Sisters of Saint Francis
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interchange

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Charism and Gifts of the Spirit

Dear Friends & Family,

We continue with an exploration of the theme of *Charism* in this issue, as it pertains to the reflections and outcome of recent meetings held by the Sisters. The Congregation gathered April 29-May 8, 2022, to reflect on a shared mission, vision and values; determining how they wish to embrace this new 'chapter' in their lives. During this process, they elected the next leadership team to serve from July 2022 thru June 2026.

Charism: Can We Name It?

By Sister Helen Rolfson

In 1 Corinthians 12: 27-31, St. Paul speaks eloquently of the distribution of gifts in the Christian community. There are so many that Paul doesn't (and can't) name them all... some are teachers, some leaders, some administrators, some gifted as healers, some wisdom figures, etc. We know in our own experience of community that we have only to look at the list of Sisters to start musing on each one in terms of the gift that that Sister is or was to us all. Sister A was a bringer of peace. Sister B was beautifully humble. Sister C is a generous artist, etc. God's gifts are not given for one person alone. In all their diversity, they are all meant for the building up of the Body of Christ.

As St. Therese of Lisieux was fond of saying, "Everything is grace."

If that is true on the personal level, it is also no great leap to apply it to a body of persons, to mark what makes a particular convening of people unique in some way. But to name THE particular charism of a given group is difficult.

Vatican II invited religious to "return to the sources" in the search for authentic renewal (*aggiornamento* was the going term). Each congregation was asked to identify that which inspired its founder(s) and to examine its own polity* and life to see how true to that identifying marker it has remained. When we Rochester Franciscans look for our "charism," we find charism upon charism upon charism in the members. I will simply allude to three levels here: dedication to the call to follow Christ: 1) in preaching the Gospel by our lives *through baptism*; 2) in preaching the Gospel by our lives *a la St. Francis*, 3) in preaching the Gospel by our lives *a la Mother Alfred*. Each of the three has its particularity, as well as its unifying character. In this consideration, it is the third that interests us here.

Speaking for myself, I cannot help but thinking that this Vatican II emphasis on finding the Community's charism really changed my outlook. I recall that the Mother Alfred I knew from Community lore, back in 1956 to 1965, was quite different from the one I received from historian Sister Francis Ann Hayes in her study of the origins of the Congregation, and from Sister Carlan Kraman's study for the centennial of our founding.

The first "Mother Alfred" was presented to us with the outline of a few facts: she and her sister Barbara had come from Europe as laywomen with religious mission in mind. They eventually entered the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Milwaukee; left, joined a congregation of Marianites in Indiana; then they were received into the Third Order Regular of St. Francis. Mother Alfred then founded the Joliet community; left there and came to Minnesota to expand the Joliet mission. Given certain animosities (Bishop, some Sisters), her return was denied. Long story short, *here we are*.

The rather questionable understanding of vocation we received at the time was largely based on the assumption that God gave a vocation and one had best stay in it at one's eternal peril. How often we heard the dictum: "He who puts his hand to the plow and turns back is not worthy of the kingdom of God!" Accordingly, Mother Alfred was not proposed as a particularly great model of perseverance in her unique call, let alone a saintly figure for us to admire. In a way, this path seemed rather an embarrassment.

Thanks to the new insights into the history given by our Sister historians, I came to admire deeply Mother Alfred and our founding Sisters of the Rochester Franciscan Congregation. To me, she and the founding Sisters became a model of fidelity to the Spirit that "blows where It will," *meeting challenges at every turning of their life, believing that the finger of God was in the daily call, and responding with joy.* This default setting of their souls was a constant gift from the Spirit …to her and to us.

The loving obedience of these Sisters to the Spirit brings to mind St. Paul as recounted in the *Acts of the Apostles*, whenever he comments that "The Spirit" sent him here or there, or that "the Spirit" detained him from going to such and such a place. He did not know the "why" of his inner urging, just that he needed to follow. The Spirit expected them to be open to the inner promptings, for the advancement of the Realm of God.

Charism, however, is not the same as Mission, though they are closely related. Charism serves Mission. Our Congregation has been involved in several missions: education on all levels, health care, social justice in many forms and in many places, living out the various charisms of administration, teaching, healing, and discernment, to name a few. For Franciscans, there is no particular "work" assigned by the founder St. Francis other than to follow the Gospel in the footsteps of Christ.

Congregational history shows the importance of the charism of being open to the Spirit, reading the "signs of the times" and responding in flexibility and creativity to the needs set before us, as did our founding Sisters.

