interchange

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Respect

Sisters of Saint Francis

Exploring values common to you and today's Rochester Franciscans

interchange

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Kathy Gatliff, Director of Communications and Public Relations

The Franciscan Values shared by Saint Marys Hospital Sponsorship Board were the impetus for determining the focus of this issue... in particular, *Respect*.

Respect...for the dignity of the human person
Respect...for life
Respect...for the poor and impoverished

Our society seems to be lacking in this value... it certainly doesn't appear on mainstream TV shows! However, once this issue was well underway, I was surprised to find the topic of respect highlighted in the news and on the radio, and in upcoming events. Was this coincidence... serendipity... synchronicity?

For example:

May 1 - Pope Francis called for an end to slave labor and human trafficking as well as greater efforts to create dignified work for more people.

May 9 - While listening to WCCO radio, I caught this discussion: "Have manners gone away in this day and age? Are we struggling with how correct our own (or someone else's) manners? Jordana Green asks Bethany Miller, owner of the Door of Success School of Etiquette." Funny, an etiquette program for young girls is scheduled for August 20-21 in the Assisi Heights Spirituality Center!

May 13 – Sister Anne provided the final content for her handout for our upcoming "Breaking the Chains: Human Trafficking Awareness" event, listing respect as the first point in the outline of how one can help shape the future.

May 15 - Looking out the window, Audrey asked me why the flag was at half-mast. We were told May 15 of each year is designated nationally as "Peace Officers Memorial Day," to pay respect to those fallen police officers in our state.

May 16 - While attending the pinning ceremony for graduates of RCTC's nursing program, they read the Professional Nursing Pledge, which includes the line, "…I will respect, at all times, the dignity and religious beliefs of the patients under my care…"

"Saint Francis and the Lamb," by Italian sculptor V. Rosignoli in front of Lourdes Chapel.

May 29 - The release of the new DVD, "In the Footsteps of Francis and the Sultan: A Model for Peacemaking," co-produced by Sister Kathy Warren, will be celebrated at Assisi Heights Spirituality Center. This DVD examines contemporary issues of interreligious understanding... and, of course, that includes mutual respect.

And, now, it seems fitting that this issue is being published just prior to Memorial Day, a time to show our respect for those who paid the ultimate price for our freedoms and opportunities in this country. May we continue to value their service, and pay our respects by holding those same values dear to us.

Respect: A Global Perspective

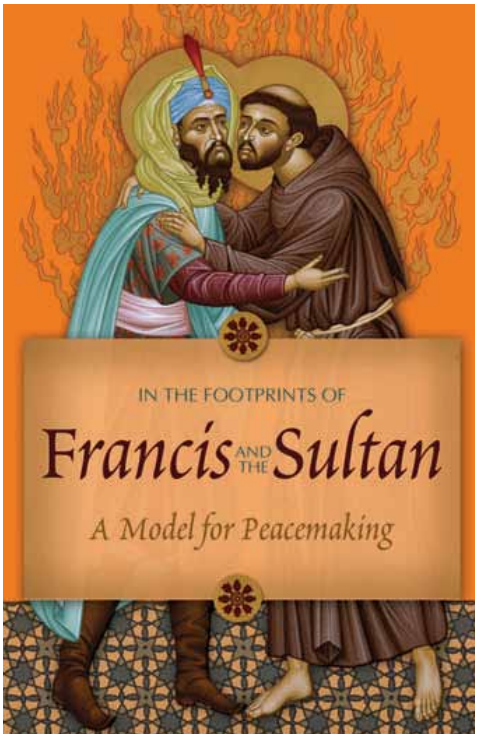
Sister Linda Wieser and Sister Patricia Fritz

As you watch the evening news, browse the internet, or read the paper, you can see how the world community has become increasingly interdependent and fragile. To move forward in peace, we must recognize and welcome the diversity of cultures and faith traditions. Together, we are one human family. When any one among us lacks respect and dignity, the world community suffers. The reality is that violence often occurs as a result of religious or racial bias.

Over the past several years, there has been a concerted effort by the Rochester Franciscans to focus their energies and raise awareness to encourage interreligious dialogue; as witnessed during their General Chapter gathering in 2005, and reaffirmed in their Chapter Directional Statement of 2011. To do so, Journey of Peace events have been held at Assisi Heights during the past few years in October. These events bring hundreds of persons of various ethnic, cultural and faith traditions together. Welcoming and respecting persons who are different from us opens up the world community and the gift of human diversity.

This truth drew Sister Kathy Warren and Jayasri Hart, of Hartfilms, Los Angeles, into a three-year effort, known as the Damietta Project. The end result of their collaboration was the recently released DVD: *In the Footprints of Francis and the Sultan: A Model for Peacemaking*. "My own belief is that the message and vision of Francis of Assisi has never been more timely. The prevalence of violence in our world, with its prejudice, hatred and aggression, shows utter lack of respect for others and begs for an alternative." Ms. Hart put these words of Sister Kathy into the context of the time of Francis, saying, "…a similar need was present during the Crusades. Francis' vision of inclusivity was unique among medieval European Christians…Francis' vision was shared by Sultan al-Kamil of Egypt with his Sufi Muslim background." Featured in the film are thirteenth century manuscripts, from both Franciscan and Islamic sources, tracing the encounter of Francis and the Sultan.

The efforts to listen with respect and dignity, to the story of followers of Islam, required being among them in conversations and filming at the actual site of the encounter of Francis and the Sultan in Damietta, Egypt. Other film locations included: Cairo, Egypt; Istanbul, Turkey; and various sites in Syria. Scholars in the Franciscan tradition—Friars Michael Cusato, Michael Calabria, and Murray Bodo— explore the meaning of the story behind this historical moment. Muslim experts include Iman Yahwa Hendi, of Georgetown University, and Fareed Munir, of Siena College. And, from his residence in Cairo, Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald, Papal Nuncio to Egypt and former President of the Pontifical Council of Interreligious Dialogue, offers insights gleaned from decades of interaction with Muslims.



