Sisters serving in Bogotá

Our former Congregational Ministers / Presidents

LEGACY

Saint Marys Hospital

Recent Graduates from the COERR School in Cambodia

Fall 2018

interchange

Sisters of Saint Francis

Exploring values common to you and today's Rochester Franciscans

Focus: Legacy

interchange

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Letter from the Congregational Minister *Sister Ramona Miller*

Dear Friends and Family,

Celebrating our legacy provides rich impetus for the momentum of everyday life. Ken Burns' new documentary, "The Mayo Clinic: Faith-Hope-Science," highlights a major portion of the legacy of the Sisters of Saint Francis in Rochester. That story reminds us of the giants whose shoulders we stand on, visionaries that enable us to see into the future with the strength of what they have given us. Reminded that Mother Alfred's cultural roots are in Luxembourg, we reflect on the richness of our culture having evolved from the labor and love of immigrants of the past centuries.

Saint Francis sang praise to God for Mother Earth: "All praise be yours, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth, who sustains us and governs us, and produces various fruits with colored flowers and herbs." Our Franciscan legacy impels us to respect and care for the earth. The beauty of the grounds at Assisi Heights testifies to the reverence for all God has given us, and contributes to our contemplative life. Grounded in God throughout our history, Sisters have courageously responded to social concerns with generous, authentic lives. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the legacy that we have embraced and which compels us to live its message meaningfully now and into the future. The Gospel of Matthew tells us, "Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." This is the ground of our outreach, our actions as Christians. When we comfort sorrowing parents, educate the unlearned or advocate for our planet, we are comforting, educating, and advocating for God among us.

Many of us graduated from the College of Saint Teresa, which has formed our worldview. From our meaningful formative years we have celebrated our legacy by building, with living stones, the culture where we live. The stories of the past are a foundation for remembering the values that motivated those who have gone before us. These stories influence our dreams for the future: women and children experiencing their dignity in our church and society; systemic change to bring about right relationships in the work place and all areas of society; and changes in personal and corporate behavior to safeguard the care for our Common Home.

We look forward to the ways we can become "bearers of hope" for coming generations.

Sister Ramona Miller

Sister Ramona Miller, OSF
Congregational Minister

Saint Marys Hospital Legacy: *The Sisters' Influence on the Ken Burns Documentary*

Top: Sisters Generose Gervais, Mary Brigh and Lauren Weinandt

Bottom: Sisters Tierney Trueman, Antoine Murphy and Ellen Whelan

On September 25, 2018, the new Ken Burns documentary, The Mayo Clinic: Faith – Hope – Science, aired on PBS TV stations nationwide. For the Sisters of Saint Francis of Rochester, MN, this was the first time being recognized on such a national stage.

The documentary, *The Mayo Clinic: Faith – Hope – Science,* is an invitation to spend approximately two hours learning about one of the most incredible partnerships in the world of healthcare. This film, by executive producer Ken Burns, dramatically tells the story of Saint Marys Hospital and the Mayo Clinic, identifying the "… hospital's beginnings, which revolves around a few unknown women and men who built the foundations of an extraordinary institution. The cornerstone of the foundation was their *shared commitment to serve suffering humanity.* Such commitment inspired unstinting efforts, tapped creative resources, and transcended religious differences. They forged a permanent partnership and in the process overcame formidable obstacles – not the least of which being their lack of experience with hospitals and how they operated." (*Sisters' Story*, p. 57) Sister Ellen Whelan, the author of the *Sisters' Story*, was a key member of the Advisory Board for the film project, contributing her expert research on the lives and history of the Sisters who so selflessly served at Saint Marys Hospital. In addition to her contributions, Sister Generose, Sister Lauren, Sister Antoine and Sister Tierney were personally interviewed. They provided vital historical information of the past, and they explained how the essence of that past continues to live in the present. Sister Lauren and Renee Ziemer, archivists for Saint Marys Hospital and Mayo Clinic respectively, researched a large variety of archival photos and films, and brought the rich history of the past visually alive in the present.

One of the most significant aspects of the film is the

manner in which Ken Burns and the Ewer brothers so profoundly captured the essence of this Mayo/Franciscan permanent partnership, viz., the gift of our Mayo/Franciscan values. Mayo Clinic identifies its primary value, "the needs of the patient come first," and the eight core values that support this primary value, with the clear statement "these value statements are the expression of the vison and intent of our founders, the original Mayos and the Franciscan Sisters." The profound respect for patients, families and colleagues, and the essential teamwork that was born of that respect, as W.W. Mayo described, "No one is big enough to be independent of others", created the foundation for selfless service throughout Mayo Clinic's history. Sister Mary Brigh, a former administrator of Saint Marys Hospital spoke eloquently to the importance of our value-based institution when she said, "As we go into the future, we must not lose the good things of the past." Sister Generose added: "We must not be content only to see things as they are; we must have the vision, the faith and the hope to see what things can and must become." This is stewardship "sustain and reinvest in our mission and extended communities . . ." The film beautifully captures the historic and ongoing importance of the value of innovation. Dr. Wilson's accidental, but important discovery of the frozen specimen for cancer diagnosis early in the last century is the basis that propels the viewer into the proton beam tool for cancer treatment today.

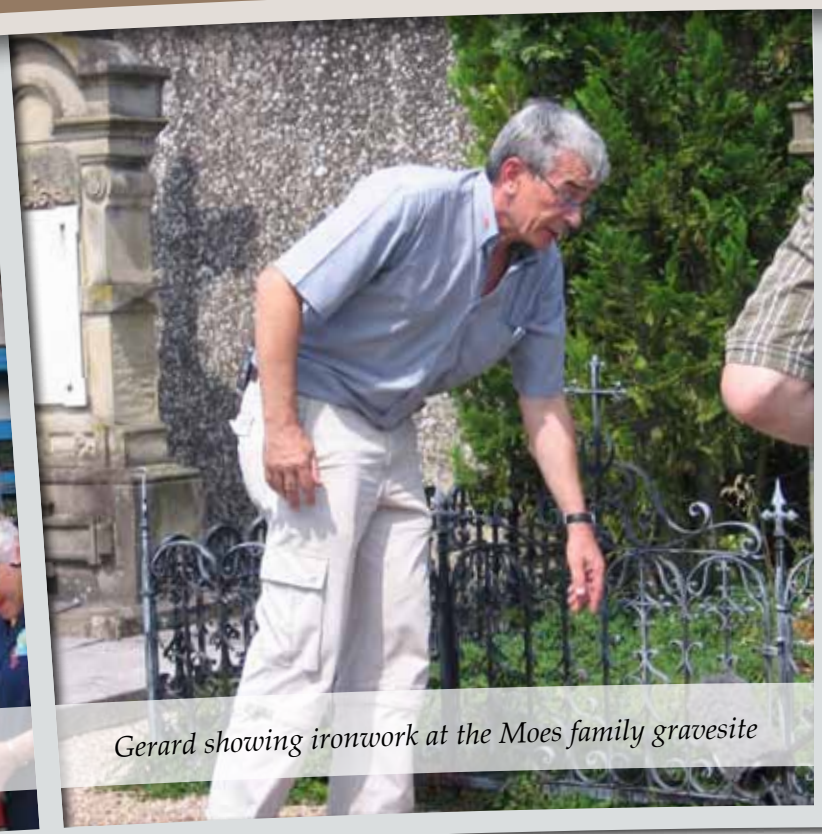
It is impossible to view the film and not capture the awareness that when persons dream together about ways to improve life for everyone on our Mother Earth, and work selflessly and generously to bring their dream to life, good will always be the outcome – for generations!

A companion book is being published that will include the film script as well as many images from the film. It will go on sale following the film release on PBS Television. Along with the main film, the Ken Burns' team is producing a series of brief, stand-alone segments that provide additional depth for key topics. One of these, "Mayo Moments," is about the Sisters.

