interchange spring 2012

canticle of creation

Sisters of Saint Francis

Exploring values common to you and today's Rochester Franciscans

interchange

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Focus: Canticle of Creation

2 **Winds of Change...**
Announcing New Leadership

3 **Greetings from Willkapampa**
by Sister Carolina Pardo

4 **Sitting with Francis**
by Sister Ramona Miller

5 **A Sacred Space**
Assisi Heights Spirituality Center

6 **Sharing Our Bee-Attitudes**
by Sister Alice Thraen

8 **Capturing a Moment in Time**
by Audrey Caseltine

10 **Staying in the Fire**
by Sister Marlys Jax

12 **We Remember...**
In Memoriam

13 **In Celebration...**
Companions on the Journey - Jubilee 2012

14 **A Canticle of Creation at Lake Elysian**
by Sister Charlotte Hesby

15 **Healing Waters**
by Sister Marlys Jax

16 **Celebrating Spring... and Symbiosis**
by Sister Tierney Trueman

17 **From the Development Office**
by Sister Eleanor Granger

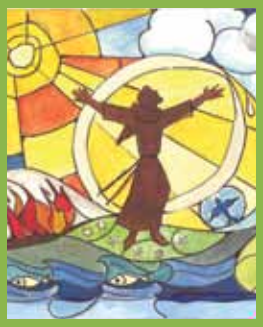
From the Editor

Best known as the patron saint of animals and the environment, St. Francis was also the author of one of the most memorable poems, "The Canticle of Creation." For those of you who may have wondered about the origin of the terms ***Sister Water, Brother Sun, Mother Earth*** and ***Sister Moon***, they are attributed to this work which was written over 1000 years ago!

Today, Rochester Franciscans share how they celebrate and pay reverence to all of creation; as noted in their Mission Statement and in the articles that appear in this issue. Whether it be establishing a communal eco-spirituality center, caring for and sustaining the diminishing bee population, or helping those in need ravaged by a destructive earthquake…

Rochester Franciscans are busy at work. You'll also find them in the quiet places... reaching out in prayer to those who need healing, meditating in nature... sitting in solitary prayer or walking a labyrinth. And they appreciate the wonder of the simplest things in life... from the beauty of nature at Holy Spirit Retreat Center, to the uniqueness of a seed springing forth to life from the branch of another plant. Rochester Franciscans truly epitomize the spirit of Francis' love for all of creation.

Kathy Gatliff
Editor/Director of Communications and Public Relations
Sisters of Saint Francis



The Canticle of Creation

by Saint Francis of Assisi

Most High, all-powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory and the honor, and all blessing.
To You along, Most High, do they belong,
and no human is worthy to mention Your name.
Praise be You, my Lord, with all Your creatures,
especially *Sir Brother Sun*,
Who is the day and through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor;
and bear a likeness of You, Most High One.
Praised be You, my Lord, through *Sister Moon* and the stars,
in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.
Praised to You, my Lord, through *Brother Wind*,
and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather,
through whom You give sustenance to Your Creatures.
Praised be You, my Lord, through *Sister Water*,
Who is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.
Praised be You, my Lord, through our *Brother Fire*,
through whom You light the night,
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.
Praised be You, my Lord, through our *Sister Mother Earth*,
who sustains and governs us,
and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs.
Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your love,
and bear infirmity and tribulation.
Blessed are those who endure in peace
for by You, Most High, shall they be crowned.

Praised be You, my Lord, through our *Sister Bodily Death*
from whom no one living can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin.
Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will,
for the second death shall do them no harm.

Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks
And serve him with great humility.

New Leadership Elected March 2012

Sister Marilyn Geiger was elected as Congregational Minister/President. She has served as an Associate Minister on the current leadership team of the Rochester Franciscans since 2006. Her focus has been in healthcare and justice and peace ministries. Prior to her congregational leadership role, S. Marilyn served in the Archdiocese of Seattle, Washington, as pastoral coordinator of St. Anne's Parish, and before that as a family nurse practitioner in a community clinic in Seattle. She graduated from the College of St. Teresa in Winona, Minnesota with a B.S. in Nursing, from the University of Washington in Seattle with a M.S. in Nursing, and from Seattle University with a Masters of Divinity in Theology.

Sister Joan Lewison recently served as administrator for the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary retirement center in Chicago, Illinois. Her prior experience included six years as co-director of the residential facility at Assisi Heights in Rochester (1999-2006). She holds a B.S. degree in elementary education from the College of St. Teresa in Winona, Minnesota, and an M.S. in education administration from Texas A & M University in Kingsville, Texas. She looks forward to returning to work at Assisi Heights as an Associate Minister.

Sister Christine Stanoch is currently enrolled in the chaplain residency program at Mayo Clinic-Saint Marys Campus, and will assume the role of Associate Minister. Prior experience includes work in pastoral ministry, counseling, teaching, and as a director of religious education. She holds a B.S. in education from the College of St. Teresa in Winona, Minnesota, and a Master of Pastoral Studies, with a concentration in spirituality, from Loyola University in Chicago.

Top to Bottom: *Ss. Marilyn, Joan, Christine, Sue, Barbara and Marlys.*

In addition to serving as Councillors At-Large, Sisters Sue Reif, Barbara Goergen and Marlys Jax, will also continue in their current ministries.