**a form or process of civil government or constitution*

And so, as the Congregation prepares to for the next chapter of their shared lives, they are *engaging the mystery in new beginnings…*

Sharing Gifts of the Spirit

Introducing our 2022-2026 Congregational Leadership:

Sister Tierney Trueman, Congregational Minister/President

Associate Ministers:
Sister M. Carolina Pardo Jaramillo
Sister Dawn Nothwehr
Sister JoAnn Chevalier
Sister Marilyn Geiger

L to R: Sisters JoAnn Chevalier, Marilyn Geiger, Tierney Trueman, Dawn Nothwehr and Carolina Pardo

The following is a brief introduction to each member of the leadership team, including a personal statement. Each Sister brings different gifts of the spirit. Together, they create a strong foundation to carry the mission, vision and values of the Congregation into the future.

Sister Tierney Trueman was elected as Congregational Minister/President.

"This is a day of new beginnings, a time to remember, and move on... For by the life and death of Jesus, love's mighty Spirit, now as then, can make for us a world of difference, as faith and hope are born again." Pope Francis challenges us: "God expects something from you... God is encouraging you to dream. God wants to make you see that, with you, our suffering, violent, divided world can be different."

From 2006-2012, Sister Tierney served as president of the Sisters of Saint Francis, and served on the National Board for the Leadership Conference for Women Religious (LCWR). From 2008-2011, She was chair of LCWR Region 11 (ND, SD, and MN). Most recently, Sister Tierney served as the Coordinator for the Values Council, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota. She volunteers in pastoral ministry for the Spanish-

speaking at the Federal Medical Center, and as a Translator at the Our Lady of Guadalupe Free Clinic for Immigrants in Worthington, Minnesota.
Sister Maria Carolina Pardo Jaramillo was elected as an Associate Minister.

"Franciscan Leadership, at this time of chaos, climate and systems collapse [as Pope Francis stated], demands of us to immerse ourselves in the heart of God, to be midwives of a new world, to be visionaries, while we are ourselves in the travails of life and death."

Sister Carolina has served as a psychologist and educator at Colegio Anexo San Francisco de Asis (a school in Bogotá founded by the Sisters of Saint Francis) and also at Javeriana University, San Alfonso University and in private practice. Most recently, Sister Carolina served as the Executive Director of Mission and Futuring for Colegio Anexo Santa Francisco de Asis (CASFA) in Bogotá, and as the legal representative for the Congregation in Colombia.

Sister Marilyn Geiger was elected as an Associate Minister.

As Pope Francis stated, we "live in an unprecedented time of chaos, climate and systems collapse, and manifold forms of suffering." As a Rochester Franciscan, I do live with gratitude and hope for the future I/we are helping to birth at this very time in time."

Previously, Sister Marilyn served as Congregational Minister/President from 2012-2018, and as an Associate Minister on the 2006-2012 leadership team of the Rochester Franciscans. Her primary focus has been in healthcare, pastoral care and justice and peace ministries. She graduated from the College of Saint Teresa in Winona, Minnesota, with a B.S. in Nursing, and from the University of Washington in Seattle with a M.S. in Nursing. She also received a Masters of Divinity in Theology from Seattle University in Seattle, Washington.

Sister JoAnn Chevalier was elected as an Associate Minister.

"Serving in leadership is a response to the movement of the Spirit. We are called to be attentive and engage the Holy Mystery in a time of new beginnings. Together we embark on a sacred journey in a time of rapid change and unknowns, taking a stance on courage, creativity, empathy, growth, humility, listening, and transformation. Individually and collectively, we dream, hope, and trust for our future as we respond however, whenever, and wherever the Holy One is calling us."

While serving on the Alumnae Board of the College of Saint Teresa, journeying with the Rochester Franciscans, Sister JoAnn became a Cojourner. She then responded to the call to religious life and congregational membership. After receiving her Master of Ministry from Saint John's School of Theology and Seminary, Collegeville, Minnesota, she completed a year of Clinical Pastoral Education Residency at Gundersen Hospital, La Crosse, Wisconsin. Before the leadership election, Sister JoAnn served as a Chaplain and Director of Spiritual Care at Benedictine Living–Regina Senior Living, Hastings, Minnesota.

Sister Dawn Nothwehr was elected as an Associate Minister.

