interchange

Fall 2013

building upon a sense of community

Sisters of Saint Francis

Exploring values common to you and today's Rochester Franciscans

interchange

a publication of the
Sisters of Saint Francis
Volume 18 Issue 4

editor
Kathy Gatliff

layout/design
Audrey Caseltine

telephone: (507) 282-7441
fax: (507) 282-7762
info@rochesterfranciscan.org
www.rochesterfranciscan.org

1001 14th Street Northwest
Rochester, MN 55901

interchange is published 4 times a year. Issues are sent via email in Winter and Summer to accompany our magazines published in Fall and Spring. To receive our email editions, please complete the form on the back of this magazine, or send an email request to: info@rochesterfranciscan.org

There is no subscription fee. However, donations to help cover the cost of printing and postage are accepted and appreciated.

Recipient of the 2010 & 2011
Lumen Award
From the National Catholic Development Conference

Focus: Building Upon a Sense of Community

2 **Assisi Heights: 60 Years on the Rochester Skyline**
by Sister Marlys Jax

4 **The Secret Garden**
by Angie Grimm, AHSC Event Coordinator

6 **The Franciscans' Role in Secondary Education in Rochester: Past, Present and Future**
by Sister Ramona Miller

7 **Women of Wisdom: Celebrating 90 Years of Life**

8 **Blessing of the Animals**
by Darlene Kelly, Cojourner

9 **Franciscan Life in California**
by Sister Sue Reif

10 **Solar Energy: Investing in the Future of Our Community**
by Sister Marlene Pinzka

11 **Rochester Franciscans in the West: AHIMSA**
by Eileen Lundy, Cojourner

12 **Bogotá – Sharing the Legacy of Service**
by Sister Theresa Hoffmann

13 **Sisters vs. Nuns**
by Sister Colleen Byron

14 **From the Office of Development**
by Barb DeCramer, Director, Office of Development

16 **Sister Eleanor Retires!**
Give to the Max Day

17 **Umbrian Christmas IV:**
Reflections on Franciscan Crèche Traditions

Letter From The Editor

Kathy Gatliff, Director of Communications and PR

If these walls could talk...

Located in a prominent place overlooking of the city of Rochester for 60 years, Assisi Heights continues to serve as the Sisters' residence and much more. On September 8, 2013, an event was held, open to the public, to share all that has taken place within these walls, and to exhibit how vital this building has been to the local community. Long before it was a 'popular' practice to welcome people of other faiths, the Sisters leased space to other religious communities as their buildings were being funded for construction. Did you know that IBM leased space at Assisi Heights while their blue building was being constructed in Rochester? And, of course, the long shared history with the Mayo Clinic continues, as they utilize portions of two floors on one wing at Assisi Heights for educational programs. In addition, the Sisters of Saint Francis have welcomed many to their building for special events, office space and meetings. Truly, they have been a welcoming presence in creating a sense of community in the Rochester area.

But what about those Sisters and Cojourners living outside of Assisi Heights and Rochester? How do they maintain that sense of community at a distance and still feel connected to the entire Congregation? In this issue you'll find out how those in the western U.S., as well as a Sister who served in Bogotá, remain connected. As Rochester Franciscans, they have expanded the definition of 'community' beyond these four walls and the borders of this city to the greater U.S. and beyond.

Now, as we move into the future, the Sisters have re-established their connections with secondary Catholic education in Rochester, taking a more active role at Lourdes High School. They continue to live out their Franciscan values, including that of care for the earth and the environment. Serving as good stewards of community resources, they have embraced the technology of solar energy to minimize costs and the drain on limited energy resources. Serving as a compassionate presence is another value they share. In reverence for the retired Sisters, who have devoted their lives to serving God and others, they now look to ways for making their lives safe and secure, initiating the "Lifelines Project" at Assisi Heights.

Yes, the Rochester Franciscans continue to build upon a sense of community within these walls… and beyond!

Assisi Heights: 60 Years on the Rochester Skyline

Sister Marlys Jax

Admit it! You always wanted to know what happens at Assisi Heights. Sixty years after the laying of the cornerstone, we decided to host an event to offer people a chance to find out!

For a fair share of the 325+ visitors, this was a first-time experience. Some in attendance had recently moved to Rochester; for others it was a chance to get beyond the front door – a secret desire they had for many years. Among those attending was a family that has lived in our neighborhood for the past 30 years, but had never had the occasion to step inside. Interestingly enough, most of the names on the pre-registration list were unfamiliar to our planning group. So, our goal was achieved even before we opened the doors! The effort behind this "Open House" event was to answer the most often asked question "Now that you don't teach or nurse, what do you do for ministry?"

