



FRANCISCAN CONNECTIONS

The Newsletter of the Associates of the
Hospital Sisters of St. Francis

“Sharing in a Franciscan way of life and a healing Spirit”

Volume 13, Issue 3

May 2018



Ecclesiastes 3:1 There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens.

Our Sister Jubilarians will Celebrate in June

75 Years Professed – “Jeweled Crown Jubilee”

Sister Jocelyn Serwatka

70 Years Professed – “Grace Jubilee”

Sister Anna Clara Rick
Sister Chaminade Kelley
Sister Joseph Wu
Sister Leonardine Sconzert
Sister Marie Chang
Sister Viola Swoboda

50 Years Professed – “Golden Jubilee”

Sister Maureen O’Connor
Sister Sherry Murphy

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Associate Office

By Nancy Davis

“To Be Continued”

Since our friendship was born in 2011, my friend, Father Simon Taabu, and I have always ended our conversations with the words, “to be continued.” Several weeks ago, I heard a homily about how we, as a society, hate mystery. We like to have things “wrapped up” and really don’t like “to be continued.” The priest talked about how we should never put a period where a comma belongs, because God always has the last word.

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Associate

Office –Continued from page 1



Sometimes we as humans, with our limited intellectual capacity, want to be in control, and our lack of faith tends to put periods where commas belong. I am mindful of my dear friend, Laura. She died in 2014 of stage IV breast cancer at age 44. Many people see a period here, an end to her life, the battle lost. There was an end to her physical life here on earth, but there is so much more. Cancer did not win because Laura was one of the few people that I have known who seemed to have completed the mission for which she was created. This young woman inspired so many people during those six years she lived with cancer because of her tremendous faith and positive attitude. In the midst of her battle while raising her four children under age 12, she wrote a book that was entitled: “Shine – The Silver Lining of Living with Cancer is God’s Love, the greatest Gift of All.” (Available on Amazon) Her story will live on through the lives of her children and the many people impacted by her witness. No period here. Another example is my friend who just found her birth father at age 47 after putting her DNA in a database that, unbeknownst to her, also contained her birth-father’s DNA. She is from Vietnam and her dad is an American GI. She had nothing to go on, not even a name, yet God orchestrated their finding each other. A

period had been put on this part of her life, when God had actually placed a comma. When viewing these stories through the eyes of faith and from the perspective of an omnipresent God, there are no periods. Where have you put a period in your life, instead of God’s comma? ❖

NEWS BITS . . .

The Sistine Chapel Choir will be performing at the Fabulous Fox Theater in St. Louis on 7/9/18 for one performance only. Contact the Fox Theater for ticket information by calling 314-535-2900 or visit their webpage <https://www.fabulousfox.com/> . ❖

WE SUPPORT IN PRAYER . . .

- Sue Smith (Decatur) whose brother died
- Debbie Waitkus (Springfield) who is undergoing medical treatment
- Peggy Tregoning (Springfield) who is undergoing medical treatment
- Kathy Kovell (Eau Claire) who is recovering from surgery
- Mike Sgro (Springfield) who is undergoing medical treatment
- All our Hospital Sisters ❖

NEWS BITS . . .

The Sisters moved into the new Loretto Home on 3/13/2018. Father Dennis Koopman held a blessing ceremony on 3/19/18. May God bless the Sisters as they adjust to their beautiful new home. ❖



Being Franciscan . . .

Dee Turnbaugh

(Highland)

**Year of Commitment –
2015**



I became interested in becoming an Associate of the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis after seeing an article in *Catholic Times* in 2014. Prior to this, I had professed as a Third Order Franciscan (OFS) with the Monte Le Verna Franciscan Fraternity in Granite City, IL in 2013. During my formation for the Third Order Fraternity, I studied about St. Francis and was inspired by his life and work. I was very excited to learn that there were Franciscan Sisters in my area with which I could become affiliated. I contacted RuthEllen Davis and began attending the meetings with the Highland group.

To be an Associate is a very important part of my life. In high school, I thought about becoming a nurse. Although that did not happen, I did volunteer at Wood River Hospital. Being there and seeing the work done each day remained in the back of my mind for many years. Each monthly meeting gives me more insight into the life and work of the Hospital Sisters. Their faith, love, and support of each other gives me hope in the fact that the world will continue simply because of such wonderful devoted Sisters. Their prayer life is an inspiration which helps me to continue each day with the knowledge that we are all in this together. Being an Associate is a bright light in my world, calling me to a deeper faith life.