"It is my great privilege to serve our Rochester Franciscan Community. We recognize the deep relationship between justice, peace, and healing of people and our planet, as did St. Francis. Pope Francis reminds us: "When we speak of the "environment", what we really mean is a relationship existing between nature and the society which lives in it. Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it. … We are faced … with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution

demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature. – Laudato Si' § 139"

Sister Dawn entered the Rochester Franciscan Novitiate in 1977. She held positions as an extended care worker, pastoral associate, religious education director and youth minister before professing Life Vows in 1985, and then obtained her MA in Religious Studies from Maryknoll School of Theology, Maryknoll, New York. In 1995, she received a Ph.D. in Theological Ethics – Feminist Ethics, Racial Justice, Environmental Ethics Subspecialties, from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. From 1996-1999, she taught at the Franciscan Quincy University, in Quincy, IL. Since 1999, she has served on the Historical and Doctrinal Studies Department faculty of Catholic Theological Union, Chicago. Promoted to Full Professor in 2010, on October 7, 2012, Sister Dawn was installed as the Erica & Harry John Family Endowed Chair in Catholic Theological Ethics. Sister Dawn is the author of several books and numerous articles.

Celebrating Milestones: Our 2020-2022 Jubilarians

Since the start of the pandemic in 2020, our Sisters did not have the opportunity to properly celebrate their Jubilee together with others due to lockdowns, social distancing, and concerns for gathering in a large group. While some restrictions were still in place this year, a concerted effort was made to engage in a celebration for each of the Jubilarians, from 2020 thru 2022, with the entire Congregation.

INDIVIDUAL THREADS, ONE TAPESTRY OF GOD'S LOVE.

2020 Jubilarians

50 Years (1970)
Sister Kathy Warren
Sister Marlene Pinzka

60 Years (1960)
Sister Avis Schons
Sister Bernadine Jax
Sister Joyce Stemper
Sister Rosemary Zemler

75 years *(since entrance)*
Sister Francine Balster
Sister Jeanette Klein
Sister Mary Kathryn Esch
Sister Ronan Degnan ✝

2021 Jubilarians

25 years (1996)
Sister Carolina Pardo

60 years (1961)
Sister Briana McCarthy
Sister Cashel Weiler
Sister Dolore Rockers
Sister Dominique Pisciotta
Sister Mary Beth Burns
Sister Mary Pat Smith
Sister Nancy Kinsley
Sister Ramona Miller

75 years *(since entrance)*
Sister Agnes Malone

50 Years (2020): Sisters Kathleen Warren and Marlene Pinzka

25 Years (2021): Sister M. Carolina Pardo Jaramillo

60 Years (2020): Standing: Sisters Bernadine Jax and Joyce Stemper. Seated: Sisters Rosemary Zemler and Avis Schons

60 Years (2021): *Standing*: Sisters Mary Beth Burns, Cashel Weiler, Nancy Kinsley and Briana McCarthy. *Seated:* Sisters Mary Pat Smith, Ramona Miller and Dominique Pisciotta.

75 Years (2020): Sisters Mary Kathryn Esch, Francine Balster, Jeannette Klein and Ronan Degnan ǂ

75 Years (2021):
Sister Agnes Malone

2022 Jubilarians

60 years (1962)
Sister Ann Redig
Sister Anne Walch
Sister Chabanel Hayunga
Sister Geneva Berns
Sister Joan Hrabe
Sister Lois Knipp
Sister Lorraine Loecher
Sister Nancy Casey
Sister Mary Carroll
Sister Phyllis Sellner
Sister Theresa Hoffmann

75 years *(since entrance)*
Sister Edith Zamboni
Sister Seton Slater

60 Years: *Standing:* Sisters Theresa Hoffman, Joan Hrabe, Geneva Berns, Lois Knipp, Lorraine Loecher, Ann Redig and Phyllis Sellner. *Seated:* Sisters Chabanel Hayunga, Anne Walch and Mary Carroll.

75 Years: Sisters Seton Slater and Edith Zamboni.

On the next page…

Scenes from the Jubilee Celebration held on April 29, 2022

Sister Kathleen Welscher's colorful creation adorned the Chapel, reflecting the theme.

Each Jubilee Class remembered their deceased classmates by contributing a single rose, which made a beautiful bouquet.

Silver Jubilarian Sister Carolina Pardo offered the reflection during the Jubilee prayer ceremony.

Sister Char Hesby blessing Jubilarian Sister Kathy Warren.

Jubilarian Sister Marlene Pinzka leads the procession out of the Chapel.

The blessing of the hands.

With Sincere Gratitude....

We would be remiss if we didn't acknowledge the contributions of time, talents, and guidance provided by the outgoing leadership team. In particular, they held a steady course of action through unusual times during the pandemic. We thank them for their devotion to ***'living from our common heart.'*** May they reap the rewards of their efforts in the coming days; perhaps in the form of some well-deserved rest and relaxation! Thank you, Sisters Ramona Miller, Mary Eliot Crowley, Judi Angst, Jennifer Corbett and Charlotte Hesby!

2018-2022 Congregational Leadership
Sisters Charlotte Hesby, Mary Eliot Crowley, Ramona Miller, Judi Angst and Jennifer Corbett.