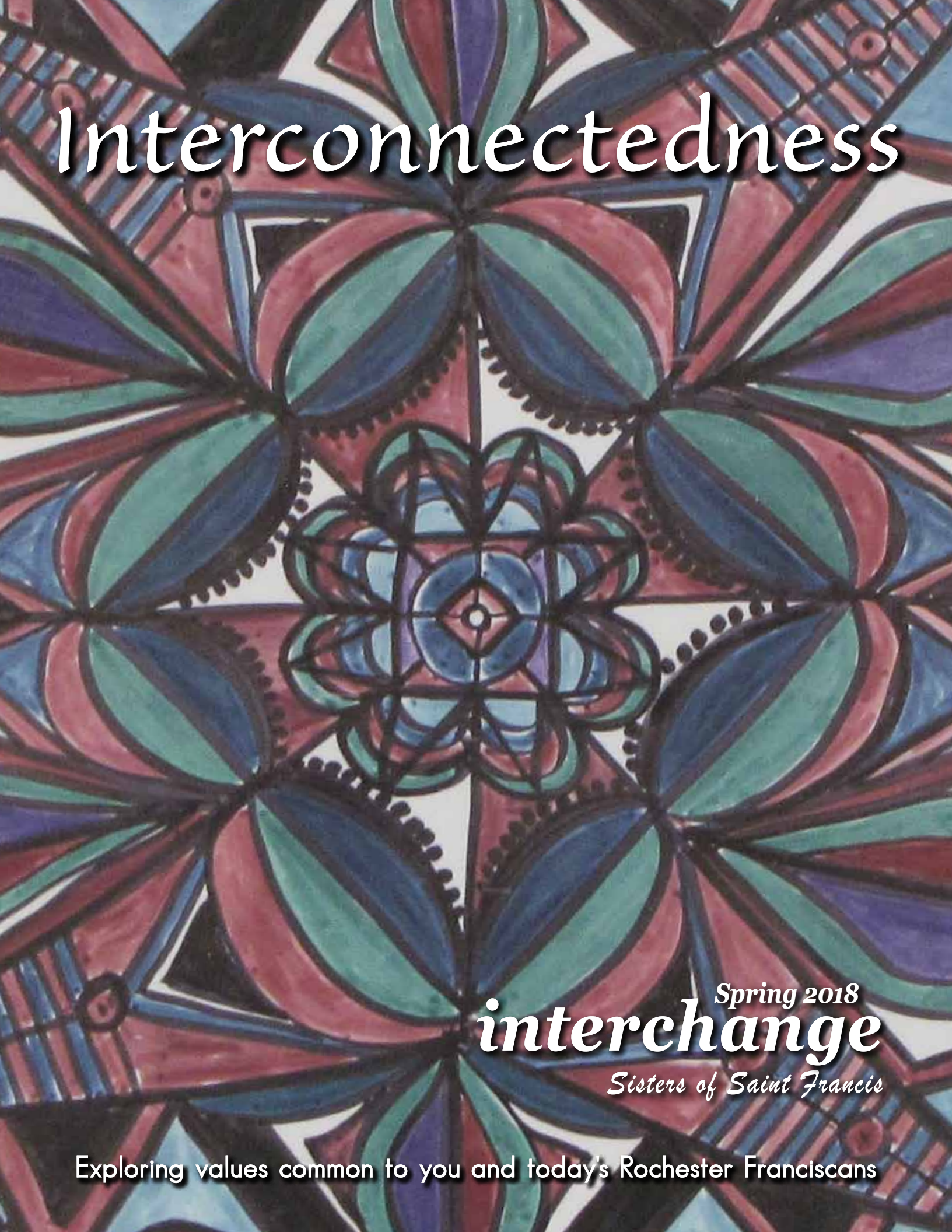

Interconnectedness

Spring 2018

interchange

Sisters of Saint Francis

Exploring values common to you and today's Rochester Franciscans

Focus: Interconnectedness

interchange

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From the National Catholic Development Conference

1 **Letter from the President**
by Sister Marilyn Geiger

2 **Bearers of Hope**
by Sister Ramona Miller

4 **Sharing a Common Bond and a Common Home**
by Diane Wrobleski, Cojourner

6 **In Life Together**
by Candace Shankland and Kim Jaworski

8 **Staying Connected with Local Housing Needs**
by Sister Glennie Jeanne Pogue

10 **Fairy Tales, Godmothers and Heroes...**
by Sister Tierney Trueman

12 **Staying Interconnected: Journey of Peace**
by Sister Linda Wieser

14 **An Essential Ingredient of the Jeremiah Program**
by JoMarie Morris, Executive Director

15 **In Memoriam**

17 **Annual Report: 2016-2017**

21 **From the Office of Mission Advancement**
by June Howard, Director

Letter from the President

Sister Marilyn Geiger

Dear Friends and Companions,

This issue of *Interchange* brings closure to a path of the journey we have been on these past six years. Come July 1, 2018, a new Council will be installed to serve the Sisters of Saint Francis. We, Sisters in Leadership these past six years, have been challenged to speak respectfully, to act with courage and take necessary risks on behalf of the common good. The path taken often led us in unexpected directions, but we, in Leadership, attempted to stay the course, trusting in the Spirit with Mother Alfred as our example of what one woman could do when led by the Spirit, as well as our Sisters who went before us.