Scenes from September 10, 2018: "An Evening with Ken Burns"

The Legacy of Mother Alfred: *the Luxembourg Connection*

Sister Jean Keniry at Gerard Moes' place of business



Gerard showing ironwork at the Moes family gravesite

Our Congregational history provides evidence that when Mother Alfred Moes wanted to give birth to an idea or vision, her deep faith and strong work ethic led the way to make it a reality. A trip to her birthplace in Remich, Luxembourg, and a visit with one of her relatives confirmed these traits are also those of the Moes family through generations.

In 2009, Sister Jean Keniry and I were invited to join the writers and film crew working on the Mayo Clinic Heritage Days film "Healing Hands: The Sisters of Saint Francis and Mayo Clinic" based on *The Sisters Story*, written by Sister Ellen Whelan. Her book gives the historical perspective for the founding of Saint Marys Hospital in Rochester, Minnesota, by Mother Alfred Moes, as well as the hard work of the Sisters over decades of growth, and the many contributions to the healthcare and nursing fields.

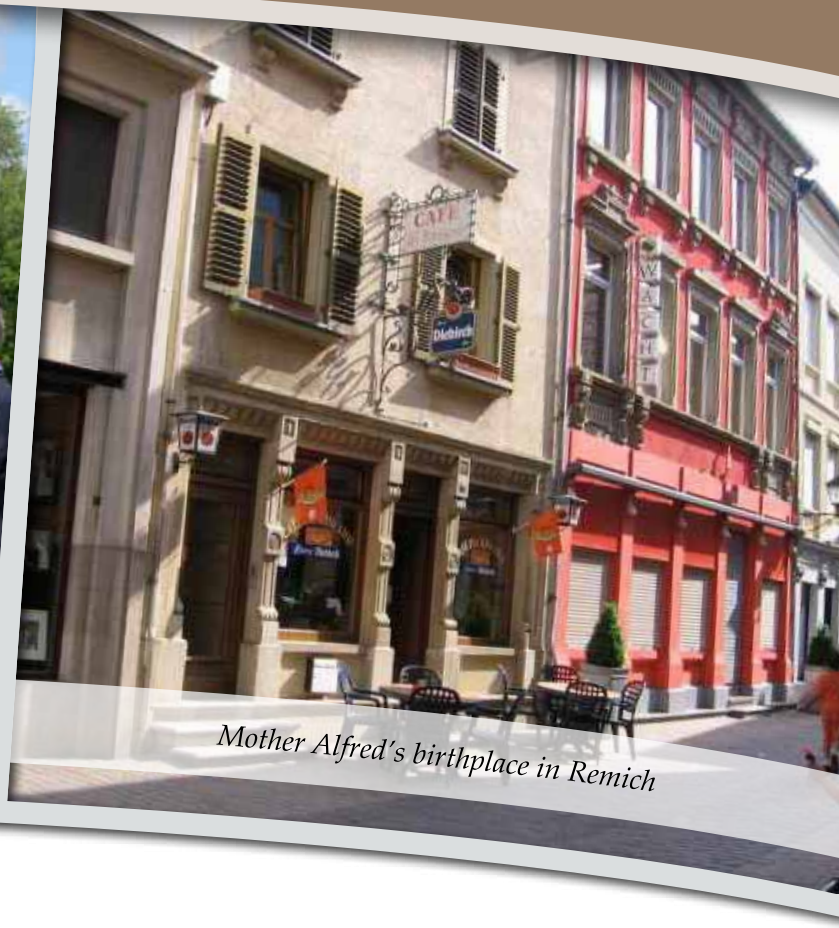
Prior to the trip to Remich, an interview had been scheduled with Gerard Moes, a relative of Mother Alfred. When we arrived at Gerard's business, *Werk Markt, Moes Fieres* (similar to a Home Depot or Lowes), his work ethic was evident. He explained at the outset that he knew there were two relatives, Maria (later Mother Alfred) and her sister Catherine (later Sister Barbara), who had gone to America, but he did not know much about them. As he relaxed and began talking about the Moes' family values, it was obvious he was related to them! A deep faith and strong work ethic were still part of the Moes family members!

During the remainder of our short time in Remich, he and his wife Margit proudly showed us their church and the baptismal font where many family members had been baptized, possibly even Mother Alfred, the home where she grew up, above their business working with wrought iron, as well as the wrought iron around their family graves. By the end of that visit, Gerard and Margit were eager to learn more about Mother Alfred and to visit Rochester – which became a reality in May, 2017.

Their time in Rochester began with a tour of Saint Marys Hospital by Sisters Jean Keniry and Tierney Trueman and a visit with all of the Sisters who

by Sister Marlene Pinzka

Gerard and Margit Moes with Sister Marilyn Geiger at Mother Alfred's gravesite



Mother Alfred's birthplace in Remich

live and work at Saint Marys. Gerard and Margit expressed awe at the reality of the dream Mother Alfred had to build a hospital, the enormity of the result, and her connection with Dr. William Worrall Mayo.

They had heard of the Mayo Clinic, but had no idea one of their relatives was an instrumental part in its existence. "You feel there is a common aim, a common vision here," Gerard remarked.

The following day began with a visit to Assisi Heights, home of the Sisters of Saint Francis. As we approached the property, Gerard immediately noted the wrought iron at the driveway entrance and in the lobby, a visible witness to the heritage he shares with Mother Alfred. He was eager to unroll the genealogy charts he had been working on since our visit to Remich, showing he was a fourth generation nephew of Mother Alfred. During a tour given by Sister Alice, he and Margit especially enjoyed the artifact from Remich along our Heritage Hall. They then attended Mass, during which they were given a blessing by the Community, and enjoyed lunch with our Sisters of Luxembourg descent.

That afternoon included a visit to Calvary Cemetery where over 800 of our Sisters are buried. Joined by Sister Marilyn Geiger, then Community Minister of the Sisters of Saint Francis, and others, Gerard and Margit brought flowers to place on Mother Alfred's grave and expressed that the time there was one of the most important of their visit.

Their short visit to Rochester concluded that evening with a formal dinner including Franciscan Sisters and Mayo Clinic representatives. Gerard was very reflective as he expressed gratitude for the time he and Margit spent here and all that they learned about the life and contributions of "one of their own." Her life and legacy has touched countless patients as well as the lives of students educated by the Franciscan Sisters who followed her. Gerard shared his plans to return to Remich, spread the word on what "one of their own" had accomplished, and find a public way to honor her life and contributions.

My Cojourning Experience: *What the Legacy of the Sisters of Saint Francis Means to Me*

Rosemary Grebin Palms used the cover of "Interchange" as her sign during a climate change march at Times Square in New York!

Some synonyms for the word "legacy" are: bequest, inheritance, endowment, gift. Gift. I would like to consider these gifts from the Rochester Franciscan Sisters: my education, the path of Cojourning, and continuity in the spirituality of Saint Francis.

THE GIFT OF EDUCATION

I was still growing up, but I didn't know that yet. I was a young seventeen, a first-year student at the College of Saint Teresa that autumn of 1957, and I was smitten with the Sisters there. Sister Cortona (later known as Sister Margaret Pirkl) taught me math; Sister Francis Ann taught me history; Sister Bernetta presided over my residence hall. In a few months I applied to be one of them. Soon, I was a happy postulant and then a happy novice, learning the Franciscan ropes from my "postulant mistress," Sister Michaea, and my "novice mistress," Sister Lucretia. Yes, we called our directors "mistresses" then.

Among the most important gifts I received from the Sisters happened during those first years. I imbibed the joy of Assisi Heights, where women who shared a commitment and a desire to serve God grew to love one another. We shared values. We learned to live our vows as they were commonly understood in those pre-Vatican II years. To live a life of poverty meant to me that I renounced all choice regarding my material needs; I was dependent on my religious superiors to decide for me. Chastity meant to me that I was dedicated exclusively to Christ. Obedience meant that I was to cheerfully take on whatever tasks or career that my superiors determined for me.

Because very good women were my superiors and my teachers, and because 33 wonderful young women became my Sister classmates and dear friends, those early years were deeply joyful for me.