Display windows carried the works and faces of earlier Sisters and their dissertations. Situated in Callista Dining Room were our current writers. For this room of authors and poets, it was an opportunity to meet the people behind the pages! Archives provided a visual narrative of the past 60 years of history that took place at Assisi Heights. Other rooms and corridors had displays representing our current ministries, to include examples of efforts made to bring about social justice. And, if you wondered if the Sisters were no longer involved in education and nursing, think again. Highlighted in the Pine Parlor, and other locations, were Sisters currently involved in education, including Tutors, ESL, paraprofessionals, representatives for CSFR/CASFA (our schools in Colombia) and the COERR educational center in Cambodia. Other Sisters shared their service in nursing (including nursing assistants and nurse practitioners) as well as those serving in pastoral care ministries, such as chemical dependency counselors, pastoral staff for prisons and corrections, prayer ministry, and spiritual direction, wholistic living, eldercare, hospital chaplaincy and the staffing of our two centers – Holy Spirit Retreat Center in Janesville, MN, and the Assisi Heights Spirituality Center. We even have Sisters who are available for house and pet sitting; not to mention a Sister who

Can you believe all this happened at Assisi Heights?

volunteers as a naturalist at Oxbow Park! We shared the talents of our artists, musicians and gardeners. The remaining displays focused on advocacy efforts related to water conservation, ecology, ending the mining processes of mountaintop removal and fracking, and our new installation of solar panels. In addition, Sisters are actively engaged in raising awareness of concern for the ethical treatment of people with respect to Immigration reform and raising awareness on the horrific practice of human trafficking. As one gentleman said, as he passed through the rooms and viewed the displays on the way to the solar panels, "I guess life sprouts everywhere here at Assisi Heights."

Sister Merici Maher was approached by a gentleman inquiring if he might step into the inner courtyard. Meditatively, he spent a good deal of time surveying the space, looking up and down, checking angles. Upon returning indoors he recalled how 60 years ago, he cut and laid the stone for the walkways in the courtyard. The original sidewalk was created with limestone laid flat in a pinwheel brick pattern. Over time, the weathering of the soft limestone deteriorated to the point of being dangerous. (It was removed by a former employee, Bill Canfield, one wheelbarrow at a time, by way of the Francis elevator and replaced with exposed aggregate stone still in use today.) The visiting gentleman was proud of his work on this sacred ground, but well aware of the reason for its replacement. He had never been back and was thrilled to pay a visit to his beloved project.

As one visitor said, "You have opened up lots of new frontiers." Other comments shared:

- "There are some world-shapers here!"
- "Those early days were long and unglamorous, but they were the foundation of today."
- "I never knew all that the Sisters are involved in."
- "You get a standing ovation."

It was a very successful event, having achieved its primary goal: to educate the public on all that has happened under this roof!

The Secret Garden

Angie Grimm, AHSC Event Coordinator

The Assisi Heights Spirituality Center (AHSC) team continually explores creative ideas to bring quality events to Assisi Heights so we can share the beauty and spirituality of Assisi Heights with Rochester and the surrounding communities. The Assisi Heights Charm School Garden Party was the result of this teamwork, brainstorming and creative thinking. This special event was developed to provide instruction to young girls on manners and etiquette, as well as introducing them to the wealth of knowledge, experience and positive role modeling found in the Sisters of Saint Francis.

Twenty-three girls, ranging in age from 9 to 12, participated in the 1-½ day program held in late August.

The AHSC Staff (left to right) Sister Pat Himmer, Angie Grimm and Sister Marlys Jax.

Day One was filled with interactive workshops on basic manners, table setting, menu creation, party planning, sportsmanship, and invitation making, as well as meeting with the Sisters of Saint Francis and participating in a tour of the grounds and the Chapel.

Cojourner Diane Wrobleski was the keynote speaker and addressed the girls on the dos and don'ts of good manners. Other facilitators for the day included: Sisters Pat Himmer (crafts), Alice Thraen and Yvonne Elskamp (tours); Arnold Ritchey and Marlys Jax (sportsmanship); as well as Assisi Heights staff Tracy Straw and Marcia Udenberg (table setting and menu creation); and volunteer Julie Burgart (music).

The girls were enthralled and excited to use their knowledge to prepare for the upcoming garden party.

Day Two began in the afternoon with a whirlwind of preparations for the party. The hostesses met their honored guests, the Sisters of Saint Francis, under the cloister walk of the inner courtyard. They escorted the Sisters to reserved places at the tables, where they served and entertained their honored guests. Party guests included: Sisters Ann Redig, Arnold Ritchey, Clara Marie Schotzko, Claren Sellner, Dominique Pisciotta, Elizabeth Gillis, Ellen Whelan, Glennie Jean Pogue, Iria Miller, Karen Collette, Kathleen Welscher, Lorraine Doherty, Marcan Freking, Margaret Boler, Mariella Hinkly, Marita Johnson, Mary Kathryn Esch, Mary Lonan Reilly, Mary Goergen, Rafael Tilton, M. Severina Caron, Virgeen Ernster, and Yvonne Elskamp. Sister Yvonne Elskamp developed a quick bond with her hostess, Hope, and described the event as "a charming way

to introduce manners, kindness, and charity to the young women involved and also brought the Sisters in contact to the simplicity and trust that these young women have toward adults." This thought was also shared in the sentiments of many involved in the event. Unfortunately, all good things must come to an end. The party concluded with the girls singing to the Sisters, and assisting with event clean-up. Each girl departed with a gift from Assisi Heights and prayers from the Sisters.

The day was delightful, the weather cooperative and the camaraderie contagious. We can hardly wait to present this event again next year!

Opposite page: Sister Mary Lonan Reilly and her hostess Katie; The Secret Garden; Sisters Virgeen and Yvonne with Hope and Lauren.

This page: (left to right) Sisters Marita and Mary Goergen with Abigail and Erin; Sister Pat Himmer assists hostess Linnea; Sister M. Severina visits with Linnea; Sisters Ann and Kathleen with Sidney and Grace; Natalie sets the table.