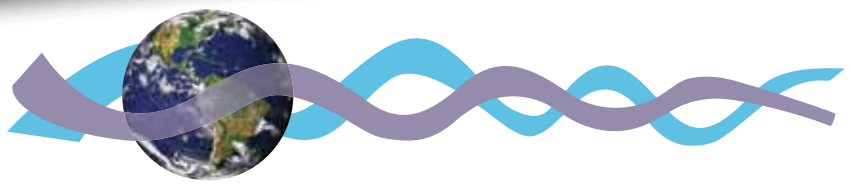
Those of you receiving the *Interchange* have been introduced to the diversity of the Franciscan life. You have come to expect that where there are Rochester Franciscan Sisters and Cojourners, there is a commitment to being a compassionate presence for peace in our world, while striving for justice and a reverence for all creation. We are living out our mission while being led by the Spirit, embracing the Gospel life of continual conversion through prayer, community and service, all in the tradition of Francis, Clare and Mother Alfred.

As you read the stories here you will find the "Interconnectedness" of the Franciscan life with all creation; especially with those who live on the margins of society. Strangers are welcomed wherever the path of the journey is leading us. There is gratitude that a door was left ajar for Sisters to continue to actively serve and pray during what might be "retirement years." These are the blessings of saying 'yes' to the call to serve with a joy and good humor.

The Sisters are so very grateful for your support to us in our mission and ministries. May we all work and pray together for peace and mercy in our world.

Sr Marilyn Geiger, OSF

Sister Marilyn Geiger, OSF
Congregational Minister



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 by the General Chapter of Affairs on January 20, 2018

. . . . . .

What is hope? Its qualities are illusive. We experience hope when we spot the crocuses bursting through a light snow cover telling us spring is here, or when we hear a newborn baby cry and know that God believes in the future of the human race, or when we kneel in prayer acknowledging the Presence of Love. Hope resides within us from our shared life with the Trinity begun at Baptism. Signs and words of hope awaken in us that deep river of life that buoys us up to be who we are called to be, bearers of hope.

During the Chapter of Elections, March 12-16, the prayerful week of discernment culminated in the election of a Congregational Minister, Sister Ramona Miller, and four Councilors: Sisters Mary Eliot Crowley, Charlotte Hesby, Judi Angst and Jennifer Corbett. As each newly elected Sister came forth, Sister Marilyn Geiger asked of them, "Are you willing to be a bearer of hope, engaging compassionately in the heart of the world?" Each elected person's affirmative response resonated with all the Sisters assembled who had, earlier in January during the Chapter of Affairs, set the direction for our communal life and ministries in the Chapter Directional Statement 2018 titled "Bearers of Hope: Engaging Compassionately in the Heart of the World."

We bear the hope of a renewed confidence in our future under God's direction. The new Council is charged with ongoing formation/enrichment and strengthening of relationships within the Community. As our direction states: "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." God's love within us stirs us to feel the joys and sorrows of the human family and of all creation. Our compassion, born in contemplation, overflows in our intent to use our voice to respond to injustices.

Standing: *Sisters Mary Elliot Crowley, Ramona Miller, Charlotte Hesby*
Seated: *Sisters Jennifer Corbett, Judi Angst*

Constantly being led by the Spirit, the membership of the Congregation and the Cojourners continually commit themselves to our common mission: "to be a compassionate presence for peace in the world, striving for justice and reverence for all creation." Engaging compassionately takes many forms. The 2018 directional statement challenges us to:

- 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.

The specifics for our voice and actions to respond to injustices will be developed personally and collectively in the months ahead. Compassion rising within each person invites us to claim God's love within us, and from our inner self, to express that Love in some manner. For some, it will be intercessory prayer, for others direct "hands on" ministry with the poor and disenfranchised, while others will work collaboratively with peace and justice networks. The Council will be appointing a Promoter/Coordinator of Social Justice to gather and promote the intentions of the congregational mission to strive for justice.

Toward the end of his life, Saint Francis of Assisi expressed the awareness that we praise God with all God's creatures through the mystical prayer, the Canticle of the Creatures. Our Franciscan legacy to reverence creation flows from this inherent belief that we are together, brothers and sisters of all that God has created; Brother Sun, Sister Mosquito, Brother Coal, Sister Water… Sensitivity to the use and consumption of natural resources overflows from our deeper awareness of sharing a Common Home with all of God's creatures, and desiring to provide for coming generations the beauty that God so desires for everyone. Yes, we have unshakeable hope that we are bearers of Good News.

Sharing a Common Bond and a Common Home

Recently, the Rochester Franciscan Community, founded by Mother Alfred, was blessed to have the Poor Clare Nuns of Bloomington, Minnesota, move into Assisi Heights. What a wonderful addition to our "home." But what does this mean for us?