Then, in the 1960s, Vatican II offered new perspectives. I welcomed the fresh air that Pope

John XXIII's Ecumenical Council introduced into the theology and practices of the Catholic Church.

The Sisters had gifted me and trusted me with an excellent education. They helped me to truly grow up – asking questions, thinking through issues of faith, taking on leadership roles with new confidence.

Eventually this personal growth led me to think of my vows in a new light. A life of Franciscan poverty can impart joy in a life of simplicity, a freedom from having to "keep up with the Joneses," a delight and satisfaction in walking gently upon our beautiful planet. A life of chastity offers contentment in faithfulness, being there dependably for one's family and one's friends. A life of obedience challenges one to be generous, to be magnanimous, to be selfless – as Jesus put it, doing unto others, especially those more needy human sisters and brothers, as you would have others do unto you.

My personal growth into adulthood, my education, started with my loving and devout Catholic parents. Then it was nourished by the values of the Sisters of Saint Francis. When this education brought me to the realization that it was time to leave the religious life, I knew, ironically enough, I had the Sisters to thank for that, as they helped me to better understand myself.

THE GIFT OF A REWARDING "LAY" FRANCISCAN LIFE

I left the vowed life, but I did not leave behind the values, the love, and the joy I had learned from the Sisters. I wanted to show the Sisters my appreciation and my love by remaining a "lay" associate – without the formal vows. I wanted to walk alongside, to support, to continue learning from and sharing with this amazing group of women. I was among those who asked the Sisters to invent such a structure for people like me.

In 1984, such a structure was born. Cojourning welcomes women and men who share and aspire to Franciscan values are invited to consider joining the Rochester Franciscan Community as Cojourners, as non-canonical members. This group has grown to over one hundred of us who love the Franciscan Sisters and who wish to share informally in their Franciscan life in whatever ways are comfortable for us. As individuals, we consider what we desire from this relationship and what we can contribute to this relationship.

Cojourning is an extraordinary gift from the Sisters. We Cojourners are offered many ways to develop meaningful friendships with the Sisters and with one another. At the same time, we are invited to find our own ways to live those informal vows [our covenant] in our daily lives. As a Cojourner, I find motivation to be an activist pursuing social justice in my own ways. In the photo accompanying this article, you can see me at a climate change march in New York City, my home. The Franciscan sign I carried was the cover of a prior issue of Interchange!

THE GIFT OF THE CONTINUITY OF FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY

New forms of dedicated religious lifestyles are in the process of being born. What shapes will Franciscan life take in the years ahead?

The Rochester Franciscan Sisters have shone a bright light for us in so many ways since they arrived in Minnesota over 140 years ago. The Cojourners are a part of the Sisters' spiritual legacy. As a group, we Cojourners are becoming educated in the ways of Saints Francis and Clare and the specific charism (= gift!) of the Sisters' foundress, Mother Alfred Moes. What will the Cojourners' role be in carrying the gifts and developing the gifts and passing along the gifts?

I believe that, with the guidance of the Spirit, there will be the gift of continuity -- partly through the Cojourners. The Cojourners have received this legacy, for we have been offered a new and different way of living as Franciscans. And the Cojourners will in turn offer this legacy to those who follow us. No doubt, the Spirit will guide us in more new ways of living as Franciscans.

The legacy continues.

Leaving a Living Legacy: *Rochester Franciscan Sisters Care for the Earth*

"The practice of conservation must spring from a conviction of what is ethically and esthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient. A thing is right only when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the community and the community includes the soil, waters, fauna, and flora as well as the people."

- Aldo Leopold

The Sisters at Assisi Heights have long honored and celebrated humanity's longing for peaceful and balanced living in harmony with the natural world. It originates from our Franciscan Heritage. We trust that these grounds occupied by Assisi Heights can help people to discover their connection with the Earth and encourage their commitment to stewardship and peace. We have made every effort to embody a commitment to ecological awareness, and community- building through education.

Assisi Heights is located on the rim of one of Rochester's edges and, when purchased in 1949, it was just inside the city limits. The original 138.5 acres consisted of an old plateau covered with windblown silt and some glacial till, with a forested portion identified as part of Southern Minnesota's Oak Savannah. The undisturbed forest is veined with oak and hickory trees dominating the adjacent slopes of Trenton Limestone. It may not have waterfalls, but Assisi Heights is blessed with natural beauty from every angle.

Our earliest recordings of care for this property began in 1958. It was the pursuit of Sister Margaret Kiefer, whose Master of Arts thesis outlined the history and ecology of 350 of the 400 species of trees and shrubs planted on the property. The original landscape design embodied three principles: simplicity, balance, and diversity for this zone. Sister Marg's objectives included: 1) Develop a teaching device; 2) Understand the background and benefits of the

various varieties of trees and shrubs; and 3) Appreciate the value and care for these natural resources.

Early images of this landscape appear a bit naked compared to now. A couple of decades later, a visual treat sported matured foliage of various colors in every season. You still could not climb on a three-year-old sapling or hang a swing from its top bough; but, nevertheless, the list of shortcomings ended there.

In the early years, the land was maintained and cared for by the grounds crew. In some of the ensuing years, care of the earth suffered. New herbicides and pesticides became available on the market as quick fixes and easy solutions. But it left a scar on the earth. That has changed! Data showed harmful health effects to the earth, animal and insects and to the human applicator. Alerted to the health issues, one of Rochester Franciscan Area Forums sought to reduce the usage of chemicals, decrease mowing and convert the land into restored prairie flowers. Fast forward to 1997. An outdoor environmental taskforce formed to develop our Franciscan Philosophy of Land, establish a Vision Statement, create the Mission of the taskforce, and set Goals and Objectives, as follows:

Philosophy of Land

Assisi Heights is a place where the natural world
can teach peace, justice and harmony
with the aid of educators, artisans and others.

The Vision

Invites people "to step gently on the earth,"
leaving behind a legacy of beautiful safe, fruitful, nurturing land
as a gift to future generations.

continued...

Leaving a Living Legacy...

Sister Alice tending beehives

aerial view of our labyrinth

our solar farm

The Mission:

Assisi Heights' mission is to provide
A garden oasis of peace and tranquility
A sacred place that speaks to the
Sacred space at the core of the human heart.

Goals and Objectives:

The earth belongs to God and, as co-creators with God,
we desire to learn to live interdependently with all that is, by:
1) Preserving, sustaining and renewing the land with healthy practices;
2) Educating ourselves and others about restoration, conservation and consumption practices; and
3) Fostering ethical principles of healing for humans and nature.

The first concerted efforts began with the assistance of Minnesota's Department of Natural Resources to develop a Woodland Stewardship Plan and a Ten-year Land Assessment Plan, supported with recommendations from Sister Paula Gonzales, SC, founder of EarthConnection.

The first step was to reduce mowing by planting a floral prairie adjacent to the driveway at the entrance. Subsequently, a second grass prairie was tucked into the descending ravine, and lastly, we added a goat prairie--this one in collaboration with the Rochester Off-Campus School, now known as Rosa Parks School.

Since 1998, our objective actions began and continues by composting, and adopting an integrated system to reduce or eliminate pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers. We planted trees, reseeded the inner courtyard, and performed bird banding. We chose to eliminate non-regional plant species, such as buckthorn and thistles, which thwart the growth of native species. We created animal escapes with the refuse and scattered bluebird houses on the hillside. We established our own apiary for pollination purposes and education. We harvested lumber, created glider rockers and other wooden furniture items including a cremains box for Sisters' funerals. We tested the wind power possibility, researched geo-thermal heating systems, installed 600 solar panels, and created a retention pond.

Wildlife is plentiful at Assisi Heights:

newborn fawn

proud turkey

mother swallow feeding her offspring

We established partnerships with Leadership Greater Rochester, in 2001, to create an ancient, paved stone labyrinth. We were grateful for three grants from Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for educational programs, expanding to area and regional schools, District #535 and Community Education. We have collaborated with Sentence to Serve, IBM, University of Minnesota, Quarry Hill Nature Center, Southeastern MN Beekeepers, Indian Heights, Conservation Corps, and the Soil Conservation Cooperative of Olmsted County.