My sponsor was Sister Marilyn McCormick. We had many things in common, such as love of nature (especially trees), enjoying quiet times to pray or read, and our views on life in general. God seems to put people in one's life at just the right time. Sister Marilyn was one of those people who helped me to grow in ways beyond imagining.

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Marcianne O'Brien

(Springfield)

**Year of Commitment –
2016**



I was introduced to the Associate Program of the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis by Sue Smith, a fellow Associate. I was immediately drawn to the joy of the Hospital Sisters and their devotion to living the traditions of St. Francis and St. Clare. Trying to live the Franciscan way in prayer, community, and service has been challenging yet very fulfilling for me. Sister Jocelyn Serwatka was my sponsor. I was drawn to her because of her piety and her quick smile. We also share a Polish heritage. She helped me clarify my purpose as I began the journey. I pray regularly for the Holy Spirit to guide me.

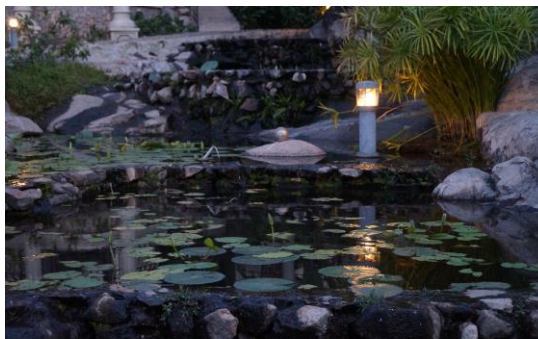
I am a retired teacher and enjoy tutoring and working on projects. I also have a love for playing duplicate bridge. I have three children and four grandchildren. I love spending time with my grandchildren which I am able to do weekly. I am extremely fortunate that they all live in the surrounding area, which affords us the opportunity to attend Mass together, to attend school activities, and to gather to share meals.

A slice of my history: My great grandmother, an immigrant from Poland, was associated with the Felician Sisters in Stevens Point, WI. She was affectionately remembered as the grandma who prayed the rosary day and night and who walked everywhere, as much as 15 miles one way. She was buried in a Franciscan habit. This saintly woman has been an inspiration to all of us who have rediscovered her. ❖

A Moment Of Reflection . . .

Living Peacefully on Earth – By Richard Rohr

To live nonviolently—both toward humans and nature—requires that we recognize God’s image in each living thing. We cannot be violent toward someone or something when we see the divine in them. My friend and nonviolent activist John Dear recently published a new book, They Will Inherit the Earth, from which I’d like to share today.



Over the decades, I have witnessed the destruction we humans have done to Mother Earth and her creatures. I’ve read about catastrophic climate change and experienced the changes—the droughts, the strange weather, the extreme fires and tornadoes and rainfall. . . . I grieve for Mother Earth and the creatures who die because of our systemic greed, violence, and destructive habits. But I never made or felt the connection between my vision of nonviolence and the ongoing destruction of Mother Earth. Until now. . .

“Blessed are the meek,” Jesus says in the Beatitudes. Thomas Merton wrote that “meekness” is the biblical word for nonviolence. “Blessed are the nonviolent,” Jesus is saying. . . . “They will inherit the earth.” . . . A life of nonviolence leads to oneness with creation and her creatures. A life of violence, of course, leads to an abrupt discord with creation. In a time of permanent warfare, nuclear weapons, and catastrophic climate change, the message couldn’t be clearer. The God of peace, the

nonviolent Jesus, and his Holy Spirit call us to practice nonviolence. In that way, we’ll renounce and stop our environmental destruction, tend our Garden of Eden together, and restore creation to its rightful peace. In the process, we will discover peace with one another and all the creatures. . .

This is the journey we are all called to live, to make the connection between active nonviolence and oneness with creation, so that we all might dwell peacefully in this paradise. . . . I [see] not just the vision of peace and nonviolence, but the vision of a new creation, where we all live as one in peace with one another, Mother Earth and her glorious creatures. It’s that vision of peace, nonviolence, and the new creation, the vision of the promised land before us, the practice of proactive nonviolence, that offers a way out of environmental destruction, as well as permanent war, corporate greed, systemic racism, and extreme poverty.

All we must do is open our eyes to the reality of creation before us, to be present to it, to take it in and honor it, and welcome its gift of peace—and do so within the boundaries of nonviolence. In that present moment of peace, a new creation is offered to us once again.