This DVD, as well as the book "*Daring to Cross the Threshold: Francis of Assisi Encounters Sultan Malek al-Kamil,*" also by Sister Kathy Warren, may be purchased online at Amazon.com or Franciscanmedia.org or in the Assisi Heights Gift Shop. In addition, to help foster interreligious dialogue, a downloadable Resource Material packet is available to use with the DVD for use in high school and college classrooms, adult education programs, and religious education centers. Those wishing to improve interreligious dialogue will find these resources helpful to explore and expand a worldview different from their own, in order to create a pathway to peace.

Woman carries sign during Postville, IA immigration protests.

Sign in Cambodia warning of punishment for human trafficking.

Artwork by Stephanie Holt, Mission 21, on display at January's Human Trafficking Awareness Event at Assisi Heights

(credit: Hardwick Photo)

Terminology is Key to Showing Respect

Sister Anne Walch and Kathy Gatliff

The fight against human trafficking – people taken against their will to be sold and enslaved for sexual exploitation - is a global issue, and yes, even a local issue. Success of the human trafficking industry rests heavily on the shoulders of ignorance and apathy. Until we become aware of and overcome our personal biases and misconceptions about prostitution and labor trafficking, recognizing that no person is for sale under any circumstances, only then can we say we truly hold respect and reverence for every human person.

Human trafficking is a complex issue. Exploiting and forcing persons into servitude for labor does not just happen in big cities or foreign countries; it can be found in most every city, town or rural area – wherever there is a demand for cheap labor. Traffickers would not be able to take advantage of vulnerable people if there wasn't a societal demand for their products and services. Each of us might consider our desire for cheap products in light of the fact that it is often at the price of persons working in unsafe and dehumanizing conditions.

You've seen the recent stories about the building collapse in Bangladesh, killing over 1,000 persons working in a factory to create 'name brand' clothing. The owner of the building was arrested and held on charges of negligence, illegal construction and forcing people to join in the work. And, in the not so recent past, there was a raid on those working in harsh conditions at a meat-processing plant in Postville, Iowa. Several employees and lower and middle level managers were indicted and convicted on charges of conspiracy to harbor illegal immigrants, aggravated identity theft, and child labor violations. These stories may be worlds apart, but they have something in common: exploitation of others. These people shouldn't be viewed just as "workers" or "illegal immigrants" but rather as fellow human beings!

So what about prostitution? Is prostitution the world's oldest profession, or is it the world's oldest oppression? Rather than viewing prostitutes as criminals, we must look deeper to find that most are actually victims. They are victims of modern day slavery; having been stolen, coerced, lied to and held in check by fear tactics and physical threats to themselves, and their family members. Many of these persons have been taken far from their families and homes, and exploited into service for profit – not for their personal gain – but for that of their trafficker.

As Rochester Franciscans, it is our goal to make a difference by raising awareness of these horrific crimes to humanity. In doing so, we hope to enlighten others on how to view those enslaved - not as criminals, but as victims. We are educating others, and identifying ways to help the victims, reduce the demand, and rehabilitate the offenders. It won't be easy, but it will be worthwhile.

S. Martha Mathew reaches out to a Sister in the final stages of life.

Daily respect for life embraces Franciscan living and dying

Sister Patricia Fritz

The followers of Francis of Assisi take their cues on respect for living and dying from Francis' life and his death. Francis experienced, in profound ways, the wonder of Christ Jesus Incarnate among humans. This reality deep within led him to embrace all created life. Human persons were images of God, thus human life was very precious and sacred. Each person at every stage of life, without exception, deserved to be treated with dignity and respect. Death was the doorway to new and everlasting life.

Respect, compassion and care are woven into the web of relationships. As Rochester Franciscans, we see both our living and dying are Gospel witness. Our relationships as Sisters and Cojourners are strengthened through our affective commitment to each other; which unites us as one in faith, hope, love, service and prayer. This is the *sacrum commercium*, the holy exchange, of which Francis speaks. The lifelong process of transformation comes to fullness when the passing over, known as Transitus, happens within a holy exchange where the respect and dignity of the person is sacred, and the bonds of relationship are valued as integral to living and to dying.

As we age, rather than becoming more alike, the beauty of life becomes more unique in each person. It is within the bonds of relationship with Sisters in her Franciscan Life group, and through friendships, that the Sister expresses her needs in life—personal, spiritual and emotional—as she considers dying. She identifies a health care agent to act on her behalf, and in accord with her desires, if she is unable to do so for herself. Self-determination is a key aspect of respect for the person.

In his dying, Joe Keefe, Franciscan Cojourner and priest, said to me, "It is all one piece. Everyone and everything is connected!" Yes, living and dying are all one piece. We prepare by living fully; talk about dying as openly as about living, and live in relationship with one another, not in isolation.

Note: A few wonderful books on this topic include: Richard Rohr's book, "Falling Upward," or Joan Chittister's book, "Gift of Years."

In Memoriam

How lovely for those found in Your Most Holy Will.
The second death can do them no harm.
Praise and bless my Lord, and give him thanks,
And serve him with great humility.
(From *Canticle of Creation*)

Sister Florence Simon (formerly known as Sister Veritas) was a gifted and productive teacher and administrator in elementary and upper-grade schools in Illinois, Ohio and Minnesota. As principal of the newly-integrated Portsmouth Catholic Elementary School, she was responsible for attaining its state accreditation. The accreditors stated, "There is no feature of this school which could be improved."

Sister Florence will be pleasurably remembered in the Owatonna/Litomysl area... in her family's gatherings as the orchestrator of their ability to sing and rejoice, for her service to the elderly in nursing homes as she brought the Eucharist to them, and for her simply loving the residents as she recognized their beauty and resilience.