We continue most of these same practices today. We keep the garden organic and prolific; protect the swallows and baby ducks; and the plant life which offers a festival of colors. We provide a home for deer and turkey (some of which we harvest!), extract honey, and count the Chimney Swifts. We share our walking paths with other two- and four-footers and find that it is here we meet the rest of creation. During this autumn season, all of nature exhibits glorious color. We are using the updated Woodland Stewardship Plan, planting new trees, managing invasive and hazardous insect and plant species, and are considering the creation of a conservation easement. Solar panels continue to conserve and store energy for future use. Several Rochester Franciscan groups have studied Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si*, and a public presentation, open to the public, is scheduled in the next few months. We keep up our personal, civic and legislative efforts to minimize the impact of climate change. These represent just some of our efforts to leave a living legacy by caring for the Earth.

As John Muir said, "Every hidden cell is throbbing with music and life, every fiber thrilling like harp strings. No wonder the hills and groves were God's first temple." That is why we put effort into caring for our Mother Earth!

Justice and Peace Efforts: *Making a Difference Now and into the Future*

Our Franciscans International Earth Cluster Group

When Honduran parents are separated from their children at the Texas border, Sister Mary Kay Mahowald is there to share their grief. When the Paris Climate Agreement was being reached in France, Sister Joan Brown was there to be our voice for the protection of our planet. When the children of the barrios (slums) of 1980's Bogota needed education, Sister Patricia Leon called them to come down the mountain to be taught. When the barrio children of today need counseling as well as education, Sister Carolina Pardo is there with her open heart. When Rochester needed to be awakened to the human trafficking in our midst, Sister Anne Walch led a team of Sisters, who brought their educational skills to focus on an awareness campaign. When the UN's Fourth International Women's Conference in Beijing urged the use of the internet to network for social change, Midwest religious communities and Sister Betty Kenny took up the challenge to maintain a website devoted to justice issues. When a Rochester immigrant family needs a home, Sister Ruth Snyder is there to agonize with them over the lack of affordable housing, while advocating for them in every way she knows how. When legislation for clean water is proposed at the state or national level, Sister Joy Barth and the Franciscans International – Earth Cluster Group in Rochester mobilize efforts to urge our lawmakers to endorse it.

The Gospel of Matthew tells us, "Whatever you did for one of these least sisters and brothers of mine, you did for me." This is the basis of our outreach, our actions, as Christians. When we comfort sorrowing parents,

Human Trafficking Awareness Planning Committee collects items for victims of sex trafficking

Rochester Franciscan Sisters and Cojourners attend an Immigration Rally

educate the unlearned or advocate for our planet, we are comforting, educating and advocating for God among us.

This is not some pietistic reduction of the other which says they are worthy only because we have been taught to "see Christ" in them. Rather, it is the radical recognition that God truly lives in and among us. This recognition is possible because it is God within each of us who moves our hearts, opens our eyes and impels us to act. The suffering of our brothers and sisters, and of our planet, is impressed into God's own heart. It is God's heart, moving in us, which reaches out in compassion.

Promoting Inter-religious dialogue

Oftentimes we do not see this heart of God behind the actions of those who work for Justice and Peace. Their words and actions are often bold, perhaps challenging our apparent half-heartedness. Their drive and commitment are visible; the heart of God impelling them to act may be less so. Yet, this is how God lives among us today: not as the historical person of Jesus, but in the suffering of the poor, and the work of those who seek to alleviate their suffering.

Those steeped in God also remind us that it is not only the ones whom we are comforting who bear God within them. We need to consider also that the presence of God is also open to those who cause the suffering: the government authorities and the border guards who carry out their policies; those who groom, control and transport the trafficked sex-workers; the oblivious and malicious polluters of our water, air and earth; the physical and sexual abusers.

God is All In All. God's heart moves within all. Some are more able to hear and be moved, but God is in all and all is in God. This is our hope and our strength; when our efforts to right wrongs seem so puny, we remember: All that IS belongs to and lives within God.

Bogotá Mission: *A Legacy of Love*

"The gift you have received, give as a gift."
- Matthew 10: 8

What a wonder it is to look back over some 60 years of history and realize that you are now tasting the fruits of the efforts of a great variety of Rochester Franciscan Sisters and many colleagues over the years, each of whom has made a significant contribution to the reality we see today! It began with the Vatican II challenge of Pope John XXIII to all religious communities of the northern hemisphere to send both human and material resources to the South and to take part in the process of developing countries. This prompted Mother Callista and her Council to take the risk of sending an initial group of Sisters to pave the way for a foreign mission in Bogotá, Colombia.

At that point in our Congregational history, our focus was on two important areas: that of education and health care. These were the areas to which the pioneers of this movement gave their attention. In short order, following their arrival in Bogotá in September 1962, Sister Mary Beth Modde and the accompanying Sisters found themselves collaborating with the Archdiocese of Bogotá in opening a school for girls, and soon after, others were contributing their considerable expertise in such roles as the Director of Nursing at San Ignacio Hospital (Sister Maeve Cashman) and as the first Dean of the Faculty of Nursing at the Jesuit Javariana University (Sister Lea *(Jean)* Schulte).

From the beginning, it was evident that the Sisters were clearly marked by their own experiences with a desire to respond to the needs of the marginalized, involving their charges in service to the poorer sectors of this sprawling city. This was steeped in such values as a sense of justice, peacemaking, exhibiting a quality of excellence in whatever was undertaken, care for our Mother Earth and, of course, our Franciscan spirituality. This led to pastoral ministry in parishes and work with childcare centers in some of the poorest neighborhoods, the barrios.

Although some of these ministries have come and gone in the course of decades, the presence and influence of the Rochester Franciscan Community is still keenly felt. It is clearly seen and experienced through the following elements:

The Colegio Santa Francisca Romana, a school for 800 girls from Pre-Kinder through Seniors in high school, which is recognized as the No. 1 School for girls in the country! Sisters Clara Inés Ordóñez and Carolina Pardo, as well as our former Sister Patricia Leon, are all graduates of the school. Now in its 56th year, "Santa Pacha," as the school is popularly known, is outstanding on many fronts: from its grounding in the development of a leadership of service in each student, to its academic excellence; from developing technological skills of the students, to their creative expression in music, dance, art and theatre; from the range of involvement in sports and physical achievements, to careful development of personalized Life Plans (inner and outer) for their future.

The Colegio Anexo San Francisco de Asís, also known as CASFA, is a co-ed school for 350 children and youth (3-year-olds thru 12th grade) began back in 1985 as a "service project" for Santa Francisca Romana´s older students. This was in response to a huge need in that sector of the city to offer education to the hundreds of students from the nearby invasion barrios who had absolutely no access to formal education. CASFA has grown from its rudimentary beginnings with Kindergarteners, 1st and 2nd graders, to a full-fledged school in its own right. From its beginnings, the focus was on preparing the students for a work life, thus developing their appropriate skills in such areas as accounting, business management, trades, etc. But they also accentuated the importance of a strong work ethic, taking with responsibility for their own lives and those of their families. Over the last three decades, the focus has been on developing a sense of autonomy in these individuals, with a strong emphasis on their Franciscan identity and spirituality. In recent years, they have excelled in university prep work, and now, many not only graduate from high school (a far-away goal in the school´s beginnings!) but most go on to some form of higher education and obtain excellent positions in the work force. They, too, see themselves as leaders within their neighborhood communities and beyond, and strive to leave their mark as good persons who will have a genuine influence on their society.