Sister Sue Reif is the Director of Restorative Justice for the Diocese of San Bernardino, California, a position she has held since 2008. Prior to that, she was the Coordinator of Prison and Re-entry Ministry for the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, New Mexico. She holds undergraduate degrees in elementary education, psychology and speech pathology from the College of St. Teresa in Winona, Minnesota, and a Masters in Pastoral Ministry from St. Thomas Theological Seminary in Denver, Colorado, with a concentration in Hispanic Ministry. In addition, she earned a Masters in Social Work from New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

Sister Barbara Goergen returns to leadership, having served as a Councillor At-Large since 2009. She holds a full-time position as pediatric nurse practitioner at the Allergy and Asthma Medical Group and Research Center in San Diego, California. She obtained her B.S. in nursing from the College of St. Teresa in Winona, Minnesota, and an M.S. in Community Health as a family nurse practitioner from Texas Women's University in Houston, Texas. Her career also included work as a pediatric primary care nurse at Mayo Clinic. S. Barbara volunteers at a homeless shelter in San Diego and has volunteered at a clinic in Tijuana, Mexico.

Sister Marlys Jax currently serves as Outreach Coordinator for Assisi Heights, which includes hospitality and marketing for the Assisi Heights Spirituality Center and its sponsored events. She earned a B.S. in education from the College of St. Teresa in Winona, Minnesota, and has pursued additional education and leadership training in Spokane, Washington and various institutions in Minnesota.

Installation will take place July 1, 2012.

Greetings from Willkapampa

by Sister Carolina Pardo

Willkapampa means "Sacred Land" in the Quechua language. Indeed this land—our communal Eco-Spirituality project—and all her creatures are sacred! We have experienced this spiritual space over the past few years, as we have been held and accompanied by the trees, the corn, the sheep, bees, cows, chickens, and Cornish hens at our personal and communal retreats.

Back in March of 2011, at one of our community retreats, eight of us—Sisters, Cojourners, and associates—gathered here for meditation. While sitting, eating, and working, every act became meditation. It was a unique experience for us to chew every bite 50 times at lunchtime, or to quietly stuff the recycled plastic bottles we've been collecting with sand to build our rain water tank and grotto, tapping every spoonful into it. (Our aim is to fill 500 bottles, but so far we have only filled 10. Just imagine how much meditation this will require!)

For Holy Week, the hermitage was the perfect location for prayer and reflection. At night, one could see Orion's belt, Sirius and a star-filled sky from bed! And in the morning, through the little windows, one could see Eleanor and Valerian—our two newborn sheep—chewing grass kissed by the dew. Such beauty and sacredness! The small fireplace warmed the candle-lit hermitage and helped one connect with the rhythm of nature, sleeping and rising with the sun.

The generosity of Earth is bountiful! Relating with the earth in an organic way has given us a lot in return: year-round produce of healthy lettuce, spinach, Swiss chard, cilantro, artichokes, parsley, and fresh corn for arepas, cornbread, and all kinds of treats!

Our students from Colegio San Francisco de Asís (CASFA) now have Cornish hens as part of their graduation project. The students quickly learned that these creatures love freedom! Even after some of them escaped the cage, they continue to come back to eat with the others. They are free beings! Our CASFA students, who have no access to green space in the city, enjoyed being part of planting trees—even as they spent a night freezing while camping under the rain—followed by morning walks up the hill to a nearby Marian sanctuary.

Certainly, the opportunity to connect with Sister Mother Earth at Willkapampa has brought a new dimension to our lives – that of healing and joy!

Willkapampa is located outside of Bogotá, Colombia.

Clockwise from top: *Willkapampa Hermitage nestled in the middle of a field. Matiqui with Valerian. Lettuce in the garden awaits picking. Ss. Val and Carolina holding the newest member and S. Val's namesake, Valerian. Torello grazing near the chicken coop. S. Carolina stands tall next to even taller corn.*
Inset: *Baby Eleanor contemplates the grass.*

Bronze sculpture of Francis on the grounds of San Damiano Sanctuary, Assisi, Italy.

Sitting with Francis

by Sister Ramona Miller

One yearns to walk the sacred places in Italy once traversed by Francis of Assisi, in order to see what he saw and to deepen intimacy with God. This can happen vicariously in a virtual pilgrimage. When Pope Benedict XVI made a pilgrimage in 2010 to the burial place of St. James at Santiago de Compostela, he said:

"To go on pilgrimage is not simply to visit a place to admire its treasures of nature, art or history; to go on pilgrimage really means to step out of ourselves in order to encounter God where he has revealed himself, where his grace has shone with particular splendor and produced rich fruits of conversion and holiness among those who believe."

Pilgrimage is traveling to a sacred place. However, we can also do this using our imagination. So, a prayer time can be a time for pilgrimage when we step out of ourselves in order to encounter God. Let's imagine going to the place where Francis spontaneously composed the Canticle of the Creatures. He was finding solace at the sanctuary of San Damiano, a short distance outside the city walls of Assisi, where Saint Clare was residing with other women, "the Poor Ladies." Although Francis was suffering from an eye disease that required his eyes to be wrapped, preventing light from causing pain, his memory provided him with sights that nurtured his meditation.

If we sit with Francis for awhile outside of San Damiano, our senses take in the beauty of God's creation, the panorama of the Umbrian valley, the intense colors of the vegetation, and we feel the gentle breezes and the warmth of the sun. Brother Sun…Who is the day and through whom You give us light. How ironic that Francis is praising the sun who gives light when his eyes cannot tolerate light! God's grace has shone with particular splendor in Francis' life. What meaning might we gain from consideration of Francis prayer?

Solitary prayer takes us to the place of self-knowledge, where we recognize that all we are and all we have is gift from God. Francis recalled what he had seen and considered the Source of all beauty and goodness. Such meditation moved him to rest in contemplation, in non-verbal communion with God. Contemplation provides God with time to gaze upon us, to transform us, to shape us like clay in the potter's hand. Pope Benedict said about his own pilgrimage: "Faith, by its very essence, is a pilgrimage… Sometimes it is necessary to escape from daily routine, from the world of practicality and utility, to undertake a journey toward transcendence… and so discovering a new freedom, a time for inner thought and for identifying oneself, for seeing others, seeing God. This is what pilgrimage has always meant." Sitting with Francis, allowing the warmth of God's love to nurture our souls, takes us on pilgrimage.