Sister Conall O'Connell (born Helen Patricia) spent twenty-seven years as a teacher in Minnesota elementary schools in Winona, Adrian, Ellsworth, Waseca and Owatonna, and also at Pacelli High School in Austin. During those years she earned her Bachelor's Degree at the College of Saint Teresa in 1964, and her M.T.S. at the Catholic University in 1970, majoring in mathematics.

In 1979, she moved to Vanceburg, Kentucky. There she joined the Holy Redeemer Parish staff as an outreach pastoral worker. She oversaw the concerns of homeless families who were housed in shelters, and met with other needy persons. After eight years, a new corporation was formed called Appalachian Apostolate, Inc. and Sister Conall became the director of the Church Community Center of Appalachian Apostolate. Her nineteen years in Vanceburg made a big difference in the lives of the poor. When Sister Conall returned to Rochester in 1998 to assist with the Assisi Heights ministries. She, along with social workers, clergy, and others, met with the police as they searched for a better way to care for homeless families, establishing a chapter of Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) in 2001. Sister Conall received an award entitled "From Deep Roots to Blooming" on May 12, 2011, in recognition for her help with starting the IHN chapter ten years earlier.

Sister Conall was active on the Congregation's Justice and Peace Core Committee from its very beginning until she resigned because of her poor health. Sister Conall's example during these last few years of retirement will be well remembered for her other-centeredness, her gentleness and goodness, and her love for her family.

A Nurse's Perspective

Kathy Johnson, Cojourner

As I begin to write this article, I am in Italy, touring the sites that St. Francis lived in and loved. All around are signs of Spring in the beautiful countryside–life showing forth in the budding grapevines, the flowering Wisteria, rapeseed blossoms, and the bright red poppies. How can one NOT respect life?

Fade to the past….

I think I was born to be a Franciscan. Growing up on a farm in Iowa, I witnessed life come forth each spring as the snow melted and fields became green with new growth. Through the daily tending of animals, I observed birth and growth on a never-ending cycle. But there was suffering and death, too.

My own first remembrance of suffering came as I fell out of a swing at the age of four, and as I landed, I put my teeth through my lower lip. It became infected and I ended up in Saint Marys Hospital, one of the first to be treated with four times daily shots of a new drug—Penicillin. It killed the infection and saved my life. It was there that I first experienced the loving and caring nurses, and decided that I, too, would become a nurse one day.

That resolution came to fruition, and only once in the 65+ following years, did I waiver in that decision. It happened when I saw needless suffering of abused children in Bellevue Hospital in New York City. It became almost too much for me to bear. Despite that, throughout my career, the example of the compassionate care of the nurses I encountered always made me proud and motivated me to become more like them.

It was the Rochester Franciscan Sisters who were my teachers and my models in nursing school. I saw the gentle touch and the kind words of Sisters Elizabeth Gillis, Mary Lou Connelly and Joyce Hassett (deceased). What a privilege to be able to literally and meaningfully "touch" the suffering people, to listen to their worries and the descriptions of their pain. Nursing offers opportunities that few others experience - to be with people when they are most vulnerable, to offer comfort, compassion, and care. I also learned the spirituality that explained how Jesus suffered in his life, and suffers now in the Body of Christ. We should care for each other as He asked us to do.

The teachings and example of the Rochester Franciscans have carried me though my career from Saint Marys to Bellevue, from inner city clinics, to the rural North Carolina mountains and the poorest sections of the southeastern U.S. When I returned to the Midwest in 2006, to care for my mother, I went through an orientation process for a new position at Mayo Clinic-Austin. One of the orientation sessions focused on "Mayo Values." As I started reading, I laughed and said to myself, "These aren't Mayo values, these are Franciscan values." These values were imbued in all of us who went through nursing programs in Rochester and Winona, and extended throughout the Rochester healing community.

The Franciscan values are also expressed daily by those who care for the elderly or infirm Sisters at Assisi Heights. Each of the Sisters is treated with dignity and care. Theirs is a time of prayer and patient suffering, knowing that they are respected and loved. It's a continuous cycle of love, and the nurses are blessed to be a part of this journey.

(Above) Kathy Johnson in 1961 when she was "capped" in the nursing program at Saint Marys Hospital. (Bottom) A group touring Assisi includes: Linda Jax, Mary Huettl, Kathy Johnson, Sister Marlys Jax, Marcia Boatwright, Darlene Kelly, Steve Boatwright. (Not shown, photographer, Len Jax.)

Person to Person: The Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Sister Ruth Snyder

Perhaps for many of us the name "St. Vincent de Paul" calls to mind a store where the poor can purchase clothing, furniture and household goods inexpensively. But for some Sisters and Cojourners, it is a ministry that goes hand-in-hand with their Franciscan vocation.

So, what exactly is the Society of St. Vincent de Paul? It's an international Catholic organization which was founded in 1833 by Frederic Ozanam, and placed under the patronage of St. Vincent de Paul. It seeks, in a spirit of justice and charity and person-to-person involvement of its members, to help those who are suffering and poor. Vincentians are called to see the face of Jesus in the poor and needy whom they serve. One of the Society's methods for serving the poor takes place through the home visit, where two members of a local conference meet in the home of the person who expressed a need. They discuss the situation and try to arrive at the best possible solution. There are five such parish conferences in Rochester. Anyone in the local community requesting assistance is ministered to with love and respect; regardless of their gender, race, creed or nationality. Some common requests include assistance with rent, utility bills, medical needs, food or transportation. In our bi-monthly meetings, each situation is brought before the group, and we prayerfully dialogue about what help might be offered. The Vincentian members must be knowledgeable about other sources of help in the community and, when possible, work with the families to improve their situation, in addition to attending to the needs of the moment.

How are our Sisters and Cojourners involved? Sisters Janel Crumb and Lorraine Landkammer, for example, were members of the St. Vincent de Paul Conference in Bernalillo, NM, which Sister Jean Schulte had helped revitalize. They remember the many ways the poor were helped spiritually, as well as materially, in that very impoverished area.