The Dispensario Santa Francisca Romana was initiated by Santa Pacha graduates who had specialized in medicine, along with a group of volunteer mothers, and supported by the former Principal of the Colegio, Sister Tierney Trueman. It is a primary clinic founded over 27 years ago to serve the basic healthcare needs of families from the poorest sectors of the population. Services include

continued...

both medical and dental appointments, evaluations by collaborating medical specialists, respiratory therapy, eye and ear exams, and personal legal assistance. The current highlight of the program is the dedication of Wednesday mornings to service the elderly members of these families. They come for sessions on health monitoring (blood pressure, medication adjustments, physical and dental exams, etc.), nutrition, spiritual and recreational activities, as well as the frequent distribution of personal hygiene articles and other simple gifts. Two doctors, two dentists, a nurse, along with other healthcare professionals, are on hand to offer their services. In addition, over 40 volunteers staff the clinic to keep the program running with care and efficiency. Pacha students are frequently on hand to offer their own brand of life to the program.

These 56 years of presence and ministry in Bogotá by over 50 members of our Rochester Franciscan Community have indeed left a legacy in the lives of thousands of students, parents, fellow staff, patients, clients and collaborators with whom we have shared life and service.

There are currently three Rochester Franciscans engaged in active ministry in Bogotá:

- Sister Clara Inés Ordónez is a speech and language pathologist, in private practice, who offers therapy to hearing-impaired children and adults; and to children with learning disabilities. She also serves on the Board of the Dispensary.

- Sister Carolina Pardo is a psychologist and alternative medicine specialist. She serves on the CASFA staff in the Psychology Department, leads the school´s Pastoral Team, performs Guidance Counseling and Admissions evaluations and serves the students and their families with therapeutic sessions. She also has a private practice for her counseling and alternative medicine services.

- Sister Valerie Usher serves as the Coordinator of the Franciscan Mission, involved in the administration and networking of the three ministries (two schools and a Clinic). She also is the Co-Chair of the Pastoral Team of the Colegio Santa Francisca Romana.

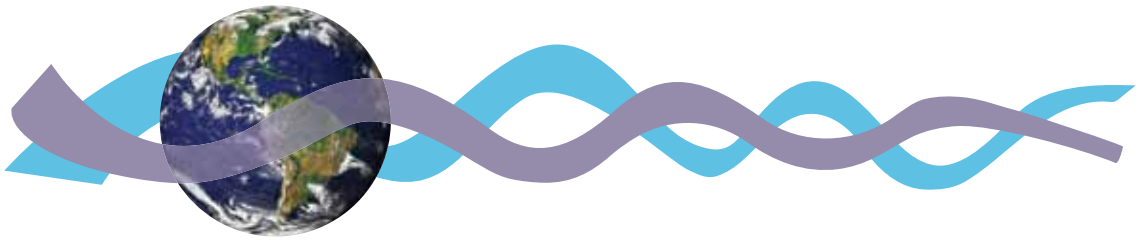
Sisters Valerie Usher, Clara Inés Ordóñez and Carolina Pardo

What does the Bogotá legacy look like?

It is heralded by such qualities and attitudes as:

- An openness to receive the "other" as my brother or sister with whom I want to relate;
- An appreciation for the beauty and sacredness of the created world and my responsibility to care for it;
- A genuine desire to continue to grow and develop as a person relationally, intellectually and spiritually;
- A sense of responsibility for the disenfranchised and those in need around me;
- A passion for "making a difference" in the world through the sharing of my personal gifts, talents and convictions; and
- A commitment to nurture the "inner light" within me so that others might experience true light, warmth and a sense of direction.

THIS is to give away again the gift that we have received! May the world be a better place because of it!



Bearers of Hope:

Engaging Compassionately in the Heart of the World

Chapter Directional Statement 2018

We, the Sisters of Saint Francis of Rochester, MN, recognizing the challenges of this historic moment ask, "How can we be silent?" Nurtured by the Gospel and Franciscan spirituality, we desire to offer hope to the world. We deepen our interconnectedness with each other, with Cojourners, and with all others through shared faith traditions, prayer, community and service. From these relationships, we respond to injustices with our voice, as we:

- Commit ourselves to actions that enhance the dignity of all persons, especially women and children in our church and society;
- Advocate for systemic and structural change to bring about right relationships;
- Care for Our Common Home with a focus on climate justice.

Therefore, we Sisters of Saint Francis, Bearers of Hope, engage compassionately in the heart of the world.

-Approved at the General Chapter of Affairs 2018 on January 20, 2018

Sisters of Saint Francis
Rochester, MN

Bearers of Hope

by Sister Mary Eliot Crowley

Sisters Elaine Frank, Marilyn Geiger and Christine Stanoch (the three seated in the center of the table, left to right) attend a banquet at Lourdes High School.

The living legacy of the Sisters of Saint Francis is contained in the persons whom you see each day. What do you know of us? Whose path have you crossed that has somehow influenced you in the classroom, halls of the hospital, at a neighborhood meeting, or a church dinner? I could go on. Some people tell me that "you Sisters are everywhere"! In many respects that is true, for you are seeing through our eyes – you have been touched by our spirit.

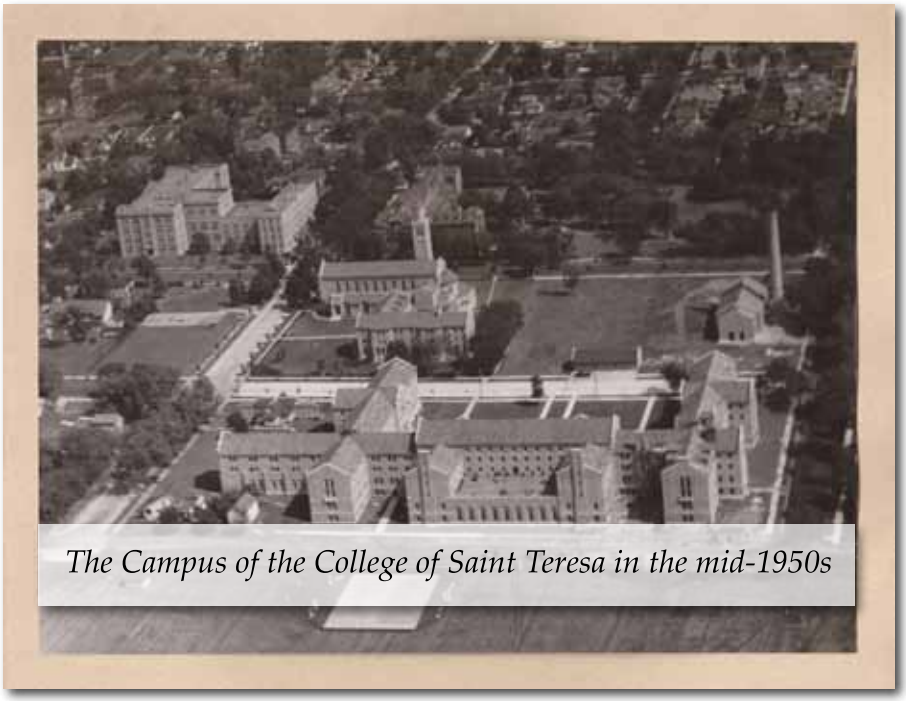
We gather as a community of 180 women who stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us. Each had dreams and visions for a future that is now taking effect. We dream about what tomorrow will bring, recognizing that our future will be very different. We no longer own and operate institutions of influence, and we do not find ourselves in traditional classrooms. We are working to change our carbon footprint, and to make different decisions related to the use of the land that surrounds us through conservation measures to preserve green space. It is a wonderful trust that we have been given and one that we embrace. The imprint of generations is on this hilltop and we believe, as good stewards of its gifts, we must leave a legacy for those who follow in our footsteps. And all of this impacts the universe.

A phrase that beats deep within us, and is a rich part of our legacy, is our call to 'live from our common heart.' Although our spheres of influence may have changed, and our impact seems to be more subtle than in the past, in some ways it is even more profound. We seek to raise awareness of abuses of our present day. We speak out against racism, and power over others. We stress respect for strangers as well as neighbors. We protest injustice here and at the borders of our country, and at the state houses where we are located. We are part of networks speaking out against sexual violence and injustices in our churches and cities.