From: John Dear, *They Will Inherit the Earth: Peace and Nonviolence in a Time of Climate Change* (Orbis Books: 2018) ❖

Dee Turnbaugh – Continued from page 3

I have been married to my husband, Gary since September 24, 1966 for 51 years. We have one daughter, Amy, who is an attorney and lives in Chicago. We have a rescue beagle named Jilly and two grand-dogs. Both my husband and I are retired.

I have served as a lector, rosary leader, and Eucharistic minister in my parish. I enjoy being outside as much as possible and reading is a large part of my life. I do like tattoos and I have one of St. Francis and the wolf of Gubbio. I am Franciscan all the way. ❖

Musings from Chiara

By Dan Frachey



Of Fragrances, Tastes and Aromas

One of my favorite learning applications when working with youth involved hot cocoa. In the context of becoming authentic disciples, I would start by telling them about what great cocoa I made and then have some volunteers with carafes begin pouring samples for everyone.

The kids would soon realize that what they were drinking was the most watered-down, lukewarm excuse for cocoa they would probably ever taste. After the huge build-up of how good it was, I would watch their faces as they realized how unimpressive my cocoa was. After savoring the frowns and mumbles, I would move into my point that *WE are the cocoa that the world tastes and longs for*. The point of this lesson was how God had infused a particular flavor of Jesus' self into each one of us. To withhold or to dilute the essence of ourselves would leave the world thirsting and disappointed. To finish making my point, the volunteers would return with a second offering – a velvety rich cocoa topped with real whipped cream that could only be obtained from the Cocoa Blue chocolatier in my hometown of Rochester, Illinois.

Lest the reader dismiss my folly, I can point to the origin of this *cocoa-ism* in Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians. *"But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing."* (Vs 14-15, NIV)

No doubt St. Francis knew that people craved Jesus' essence in a world full of foul smells. As troubadour, soldier, merchant and preacher all rolled up in a course brown tunic, Christ was

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Prayer: Trusting God with Hope

By: Sister Rosily Menachery



There was a time in my life I understood prayer as "God gives what I ask for." Did I receive all that I asked for? No way! As a young religious Sister my understanding of prayer changed into something like this: "God is all-knowing and all-powerful; then, God knows what my needs are and will fulfill my needs accordingly." I wrestled with this thought for many years and learned my lesson for the rest of my life in 2010 through a personal experience. During that time this sentence reassured me: "Well, your Father does know what you need before you ask him; but do you?" The author has recognized the problem in this type of thinking with the emphasis on the words "do you?" The underlying wisdom here is that if one has not prayed for a specific need to be fulfilled, but God recognizes the person's need and fulfills that need, there is a possibility that the person does not recognize God's intervention.

When God does not answer a prayer the way one wants, one has the freedom to think that perhaps what one is asking for is not good for oneself. Only God who is all-knowing and all-powerful will know what is good and what is not good for one, in a similar way that a mother knows what is good and what is not good for her child.

When a person reaches to the stage in prayer where one realizes that what the person wants is only God, then the person is able to let go of everything that hinders the relationship with God. Looking at the life of St. Francis of Assisi, one can understand why Francis gave up everything including his biological father and his inheritance. When Francis experienced God in prayer, what mattered for him was only God.

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Justice and Peace Connection

By Sister Mary Shaw, ASC



Choices

"What potent blood hath modest May." (Ralph W. Emerson) May! After many harrowing experiences this winter of blood loss resulting from violent acts, almost to the point of saturation, we again cry STOP THE VIOLENCE while we perceive care for our common home as a disconnect from violence.

May is replete with new life and historical significance: the birth of Daniel J. Berrigan, S.J. Rerum Novarum, Memorial Day and so forth. We celebrate Laudato Si' published in 2015. Scripture declares that, "Life is in the Blood" (Lv.17:11) and Laudato Si' tells us rather candidly that "everything is connected." Yet, we stand by and watch some of our finest cut down in the prime of life. We are called to cultivate a culture of life not a culture of death. How? Perhaps take a public stance on one of the above issues, coupled with practicing nonviolence in our approach to all whom we interact with daily. Add a dash of prayer, a smile or kind gesture and recognizing another's presence. Let us allow Jesus to encounter us and hear Him say, "Lay down your sword." Transformation and care for our home begins. It may cost us our blood, but life is in the blood.