Bishop Quinn recommended that each parish in the Diocese of Winona form a St. Vincent de Paul conference. Sister Glennie Jean Pogue is a member of the Pax Christi Parish Conference. She commented, "I find my membership to be one of the best ways I can think of to follow my call as a Franciscan in meeting the needs of those who are poor and lacking in support of all kinds." Her background as an Occupational Therapist helps her as she visits the poor and returns to see how the goals they have set are being carried out. Cojourner Marty Cormack is president of the Resurrection Parish Conference in Rochester (see article page 8), and Cojourner Diane Borg is spiritual advisor for that same conference.

I joined the St. Francis Parish Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Rochester, and serve as their spiritual advisor.

Jeannie Kuisle (l) and Sister Ruth Snyder as they prepare to depart for a home visit.

Together, we have made visits to 376 homes since 2011, and respond to an average of 30-40 phone calls inquiries and requests each month. I am inspired by the members of the Conference and the way they live out the three essential elements of the Society:

- Spirituality: Prayer and bearing witness to Christ.
- Service to the Poor: Giving of their time and their spirit of empathy for the poor.
- Faith Community: Exhibiting true friendship to one another and to the poor they visit.

The work of the Society is financed by the parishes and special fundraising events, as well as from contributions. The spiritual energy needed to continue this ministry to the poor comes from the prayers of all of us. We appreciate that support.

Embracing the Call of Service to the Poor

Marty Cormack, Cojourner

When Ginni and I first started to explore the possibility of a Cojourner relationship with the Rochester Franciscans in 1999, continuing through our Covenants in 2003, right up to the present day, we have been continually challenged to live out our Gospel values in the manner of Francis and Clare.

Some aspects of the Franciscan way of life are easier for me to live out than others. One area with which I have struggled is living in solidarity with the poor. Coming from a modest middle class environment, I was, nevertheless, firmly entrenched in that middle class. I had spent very little time interacting with the poor. In my family life, my professional life, and in my leisure interests, I had virtually no opportunities to stray outside my middle class lifestyle and community. I neither noticed nor sought out anything different, as life was cozy and comfortable. This was not due to being uncaring, but when called upon to help, my help came by way of my checkbook and usually nothing more. It does not take much exposure to the life of Francis of Assisi, and the continual flow of stories of the Poverello, the little poor one, to know that as a Franciscan I am called to live with the poor in some way. But how?

When John Quinn became Bishop of the Diocese of Winona in 2009, he was already the Episcopal Advisor for the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in the U.S. He quickly found that there were no conferences of the Society in his new diocese, and sought a way to remedy that. In the summer of 2010, the pastors of the parishes in Rochester agreed to recommend the development of new conferences in each of the parishes.

At the time when our parish, the Church of the Resurrection, announced an informational meeting, once again, I had been in prayer discerning all the aspects of my Franciscan call, and realized that maybe this was an opportunity to be in communion with the poor of our city.

As I attended the informational meetings, I began to understand how the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul calls ordinary lay men and women to come together in prayer and friendship and then provide that prayer and friendship in service to the poor of the local community.

By December of 2010, our parish had formally incorporated a new conference, with my role as leader. By June of 2011, we began our ministry through home visits. Almost immediately we recognized both the generosity of our parishioners, and the great needs found in our community, especially following the effects of the most recent recession.

Not much effort was needed to start this ministry. The parish regularly received phone calls from those seeking assistance; but now such calls would be routed to our extension on the parish phone system. Our conference's on-call volunteers responded to these requests by way of home visits.

In a home visit, a Vincentian man and woman meet with those making the request, to discern the most urgent need, and then try to address it. Oftentimes, Vincentian home visitors assist with cash payments for rent, utilities, groceries, or transportation. Sometimes they provide advice regarding available social services. And always they bring prayers and friendship. For cases requiring significant cash resources, or posing particularly difficult situations, our home visitors bring the requests to our twice monthly conference meetings, where additional prayer or advice can be brought to bear. Since its inception, and through Spring of 2013, our conference made over 300 home visits assisting over 700 people.

In my previous exclusive middle class existence, it was easy to be ignorant of the great needs in the local community. In the past few years, I have learned a lot. Even in this city of great opportunity and above average resources, there still are many people who, despite being employed, live on the edge most of the time. One can have a job, be resourceful and hard working, but with so many low wage service jobs, offering limited or no benefits, it just takes one accident, one illness, a layoff or a bad decision to push one over that edge.

From Page 8:
Kneeling L to R:
Tim O'Callaghan, Tim Geisler, Marty Cormack (Cojourner), Imelda Murray, Jim McCarthy, Diane Borg (Cojourner)
Standing L to R:
Mary McCarthy, Gloria Flicek, Larry Flicek, Gil Harmon, Doug Hudson, Melodie Hudson, Kathy Geisler, Peter Crowley, André LaPolice, Mike Maher, Tami Hrabe

At Left: Detail of painting of the Society's founder, Blessed Frederick Ozanam, doing a home visit. *Credit: www.svdpusa.org*

I have also learned that our system and culture have things stacked against too many of our neighbors. Among the systemic problems that I have encountered are immigration and criminal justice. On several occasions, we have had to assist undocumented workers who were clearly being taken advantage of by their employers. With such injustices imbedded into the immigration system, it is nearly impossible for us to point out the employer's immoral or illegal actions without also risking total loss of employment for our friends, or even worse, separation or destruction of their families through detention or deportation. Our criminal justice system is pretty good at imposing felony level punishments, even for non-violent drug crimes, but pretty bad at rehabilitation afterwards, since so few businesses are willing to employ ex-felons. How can one rehabilitate and become a contributing and successful member of society when the single most important element to that, employment, is nearly impossible to achieve for an ex-felon?

The past few years have helped me grow tremendously in my Franciscan call to live in solidarity with the poor. The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, and my fellow parishioners with their Vincentian service to the poor, are valuable role models for me.