We know that Clare admired Francis and wished to join his group of brothers to live a life of poverty and prayer. But, what more do we know about Clare and the Franciscan way of life?

As a teenager Clare often heard Francis preach. Moved by her love for God and attracted to Francis' love for the Gospel message, Clare rejected her family's plans for her. She founded her own community of "Poor Ladies" and was the first woman to write a rule of life for religious women. During her lifetime she stressed devotion, kindness, tenderness and practicality to the women who were cloistered within the church of San Damiano.

Francis makes an oath to take care of the Poor Ladies in the same manner that he makes for the Brothers. Thus, it is clear that the relationship between Francis and Clare is one of a close bond and Clare supported obedience to Francis. Both Francis and Clare considered the Poor Ladies and the Friars Minor to be bonded in the life according to the teachings of the Gospel, and thus they are considered to be cofounders of the Franciscan Order.

> *Questions to ponder: What is the Franciscan Way? Who is this person, Francis of Assisi, who has inspired so any people? Why was Clare of Assisi so determined to live a life of poverty? What does it mean to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ in light of the teaching of Francis and Clare?*

by Cojourner Diane Wrobleski

Top Left - Front row: Sisters Gabriel Zwiener, Kate Martin and Lucie Lafleur; **Second row:** Sisters Jo Casey, Catherine Chung, Caroline Berres and Frances Getchell; **Third row:** Sisters Elizabeth Lynn, Margaret Mewhorter and Helen Weier; Missing, but soon to join us: Sister Cecilia Ramisch.

Top Right - Sister Gabriel (left) is interviewed by Diane Wrobleski.

Possibly the greatest heritage Francis and Clare leave for us is a deeply rooted desire for God, a fervent commitment to prayer, and a life that generates action. Clare is remembered as Francis' most faithful follower whose commitment was to a life of contemplation. The Third Order Franciscans (including today's Rochester Franciscans), follow the example of Saint Francis, living a life of contemplation in action. Therefore, we look to both Francis and Clare to teach us Franciscan values and seek to imitate them as inspired servant leaders.

This model of Francis and Clare developing similar, yet different, ways of life helped the Poor Clares with the transition to Rochester. It came about as the result of a series of relationships over the years with the Rochester Franciscans. Sister Frances (Fran) described attending classes at the College of St. Teresa, as well as enrichment programs and retreats at Holy Spirit Retreat Center and in the hermitage. One of her fondest memories is of Sister Tierney who, while a student at the U of M two years before entering the convent, began to bring in eggs from the Delano home farm for the Poor Clares. This gift of eggs grew with the members of the parish, and soon many others were providing home grown produce as well on the first Monday of the month, which continued from 1960 through last Fall, just prior to the Poor Clare Sisters move to Rochester.

Sister Gabriel described a life of work, sewing, gardening, leadership, reading, prayer and bringing the needs of others to God. She spoke of Franciscan Federation Gatherings where, with the Rochester Franciscans, they attended workshops for deepening contemplative prayer. She stated that through prayer we know that God is always present, loving us and caring for us.

There is admiration on the part of both the Rochester Franciscans and the Poor Clare Nuns for the work that they have each done to help others in the service of our Lord. Therefore, one is led inescapably to the conclusion that the relationship between Francis and Clare is one of union through their way of life and mutual support and respect, and their example inspires the lives of all now living at Assisi Heights.

In Life Together

In Life Together Task Force members: ***Front Row:*** *Dayna Hurst, Consultant and Judy Rud, Human Resources Director.* ***Standing:*** *Sister Karen Collette, Director of Residential Life; Carol Stortz, Healthcare Manager; Chris Ellis, Healthcare Manager; Sister Dorothy Hansen, Volunteer; and Candace Shankland, Life Enrichment Coordinator*

Recently, a new logo and concept for living was identified and adopted by the Rochester Franciscan Sisters. "In Life Together" focuses on person-centered programs and enrichment to ensure we meet the needs of our Community. Individually, we will all struggle from time to time with our human frailties, whether recovering from a surgery, coping with mobility difficulties or the challenges of the aging process. But as a community, we are incredibly strong as we support each other through it all. While our programming efforts include assistance from volunteers and Cojourners each month, a BIG component of this program is Sisters helping Sisters, each and every day and in so many ways.

As part of our hostess program, Sisters are often on hand during meals in our 3rd Francis dining room to assist with food and beverage service, and to tidy up afterwards. They also provide a warm and cheery geniality at each meal. In the role of Eucharistic ministers, Sisters bring Communion to those in their rooms or in our chapels. Others offer to drive a group of Sisters out for a shopping trip or to attend an event on an as-needed basis. Wednesday hair appointments require assistance from a Sister to help shuttle wheelchairs to and from the ground floor beauty shop to ensure each Sister arrives in time for her perm, cut or style. Daily life enrichment activities, such as Bingo, Coffee Talk, Sunshine Group, exercise and music programs, are most frequently led by Sisters. During our monthly social events, we need wheelchair drivers and Sisters to keep things interesting and engaging for each attendee. We have a monthly art class led by one of our gifted artists. Sisters serve as health care agents and companions for doctor appointments and, of course, Sisters staff our 'This and That' and 'Nearly New' shops to provide for the needs that come up. Sisters also share their expertise and experience by presenting educational programs.