Our legacy will continue to lead us. You may ask, as many do, *"What will happen after you are gone?"* Well, we are not gone yet! Judging by our average age and our longevity, it is going to be a while before we are gone! Our mission will continue, as it has been, to be community, lead from community, to "lean into our call to nurture and foster community wherever we find it, wherever we are, with whatever means we have, whether it is prayer, solidarity, presence or our blessing." We are invited to be "Bearers of Hope" wherever we are with and among the larger communities of our environment.

The Legacy and Relationship of the College of Saint Teresa

Continues with the Sisters of Saint Francis



The Campus of the College of Saint Teresa in the mid-1950s

In contemplating the best approach to take when writing about the legacy and relationship of the College of Saint Teresa (CST) and the Sisters of Saint Francis, several potentially rewarding choices came to mind. First, the word legacy signifies a **shared history**, the memory of times gone by that offer a rich repository of material worthy of several volumes. A second choice would be to focus on the enormous gifts and contributions of our nearly 8,000 alumnae – but whom does one feature from among all whose lives have been the source of inspiration and the realization of the purpose of the College? I can barely contain myself not to mention a few dozen of my favorites, but so could each of those of you with ties to the College. Another possibility would be to focus on the countless individuals who have contributed immensely to the mission of the College through their service as **lay faculty, administrators, staff, and benefactors,** among others. Finally, the other essential part of the legacy are the **Sisters of Saint Francis** themselves. All those mentioned represent necessary connecting points that led to the ultimate fulfilment of the mission of the College of Saint Teresa.

Short of choosing favorites, the dilemma remaining is how to faithfully recollect and accurately describe the legacy we share. In envisioning the relationship, we can look to the providential beginning in 1894 of the Winona Seminary for Young Ladies, an institution that was to become the College of Saint Teresa, and remains a remarkable slice of Rochester Franciscan history. In light of the auspicious beginning, we might think of legacy as "something handed down and carried on, often a gift of lasting value." It signifies a mutuality that requires and embraces giving and receiving by all participants. It has an historical dimension kept alive by memories, and, more importantly, by individuals and groups who continue to make visible the fruits of lives well lived.

How might one identify and describe the character of those involved in this extraordinary venture? Let us focus here on the alumnae of the College of Saint Teresa and the Sisters of Saint Francis. As a social scientist, I would like nothing better than to distribute a survey to gain an understanding of the collective views of our graduates and the Sisters to determine their thoughts about the intent, the purpose, and the original mission of the College. Short of being able to accomplish that task, I will offer a description of what I believe are the attitudes and values that characterize our spiritual, academic, and human heritage: resources to develop an inner life; foundations for expanding intellectual horizons; and insight to recognize and appreciate the circumstances of the other. Recognizing that each generation might differ in what they most treasure, I hope that these aspects of the legacy are among those of lasting value given for nearly a century by and to those associated with Saint Teresa's.

Moving now from the abstract to the particular, we can recall abundant resources available to us as we sought to develop **an inner life.** Plenty of time for reflection was built into our collegiate days (at least

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Sister Margaret Pirkl in the CST Science lab

Sister Leontius Schulte TV Teaching (1962-1963)

Sister Yolande Schulte in the Business Office

Sister Bernetta Quinn teaching at CST in the late 1960s

for most of us who predated the unlimited technology that can now serve as a constant distraction!) This time for reflection helped us understand our strengths and weaknesses, our values and goals. In a subtle way, we framed our spiritual and secular lives with careful thought about who and what we wanted to become. Appreciating and growing in the Catholic faith was certainly a focal point of spirituality, but, in retrospect, as we contemplated our beliefs and behaviors, we also were to examine and explore them, not just reflexively accept them. Over time, the environment and companionship involving fruitful discussions assisted us in reframing our experiences, guiding us toward enriched lives. Exposure to music, art, and theatre provided creative space to enhance our inner life. An essential part of our legacy then, both given and received, was an introduction to these traditions that served us well in personal, social, and professional roles.

While engagement in **academic endeavors** was much more than a classroom experience, it indeed involved extensive and profitable time with outstanding faculty, both Sisters and lay teachers. The foundations for expanding our intellectual horizons included looking outward in every direction, discovering a world of diverse viewpoints held by the billions of people who populated the planet. Through classes and an array of impressive visiting experts, the College introduced us to an amazing array of ideas. A lecture in the early 1960s by John Howard Griffin, author of *Black Like Me*, was a prime example of having our eyes and minds and hearts opened. This white journalist, disguised in black, recounted his journey in the Deep South at a time when African-Americans lived under racial segregation. As we listened to his accounts of discrimination, he expanded our vision tremendously. Such regular "convocations" added to our confidence, knowing that we could communicate more broadly,

engage more easily, and build networks more readily. More self-assured and certain of our strengths and abilities to participate in a complex life, we were encouraged to meet the expectations of faith and family, career, and community.

The third aspect of our legacy is a bit more difficult to define, though connected to development of both our inner life and our varied educational opportunities. The goal was to be able to **recognize and appreciate the circumstances of others.** It meant supporting and promoting principles and policies that were just and compassionate, with sensitivity to the plight of all people. I am not certain that we used the term "social justice" in the early years, but theology and philosophy courses, especially, led us to clarify our core values that would strengthen our integrity and lead to right decisions. The same theme pervaded the entire curriculum, and though I had not intended to mention individuals, the faculty member who most exemplified that spirit was Sister Yolande Schulte, Professor of Economics. Her foresight about problems in American society was remarkable. In the early 1960s, she was among the first to support the marches for racial justice in the South. She conveyed clearly her belief in the rights and dignity of all people, which permeated her teaching and affected the thinking of all who had contact with her. Her examples of courage and her understanding of the value of every life stand as concrete and powerful treasures of our inheritance.

Sister Yolande Schulte with her traveling workshop

As I end this reflection on some elements of the legacy that shape the relationship between the College of Saint Teresa and the Sisters of Saint Francis, I would appreciate nothing more than knowing the views of the reader. Do you identify with any of these aspects of our legacy – development of an inner life; foundations for expansive intellectual horizons; and recognition and appreciation of the circumstances of others? What else about the relationship is influential in your life?

Changing circumstances affect what we value over time, but thanks to Colleen Kocer Peplinski, class of 1981, and the Alumnae Association's Executive Director, our interaction continues. The ongoing legacy of the College of Saint Teresa is clearly in the hearts and hands of the nearly 8,000 graduates and 25,000 other students who registered in a variety of shorter programs over the years. They and their progeny carry a special DNA, a particular way of being that imparts to the world faith, integrity, and justice – so desperately needed in our day. As Sisters, we count on the generations that followed us at Saint Teresa's. Their fidelity to our 'alma mater' is impressive as each year's homecoming celebration brings the joy of meeting and remembering the richness of the time we spent together.

I count myself fortunate to have shared part of my life as student beginning in 1959, and later as a teacher, with the women who attended the College. At least once a week I meet someone who reminds me of the relationship – most recently at the Minnesota State Fair where Marty Rossini, class of 1973, delights visitors at the fair by serving over a million of "Martha's Cookies" each day! My hope and prayer for all who have a relationship with the College of Saint Teresa and the Sisters of Saint Francis is that the time-honored benefits we received remain a blessing in our lives.

Sister Katarina Schuth, OSF, Ph.D. is the Endowed Chair for the Social Scientific Study of Religion, Emerita, St. Paul Seminary School of Divinity University of St. Thomas.

In Memoriam

Sister Clarus Strouth (September 26, 1919—August 26, 2018)

Sister Clarus was born Laura Barbara Strouth at her family's farm near Faribault, Minnesota. After graduation from high school, two Franciscan Sisters from the College of Saint Teresa in Winona, Minnesota, offered her a scholarship to college and a part-time job. This happened during the time of the Great Depression, so to receive a scholarship was truly a gift. After graduation from college she worked for four months before joining the Congregation. She started her ministry teaching high school in Ohio. After receiving a PhD in chemistry, she returned to the College of Saint Teresa as a professor of chemistry. In 1973, she took a sabbatical and decided that she wanted to become a nurse. She received her license to serve as an LPN and worked at Saint Marys Hospital in Rochester, followed by Saint Anne Hospice in Winona. Later she worked at Assisi Heights in the administrative offices, followed by providing child care for 15 years. Among her gifts was teaching others to be excited about learning.