S. Ramona Miller, along with S. Mary Eliot Crowley, have led Franciscan Pilgrimages to Assisi, Italy, and the surrounding areas. You can attend their Virtual Pilgrimage presentation on November 9-10, 2012 at the Assisi Heights Spirituality Center.
Go to: **www.rochesterfranciscan.org** *to make a reservation.*

A Sacred Space

Assisi Heights Spirituality Center

In 2006, while in the midst of interior remodeling, the Sisters of Saint Francis decided to convert some of their land into a park. At the crest of the hill, they added a gazebo, picnic area and permeable paver parking lot. This area became known as "Canticle Park." An artist from another Franciscan Community, Sister Mary Jane Sorosiak, OSF, Sylvania, Ohio, was selected to bring the "Canticle of Creation" to life using pieces of colored tile. These designs, shown on our cover, were placed on rocks for reflection in Canticle Park. The largest piece of art is on display in the gazebo, and the others are spaced at intervals leading to the labyrinth.

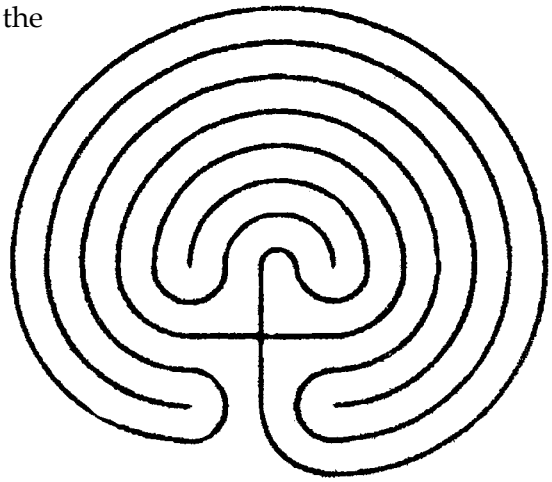
The labyrinth is a marked course designed for spiritual meditation. Labyrinths have a single, winding unobstructed path from the outside to the center. Entering into the circular area, you slowly walk a meandering path, evoking thoughtfulness about the purpose of life. Concentrating on each step, your pace is reduced, your breathing deepens and your mind becomes clearer as you let go of stress.

The labyrinth is an ancient symbol. According to the information provided for persons at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, who walk the labyrinth built into the cathedral floor, "At its most basic level, the labyrinth is a metaphor for the journey to the center of your deepest self and back out into the world with a broadened understanding of who you are."

If you wish to come to Assisi Heights and walk the labyrinth for spiritual reflection, we ask that you check in at the front desk and obtain a grounds pass. The grounds are open from 7:30 am until dusk daily.

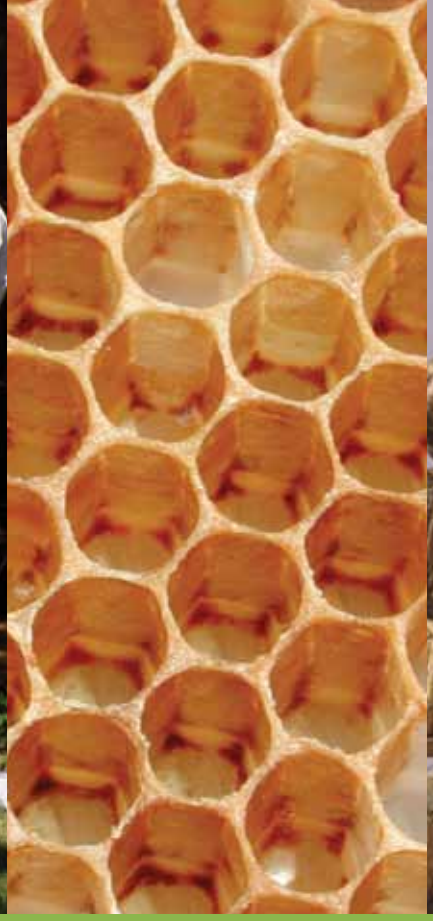
To support you in your spiritual journey, we offer programs at the Assisi Heights Spirituality Center. Information is available at, **www.rochesterfranciscan.org**, by selecting: *What's Happening/Events*.

Or, if you wish to retreat to Assisi Heights for a day of solitude and quiet, please contact Lynnette Stadtherr, event coordinator, at **507-280-2195** or **ahsc@rochesterfranciscan.org**.



Assisi Heights has a Classical 7-Circuit Labyrinth. This ancient design goes back thousands of years and has been found all over the world.

Labyrinths have, in fact, become powerful tools for today's hectic times. It is a meditation in motion, fusing movement and inner calm.



Sharing Our Bee-Attitudes

by Sister Alice Thraen

St. Francis was a lover of Creation and as followers of Francis we, too, "commit ourselves to be a compassionate presence for peace and reverence all creation."

As inhabitants of planet Earth, we recognize that all life is interdependent and every form has worth and value. In integrating the principle "to protect and restore the integrity of earth's ecological system which sustains life" (Earth Charter, 2000) we recognize the honeybees for their pollination value and their energy-filled honey.