We have many opportunities for others to share their talents and gift of time. If you would like to volunteer, we can always use your help! Please contact Candace Shankland, Life Enrichment Coordinator, at 507-282-7441. We are always working on new ways to share life together!

by Candace Shankland and Kim Jaworski, Assisi Heights Life Enrichment Staff

A Connection to Local Housing Needs

HOME! What crosses your mind when you hear that word? What images do you have? My mind immediately goes to my family home in North St. Paul. We moved there in 1941 when there were three children in our family and a fourth one was on the way. My dad and mom immediately set about making it a warm, safe, comfortable space for us. It was an ongoing work in progress, as my dad added more bedrooms and living areas for us as our family ultimately grew to seven children. We had a large yard surrounded by a buckthorn hedge that was too thick for us to see through, too high for us to see over, and kept us from running out into the street where a few cars went past each day. We were secure there as my mother cooked good German meals for us and my dad planted and tended a large vegetable garden. This was our family home until 1990, when we lost our father one Sunday morning to cardiac arrest in St. Peter's Church. Our mother had passed away 24 years earlier. We had been there long enough for all of us to be able to put down good strong roots and grow into healthy adults with many good memories of "home".

The images on these two pages represent drawings made by a 4-year-old girl whose family is being assisted by the St. Vincent de Paul Society. She is very happy with her new home!

By Sister Glennie Jeanne Pogue

Today, as a member of the Pax Christi-St. Vincent de Paul Conference, I work with families who are frequently in search of, or trying to remain in, houses that may or may not be safe and comfortable, much less affordable. For some families, moving may be an annual event for a variety of reasons. Some landlords are there strictly for the money. They do not provide safety, or have few qualms about charging for homes where there is no heat in the winter. What happens to the children? Do they have pleasant memories of a childhood where they could put down roots and grow upwards; or is it a place they hear about but have no real experience of what it means to have a home?

Fortunately, there are some good owners of homes and apartment buildings who really are assisting families to have a home where they can grow "upward." But for others, what else can be done? There are people who make it a point to find families who would benefit from the stability of a good, safe home and provide them with many of the basic needs for their families at a lower cost than "market value." Some people volunteer their time to assist in building homes for families as part of Habitat for Humanity; others feel the call to join, and become active members of St. Vincent de Paul where they can meet and get to know families in need of housing by providing them with the funding for rent or a security deposit. Often furniture and other household items are donated to assist families as they move. Food, clothing, gas/bus cards, utilities assistance also contribute to establishing a better sense of security and stability for families. Anything that can contribute to helping families to put down roots and grow is beneficial. In Rochester, each Catholic Church has their own St. Vincent de Paul Conference. Funds are generated from donations by parishioners, grants from a variety of companies and fundraisers, such as the Walk for the Poor, that occurs each September. All are welcome to become a member and assist with the housing crisis plaguing so many families. Members see the face of Christ in the families they assist and serve.

As I minister with these families, it is so apparent that we truly are all interconnected. Assisting families in need of housing is one way to ensure that the next generation grows up with stability and security during these formative years. When I reflect on being a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, I realize that it not only serves to help others, but as volunteers, we also benefit from the relationships developed, enjoy fellowship amongst the members, and experience a spiritual growth and awareness that exceeds expectations.

Fairy Tales, Godmothers and Heroes…

Do you remember those delightful fairy tales that held you spellbound as a child, waiting to hear the magical ending that "everyone lived happily ever after?" Did you believe that these tales could ever become reality in life?

Flashback: Bogotá, Colombia, and the arrival of Padre Javier de Nicolo from Italy. Javier and his five siblings lived through the horrors of WWII. His sleep was punctuated with the sound of bombs and bullets, and the smell of gunpowder and smoke. When the rain of missiles and bullets subsided, he lived on the streets for survival. A Salesian priest invited him to Naples, where he was able to study for two years in the midst of a community that celebrated together in fiestas of music and theater. In 1949, he landed in the city of Buenventura, was later ordained as a Salesian priest, and began his initial work with the poor.

Moving to Bogotá, he found a city experiencing the ruins of a terrible riot, and thousands living in the streets. In his own words, "my adventure began." He created the Juvenile Service Foundation. Until his death in 2016, over 80,000 abandoned, orphaned youth, between the ages of 15-22, were rehabilitated. Their street lives had been filled with crime, drugs and violence. He did not have great appreciation for the work of psychologists and psychiatrists in rehabilitating youth – rather he believed it was necessary to change the dismal life on the street to a joyful site. Thus, he organized dances, choral groups, fiestas and trips to parks and the countryside, where these young people could forget the life of misery in which they were immersed.