Sister Germaine Hullerman (July 31, 1932—September 12, 2018)

Sister Germaine was born in Heron Lake, Minnesota. She graduated from the College of Saint Teresa with a bachelor's degree in nursing. For 38 years, the majority of her career, she worked at Saint Marys Hospital. She was highly skilled, and was assigned to work in many different areas of the hospital. She knew the beauty and toil of each assignment. She always found a way to surmount challenges, even if it took faith, trust, and sheer persistence. No matter what Germaine did, she gave everything she had, including climbing to the top of the Grand Canyon. In retirement, she worked as Sacristan of Saint Marys Chapel, and volunteered in other areas. It was said that she presented the graciousness of the face of God to all she met.

Sister Kathleen Lonergan (July 24, 1931—August 28, 2018)

Sister Kathleen spent her early years on a farm near Ellendale, Minnesota, later moving to Rochester and graduating from Lourdes High School. She joined the Rochester Franciscan Community in 1950, and attended the College of Saint Teresa. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in nursing and served at Saint Marys Hospital for the majority of her career. In 1975, she assisted in the Christian Community Center, followed by years of in-home child care; naturally influenced by her years serving in pediatric nursing. Sister Kathleen always held a deep belief in God's love for her, her love for God, and the eternal life awaiting her, proclaiming, "God is always with me."

Sister Mariella Hinkly (May 26, 1923—June 7, 2018)

Sister Mariella was born Mary Jane in Luverne, Minnesota, and entered the Sisters of Saint Francis in 1941. She began her ministry of teaching in 1944, and continued in teaching for over 50 years, serving in educational and administrative roles. Her greatest achievement was in the field of specialized reading, stating "I used my ability to communicate with children by understanding how they think and learn. It is a joyful experience as each child achieves the momentous time where she/he begins to read independently." When asked about life as a Franciscan, she explained the Sisters' work as followers of Francis of Assisi as "love for all creation through nonviolent peace and justice work and daily prayer."

Sister Mary Cullen (March 12, 1930—September 27, 2018)

Sister Mary Cullen grew up as Helen Frances in Fulda, Minnesota, and later the family moved to Worthington. The Sisters of Saint Francis were leaving footprints on the heart of Sister Mary when she was educated in schools. Sister Mary entered the convent in 1949. She began her ministry as an elementary school teacher serving throughout Southern Minnesota, and in Chicago, Illinois. Later Sister Mary served in parishes in Harlan and Wallins, Kentucky, and Hudson, Wisconsin. Sister Mary provided literacy classes for adults who were not able to read. Sister Mary's degrees in elementary education and religious education served her well through all the years. Her spirit was drawn to helping the poor.

Sister Moira Tighe (July 16, 1924—June 29, 2018)

When asked how she knew the Rochester Franciscan Sisters, Sister Moira responded, "I knew them all my life." She had them for teachers in her first eight years of schooling in St. James, Minnesota. Born Mary Margaret, she entered the Rochester Franciscan Community during her junior year at the College of Saint Teresa in Winona, Minnesota. She was studying for a degree in Chemistry when her plans abruptly changed. Mother Alcuin contacted her to change her degree to Dietetics, and so, after graduate study, she became the Director of the Dietary Department at Saint Marys Hospital. She served in that ministry for 44 years. She was known for her wit and keen sense of memory. Following retirement, Sister Moira continued volunteer work at Saint Marys Hospital Gift Shop and the Ronald McDonald House. She also served for several years on the Poverello Foundation Board and on the Saint Marys Hospital Sponsorship Board.

Sister Nicholine Mertz (February 4, 1923—August 21, 2018)

Sister Nicholine began life in Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, and entered the Sisters of Saint Francis in 1940. Her first mission was far from home, teaching in Chicago, Illinois; having received her bachelor's degree in elementary education from the College of Saint Teresa in Winona, Minnesota. She spent 22 years teaching in parish schools throughout Minnesota, South Dakota, Illinois, and Ohio. In 1965, Sister Nicholine transitioned to serving in parish religious education until she retired in 1995. In her own words, she reflected on her mission in religious education: "I was able to help build community, especially with the faculty…" She also stated that facilitation of a faith sharing group was fulfilling. Her Rochester Franciscan Sisters often spoke of Sister Nicholine's compassion. She was "kindness personified."

Sister Parma Kathman (September 13, 1928—May 1, 2018)

Sister Parma said that the first words of Scripture that impacted her, which she remembered best, were, "Come, follow me." Her entire life exemplified that inner core of fidelity to God's call. She always had a smile and was willing to help others. Her ministry consisted of serving as a housekeeper at parish convents, before being assigned to congregational institutions. She became the executive housekeeper at Saint Anne Hospice when it opened in 1962. There her management skills and expertise became so appreciated that she was asked to assist the organization of the housekeeping departments for the opening of Sacred Heart Hospice in Austin, and Grace Home in Graceville, Minnesota.

In Memoriam

Sister Rita Patzner (February 3, 1933—June 16, 2018)

Sister Rita grew up on a farm near Rollingstone, Minnesota and walked across the bridge to LaCrosse each day for school, taught by Franciscan Sisters. At age 18, Rita moved to Rochester and began working in the dietary and housekeeping departments at Saint Marys Hospital, with the goal of becoming a Sister nurse. She entered the Congregation at 21 and returned to Saint Marys to become certified as a licensed practical nurse. Of her profession, she said, "My years of nursing gave me an opportunity to serve others. This gave me great joy for many years." She later became certified as an occupational therapy aide. When asked how she accomplished all that she did, she said, "I did what I had to do and put my shoulder to the task at hand."

Sister Virgeen Ernster (December 24, 1931—July 7, 2018)

Sister Virgeen grew up on a farm near Caledonia, Minnesota. She came to know the Franciscans well through her twelve years of education by the Sisters. After graduating as co-valedictorian, she studied accounting and was quick to learn, becoming proficient in financial management. While working, she was offered an opportunity for advancement, to which she replied, "I am entering the convent." Throughout her ministry, she willingly took on any financial sheet that needed balancing, no matter the hour of day or number of hours it would take to complete. Nevertheless, Sister Virgeen had all the time in the world for each person she met. A volunteer at Assisi Heights stated, "I don't know anyone who didn't love her." If she heard that, she would surely respond, "Oh, God bless you!" After leaving her ministry at Grace Home in Graceville, Minnesota, she wrote, "After responding to Christ's call, 'Come, follow Me,' I was mindful of the lesson Jesus taught in the parable of the talents. I invested my accounting talents in the 'bank' of the religious life… there to gain the spiritual 'interest' of the grace of my vocation… and then 'reinvested' all in a 'special account,' namely, "Caring for the Elderly." She had a child-like spirit and strong trust in God.

Sister Yvette Kaiser (September 1, 1921—August 4, 2018)

Sister Yvette lived out her favorite Scripture passage to the utmost in her 96 years: "…I have come so that you might have life – life in all its fullness." (John 10:10) Born in Janesville, Minnesota, she had an active life with a famly of ten brothers and four sisters. She entered the Sisters of Saint Francis in 1939. Her life was dedicated to education, first in preparation, and then in years of service to others. She started her ministry as a teacher and administrator of elementary and secondary schools in Minnesota, Illinois and Ohio. Later, she fulfilled roles as faculty member, Dean of Students, and Director of the Alumnae Association for the College of Saint Teresa in Winona. She also served her Franciscan Congregation as school supervisor and then as formation director of postulants and novices. Many Sisters appreciated her caring and thoughtful attention. Others always came first in conversations, and she maintained a keen awareness to church news and world events to the end. Her belief in the importance and dignity of each person's life led her to hold clear views about the requirements of social justice; every human being deserved to have a life of absolute decency.