Our Floridian youth get the picture. Their pain is generating **hope and a proactive, non-violent stance**. They are going to the Legislators and confronting the idols that have become the basis for our laws at the expense of human life. Yes, May is filled with life and it

just may be a good time to reflect upon Ullman's poem: "Youth is not a time of life; it is a state of mind; it is not a matter of rosy cheeks, red lips and supple knees; it is a matter of the will, a quality of the imagination, a vigor of the emotions; it is the freshness of the deep springs of life." May we tap into our wellsprings and find the One who will empower us to live out of the love of God. May we exude hope, non-violence and a care for the health of our home. ❖

Musings from Chiara – Continued from page 5

pleased to be found within his fragrance of love, mercy, kindness, compassion and joy as it wafted through the entire Umbrian valley. For us to be faithful Franciscans, the lids must come off the pot so that the aroma of our truest selves can spread. There can be no holding back on sharing the blessed ingredients that God has seen fit to flavor our lives with, including the bitterness of our pain, suffering and disappointments. Together with the joyful realities in our lives, all these ingredients are exactly what the Holy Spirit delights in when pouring us out as humble and joyful libations. ❖

Prayer: Trusting God with Hope – Continued from page 5

Like Jesus, Francis reached out to the poor, the sick, the outcasts and the marginalized of his time.

"Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered King Nebuchadnezzar, 'There is no need for us to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If our God, whom we serve, can save us from the white-hot furnace and from your hands, O king, may he save us!'" (Daniel 3: 16 – 17) Here I see **Prayer as Trusting God with Hope**. ❖

Associates Building the Kingdom of God . . .



Dolores Firkus and Peggy Oravec (Highland), Communion Service



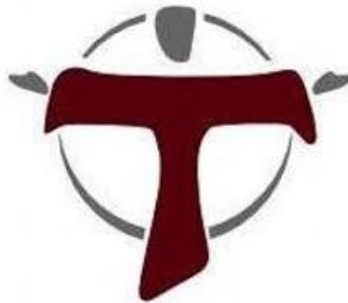
Mary Wilquet, Karen Skaletski, Donna Schneeberger, Mary Thomas, Lynn Gonwa and Debbie Buckman (Green Bay) St. Vincent de Paul Ministry



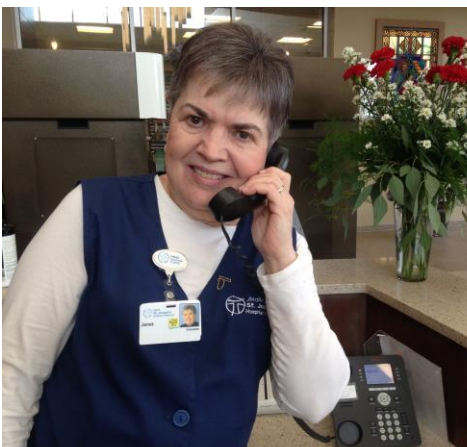
Mary Contri (Springfield), Friend-in-Deed



RuthEllen Davis (Springfield), "March For Our Lives"



Billie LeCrone (Springfield), Eucharistic Ministry



Janet Doyle (Highland), HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital



Kathy Howard (Springfield), Lector



Pat Wright (Springfield), Loretto Home Volunteer with **Sister Arlene Winkler**



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

NEWS BITS . . . The St. Anthony Camerata Chorale Ecumenical Festival Choir from Peoria will be giving a concert in St. Francis of Assisi Church on Sunday, May 20, 2018 at 3:00 p.m. Nancy Davis is a member of this choir. They are the official choir of the Diocese of Peoria and toured Italy in 2016 singing the New Year's Day Mass at the Basilica of St. Francis and ending their tour singing at the Papal Mass of the Feast of the Epiphany in Rome. They will be performing a selection of music that will include traditional sacred pieces to more contemporary gospel songs. No tickets are necessary and there is no charge for the concert. We hope to see you there. Please enter at Chiara Center. ❖

Upcoming Events at Chiara Center . . .

Ah Day of Quiet - May 3 - A gift to self for reflection, prayer, rest and inspiration.

Dream Works - May 4-6 - A Workshop and Retreat featuring Sister Joann Gehling, FSPA from Prairie Wood Franciscan Spirituality Center, Hiawatha, Iowa.

Mandala Recollection - May 8 – An artistic reflection featuring Sister Maureen Fagan, OSF starting at 7:00 p.m.

Labyrinth Nights with Sister Moon & Brother Fire - May 29 - A new labyrinth walk by candlelight followed by a time of group reflection at 8 PM with Dan Frachey, Chiara Center Program Director.

Summer Directed Retreat - June 17-22 - With Sisters Maureen Fagan, OSF and Anita Cleary, OP as the spiritual guides for the week.

To register for any of the Chiara-sponsored events, visit the Events section of www.chiaracenter.org or call us at 217-523-0901. There is 10% discount for Associates.

Please view us on Facebook and click Like