Padre Nicolo was opposed to heavy sentences for juvenile delinquents, saying "Man is the center of relationships; what is essential is love. If you were a child who did not have a good relationship with your parents, what can one expect? The need is to teach reconciliation, to return to a culture that offers a helping hand – 'come, let's talk, we're brothers', and to teach that you are superior if you are capable of not engaging your brother to fight, but to live in harmony."

Fast Forward to 2018: Luis Eduardo Gonzalez, who worked many years with Padre Nicolo organizing symphonic orchestras with the youth of Juvenile Service, is now the music teacher at the Colegio Anexo San Francisco de Asis (CASFA), the school started by the Rochester Franciscan Sisters in Bogotá, Colombia. On Saturday mornings, there is a pre-orchestra group comprised of children from first grade to sixth grade. Then during the week, there is the juvenile orchestra, with students from CASFA and five students from the program of Padre Nicolo. These five students live in institutions for homeless youth – some are studying in high school, and others are beginning their university studies. Currently, CASFA is processing the signing of a contract whereby fifteen students from the institution will be able to practice two hours, four days a week, at CASFA, using CASFA's instruments. The more advanced students have a commitment to be teachers and mentors to the younger students, who are just beginning their orchestral experience.

Yes, life continues to offer fairy godmothers, and heroes – like Padre Nicolo. But is not the greatest "fairy tale " the story of how good people, like Padre Nicolo, are determined to work together with others, to provide what he identified as "the best experience in the world is to serve humanity?" For him, a joyful environment had to include music, dancing and fiestas. And so, Padre Nicolo's ministry continues through one person he touched, Luis Eduardo Gonzalez, who now makes a difference in the lives of other youth.

What a marvelous image an orchestra offers of the beauty of interconnectedness! And picture the vision of those older students teaching and mentoring the younger students. Then, picture a place in our world where there is a wee bit more harmony and peace because brothers and sisters find Christ in the lives of one another!

CASFA's orchestra project – in service to students who live in economic poverty – needs support to enable it to thrive. The special need is for instruments, and they are costly. Generous persons have contributed a variety of good used instruments, and several persons offer their services to repair any that need repair. If you are willing to be a supporter to this "instrument" project by donating an instrument, or funds to purchase a good used instrument, please contact Sister Tierney at tierneytrueman@live.com.

View the practice sessions of the CASFA Orchestra:
https://youtu.be/H4VzZVTgu7Q
https://youtu.be/_DYs6h3_Mjc
https://youtu.be/nqByISmkrqM

Staying Interconnected: Journey of Peace

"Post-modern challenges of the 21st-century raise questions which confront the world. Can individuals and nations find a common path that celebrates religious diversity, freedom, respect, compassion and reciprocity?

Can new friendships be forged for the sake of global peace?"

-Franciscan Identity and Mission Task Force

Nine years ago, the Franciscan Sisters and Cojourners collaborated with the RACE exhibit, which was sponsored by Mayo Clinic and held at the Rochester Public Library. We closed that event with a gathering of many faith traditions, all praying together at Assisi Heights. It was an opportunity to create new friendships while working for world peace. This gathering was the beginning of what would become an annual event - the Journey of Peace! On October 28, 2018, we will host our ninth gathering. This Interfaith event has taken many forms over the years, to include raising consciousness of peace-making, building relationships, networking with groups who share the same mission, and sharing prayer and food as brothers and sisters.

Three years ago, this event birthed a steering committee to study the Charter of Compassion Movement in the world. The group spent hours in research, dialogue and networking with other city and national agencies. At our October 2017 Journey of Peace gathering, Mayor Ardell Brede affirmed the Charter of Compassion document and named Rochester, Minnesota as a Compassionate City.

Ashwinder Kaur, Representative of the Sheik Community at Journey of Peace event

by Sister Linda Wieser

Coordinating Committee for 2017 Journey of Peace.

Since that time, many more steps have been taken by the steering committee to foster greater awareness in living as a Compassionate City. These included weekly meetings at Assisi Heights, writing articles for the Rochester Post-Bulletin, making presentations to various faith communities, networking with the Rochester City Council, collaborating with United Way and the Rochester Cultural Diversity Council, and hosting monthly lunches with RCTC students. These steps continue to bring more awareness of the importance of compassion for ourselves and being instruments of compassion within our community. In December 2017, steering committee member Cathy Ashton was recognized for her directorship of this initiative and she received the Mayor's Medal of Honor in the category of Providing Humanitarian Services to others. Cathy publicly stated, "Thanks to all the profound support of the Sisters of Saint Francis."

Journey of Peace is just one attempt to awaken us to be advocates of compassion on our mutual life journey. May this event continue to provide space to strengthen relationships that impact global peace.