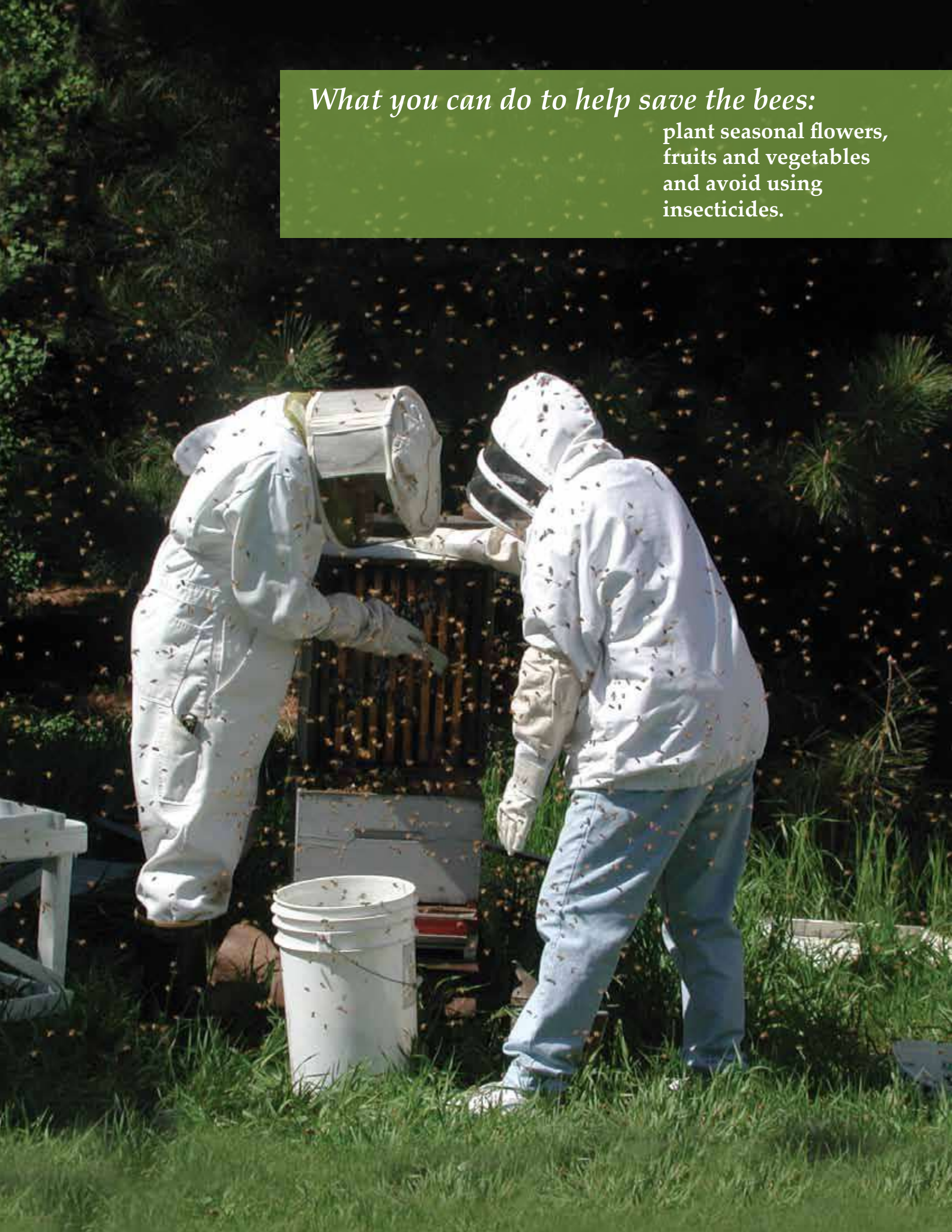
Assisi Heights has had apple trees from the time the Rochester Franciscans took up residence in 1955. At first, hives were rented for the pollination of the trees. After learning the value of the honeybee in pollinating over 3.5 million acres of crops in the U.S., it was decided to install hives on the property. Four hives were installed on the property in 2000 and the number of hives has varied from 4 to 14 over the years. The vegetable garden, flower beds, prairie grass plots, fruit trees and flowering bushes all provide wonderful forage for the bees as they pollinate and add beauty to the environment.

The honey produced at Assisi Heights is used in many different ways. The food service manager makes choices in the use of honey for pastries and meal servings in the Sisters' cafeteria. It is a natural source of energy and contributes to the Sisters' general health and well being. Honey is sold in the card shop and is often used for Christmas gifts. Hand-dipped candles, tea lights and lip balm—by-products of the wax—are also sold in the shop.

Because of Colony Collapse Disease (CCD) there is grave concern about bees disappearing. What are things we can do to help preserve our bees? Plant seasonal flowers, fruits and vegetables. Stop using insecticides and avoid seeds coated with systemic insecticides. Educate yourself about bees and tell others about their value. Create a safe haven for pollinators. Promote local honey sales, and thank the beekeepers.

Photos above (left to right):
S. Alice Thraen opening a hive's upper cover; close up of honeycomb; the queen bee travels in style in a special cage while being delivered from California; S. Alice prepares to harvest honey and holds the inner hive lid.

Right: *Beekeepers Ss. Marlys Jax and Alice Thraen maintain the bee hives. Assisi Heights' hives currently contain almost 75,000 bees.*



What you can do to help save the bees:

plant seasonal flowers, fruits and vegetables and avoid using insecticides.

Capturing a Moment in Time

by Audrey Caseltine

Many photos have been taken of the Sisters at Assisi Heights over the years, but none have gone on to become as famous worldwide as this classic photo taken by Charlie Hale in 1973.

Mr. Hale was a Rochester Post-Bulletin photographer at the time and called this photo one of his favorites. When he retired in 1986, he was quoted in a Post-Bulletin article:

"Sister Marion and Sister Anicetus from the Motherhouse at Assisi Heights were escorting the duck and ducklings as they waddled across the busy intersection. The Sisters had little switches and sort of herded them along. Cars were backed up and their drivers were smiling."

That photograph was not Charlie Hale's only involvement with the Sisters. His daughter, Bertie Schwartz, recalls some memories about the connection her father had with the Sisters in a letter written to Cojourner Jane Campion.

"I remember Dad telling me that when he was at St. Marys Hospital recovering from polio, the Sisters would come to his bed every day," she wrote. "One particular Sister always asked him if he was related to Father Hale. He wasn't related but it was a fun conversation between them."