60th Jubilee

Standing Left to Right: Sisters Colleen Waterman, Shirley Schmitz, Audrey Goldschmidt

Seated Left to Right: Sisters Mary Glynn, Marcella Klein, Delores Simon, Ingrid Peterson

Absent: Sister Rita Brom

75th Jubilee

Standing: Sister Severina Caron

Seated Left to Right: Sisters Marcan Freking and Casilda Chavez

Celebrating Nine Decades of Life

Standing Left to Right: Sisters Judine Klein, Louise Romero and Wanda Scherer

Seated Left to Right: Sisters Andrenee Lynch, Agnes Malone, Marga Ernster (deceased), LaDonna Maier, Seton Slater and Baptiste Fish

Sister Agnes Malone: "Learning about the lives of Saint Francis and Clare of Assisi, and about their work in the Church and in 13th century Italy, plus updating and applying their understandings and practices today with the community, has filled my days with God's presence, love, and service. I am filled with gratitude to all who have brought me here and to all who sustain my being here- past, present and future."

Sister Andrenee Lynch: Having taught primary grades for 40 years, she is quoted as saying, "One of my most fulfilling experiences and moments would be the preparation of second graders for the sacraments of Penance and their first Holy Eucharist."

Sister Baptiste Fish: "As a Franciscan, I have been blessed by many factors: my great Franciscan family; the help I received when I needed it most, such as access to transportation; caring for my parents in Arizona during their later years; and education in the area of business. I consider my life to be a great preview of heaven."

Sister Judine Klein: "I am happy to be a member of this community. My Sisters are very spiritual and I learn much from them. Their example inspires and helps me in my journey to heaven."

Sister LaDonna Maier: "When I went to St. Francis High School, Franciscan talk seemed to be in every class. I got tired of it and decided I would never be a Franciscan. God had other plans. I don't know what happened, but now I relish attempting to follow Francis. I have always appreciated the yearly nice long retreats, and now we even have a choice of retreats. I thank God for the opportunity for attending Mass here in our building, though I wish it could be daily.

I really appreciate the excellent physician's medical care we get due to Mother's Alfred's struggle to have others "see it my way." Along with that, the expended and rehab care when we have the misfortune of getting hurt or ill is a real blessing from God, who cares for us in our every need. I thank God every day for my good health. God has blessed me in many ways."

Sister Louise Romero: "I am enriched and grateful belonging to this community of courageous, joyful women. They are mentors, wise and generous, prayerful, hopeful and [believe] Jesus words, "I am always with you."

Sister Marga Ernster: "I've had a good life. I have enjoyed my life as a Franciscan, this is my vocation. I have appreciated the opportunities to deepen my prayer. I'm grateful for the Sisters in the Community, and especially the care I am now receiving." *(Sister Marga went on to eternal life on October 18, 2018.)*

Sister Seton Slater: "I have appreciated opportunities for my spiritual growth: daily Mass; the availability of a chapel; attending retreats; and living with Sisters who are pursuing the same spiritual goals. I enjoy the good meals we receive, especially because I never liked to cook. I'm thankful for a good education and companionship."

Sister Wanda Scherer: "Living life as a Franciscan Sister has been a celebration of the gifts of those around me, giving rise to every opportunity to know God."

Celebrating 100 Years: Sister Margaret Clare Style

This past June 3, Sister Margaret Clare Style joined with her Congregation and family at Assisi Heights to celebrate 100 years of life. Born third in a family of twelve children, her eight brothers are deceased. Only the four sisters are still living, of which Sister Margaret Clare is the oldest.

She joined the Rochester Franciscan Congregation in 1937, professing vows in 1940, and celebrates 78 years of vowed life this year. Her most fond memories include the summers spent in Winona, MN, attending classes at the College of St. Teresa, where she earned a bachelor's degree, and Winona State College, where she her master's degree.

Her years in active ministry were spent teaching primary and intermediate students in parish schools; including time spent as principal of a junior high school. In total, she spent 42 years in the classroom! Sister Margaret Clare stated she had as many as 55 students in her classroom. While teaching during the day, she noted that the Sisters often had to teach CCD classes in faith formation after hours and, if there wasn't any janitorial staff, the Sisters would have to clean the school as well! Other summer ministries included working with the impoverished in Charleston, SC, and Los Animas, CO. In addition, she tutored at the College of St. Teresa from 1982-1989; and served as the College of St. Teresa Archivist from 1989-2011.

Today, Sister Margaret Clare is retired and keeps engaged in activities at Assisi Heights.

Make a Gift Today

The Mission of the Sisters of Saint Francis of Rochester, Minnesota, is to be a compassionate presence for peace in our world, striving for justice and reverence for all creation. Our ministries include praying for the needs of our world in the silence of the chapel and daily in our homes; ministering in hospitals and hospices; eliminating social injustice; providing support to immigrants and working to end human trafficking; volunteering at Dorothy Day Centers and social agencies in our local communities; ministering to those with addictions and those imprisoned; providing education in schools and serving as spiritual guides.

Your generosity allows us to continue these ministries as well as maintaining our home, Assisi Heights, which provides care for our retired Sisters. In addition, we welcome hundreds of people each year, who come to Lourdes Chapel for prayer, liturgy and reflection, or to Assisi Heights Spirituality Center for educational programs or retreats.

We are a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your gift is tax-deductible as allowed by law.

To make a donation, you may use the enclosed envelope or donate online at www.rochesterfranciscan.org. Click on the "Make a Difference – Donate" on our homepage.

Led by the Holy Spirit to embrace the Gospel life of continual conversion, through prayer, community and service, in the tradition of Francis, Clare and Mother Alfred, we, Rochester Franciscan Sisters and Cojourners, commit ourselves to be a compassionate presence for peace in our world, striving for justice and reverence for all creation.

June Howard

Please consider joining the Mother Alfred Legacy Society today. Your charitable bequest is a most important type of gift for the Sisters of Saint Francis.

Named after the Foundress of the Sisters of Saint Francis of Rochester, Minnesota, the Mother Alfred Legacy Society honors those individuals and families who value the mission of the Sisters of Saint Francis and their continuance into the future. Mother Alfred Legacy Society Members are those who have remembered the Sisters of Saint Francis in their wills or estate plans.

Gifts to the Mother Alfred Legacy Society are acts of hope for the future of the Sisters of Saint Francis. Through God's grace and your generosity, the Sisters of Saint Francis will be equipped to serve their ministries into the future.

Why offer a legacy gift? Estate planning is important for everyone. Legacy gifts offer the following benefits:

Simplicity. Just a few sentences in your will or trust are all that is needed.

Flexibility. Because you are not actually making a gift until after your lifetime, you can change your mind at any time.

Versatility. You can structure the bequest to leave a specific item or amount of money, make the gift contingent on certain events, or leave a percentage of your estate to the Sisters.

Tax Relief. If your estate is subject to estate tax, your gift may be entitled to a charitable deduction for the gift's full value.

Have you already named the Sisters of Saint Francis in your will or estate? We would love to honor and thank you. Members of the Mother Alfred Legacy Society will be remembered through a monthly Mass intention, invited to special events, and recognized in the Interchange magazine and on our website. Please contact the Office of Mission Advancement to learn more about becoming a member of the Mother Alfred Legacy Society.

If you are considering a legacy gift to the Sisters, we can help. Contact the Sisters of Saint Francis office of Mission Advancement for gift planning information and resources.

You, the family and friends of the Sisters, make possible their impact on our world.

Thank you.

Director of Mission Advancement

Sisters of Saint Francis
Academy of Our Lady of Lourdes

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Christmas on the Hill

An Umbrian Celebration

Saturday, December 1, 2018
6:00 p.m.
$50 per person

We invite you to begin your Advent journey at the home of the Sisters of Saint Francis.

Reservations required | www.rochesterfranciscan.org | 507-529-3536
Limited seats available.

For more information or to register: www.rochesterfranciscan.org

Sisters of Saint Francis
Assisi Heights | 1001 14th Street NW | Rochester, MN 55901 | 507-529-3536

It will be an Angelic Experience!