Sisters Colleen Byron, Gema Buendía, Ann Redig and Cojourner Ginni Cormack prepare to serve the guests at the Dorothy Day Hospitality House.

Serving those in Need: Dorothy Day Hospitality House

Sister Ann Redig, Sister Colleen Byron and Ginni Cormack, Cojourner

In 1933, Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin founded the Catholic Worker Movement (CWM) in New York City. The founding principle was to "live in accordance with the justice and charity of Jesus Christ." Those involved with CWM offered hospitality to the poor and those living on the margins of society. The idea of CWM Worker houses quickly spread across the country and around the world. They respectfully provide food and shelter to those in need. While each house is based on the ideals of Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, each is independently fulfilling its mission of social justice in ways best suited to meet their local community's unique needs.

From August 1970 to August 1971, Cojourner Kathy Johnson was at the New York City Catholic Worker. There she joined former Rochester Franciscan Sister Ambrose. They both had the opportunity to work directly with Dorothy Day. One thing that impressed Kathy the most about Day was that she accepted everyone as they were. She stated, "Jesus said 'feed people.' He didn't say 'change people.'" Kathy witnessed firsthand how Day lived out those words.

Another Rochester Franciscan to be a part of the New York City Catholic Worker was Sister Irene Kelly. After spending a summer working there, Dorothy Day invited Sister Irene to return and continue the mission the next year. And, of course, she returned to continue aiding those who needed her.

In the early 1980s, the Christian Community Center, located at Assisi Heights, began receiving inquiries and requests for overnight housing for those in need. Due to security issues, the Sisters could not fulfill these requests. After hearing from Rochester Police, local social service agencies and area churches that there was an unmet need in Rochester, a concerned group of Sisters looked for possible ways to address the needs of Rochester's homeless. Their solution was based on the model of the Catholic Worker Movement houses. Members of the original development committee

included Sisters Ann Redig and Jo Anne Lawson, Phyllis Mullin, Joan Grosso, Lucille Kuhl, Collette Miller, John Eiken, Hank Kliever, Eileen Harahan, Honore Rolstad, Fr. Joe Keefe and Fr. Leroy Eikens.

On November 1, 1984, a small house on 2nd Street SW (now the McDonald's parking lot) opened its doors as the Dorothy Day Hospitality House, serving those in need of food and shelter. Initially, many of the volunteer positions were filled by the Sisters of Saint Francis. The first live-in volunteer, Phyllis Mullin, was connected with the Rochester Franciscans as the Assisi Heights Food Service Manager.

As it became more apparent that the need for Dorothy Day Hospitality House (DDHH) services exceeded the house, it moved to the empty parsonage of Christ United Methodist Church and then re-located to the former Saint Francis Convent. With contributions from Olmsted County, the City of Rochester and many private donors $250,000 was raised to purchase a house at 703 1st Street SW. Of that, $175,000 was needed for renovations especially in the kitchen and lower level of the home.

On November 1, 1989, the new Dorothy Day Hospitality House opened its doors to welcome people in need. DDHH currently provides a short-term, live-in situation for people who are homeless, or in a crisis which leaves them in need of food and shelter. There are 23 beds for adults, plus one private room reserved for families with children.

"As Christians we are taught that we cannot love God unless we love one another. We know Him in the breaking of the bread, and we know each other in the breaking of the bread, and we are not alone anymore." -Dorothy Day

All may stay up to 14 nights at one time, and if their need still exists, they may return again in 30 days.

Cojourner Rose Anderson, as a member of the Rochester Franciscan Life Team, first organized those entering the Cojourner program to adopt the most basic symbol of hospitality – serving supper at the DDHH. Ever since, Rochester Franciscan groups have graciously embraced this mission to prepare and serve supper on the first Sunday of every month. Other Franciscans who have organized the Franciscan Sunday signup calendar include Sister Colleen Byron and Cojourners Kathy Colescott, Lorraine Heenan and Ginni Cormack. This effort has spread throughout the Rochester Franciscan community. The volunteers not only provide a meal; but even greater, they provide compassion while breaking bread together. Guests are welcomed into the dining room and invited to come together in grace and thanksgiving. The time spent conversing during the meal often includes asking guests how their day or week has been by people who really want to know. Each volunteer looks past themselves and their own problems to embrace and comfort others; even when the simple act of listening may be the only gift they have to give. As servers, the volunteers respectfully offer nourishment and companionship to the DDHH guests. But the volunteers receive just as much in return; reflecting upon how inspiring and courageous some of the guests are. It is gratifying to be a DDHH volunteer; to play a part in making one's day, or week safer in a respectful environment for the homeless to come and rest. Those volunteers are blessed to be able to share stories, laughter, and even tears.

Artist rendering of current location of the Dorothy Day Hospitality House at 703 1st Street SW.

Ginni Cormack is currently the coordinator for the first Sunday volunteer signups. She may be contacted at ginni.cormack@myclearwave.net.
DDHH contacts:
Joan Grosso, Presentations: 288-1300;
Marcie Jenkins, Meal Coordinator: 288-2988

Assisi Heights Spirituality Center

Respect for our land and resources

Sacred Land! Sacred Earth!

Sunday, June 2, 2013
2:00-3:30 pm
Canticle Park, Assisi Heights

Free will offering.

On the hilltop at Assisi Heights, come explore the history and story of the precious piece of earth held sacred by our beliefs. Take a walking tour on the cusp of the oak savannah, listen to whispering pines and become part of an ecological learning community. Appropriate for family outings and persons of all ages.

Sisters Marlys Jax and Mary Goergen are in tune with world and regional environmental issues. They consider how human interaction with the environment has defined life on earth. Both will serve as your guides in the conversation and suggest ways to move forward in faith and action.

Respect for the Arts

Celtic Music in an Italian Courtyard!