Bertie stated that her father was also on the receiving end of apples from the Assisi Heights apple orchard. "For many years in the Fall, the Sisters from Assisi Heights would call Dad to come to the back entrance to pick up apples from their orchard. I think this started after he took the famous picture [of the duck herding] and it continued for many years."

When Bertie and her husband, also named Charlie, started their own apple orchard on their farm, she recalled her father driving through the Assisi Heights orchards and pointing out the jugs hanging in the trees.

"I contacted the Sisters and got the recipe of what they put in the jugs to keep the bugs away from the apples."

It wasn't just ducks and apples that connected Charlie Hale to the Sisters, there was mutual respect as well.

Bertie commented, "Many times Dad would tell Mom and me that he had been to visit the Sisters and how wonderful they were. They had a remarkable relationship - one that was very strong, even though we were Methodist, until I married [my husband] and joined the Catholic Church in 1988."

Now, the photo is a favorite among Assisi Heights Sisters and staff. The photo even made it for the month of October in the 2012 Assisi Heights calendar, proclaiming the Sisters to be, "The Original Animal Rights Activists."

Shown at right: *2012 Calendar page, and newspaper clipping from the Rochester Post-Bulletin on May 20, 1986.*

up his cameras, retiring

City/region

STANDARD

Post-Bulletin photographer Charlie Hale declared this photo, taken in 1973, as one of his favorites.

Left: Dressed in their best, local people wait for the clinic. Right: Tap-Tap (taxi) transports passengers, goats, bananas, and fuel barrels.
Next page (top to bottom): Village students dislodge the vehicle from the mud hole! S. Marlys takes a break with her fellow volunteers. Leda Castella, PA, with a baby goat and Thierry (French for "power of the tribe") carrying 55 lbs of rice home on his head.

Staying in the Fire

by Sister Marlys Jax

When the plane left Minneapolis late March for Port-au-Prince, I was mulling the question of why I was doing this. Chapter[1] was just over. I was still concentrating on "Staying in the Fire!" Then I remembered the quote of Bonhoeffer[2] —"There is meaning in every journey that is unknown to the traveler." I would have to let Haiti teach me why I was going there.

Before leaving, I knew Haiti's history, political situation and poverty. Since the earthquake on January 12, 2010, our hemisphere was awakened to where Haiti is located. I donated money but there was little else I could do. With 80% of the population living in abject poverty, the question still lingers: "Where does one start?"

One thing I know for sure, from the air, Haiti has a beautiful jagged island coast, rugged mountainous hills and the bluest water. However, Port-au-Prince is a tragic place. It is a paradise on one hand and hell on the other. It sits overlooking the beautiful Caribbean on rolling green hills under the world's bluest sky. And it is a cesspool. The question is: "What is its soul like?"

The poor are everywhere. Buildings are in various states of collapse. Since the earthquake, turrets are tipped, roofs tilted and rubble is piled as high as the building itself. Trash covers every inch of earth. Plastics are the bane of this country. Houses are turned into huts, huts turned into shacks, and thatched shacks turned into lean-tos. Though appearing less frequent with each passing year, tent cities still exist. They look like sticky-buns packed tight in a humid baking pan. I felt as if I was "Staying in the Fire," not only due to the temperature and humidity, but for the cause of humanity that lives in poverty! Disasters continue: there is debilitating disease; tropical storms which destroy agricultural land; Haitians warring with those in nearby Dominican Republic over deforestation and programs; and people trying to undermine the ongoing work of local organizations.

With us came the rains, which made the shale roads slick. The streets were mere gullies and potholes. Our Land Rover vehicles rocked from side-to-side. As we maneuvered over pits and potholes on the main streets that were so deep, I wondered if we may even be swallowed to our grave site – jeep and all! Side roads to the villages were either pure bedrock or 12" ruts of sticky clay.

We stayed at the Haitian Christian Mission in Fond-Parisien, about 45 miles from Port-au-Prince and a few miles from the Dominican Republic border. The compound

included an orphanage, school, and clinic. A house-building program was started in 1974, and is maintained by the First Christian Church, whose support brings building crews and medical groups to the area. Each member of our team of 16 arrived with an army duffle bag of medications, shoes and clothing. Our mission was medical. Upon arrival, we labeled and bagged medications, rice and beans; sometimes working by flashlight. We set up mobile clinics in remote villages, saw patients, and dispensed medications and vitamins. The local people came dressed in their very best clothing – clean and pressed. They left grateful and appreciative. They are happy! Maybe their Tap-Taps—brightly painted flatbed pickups with slatted sides and blinking lights, used as taxis, that haul people like cattle from early morn till late night—say it all… sporting names like Confidiance en Dieu – *Confidence in God*, Merci Jesu – *Thank You, Jesus*, and Espirit – *Hope*, and Golgotha. Here you *see* their spirit and *know* their soul!

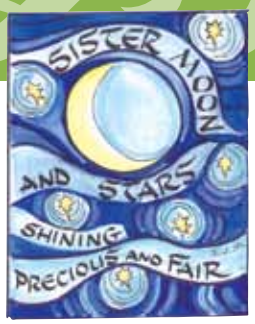
My most indelible experience was on Day 4 following a rainstorm. We had to change the location of the mobile clinic simply due to road conditions and warring activities. But the alternative location was no better. With a pick-up truck full of rice, medications and personnel, a jeep and an ambulance, we set out dodging potholes and roads that looked like rivers. We had excellent, experienced local drivers, but soon two of three vehicles were stuck in mud holes each pointing different directions. Disembarking was a feat in and of itself. We could have used the Delta Airline evacuation slides! We stepped in sticky clay that reached over our ankles, clinging in ever-broadening circles, until each foot weighed nearly 5 pounds. After 20 feet of waddling, our shoes looked like muddy snowshoes! We were oh, so close to our destination – a mere mile, so we walked. Across the field, we saw a school of uniformed children coming to rescue us! They marched in rows, shortest to tallest, through a soon-to-be sugar cane field. With their help the vehicles were unloaded. The school children, with "muddy shoes" wider than their hips, carried all the baggage, medicines and rice on their heads back to the church/school ready for mobile clinic! I discovered that mud is a great leveler!