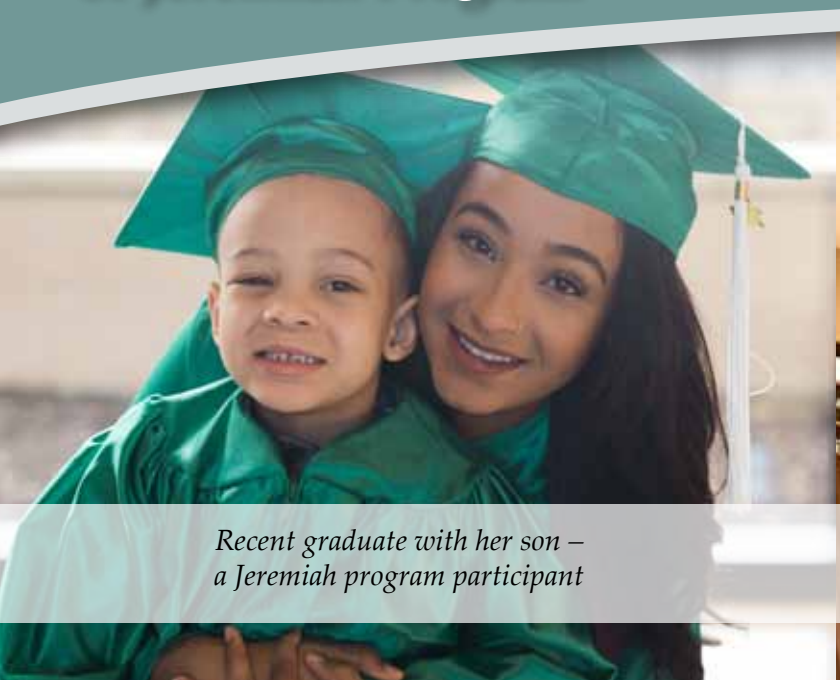
"We urgently need to make compassion a clear luminous and dynamic force in our polarized world."

- Charter for Compassion

We welcome you to join us Sunday, October 28, 2018, from 2:00pm to 4:00pm at Assisi Heights, for our 9th Annual Journey of Peace.

An Essential Ingredient of Jeremiah Program

By JoMarie Morris, Executive Director



Recent graduate with her son – a Jeremiah program participant

JoMarie Morris, Brittany (a Jeremiah Program recipient) and Sister Marilyn Geiger

The Sisters of Saint Francis have led the way in Rochester to create the supportive community so critical for launching a successful Jeremiah Program to serve single mothers and their young children in Southeast Minnesota.

Jeremiah Program offers one of the nation's most successful strategies for transforming families from poverty to prosperity two generations at a time. The single mothers that come to Jeremiah Program are isolated, lacking a support system, dependent on multiple forms of public assistance and struggling to find safe, stable housing.

For 20 years, Jeremiah Program has moved impoverished single mothers off public assistance and into careers where they not only achieve financial independence but also give back to their communities. That success is rooted in Jeremiah 29:7 where Jeremiah's visionary founder, Michael J. O'Connell, sought guidance to break the cycle for the growing number of single mothers and children living in poverty. "Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper." (Jeremiah 29:7).

This verse embodies Jeremiah Program's core pillar: that we are all connected and it is only through a deep sense of community, no matter what our differences, that we can overcome life's most difficult challenges and create an opportunity for all to flourish. From the very beginning, O'Connell recognized the importance of broad community support engaging leaders from key sectors of business, education, faith, government, and philanthropy to launch the program.

A supportive community is really the "secret sauce" of Jeremiah Program's success. It is the community of sisterhood created between the women in the program that live together and support one another as they complete their college educations and care for their children. It is also the support of local community members that help guide, mentor, and provide the extended family that so many of these young families lack. All of this works together to allow determined Jeremiah women to break the cycle of poverty and model responsibility and success for their children.

By hosting events to inform and engage the community about Jeremiah Program, pledging assistance with caring for the children in the program and mentoring and empowering the young women in Jeremiah Program to understand that they too are loveable, important, and valuable, the Sisters of Saint Francis are an essential ingredient to the "secret sauce" of Jeremiah Program.

Sister Antoine Murphy (January 15, 1914 - February 15, 2018)

During an interview two years ago, Sister Antoine Murphy (born Dorothy) said, "Compassion, healing, integrity, stewardship; the Sisters in the early days didn't have them written-down, but held them in their hearts and passed them down to other generations." She was speaking of a direct lineage to the first Sisters at Saint Marys Hospital. In 1937, she began her nurses training. In 1938, Sister Joseph Dempsey told Antoine to attend the spring nursing commencement ceremony so she would know what her graduation would be like. Dr. Chuck Mayo was the emcee. He introduced others on stage, his father and uncle, Drs. Will and Charlie, and Sister Joseph. (Unbeknownst to, those present, all three - Sister Joseph, Dr. Will Mayo, and Dr. Charlie Mayo - died before the next year's graduation).