Sunday, June 9, 2013
1:30-3:30 pm
Inner Court, Assisi Heights

Free will offering

The outdoor cathedral of the Assisi Heights courtyard is traditional Irish music's best stage! Bring a lawn chair or blanket to settle in for an afternoon of Irish music and companionship among the trees and flowers and pillars of the Inner Courtyard.

Mary Bridget Lawson and Marianne Connelly, both Irish, from Duluth, MN, will play Celtic inspired music to stir your Irish soul… even those with a Norwegian heart will appreciate it! Concessions will be available for purchase. [*Please note: outside food and beverages are not permitted.*]

Alternate indoor location in case of rain. Free will donations appreciated.

Respect for Each Other

The Secret Garden – An Afternoon Garden Party at Assisi Heights Charm School

August 20, 2013 10:00am-3:30pm
and August 21, 2013 1:00-3:30pm

$45 per child includes activities on both days.

Calling all girls, ages 9 to 12!

Let's plan a garden party while learning how to become the "hostess with the mostest." Join us at Assisi Heights Charm School on August 20 & 21, where you will learn about proper etiquette and good manners while planning a garden party.

Tuesday will be a whirlwind of activity as you make invitations, invite guests and discuss good manners. Learn how to become a hostess (or guest) everyone will admire. A picnic lunch will be provided, along with a short tour of Assisi Heights and many other fun activities. Bring your creative spirit and wear casual clothing.

Wednesday is Party Day!

Wear your favorite party outfit and be ready for an afternoon full of excitement. You will be taking care of last minute party details and preparations, entertaining your guests, and being conscientious by helping with the after-party clean up. A good time will be had by all!

In Celebration: Jubilee

Golden Jubilarians 50 *fifty* years

Front Row: (L to R) Sisters Claudia Laliberte, Ellen Whelan, Patricia Keefe
Back Row: (L to R) Sisters Katarina Schuth, Bernadette Novack, Therese Jilk
In Memory: Sister Tressa Piper

Diamond Jubilarians 60 *sixty* years

Front Row: (L to R) Sisters Alverna O'Laughlin, Cynthia Howe, Regina Louise Monnig, Joy Barth, Angelo Grose, Kathleen Lonergan
Back Row: (L to R) Sisters Valerie Olson, Elizabeth Gillis, Mary Margaret Dapporn, Margaret Boler, LaDonna Maier, Petrine DeSplinter, Helen Rohlik, June Kaiser, Janel Crumb. *Not Shown:* Sister Marguerite Cahill

Diamond Jubilarians 75 *seventy-five* years

Left to Right:
Sister Mariana Boltz
Sister Margaret Clare Style
Sister Guillaume Ryan

Praying the News: Sister Margaret Louise Branton

Sister Johanna Orlett

Sister Margaret Louise, age 90, is all smiles for her 2003 portrait

Sister Margaret Louise thoughtful after the day's Mass celebration. (2013)

"I pray the news," Sister Margaret Louise gently told Sister Jeanette Klein some years ago. When Jeanette came to her bedroom for an after-supper conversation, she noticed that Margaret Louise was unfailingly prompt in viewing the evening television news.

That's our Sister Margaret Louise – always gracious, continually prayerful, in touch with the needs of everyone in the world, firmly faithful to her commitments. And, as we all remember, she was instantaneously creative, imaginative and appreciative. She has laughed with us all.

Sister Margaret Louise, formerly Sister Lisette, was born in Ascension Parish, Minneapolis, in 1913, and entered our Congregation in 1931. She taught in Catholic schools in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Ohio and Illinois for 34 years, and then served in libraries at the College of Saint Teresa (Winona and Rochester campuses), Sleepy Eye, Minnesota and Galesville, Wisconsin.

Sister Margaret Louise was particularly effective in her ministry roles serving college students in Winona and in the Nursing Skills Lab on the Fourth Floor of Marian Hall at Saint Marys Hospital. As the students confided to other Nursing faculty members, "When Sister Margaret Louise teaches you to run an audio-visual machine or dress a wound, you just know that you're going to be successful!"

In 1990, when Sister Margaret Louise came back to Assisi Heights "for real," she was invited to re-design and manage the *Nearly New* used-clothing store for the resident sisters. She tore into that project with her usual vigor, posting colorful invitations to attend our "Spring Style Show." She solicited other Sisters to parade down the hall in the used outfits she had pulled off the hangers. For this runway performance, she read her scripts touting the virtues of each outfit, as her recruits paraded down the hall. No one ever forgot being a model in the show, and then buying a dress for fifty cents.

Sister Margaret Louise sensitively translated "outreach to the people of the world" into support for the growth of families right here in Rochester. We receive cards from those families, imploring us to let them know when she gets to be 100! Well, here she is at 100... and she's still praying the news... the news of the world and the news about us!

A Century of Devoted Living: Sister Marcianne Budnik

Sister Johanna Orlett

(1964)

Sister Marcianne, age 90. (2003)

Sister Marcianne enjoys a lively card game! (2013)

Sister Marcianne's life of 100 years has been one of quiet, consistent commitment. She has recognized the expectations of her various congregational roles and ministries, and has achieved them competently and effectively. Marcianne conveys to the rest of us that she understands exactly what is happening in a given situation.

Sister Marcianne is always first at the table for a governance group meeting, armed with completely prepared materials – reflection forms answered, suggestions for group responses, background reading comments, ideas for actions, etc.

When she is a member of any group, she is a MEMBER !

When our Franciscan International Group advocates writing to our legislators and executives about taking a strong stand on an issue, Sister Marcianne does not automatically sign her name to the group letter. She asks Sister Iria to read the complete document to her, after which she does or doesn't request a dark-ink pen to sign her name. At 100 years of age, Sister Marcianne Budnik has a firm grasp on the value of her identity.