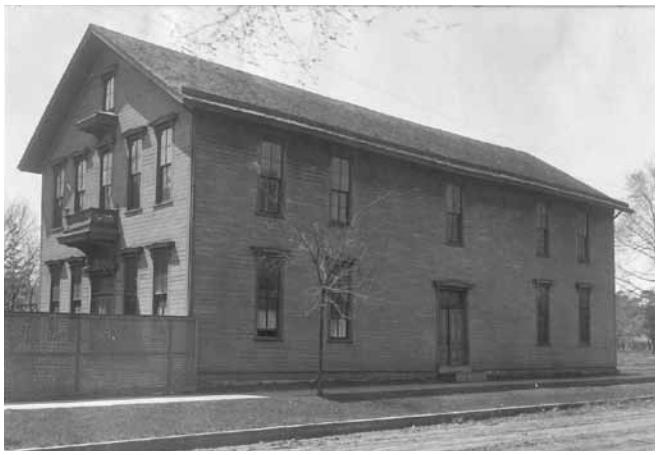
The Franciscans' Role in Secondary Education in Rochester: Past, Present and Future

Sister Ramona Miller

In my year as a senior novice, Mother Callista interviewed me about my desires for ministry. I distinctly recall asking to be assigned to a parish school ministry where the Sisters' communal lifestyle and interaction with the parishioners appealed to my aspirations for a familial approach to ministry. Soon thereafter, the junior high science department, and later, the high school math department, served as home base for my early years as an educator. During the post-Vatican II era of the 1960s, my teaching responsibilities shifted to adult faith formation and Franciscan spirituality. Thus, my life experience prepared me to say "Yes" this past year to the invitation to teach religion at Rochester Lourdes High School – a continuation of the Franciscan Sisters' presence in the Rochester Catholic Schools for the past 134 years.

A brief history: The new Lourdes building is the sixth site in Rochester to continue with the presence of the Rochester Franciscans in secondary education, which began in 1877 at the Academy of Our Lady of Lourdes. The need for a larger space quickly manifested itself, so Mother Alfred purchased another building in 1882, known as St. Mary's Hall, located at 6th Avenue and 1st Street NW in Rochester. Thirty years later, in 1912, two high schools opened: St. John's High School for Girls, taught by Rochester Franciscans and Heffron High School for Boys, taught by the Christian Brothers. In 1925, the two high schools merged, becoming St. John's High School, with the Rochester Franciscans serving as the faculty. When a newly constructed high school opened in Rochester in 1941, it was named Lourdes High School, acknowledging the beginning of Catholic education in Rochester at the Academy of Our Lady of Lourdes. And now, 72 years later, we are working in a brand new Lourdes High School.

A plaque outside the new school's Lourdes Chapel, gives an explanation of the stained glass windows featured inside, stating: "The vineyard reminds us that we are laborers in Christ's vineyard. When the fruit of the vineyard is brought to the altar during Eucharistic liturgy, the priest prays, 'Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the wine we offer you: fruit of the vine and work of human hands, it will become our spiritual drink.'" And so it is my privilege to symbolize, through my participation as a teacher at Lourdes, along with other Sisters, that we Franciscans have received much from God, and have a legacy from Mother Alfred to pass forward. Our collaborative teamwork at Lourdes High School includes that of Sister Mary Eliot Crowley, who covers my classes if I need to be out of town, and Sister Briana McCarthy, who coordinates the participation of Rochester Franciscan Sister and Cojourner volunteers who provide supportive services to the staff. In fact, the very name "Lourdes" connotes healing, and thus symbolizes the educational ministry of providing hope in the fullness of one's personhood through the efforts of continuing Mother Alfred's goal in providing quality Catholic education. I am grateful to be a part of this legacy.



Saint John's School, Rochester, MN (c. 1900)
Above left: Sister Ramona Miller in the classroom at the new Lourdes High School.

Women of Wisdom

Celebrating 90 years of Life

Sister Delphine Klein: Upon entering the Franciscan Community, I was actively engaged in housekeeping ministries. The majority of my career was at the College of St. Teresa where I enjoyed working with Sister Egbert in the maintenance department for the buildings on campus. While there I received the Teresa of Avila Award for making "an appreciation of their home away from home" for the students. When the College closed in 1989, I moved to Assisi Heights where I volunteered in various ministries. My activities are limited due to my failing eyesight and now I engage in prayer ministry.

Sister Mariella Hinkly: In memory, I still happily celebrate 50 years of teaching in elementary schools. For 16 of those years, I enabled children with reading disabilities to achieve success. Now I am gifted with time for reading, deepening my spiritual life, and expressing artistry in the Clare Art Studio.

Sister Nicholine Mertz: My first years in ministry were spent in Elementary Education. Then I was given the privilege of studying for an M.A. in Religious Education. I spent my happiest years in ministry teaching Religion and coordinating Religious Education programs. In my retirement years, I am happy to have more time for prayer and to assist where needed in the various Assisi Heights ministries.