As a nursing supervisor, Sister Antoine was known for running a "tight ship." She demanded excellence, a quality that continues to be embodied by the Mayo staff. Sister Antoine would witness the continued progress of modern medicine. She was nurse manager for the first knee replacement patient, and nursed the patient who received the first kidney dialysis procedure. Sister Antoine is credited with creating the team nursing approach for care of patients. She showed great kindness to the younger Sister nurses, and inspired them with her thoughtfulness. Sister Antoine took great care in her appearance and provided a cheerful countenance to the patients with whom she visited. Sister's gentle spirit overflowed from her Franciscan heart, especially her affection for animals. In recent years, significant loss of eyesight prevented her from volunteer work as a patient visitor, but she did not allow it to excuse herself from Community participation. She was faithful to communal prayer, and will be missed by those who observed her in the same pew for years and years.

Sister Delphine Klein (April 11, 1923 - November 25, 2017)

Sister Delphine Klein (born Lucille Marie) grew up just beyond the Minnesota border in Dell Rapids, South Dakota on the family's farm, the first of six children. In the summer of 1944, Lucille and her sister Jeanette decided to enter the Franciscan Congregation in Rochester. The one redemptive feature was learning that Mother Alfred Moes was from their parents' beloved homeland of Luxembourg. A year later, their mother was happy to hear that Lucille received the name Delphine, after her lonesome youngest sister, who is now Sister Judine. Sister Delphine was one of those 'back to the basics' persons: down-to-earth, practical and common. She liked to be busy, working for a common cause. Work experience and life on the farm was her internship before she entered the Community. She learned the economy of composting, conserving and reusing and reducing. She quickly took to heart her ministry as a homemaker in the Congregation. All of her ministry was all within the state of Minnesota: Fairmont; St. Paul; Caledonia; Springfield; Rose Creek and finally 31 years at the College of St. Teresa in Winona (CST). She loved her work at CST. Her earlier missions left her working alone all day, whereas her responsibilities at CST brought her in contact with students, faculty and colleagues, thus expanding her world and relationships. It was not surprising that the CST Class of 1982 requested that the St. Teresa of Avila award be given to her. This valiant woman was beloved by the students for her simplicity, her Luxembourg brogue and speech pattern, and her genuine care for their spirits. She loved the students and they knew it. Sister Delphine made a difference in peoples' lives; she had an incredibly positive spirit. One of the Assisi Heights staff said it well, "I'd like to Xerox her!"

In Memoriam

Doreen Van Uden (November 24, 1948 - November 21, 2017)

Doreen Van Uden was born on November 24, 1948, in Marshall, Minnesota, to parents Bertha and Joseph, and a sister, Bernie. Doreen treasured her rural roots and family. She attended Mount Marty College, in Yankton, South Dakota, for one and one-half years before joining our Community in January, 1968. During her years in formation, Sister Doreen's Franciscan spirit continued to grow and flourish. Whether it was planning a prayer service, organizing a softball game, or enjoying a walk and the beauty of God's creation, all were included. Her spirit will always be treasured by each of her classmates. Doreen earned a degree in elementary education from the College of St. Teresa and taught for 19 years in schools in southern Minnesota and South Dakota. In 1992, at the age of 43, Sister Doreen had a life-changing severe stroke. She was given a new awareness of the mystery of life that God was picking out for her. Speech and mobility were impaired but her spirit of joy and other-centeredness grew daily. She gifted all with warm welcomes, smiles, and humor. Facial expressions and arched eyebrows told a thousand stories. During the twenty-five years after the stroke, Doreen was accompanied by her dear friend, Tanya Kern. They shared a home in Bloomington and became friends with the Poor Clare Sisters. Doreen worked for 18 years at the Minnesota Zoo watering tropical flowers and plants. She became a vibrant and faithful friend to her co-workers. Doreen's name means "devoted heart" and that she was. Known for her kindness, joy, generosity, love and compassion, she treated everyone as if they were the most important person at that moment.

Sister Valerie Olson (April 18, 1927 - March 12, 2018)

Sister Valerie Olson (formerly Sister Katrine) grew up in the rural town of Ellsworth, Minnesota. In her youth, Sister Valerie helped her father at his service station. After graduation from high school, she attended business classes in Mankato, Minnesota, and for a short time, worked at a credit bureau and later as a clerk of probate court in Worthington, Minnesota. At the age of 23, she answered the call to religious life. At Saint Marys Hospital, she worked in the Personnel Office (later called Human Resources) for 40 years. She enjoyed recruitment trips to North and South Dakota, Wisconsin and Iowa to search out employees needed for the many departments of the hospital. Accuracy and a meticulous attention to detail were gifts that served Sister Valerie well. In her free time, she enjoyed the beauty of creation in walks outdoors and in biking on the bike trails of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa with her good friend, Sister Corona Malis. In 1983, they also experienced a memorable trip to Europe with Sister Martha Mathew, visiting seven different countries. After retiring from the personnel department, she volunteered at Saint Marys Hospital and in the Assisi Heights' LIFE (Living in Fidelity to Experience) Library. Sister Valerie had a gentle, quiet spirit, and always had a ready smile for everyone she met.

We are grateful for gifts given in honor of a Sister or loved one who has been a vital part of your life.