Looking back on this experience, I am left with thoughts of what Haiti taught me. Our Chapter Directional Statement, formed this past year, states that "we, the Sisters of Saint Francis….are impelled to speak respectfully and act courageously on issues of oppression and marginalization of women in our church and society…" In the late 1980's the Haitian women started Peasant Movement of Papaye (MPP). It grew out of the Basic Christian Communities. The movement was designed to set goals greater than sustaining a livelihood. However, everything seemed to be set to work against them: they are Haitian, they are peasants, and they are women. The women felt like brooms. They saw themselves used by men and then put aside when they were worn out. The Church distanced itself from the more assertive reform movement when many peasants involved in organizing land reform were massacred. Though the Catholic women were repressed in this movement; it remains strong to this day! The Haitian women recognized that their education and political organizing skills were necessary in building a sovereign country, and to bring their potential to fruition.

When I consider the Chapter Theme "Staying in the Fire," my hope is that we live into that phrase even more deeply now that Chapter is complete. The universal voice of women is one great common cry of pain. Let us turn these embers into a blazing fire as we stand beside the women and poor of the world. They cannot escape.

[1]*Chapter is the gathering of Sisters every sixth year to elect of new leadership and plan for the direction of the Congregation for the upcoming six years.*

[2]*Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906 – 1945) was a German Lutheran pastor, theologian, and anti-facist.*



We Remember...

"Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death from whom no one living can escape."

from ***The Canticle of Creation*** by Saint Francis of Assisi

Sister Annella Rhode (1908-2011)

As chief housekeeper at the Motherhouse on Center Street for 34 years, S. Annella knew exactly what needed to be done and just how to do it. She taught the young novices well; always with loving kindness. Her witticism was a delight and she often repeated, "Love many, trust few, learn to paddle your own canoe." In her later years, she was often found busily stuffing "dammit dolls" in the craft room.

Sister Carlan Kraman (1920-2012)

In 1987, Sister Carlan began researching the life of Mother Alfred, Foundress of both the Joliet and Rochester Franciscans. Shortly thereafter, she published the book in 1990. She volunteered for the Peace Corps and taught in the Czech Republic for a year.

Musician, artist, poet, author, icon writer, avid reader, linguist, committee member, frequent traveler, hermit, God-seeker… these roles and others might be attributed to Sister Carlan as her Franciscans Sisters remember and speak of her life among us.

Sister Elise Horihan (1912-2012)

Her professional life was primarily spent in education in the U.S., as well as Lima, Peru and Bogotá, Colombia. She served in Hispanic ministries in Colorado, Minnesota, and California; the Women's Institute for Life-Long Learning (WILL) at Assisi Heights; and as a Public Relations Volunteer at the College of St. Teresa, Winona, Minnesota. For all of her 99 + years (54 days short of being 100), she was gracious, grand, cheery & appreciative. She had a wonderful memory, and could recite memorized poetry and reflections, share current events, and engage in interesting conversations.

Sister Mary Ann Pfeifer (1928-2011)

She was a superb teacher who was as comfortable in the classroom teaching students how to diagram sentences, as she was in a fishing boat baiting her hook. Many remember her gentle spirit which was reflected in the compassionate care she extended to other people and all the creatures in nature.

Sister Mary Beth Modde (1915-2012)

Self-assured, well-groomed, well-spoken, and very sociable, Sister Mary Beth Modde best fits her brother Bob's description: "She never met a stranger." She was best known for her love of family, friends, travel, chatty stories and hostessing—as well as her critical stances on educational and moral issues. This ninety-six year old Franciscan Sister, who was buried on her ninety-seventh birthday, met, interacted with, and influenced many people. In all, Sister Mary Beth contributed seventy-three years of ministry, and is best remembered as the founding director of Colegio Santa Francisca Romano (CSFR) in Bogotá, Colombia.

Companions on the Journey is the theme for this year's Silver and Golden Jubilee celebrations.

The artwork is by S. Rita Brom. There is special meaning for each component.