Sister Sean Clinch: I was born on a farm in Norfolk, Nebraska, the youngest of seven children, and educated by the Sisters of Saint Francis. The theme of our Golden Jubilee Celebration, was: "Forever I will sing of the Goodness of the Lord." Today, I would add the phrase: "In Gratitude." I am grateful for my family, my faith, my Baptism in the Catholic Church and my vocation; which I have lived out in the Rochester Franciscan Community, dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes from which, by the goodness of God many, many blessings flow. To name one: that I was allowed to take care of my sister for thirteen years until she left her earthly home. God is good.

Sister Zoa Braunwarth: After making final vows in our Franciscan Community in 1955, I taught in the parochial school system in Chicago, Illinois, and Delano, Minnesota, for five years. Then I was asked to serve primarily in Religious Education, which was very interesting to me. Since moving to Assisi Heights three years ago, in addition to a limited amount of Bible study and sharing, my involvement has been in social justice with the emphasis on justice. It has been a good run. Peace.

Blessing of the Animals

Darlene Kelly, Cojourner

St. Francis honored all of nature, including those with wings, four or more legs, and even snakes! The tradition of blessing the animals continues at Assisi Heights and in churches around the world.

On September 29, more than 100 animals, some rather unique, were blessed by Sisters, Cojourners and Friends in Canticle Park. The majority of these beautiful (some more than others) creatures were dogs of all sizes, with a few cats as well. The most unique of these creatures was presented by the granddaughter of Rochester's mayor! This was his grand-critter, Clementine, a small hedgehog. Petting this little fellow was a new experience for all of us who did the blessings. Other unusual pets included frogs, a fish, and a jar of honeybees that were given the task of making great quantities of honey as part of their blessing.

It was fascinating that some of the animals that were a bit rambunctious seemed to be calmed by the blessing. It is of note that all of us who performed the blessings were likewise honored and calmed!

Photo credits: Amy Ransom

Franciscan Life in California

Sister Sue Reif

If you have ever traveled around California or looked at a map, you know it is a HUGE state. But that doesn't stop the Rochester Franciscans in California from getting together every opportunity we can, despite the miles between us! We love to gather in many different ways to support and celebrate with each other.

Last month, Sisters Kay Wagner and Sue Reif planned a special dinner and prayer ritual in Southern California (referred to as "the Desert") to celebrate the birthdays of Sisters Monessa Overby and Geneva Berns. We enjoy using birthdays to help each other reflect upon the blessings that the years have brought.

Recently, Sisters Monessa, Geneva, Kay and Sue traveled to San Diego to attend Sister Barb Goergen's retirement party. It was so much fun to meet all of the doctors and staff we have heard Barb talk about for years! As we listened to stories and watched a cute slide show that her co-workers put together, it was so obvious that Barb is well loved, appreciated, and will be terribly missed at the Asthma Clinic!

And even more recently, on September 7th, Monessa, Geneva and Sue were all in the Desert at the same time, so we joined together, as did others around the world, to fast and pray for peace in Syria and the Middle East. We used the prayer service that was being used at Assisi Heights on that same day, which made us feel very united with our Rochester Franciscan Sisters and Cojourners.

One fond memory happened a few years ago. Sister Marisa McDonald came down to the Desert and we celebrated her 25th Jubilee. Kay found out that one of Marisa's favorite foods was lamb, so Kay searched high and low to learn how to prepare lamb. We are still laughing about that dinner because the rest of us don't like lamb, but Marisa knew that we really cared about her!

This past summer, Sisters Sue and Kay drove up to San Francisco and enjoyed time with Sisters Marisa and Andrea Turbak. After a grand tour of St. Anthony's Foundation and meeting almost all of Andrea's co-workers, Sue, Kay, Marisa and Andrea put on aprons to help with the program of feeding the homeless. Afterwards, we four enjoyed lunch together and a long visit. Of course, we couldn't leave the San Francisco area without enjoying dinner with Marisa's father, George!

Without question, we know what a blessing it is to spend time together - whether it be a prayer ritual, a Sunday liturgy, celebrating holidays or special life events, or simply enjoying a meal together, walks along the beach or a game of cards – we are grateful for our time together and the common bond of our shared Franciscan values!

Photos from top to bottom: Sisters Monessa, Kay, Sue, Barb and Marisa celebrated Marisa's 25th Jubilee; Sister Geneva at Sister Barb's retirement party; the group gathers at Easter: Sisters Geneva, Kay, Sue, Monessa and Barb; Sisters Andrea, Sue and Kay in San Francisco.

(l to r) Dick Hines, Sister Marilyn Geiger, Sister Marlene Pinzka and Don DeCramer with Mayo Clinic

Solar Energy: Investing in the Future of Our Community

Sister Marlene Pinzka

Solar Power is coming…to Assisi Heights!

In this time of searching for alternate renewable energy to protect our environment and save heating and cooling costs, many businesses and homes are turning to solar power. There are large solar fields, especially in the Southwest part of the United States, but here in Minnesota?

As followers of St. Francis, the Patron Saint of Ecology, we as a Congregation strive to care for our earth and its resources. It is in that spirit, and at the urging of some of our Sisters who are very involved in reducing the negative impact of fossil fuels on our environment, that a "solar field" is now becoming a reality on the Assisi Heights property.

When the solar project is completed (by mid November), 600 solar panels will cover two sections of our property – the largest solar installation in Rochester and in SE Minnesota. These panels will be mounted on racks at a 30 degree angle, facing south and connected to inverters that will change the solar energy to electricity flowing to our power plant for immediate use. And yes, due to the warming of the panels by the sun, even in winter, the snow and ice will slide right off the panels! The advantages of solar technology include a warranty of 25 years or more, no moving parts and virtually no maintenance.