We remember those who have gone before us, and you, our generous benefactors, through the daily prayers of our Sisters.

Gifts received October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017.

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Sisters who taught at Cotter and Holy Trinity in Rollingstone
Sisters who taught at St. Juliana School in Chicago
Sisters from Mercy Hospital School of Nursing
Sisters who served and taught at St. Thomas Cathedral High School
Sisters who taught in Tracy, MN
Sisters who serve or served at Saint Marys Hospital
Sisters who taught in Winona
Sisters who were my wonderful teachers

Committing ourselves to be a compassionate presence for peace in our world, while striving for justice and reverence for all creation, is possible because of our generous benefactors.

Gifts received October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017.

In Memory of:

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Did You Know?

2017 marked the 140th anniversary of the Sisters of Saint Francis.The Sisters celebrated in a spirit of gratitude. The gifts received in 2017 have allowed the Sisters to provide ministry and mission support all over the world, allowing the Sisters to continue God's good work and share with those less fortunate.

Your gift truly makes a difference.

Did You Know?

Automatic withdrawal from your checking account is a worry-free way to make your monthly gift. There are no fees associated, and it is as easy as letting us know your routing number, account number, and the name on the account along with providing us with a voided check. On the 15th of each month, your designated dollar amount will be withdrawn and allocated to the fund of your choice here at Assisi Heights.

Did You Know?

You can use your credit card to support the mission and ministry of the Sisters of Saint Francis.

To make a secure, on line donation, click on the homepage "Donate Now" button at www.rochesterfranciscan.org

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Contact Information

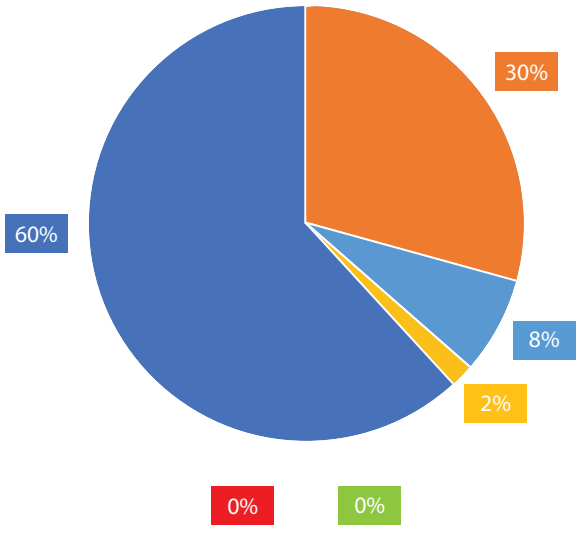
Please feel free to email or call the Office of Mission Advancement at 507.529.3536 with any questions.

June Howard, Director
june.howard@rochesterfranciscan.org

Tracey Rutherford, Assistant
tracey.wr@rochesterfranciscan.org

Sisters of Saint Francis

Development Office - Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Report



Ministries of the Sisters	$69,855.00
Greatest Need	$276,379.72
Memorial Fund	$15,025.00
Retirement Needs of Sisters	$542,162.72
Chapel Fund	$100.00
Other	$2,415.00
Total	**$905,937.44**

Proclaiming the Good News of God's Love

June Howard

I have heard, on more than one occasion over these first few weeks in my position as Director of Mission Advancement, that my predecessor, the now retired Barb DeCramer, knew everyone. What a blessed legacy to have. I can only hope and pray that at some point the same will be said of me. Getting to know you is something I care deeply about. Each and every one of you are so important in your support of the Sisters of Saint Francis.

Known previously as the Development Office, we will now be known as the Office of Mission Advancement. Large growing operations, like business and schools, often have a Development Office with capital campaigns for major building projects or new directions. That focus is not ours. As the Sisters enter the 'retirement years,' many continue to remain in active ministry, offering to volunteer with hospice, prison ministry, working with immigrants, and serving the poor. They are involved in organizations such as St. Vincent de Paul, Community Food Response, and others.

Now, as the Office of Mission Advancement, our focus will be to provide funding for the needs of our residents, as well as the Sisters' "mission" work. Your generous gifts of service, prayers, and financial support for the Sisters will enable the Congregation to continue to care for our retired Sisters and enable those in volunteer ministries to sustain their work.

Your gifts, regardless of size, are appreciated and help the Sisters of Saint Francis fulfill their mission "to be a compassionate presence for peace in our world, striving for justice and reverence for all creation" by providing a place of hope, prayer, reflection and enrichment.

As I visualize the future ahead, working together with you for the greater good of the Sisters of Saint Francis and all those they serve. I am honored to be partnering with you in our united passion to make a difference by belonging to something greater than ourselves.

I look forward to getting to know each of you. My plan is to reach out to as many of you as I can in the coming months to introduce myself and thank you personally for all you do to make the Sisters mission a reality.

Sincerely with the Grace of God,

June Howard

Sisters of Saint Francis
Academy of Our Lady of Lourdes

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