Silver Jubilarian: 1987-2012

25

S. Sara Ruble

Golden Jubilarians: 1962-2012

50

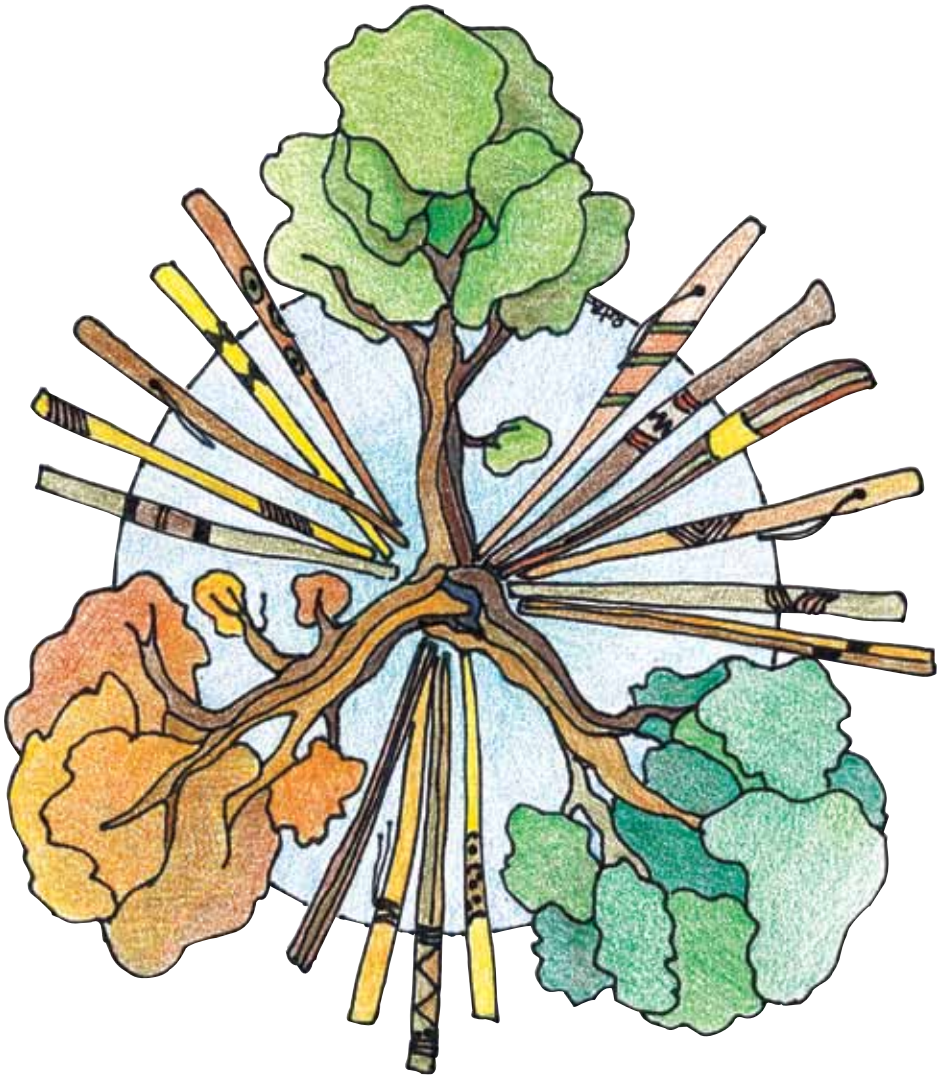
S. Geneva Berns
S. Mary Carroll
S. Nancy Casey
S. Judith Chiodo
S. Lucille Hass
S. Chabanel Hayunga
S. Theresa Hoffmann
S. Joan Hrabe
S. Valerie Kilian
S. Lois Knipp
S. Lorraine Loecher
S. Ann Redig
S. Phyllis Sellner
S. Anne Walch

In Remembrance
✝S. Carol Kaufmann (1999)

Diamond Jubilarians: 1952-2012

60

S. Rose Gillespie *(transfer)*
S. Clairvaux McFarland
S. Ruth Snyder
S. Bernadette Svatos
S. Renata Walch
S. Michon Welsh
S. Kate Zimmerman



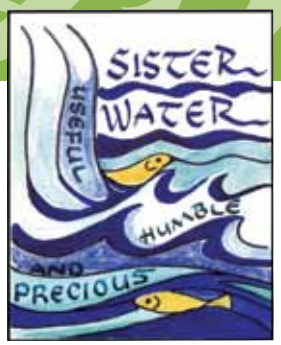
Companions ON THE Journey

JUBILEE 2012

Center of the Tree: Our being rooted in the divine presence of God.
Branches: Our creative ways of growing together and enjoying one another.
Walking Sticks: Being nourished in our walk together in the Franciscan way of life.

A Canticle of Creation at Lake Elysian

(With thanks to Gerard Manley Hopkins' "Pied Beauty")



GLORY be to God for dappled things –
Sunlight on rippled water; tree shadows on buildings, lawn and woodland floor; marsh-born frogs and salamanders.

For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow,
Crimson-kissed clouds at sunset; our neighbor's pinto ponies and calico cats.

For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim.
Walleye, northern, crappies and gazillions of huuuumongous jumping, flopping carp; Canada geese, mudhens, and pelicans that swim, dive AND fly; and heron, too, of course.

Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls, finches' wings;
Foot-crunched acorns, grape-sized wild plums, purple-staining buckthorn berries; wings of: gold-, purple-, and house- finches, cardinals, downy-, hairy-, and pileated-woodpeckers; rose-breasted grossbeaks and bald eagles.

Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough;
Tree-crowned hillocks, sand-quarried valley; rocky, sandy, tree-lined and cattailed lakeshore; sugar maple woods and wildflower-studded prairie; NOTHING fallow.

And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.
BIG lawn tractor, rakes, wheelbarrows, hoes, rain barrels, and hundreds of feet of garden hoses; birdfeeders, picnic tables, snow fences; ladders and more ladders.

All things counter, original, spare, strange.
Carmen, JoAnn, Monique, Char: You decide what applies!!

Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
Masked raccoons, darting chipmunks, scolding squirrels; trout lily leaves and nuthatch eggs.

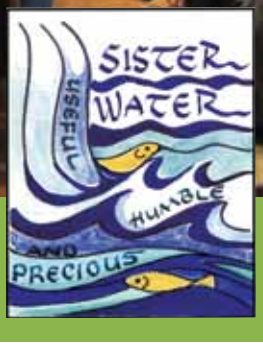
With swift, slow, sweet, sour, adazzle, dim;
Wind-driven white-caps; sauntering opossum; mouth-watering blackcap raspberries; lip-puckering gooseberries, scarlet sumac; moonless nights.

He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change.
Praise him.

Praise our Mother/Father
within whose beauty, here and in all places,
"we live and move and have our being."

How else can you even begin to describe the dizzyingly multifaceted, fertile and exuberant life of the lake, woods, prairie and people of Holy Spirit Retreat Center?

Charlotte Hesby, OSF



Healing Waters

by Sister Marlys Jax

Bernadette Soubirous was a very ordinary 14 year-old in 1858 when "the Lady" appeared and asked her to dig until 'Sister Water' emerged.

She uncovered a natural spring; the healing waters of Lourdes, France. These waters still flow to this day, bringing healing in many modalities – spiritual, physical, emotional; genuinely lifting everyday burdens.