More good news: the cost of the solar panels and their installation continues to decline. With the rebate from our local utility company, our system should pay for itself in 8 to 10 years, giving us about 30

years of "free" electricity, since the life of the panels is approximately 40 years. When operating at peak performance (full sun), the system we are installing will generate as much as 30% of our electrical usage.

Educational sessions and tours of the solar fields will be available after installation is complete. We invite you to come and see!

Solar Panel Tour opportunities will soon be listed on our website, www.rochesterfranciscan.org, under What We Do/Ecology.

Seated: Sisters Mary Kay Flanigan, Joan Brown, Marlene Perrote and Cecily Schroepfer Standing: Cojourners Kay Mullen and Elena Rodriguez, Sisters Sue Reif and Patricia Schlosser, and Cojourner Eileen Lundy

AHIMSA members join millions throughout the planet for 350.org action Connect the Dots, making the local connection with water on the acequia with the issue of climate change and how that is contributing to a growing water challenge and drought in New Mexico.

Rochester Franciscans in the West: AHIMSA

Eileen Lundy, Cojourner

AHIMSA. This may be a strange word to many, but to a number of us, it is a dear and important word. It translates as "non-violence," but it is a positive, rather than a negative, and an active, rather than a passive, idea. It means even more than that to a group of Rochester Franciscan Sisters and Cojourners, who gathered together with a Mercy Sister, a Benedictine Sister, and me, a lay woman, who was once a Rochester Franciscan Sister. The group met during the previous meetings of the Western Region Rochester Franciscan Life Groups. The meetings of the Western Region have dwindled, but AHIMSA has remained intact and has become a source of contact for many of us at a distance, not only from Rochester, but also from Rochester Franciscan Sisters and Cojourners.

I live in Austin, Texas, and years ago I was a vowed Sister in the Congregation, so my past relationships – my classmates, colleagues and friends in the Congregation – form a continuing bond of shared formation, memories, affection and concern. As a Cojourner and a member of AHIMSA, I now have an additional contact with the heart of the Rochester Franciscan Community, with issues that concern us in the evolving church, with the status of women in society and in the church, with the peace and justice issues that lie at the heart of the Christian message, the Franciscan charism, and our entire community. We meet twice a year, spring and fall, in the eco-spirituality house and home of Sister Joan Brown and Sister Marlene Perrote (a Mercy Sister) in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Our experience has taught us that these encounters during two weekends annually do more for us than a year of conference calls or emails might do. Members come to Albuquerque from Colorado, California, Montana, Washington, Illinois and Texas. Besides our readings and planned discussions, we share birthday celebrations, renewals of Cojourner Covenants, condolences on losses, congratulations on accomplishments, concern and prayers for all. We treasure these weekends together. They provide us with spiritual sustenance, contact that nurtures bonds, and joy to take with us back to our homes.

Bogotá – Sharing the Legacy of Service

Sister Theresa Hoffmann

I may have left Bogotá, but it never left me. How good it was to be back after seven years! In February 2013, four Rochester Franciscans came to be part of the festivities, celebrating fifty years of the school for young women, the Colegio Santa Francisco Romana (CSFR): Sister Marilyn Geiger, our current Congregational Minister and President; Sister Tierney Trueman, former Congregational President and Coordinator of the Franciscan Mission in Colombia for 31 years; and Sister Ann Redig and me, former teachers at both CSFR and CASFA - the Colegio Annexo San Francisco de Asis.

I lived in Colombia for 16 years. Upon returning, it felt like I was just picking up where I left off. It was like coming home again. Many familiar faces of the teachers, parents, workers, and names of students came back to me. I discovered that the present 9th, 10th, and 11th grade students had been in my primary classes. They would say, "You haven't changed… I remember you. We made cereal rosaries, First Communion altar cloths, and Christmas cookies." The 9th graders recited, in English, the Sign of the Cross and Our Father with movements I had taught them. We shared warm rolls, cheese and hot chocolate before being serenaded by the students. I was also touched by my visit to a first grade classroom – the teacher was a former student of mine – as I listened to the children sing "BINGO," a song I taught her. Another student of mine was Lina, a doctor in the dispensary (clinic), working to improve the lives of the very poor. Hearing the students sing Cathy Nelson's "The Praises of God" brought tears to my eyes. The music director asked me to tell the girls that I sang that on the CD.

Various students interviewed and thanked us for teaching them. I was pleasantly surprised to renew my acquaintance with a couple to whom I had formerly delivered Eucharist in their home. They came to see me and introduced me to their granddaughter in Kindergarten, of whom they were very proud.

In addition to the highlights of our visit with the students and families, another was a gathering of teachers who remembered Sister Ann Redig and me. We were asked to make Crazy Cake for old time sake. More memories and stories were shared among this welcoming group.

Now, I continue to correspond with some students and teachers through email. And twice a year, along with other Sisters, I help prepare mailings to American citizens who sponsor the education of a child in CASFA.

It was a privilege to visit the Colombian Sisters, Cojourners, teachers, parents and students once again. Someone shared the story of how five Sisters, who first went to Bogotá, made an impact in Colombia, and now we continue to enjoy the harvest by forming women leaders with Christian values. I was filled with gratitude and happy memories!!!

