- Ultimate Lunch Hour Workout
- Weight Training
- Yoga
- Zumba



For more information, go to [www.stfrancisrec.org](http://www.stfrancisrec.org) or call 320-632-0627.

# Living the Gospel courageously . . . with energy, spirit, peace

Her passion is to make and fix rosaries. As the years go by, **Sister Adella Blonigen** appreciates having the ability to do so more and more. “Every morning I pray to God, “If you want me to keep making rosaries, I need three things from you: eyesight, able hands and mind so that I can continue this work. I believe that God wants me to continue because He gives me the grace.”

She started this ministry in 1962, a mere 54 years ago. “I’m not satisfied with a rosary until it is as perfect as I can make it and people are happy with the results,” she said. “This means more to me now than ever before, because I’m getting closer to the time when I will meet Jesus and Mary. Mass is our most important time with God and the rosary is the second most helpful and most important. We can pray the rosary anywhere; it keeps us connected to God. I feel God’s power.”

In years past, sisters grew Job’s tears which had been a scarcity. “Now people bring them to us by the gallons.” When she makes the Job’s tears rosaries, they are all gray. When used, the hand’s natural oils turn the beads a marbled brown.

“I pray the rosary wherever I go. I’m faithful to the rosary and I believe in it. I pray for peace; we are all sisters and brothers to one another,” she said. “The older I get, the more time I have to think. I look at things differently than when I was younger. I know the time will come when I breathe my last breath. That makes life all the more precious and the rosary so much dearer to me now.”

With the world in turmoil and violence erupting in all corners, Sister Adella is more consciously faithful than ever to the Blessed Mother’s request at Fatima to “Pray the rosary every day in honor of Our Lady of the Rosary to obtain peace in the world . . . for she alone can save it.” (*Our Lady*, July 13, 1917) Amen.



**Sister Joel Bieniek**, our third oldest Franciscan Sister at age 99, daily takes care of the sacristy and chapel where she carefully arranges flowers and maintains candles. The flowers are predominately from the convent gardens; for special occasions, she orders something appropriate. She participates in all community activities and, she said, “I try to live my life simply, in keeping with the Franciscan spirit. I am close to Christ when I work in the chapel.”

A dietitian, she served in the community-owned hospitals and homes for the elderly. In 1968, the Minnesota Department of Health requested all health care facilities have their food service staff be trained; there were no lay Registered Dietitians in the area, so she was asked to serve and train staff throughout the region. As she phased out of these responsibilities, she turned to overseeing the campus flower beds in the summer and the greenhouse plants in the winter.

“I still give dietary advice to the kitchen staff when they ask for it—and sometimes even when they don’t,” she said with a wry smile.

In the past she did a lot of traveling to national meetings for the Secular Franciscans (SFOs) as advisor and for registered dietitians and nutrition managers. She also provided transportation for her Franciscan Sisters. Now she relaxes by putting picture puzzles together and reading.

She lived through the Great Depression and learned how to cope with drought. Matter-of-factly, she said, “I never intended to live an easy life after that.”



# Parading around town in style!

In honor of the Franciscan Sisters' 125th Anniversary, Sisters Joel Bieniek, Bernarda Sanoski and Fabian Schneider led the parade as grand marshals during the Little Falls Dam Festival on June 18. The driver and owner of the yellow convertible is Wayne Hansmann.



FRANCISCAN  
**Harvest  
Supper**  
**November 12, 2016**  
**4:30–7PM - St. Francis Convent**  
116 8th Avenue SE, Little Falls, MN

Chicken, sausage, garden vegetables, coleslaw, breadsticks, homemade bars and beverages will be served.

**Adults \$10 • Children (5-12 years) \$5**  
**Children under 5 years - Free**  
Tickets available at the door or  
by calling: (320) 632-2981,  
Monday - Saturday

Proceeds benefit St. Francis Health and Recreation Center  
and St. Francis Music Center, Little Falls.

## Planned Giving

Please let us know if you would like more information on remembering the Franciscan Sisters in your will and estate planning.

Contact: Sister Bernice Ebner  
116 8th Avenue SE  
Little Falls, Minnesota 56345  
(320)632-0699 • [bebner@fslf.org](mailto:bebner@fslf.org)

**DONATE**

## Prefer to donate online?

It's easy and convenient.  
Visit [www.fslf.org](http://www.fslf.org) to learn more.  
We would appreciate your email address  
and your cell phone number. Thank you!





Sister Cordy Korkowski and a young fair-goer give thanks.

## Fair-goers give a BIG thanks!

Attendees of the 2016 Green Fair Folk Festival expressed thanks and gratitude to local law enforcement for their service and commitment to Little Falls and the surrounding area.

Sisters Tonie Rausch and Mary Pat Burger presented the "Thank You" card to Morrison County Sheriff Shawn Larsen and Little Falls Police Chief Greg Schirmers.

## Our Journey

FALL 2016 • VOL. 35 NO. 1

- Please change my address. (attach old label)
- Please add the name(s) indicated below.
- Please remove my name from *Our Journey* mailing list.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State, Zip+4 \_\_\_\_\_



Our Journey is printed using environmentally friendly soy ink. Please don't throw this issue away. Pass it on to a friend or recycle it.



## FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF LITTLE FALLS, MINNESOTA

116 8th Avenue SE  
Little Falls, MN 56345

Phone: 320-632-2981  
Fax: 320-632-1714  
E-mail: [info@fslf.org](mailto:info@fslf.org)  
Web Site: [www.fslf.org](http://www.fslf.org)

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 64  
Little Falls, MN