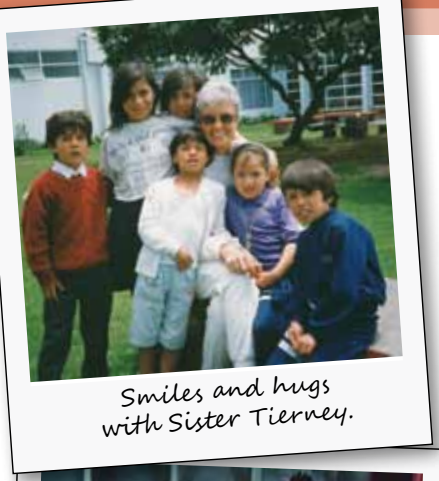
Sister Marcianne has long been visible as one of our Assisi Heights' outstanding contributors, leaders and participants in the public praise of our gathered assembly. Our sacristan, Sister Kathleen Welscher, remembers seeing Sister Marcianne's extensive use of the Liturgy Room resources to help her with the crafting of meaningful prayers for the community. She faithfully continued this ministry until her 96th year. We all thank you, Sister Marcianne, for your faithful and extended gift of praying for us and with us.

Sister Marcianne served in the congregational ministry of teaching secondary education business courses in Ohio and Minnesota for 27 years, after which she worked in administrative assistance at the College of Saint Teresa, the Treasurer's Office of the Congregation in Rochester, as well as Administrative Assistant at the Tau Center and St. Anne Hospice in Winona. Sister June Kaiser, former Treasurer of the Congregation, remembers that Sister Marcianne made a positive contribution to the important work of the Treasurer's office. She always welcomed the Sisters when they came into the office and solved their problems or took care of their needs. Sister Marcianne was a faithful and capable member of the staff.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Sister Marcianne knows exactly who she is and where she lives. She lives joyfully now, in the Assisi Heights community at the Motherhouse, where she appears at the evening "500-game" card table to interact with her friends as promptly and energetically as she ever did when she reported to work at a business affairs desk.

Experiencing Conversion

Sister Tierney Trueman



Smiles and hugs with Sister Tierney.

CASFA students at their desks.

Sister Tierney and one of her CASFA students.

CASFA Students in celebration.

It was in the decade of the 1950's that Pope John XXXIII invited religious communities of men and women in North America to go to Latin America to serve the poor, especially in the area of education. Cardinal Concha, the archbishop of Bogota, Colombia, asked Mother Callista to send some of her Sisters to serve in an archdiocesan school in Bogota. While her great desire was to work with the poor, his recommendation to her was to work with the middle class, become credible, then "you can do anything you want to do for the poor." Colegio Santa Francisca Romana was born in early 1963. The men and women who accepted Pope John XXIII's call and left for the southern hemisphere were willing to accept many forms of difficulty and sacrifice in their efforts to give of themselves to serve the poor.

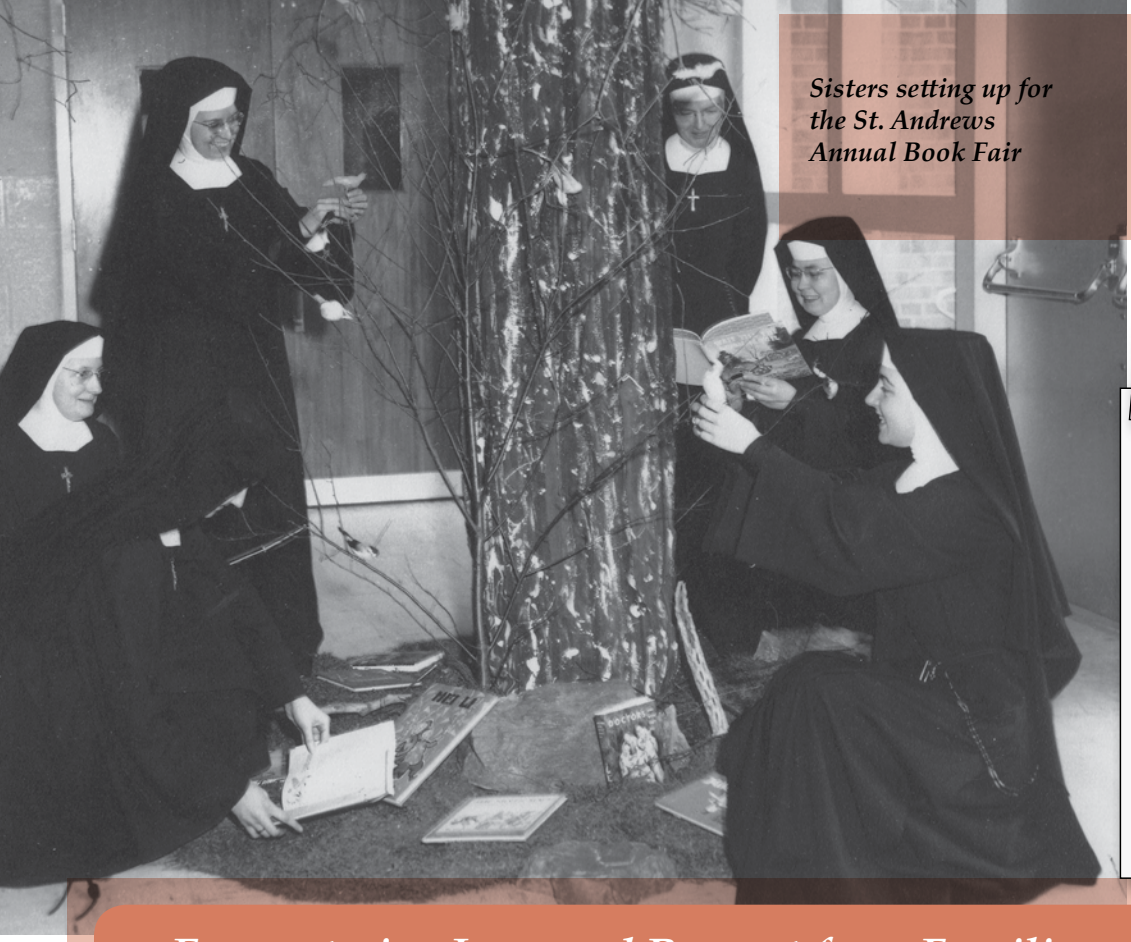
For those persons who responded to this call, a myriad of new experiences became a part of their lives. Perhaps one of the most significant, and totally unanticipated, was the experience of "reverse mission." The call was not to give of oneself without reserve, so much as it was to allow oneself to be opened to the various ways that the poor would become a part of one's own personal conversion. That gift came to me in a special way one day as I was tending to one of our children from one of the schools our congregation founded in 1985 to better serve the children and youth from the low income barrios in Bogota, Colegio Anexo San Francisco de Asís (CASFA).