May God continue to bless the Colombian people as they share Franciscan goodness and lasting values with everyone they meet along the way throughout their lives.

Left: Sister Theresa reading with students in Bogotá in 1998.
Right: Sisters Marilyn Geiger, Tierney Trueman, Theresa Hoffman and Anne Redig are welcomed to Bogotá by Sister Val Usher and students in February 2013.

Sisters vs. Nuns

Sister Colleen Byron

So, yes, there is a difference between a Sister and a Nun.
You might say that a Sister has a lot more fun.
And then again who knows the day-by-day
That happens in the cloister, I just must say.

But for me, I'm glad about my apostolic call.
For you see, the cloistered Nun doesn't seem to have a ball.
She prays and prays and has her daily work.
I am sure she wasn't called to just sit back and shirk.

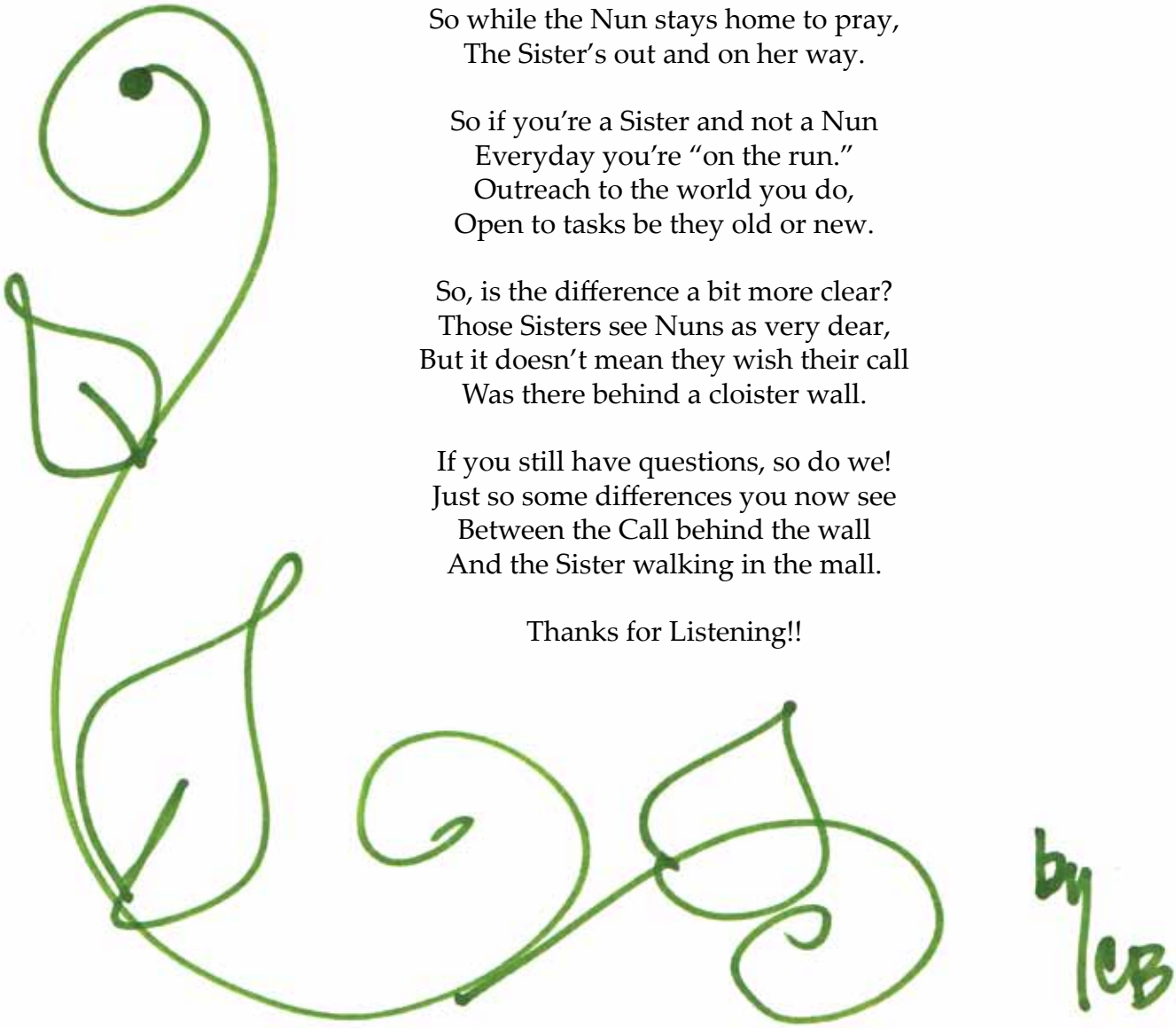
So now let's take a closer look to see what differences there are
Between a cloistered Nun and a Sister in her car.
So while the Nun stays home to pray,
The Sister's out and on her way.

So if you're a Sister and not a Nun
Everyday you're "on the run."
Outreach to the world you do,
Open to tasks be they old or new.

So, is the difference a bit more clear?
Those Sisters see Nuns as very dear,
But it doesn't mean they wish their call
Was there behind a cloister wall.

If you still have questions, so do we!
Just so some differences you now see
Between the Call behind the wall
And the Sister walking in the mall.