On February 12, 2012, the World Day of Healing was laced together with the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes at Assisi Heights. A prayer service celebrated examples of healing in Rochester. With a simple stroke of the water, Lourdes was fused with 'Med-City's' capacity to alleviate suffering and pain. In Sister Water, we encountered the divine.

At this service, testimonies were named miraculous. Chris Norton spoke of his uninterrupted healing from a sports accident. His upbeat attitude, the touch of his therapist, and encouragement of his sporting friends and family, to this day support his ongoing recovery.

Kay Anderson, a cardiac nurse, related how the eyes of compassion and the touch of humor added healing to children's mending hearts following surgery.

Dennis Manning, MD, discovered an invasive enemy living within: Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. Two cycles of chemotherapy were completed with more yet-to-come, when he decided, despite his ill health, that he would go forward with his plans to attend a scheduled medical conference in Rome at the Vatican. This critical decision turned his trip into a pilgrimage of healing. After receiving prayers and a special Papal blessing in Rome, he arrived home with increased red blood cell counts and normal test readings which baffled his doctors! There was no need for further chemotherapy.

All were blessed! For those in attendance, this prayer ritual provided:

> *Peace to the body,*
> *Nourishment for the soul*
> *Inspiration for the mind and*
> *Consolation of the heart!*

Main photo: *Attendees at the Healing Prayer Service.* ***Top Left:*** *S. Vera Klinkhammer receives a blessing.* ***Bottom Left:*** *Holy Water*

Celebrating Spring...and Symbiosis

by Sister Tierney Trueman

Spring is here! Symphonies of morning bird songs announce its presence. Tree buds bursting forth from winter-imprisoned branches welcome it. Daffodils and crocus rainbows explode from the frozen ground. Spring! New life! And Francis would sing: "Praise be my Lord ..."

A few years ago, I was given a plant as a birthday gift from S. Clara Inés. From the base plant, S. Elaine took a few leaves to root, giving me a few to root also. I rooted one in water and put the growing plant on my deck last summer. It must have been at that time when a wandering sunflower seed decided to land and call it home! Therefore, I ended up with a plant growing from within another plant! Symbiosis!

In the poem "Trying to be Thoughtful in the First Brights of Dawn"[1] Mary Oliver writes:

"I am thinking, or trying to think, about all the
imponderables for which we have
no answers, yet endless interest all the
range of our lives, and it's
good for the head no doubt to undertake such
meditation; Mystery, after all,
is God's other name, and deserves our
considerations surely. But, but—
excuse me now, please; it's morning, heavenly bright,
and my irrepressible heart begs me to hurry on
into the next exquisite moment."

How often does our Mother Earth gift us with these exquisite moments? How many symbiotic relationships surround us and challenge us to respond?

sym·bi·o·sis

a. the living together of two dissimilar organisms, as in mutualism, commensalism, amensalism, or parasitism.

b. the close association of plants or animals of different species, often, but not always, of mutual benefit, living together in a more or less intimate association.

[1] *SWAN – Poems and Prose Poems. Beacon Press, Boston, MA © 2010, page 48.*

From the Development Office

This issue calls each of us to join in creating a new and wondrous day. Our Sisters invite you to view us in our ministerial world, as we:

- Uphold life in all of God's creatures, as noted in the Willkapampa article and the article on "Bee-Attitudes."
- Discover the necessity to escape from daily routine as we undertake our journey in prayer life, to seek God and see God in others.
- "Stay in the Fire" as we walk together with so many in pain and those facing life struggles.
- Give thanks daily for the beauty of God's creation at Holy Spirit Retreat Center, and in our Chapel where we invite all people to join us in praising God.

Your collaboration and partnership assists us in all of the above ministries. Including a gift to the Sisters of Saint Francis in your will or living trust is one more way that would help us continue to live out the *Canticle of Creation*! Charitable bequests offer the following benefits:

Simplicity. Just a few sentences in your will or trust are all that is needed! Share the sample bequest language for Sisters of Saint Francis with your estate-planning attorney:

> *"I, [name], of [city, state, ZIP] give, devise and bequeath to Sisters of Saint Francis, [written amount or percentage of the estate or description of property] for its unrestricted use and purpose."*

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

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

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

We Understand. Your circumstances may change and you can change your gift at any time.

Sister Eleanor Granger *(Right)*
Director of Development Office

Sister Alice Thraen *(Left)*
Office Manager

When planning a future gift, it is sometimes difficult to determine what size donation will make sense. Emergencies happen, and you need to make sure your family is financially taken care of first. Including a bequest of a percentage of your estate ensures that your gift will remain proportionate no matter how your estate's value fluctuates over the years.

We can help. Contact Sister Eleanor with any questions about naming Sisters of Saint Francis in your will or living trust. We are happy to help, without obligation.

Sister Eleanor Granger, OSF
507-529-3536
egranger@myclearwave.net

Please note: This information is not intended as legal or tax advice. For legal or tax advice, please consult an attorney.

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Academy of Our Lady of Lourdes

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State/Zip _____

Email _____

Canticle of Creation – *Celebrate God's goodness in your life*

The heavens and the earth are full of the glory of God! St. Francis celebrated that we are all God's creatures, and must be in tune with all of the cosmos. We are brother and sister to each other, and to each creation.

Sister Water, Brother Wind (Air) and Sister Mother Earth are being challenged by abuse. Oftentimes, our sisters and brothers—humans and animals—receive lack of respect for their dignity and rights through ignorance, lack of concern or abuse. We must remember the need to care for their well being—all are created out of God's love.

Have you ever been inspired to want to give your live completely to this relationship and to the care of all of creation? If you are a single woman, desiring to spend your life with others who support and challenge you in your vision, or know of someone who does, please contact Sister Ann Redig, Vocation Minister at 1-888-277-4741 or 507-282-7441. Email: sisterann@rochesterfranciscan.org