Adriana was a young student in 4th grade. She had fallen and severely injured her ankle. She was seen by the physician at our on-site drop-in clinic. He suspected a fracture, and since the clinic had no x-ray equipment, I agreed to take her to the district hospital. We arrived at the emergency room around 4:00 pm. My first awareness of our cultural differences, came when we met with the admissions attendant. He asked Adriana the usual questions: name, mother's name, father's name, address, and so on. Then he asked her the date of her birth. She looked at me quizzically, not understanding the question. I explained the question. Her face told me she still did not understand. I further explained, "You know, the day each year when your family and friends wish you a 'Happy Birthday,' bring you a present, have a birthday cake…" A deep sadness registered on my face as I painfully realized she had absolutely no idea what a birthday was all about, and had never celebrated the gift of her young life.

We were seated in the emergency room of the hospital; a complex of several rooms, leading out from the center like spokes in a wheel. We were next to the room that reserved for babies, with two rows of cribs lining the walls. We witnessed three mothers with very sick babies; little ones who were actually green in color from whatever illness ravished their bodies. One was crying inconsolably. The mother was trying to calm and quiet the baby, desperately trying to find a way to hold the child to bring it some degree of comfort. An attending physician even began to shout at the mother to "quiet the baby."

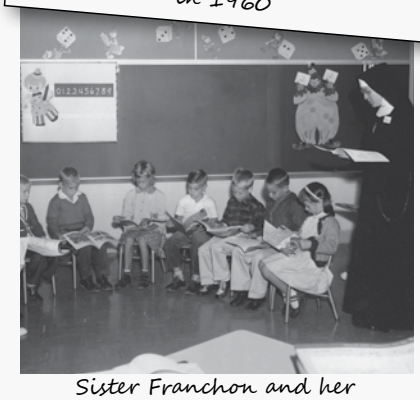
Several hours passed. It was now almost 9:00 pm. The mother of the crying baby finally explained, "We have been here since early this morning, and I only had one bottle, so the child is hungry." Without hesitation, one of the other three women said to her, "Give me your child. I have lots of milk." And she nourished that little one from her breast, selflessly giving of herself.

Witnessing and experiencing selfless acts such as this can really influence and change a person. It begs us to consider the question: Do we reach out to serve the poor and vulnerable, simply for their sake, or do we find that in our giving of ourselves, the greatest gift given is what we receive – a treasure in our own path to conversion?



Sisters setting up for the St. Andrews Annual Book Fair

Sister Irene and her St. Andrews 3rd graders in 1960



Sister Franchon and her 2nd Graders on the first day of school in 1960

Encountering Love and Respect from Families and Former Students

Sister Eleanor Granger, Director of Development

Departing on a chilly spring day in Minnesota, Sisters Dorothy Hansen and Eleanor Granger traveled to Silver Spring, Maryland to reconnect with families and students from years gone by. Landing in Washington DC, we immediately witnessed the beauty of Spring! The azaleas, tulips and dogwood were in full bloom and incredibly beautiful.

Our first visit was to a gathering of College of Saint Teresa (CST) Alumnae. Each spring, the Alumnae of CST welcome our Sisters to join them. This year, Elaine Klein, a 1973 CST graduate, graciously welcomed Sisters Dorothy Hansen, Nena Larocco and Eleanor Granger to her home.

As part of these gatherings, we presented photos of the living former CST Sister Faculty and Staff, as well as a listing of the CST Sisters from the early days up to the present. Immediately, the stories began to spring forth, and multiplied! There is no doubt of the love and respect that flows back and forth between the Sisters and the graduates. As happens each year, the proposed hour-long meeting ended three hours later.

Next, we attended a special Reunion Gathering of the Saint Andrew Apostle Parish School graduates and families in Silver Spring, MD, a suburb of Washington, D.C. Here's some background information on our involvement with this school:

In 1958-59, Cardinal O'Boyle of Washington D.C. traveled to Rochester, MN, for health reasons. With appointments already scheduled at the Mayo Clinic, he called for an appointment with Mother Callista of the Sisters of Saint Francis. His purpose was to inquire about the possibility of our Sisters coming to staff a new school. Mother Callista received Cardinal O'Boyle with great respect and interest. Shortly thereafter, a small group of Rochester Franciscans, led by Sister Irene Kelly, was on their way to staff this new parish enterprise, which was Saint Andrew Apostle Catholic School, in the Washington, D.C. area. Rochester Franciscan Sisters staffed this school from 1960 to 1984.

With great anticipation and enthusiasm for this upcoming reunion visit, Sister Eleanor had prepared a presentation for the parish, to be shown after the Sunday liturgy. The parish priest welcomed us, introduced us to the parish and invited us to bring up the offertory gifts. We felt very appreciated and respected as we represented the 38 Sisters who had taught there. We brought our history to life by sharing current photos of Rochester Franciscan teachers. We reminisced and shared stories, including those of the principals, Sister Irene Kelly, Sister Dorothy Hansen and Sister Herberta Speltz. As we shared our Mission and Directional Statement, the presentation became a conversation! The reflections by Sister Dorothy and Sister Nena Larocco merged with their recollections and we knew that God had blessed our efforts.

Sisters of Saint Francis
Academy of Our Lady of Lourdes

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