Thanks for Listening!!



From the Office of Development

Barb DeCramer, Director, Office of Development

"Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible."

When I read this quote attributed to Saint Francis, I have the feeling that he knew, back in the early 13th century, about the good work of the Rochester Franciscans. Truly, this is the quintessential definition of community. Rochester Franciscans have been, and continue to be, involved in every aspect of the community, quite often achieving the seemingly impossible.

Rochester Franciscans minister to prisoners, serve as therapists and administrators, artists and writers. They serve as pastoral ministers and on institutional and community boards. Sisters act as volunteers at Saint Marys Hospital and they give guidance on values and medical ethics. And when the demands of working in the greater community become too much, the Rochester Franciscans take on a new ministry, lifting you up in prayer to our God. Every day, the Sisters of Saint Francis find ways to be vital in this world, relating to the next generation and addressing the important issues of our time.

Each of us who knows the Sisters find ourselves called to be part of this Community. When I came to work in the Development Office a year ago, I found myself immediately embraced by the community of Sisters. It is with great excitement and humility that I am assuming the role of Director of Development.

Two priorities will drive the Development Office's fundraising efforts this year; each relates to our Franciscan spirituality. The first is stewardship of our earth – our Franciscan spirituality directs us to be responsible caretakers of our building and grounds. The other is relationship-based – specifically, quality of life for our retired Sisters. We must be responsible caretakers for Sisters who reside at Assisi Heights.

Barb DeCramer, Director, Office of Development (right) and Lynnette Stadtherr, Office of Development Assistant

Today, of the 232 Rochester Franciscans Sisters who minister in Minnesota, throughout the United States and in Bogotá, Columbia, 114 Sisters live at Assisi Heights. There are five Sisters who are over the age of 100. It is our responsibility to make sure that the Sisters who have served so many through their lifetimes may live out their retirement years in safety and with good quality of life.

Currently, there is no reliable system for a Sister living at Assisi Heights to summon assistance should she fall during the night, or in an area of the house or grounds where she might be alone. In order to provide a safety net, we are making preparations to install a "lifeline" system in the hallways and outdoor walkways at Assisi Heights. Installation of the system involves rewiring the facility with transmitters that will pick up a signal from the individual devices which the Sisters will wear. The system will provide the simplicity and functionality needed in an emergency call system. When a Sister needs help, we will know who it is, where she is and the nature of her call. The lifeline system will allow our health care staff to focus on what is most important – the health and well-being of our elder community.

The overall cost of the project is estimated at $100,000. This will provide the necessary wiring and installation, as well as initial investment in individual devices. Once the lifeline system is in place, we will have ongoing costs for monitoring.

You are a blessing to the Sisters of Saint Francis. Please help us to make the Lifelines Project a reality for the Sisters by making a gift to our Greatest Current Needs today.

Peace and all good,

Barb DeCramer
Director, Office of Development

"Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible."
- Saint Francis of Assisi

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, but are not limited to: 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, and 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 retreat centers.

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 and click on the "Donate Now" button in the upper right corner.

Sister Eleanor Granger Retires!

It is with grateful hearts that we wish Sister Eleanor Granger well in her retirement. After seven years as the Director of Development for the Sisters of Saint Francis, Sister Eleanor retired on September 30.

Under Sister Eleanor's steady guidance as Director, and with your generosity the Development Office grew in scope. Your spirit of generosity was shown by remembering the Sisters in your wills, making donations in memory of loved ones, or on a monthly basis, and by attendance at events.

Sister Eleanor promises to keep you and your loved ones in her thoughts and prayers, and asks for your prayers as she begins a new phase of Franciscan life.

Give to the Max Day: Another Way to Give!

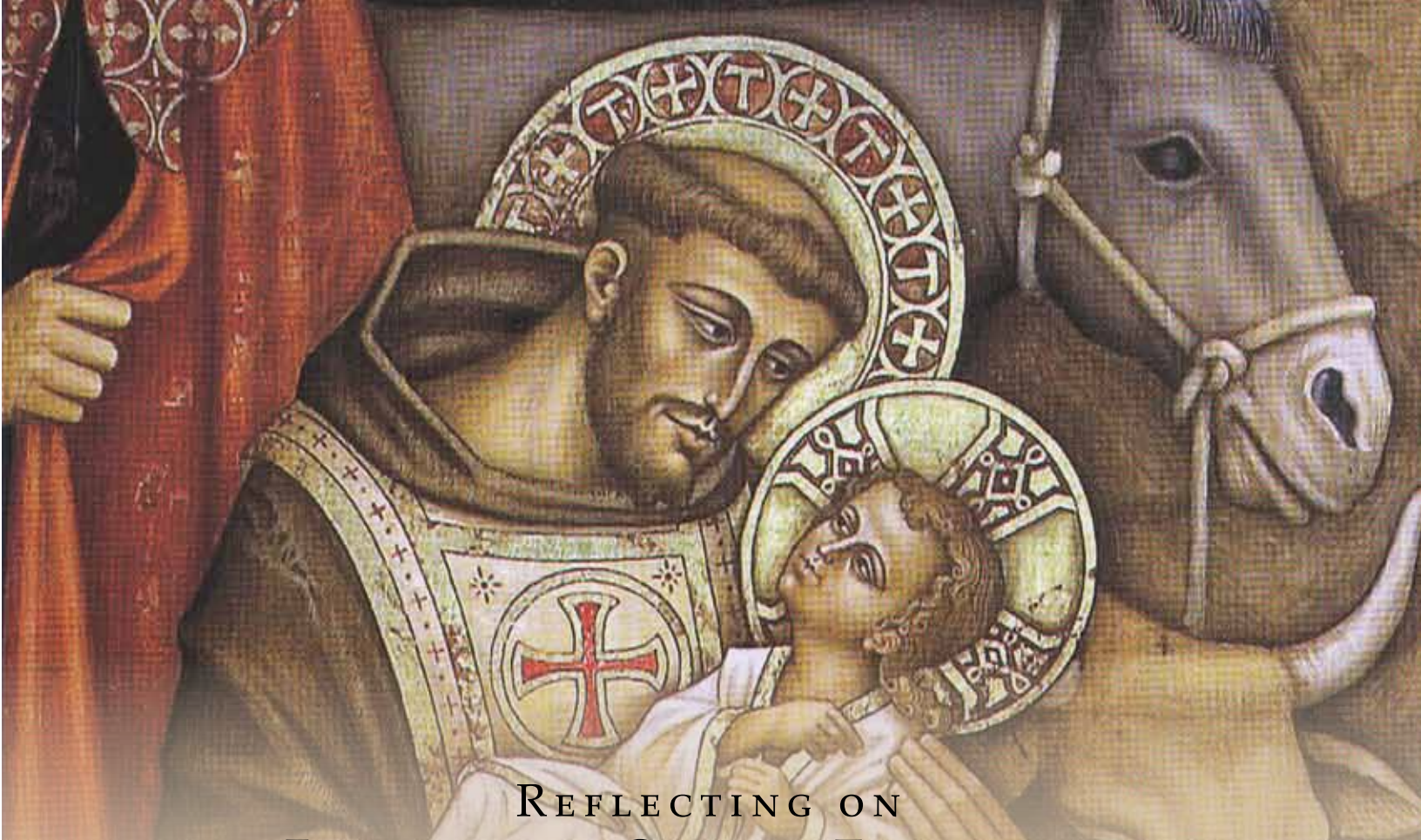
Last year, on Give to the Max Day, over $14,500 was raised to support the mission and ministries of the Rochester Franciscans. Thank you! We are participating again this year, using the opportunity to raise funds for our ministries and for our Lifelines Project here at Assisi Heights.

As you know, the Sisters of Saint Francis are changing lives every day through their ministries and prayers. On November 14, Minnesota's Give to the Max Day, your gift of any size has the power to help us win an extra $1,000 for our work in the community.

Every gift made on November 14 helps our chances of winning a $1,000 Golden Ticket! By partnering with GiveMN, an online giving website for Minnesota nonprofits, the Sisters of Saint Francis will have 25 chances to maximize your gift on Give to the Max Day. And, at the end of Give to the Max Day, one donation from across Minnesota will be randomly selected for a $10,000 Super-sized Golden Ticket. The more gifts we receive online on November 14, the better our chances to receive that bonus gift from GiveMN.

We'll be promoting Give to the Max Day through email notices, on our website and on Facebook. Please remember the Rochester Franciscans on November 14 and Give to the Max!

To Donate on November 14:
www.givemn.razoo.com/story/Rochesterfranciscan



Reflecting on
Franciscan Crèche Traditions

Umbrian Christmas IV

Each year, those who attend Umbrian Christmas tell us that this is the perfect way to start Advent, and that it sets the tone for their prayerful observance of the holiday season. This year, we look forward to highlighting Christmas in 1223 in the town of Greccio, Italy, when Saint Francis set out to share his understanding of the first Christmas in a way that had never been done before. The crèche scene created by Francis touched everyone involved and, to this day, people continue to display the crèche as a simple and humble representation of the true meaning of Christmas.

Umbrian Christmas IV: Reflecting on Franciscan Crèche Traditions will touch your heart and refresh your spirit. All proceeds benefit the ministries of the Sisters of Saint Francis.

Evening for Adults
Saturday, December 7, 2013
7:00 –11:00 pm
$50 per person

Afternoon for Families
Sunday, December 8, 2013
1:00—4:00 pm
$5 per person

Make plans now to join us! Advance registrations required.
www.rochesterfranciscan.org

Sisters of Saint Francis
Assisi Heights—1001 14th Street NW—Rochester, MN 55901

Questions? Call 507-282-7441 and ask for Barb in the Development Office
or Sister Marlys or Angie in the Spirituality Center office.

Sisters of Saint Francis
Academy of Our Lady of Lourdes

Communications Department
1001 14th Street NW
Rochester, MN 55901

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Paid Postage
PAID
Permit No. 114
Rochester, MN
55901

- ☐ Please change my address.
- ☐ Remove my name from the *interchange* mailing list.
- ☐ Send me your email announcements.
- ☐ Please add the name(s) listed below.

Name _____

Address _____

_____

City _____

State/Zip _____

Email _____

Stay in contact with the *Sisters of Saint Francis*

www.rochesterfranciscan.org
Click "What's Happening/Events"

Follow us on Facebook!

Keep up-to-date on Events at Assisi Heights Spirituality Center

www.facebook.com
search "Rochester Franciscans"