

- From Sister Shirley Morrissey: “I usually make homemade candies and breads for Christmas gifts.”
- “For family,” offers Sister Jean Moore, “I try to find something I have from my mother or dad (both deceased) to give to my nieces and nephews on special occasions, birthdays or Christmas. Also for friends and those who’ve done favors for me I’ve made jewelry or wooden objects.”
- Sister Rochelle Potaracke makes dolls, heart boxes and vases for gifts to give for Christmas, birthdays, jubilees and other occasions.
- Handmade gifts like shawls and note cards (in which she inserts her own notes so the recipient can then reuse them) are often given by Sister Mariquita Luby. She’s also been the recipient of birthday gifts from a friend “like taking me shopping or helping me use the computer. It’s very nice . . . not something you can see but you can still appreciate.”
- The FSPA Share a Sheep program was gifted \$100 last year on behalf of Sister Kathleen Kenkel’s family. Having been raised on a farm in Iowa Sister Kathleen “knows the value in this kind of investment.”
- In her retirement, making baby quilts and gifting them to organizations for families in need is a passion for Sister Dorothea Burr.
- Creatively, Sister Clara Mae Kuempel has made both woodcarvings for Christmas

gifts and icons to donate for a silent auction; collectively, she’s joined her FSPA local group, Joyful Hearts, to contribute shoes for the children in Sister Janet Dalton’s Arizona school; and personally, she’s given shelter to a woman displaced by flooding.

- Instead of exchanging gifts or gathering for a meal at a restaurant, Sister Maris Kerwin’s FSPA community group, Peace Seekers, has donated to causes like A Place of Grace and Share a Sheep.
- Downsizing and reducing consumerism is a tact that Sister Rita Feeney takes in regard to gift giving. Planting a tree, cleaning house and buying lunch are gifts she’s given others. “Most of us have more things than we need or often want.”
- Free trade gifts, handcrafted in Third World countries and sold each year before Christmas at the Ten Thousand Villages event in La Crosse, are purchased by Sister Joan Weisenbeck and given to her family and friends. “The church doesn’t make any profit from the sales,” says Sister Joan, “and it’s solely facilitated by volunteers.”
- Sister Carlene Unser, who formerly taught weaving at Viterbo University for 30 years, now makes and gives her pieces as gifts. “To me, weaving is very reflective as prayer.” ■



**Right column, top photo, heart boxes made by Sister Rochelle Potaracke, Santa carved by Sister Clara Mae Kuempel, jewelry by Sister Jean Moore; weavings by Sister Carlene Unser. Above, quilts made by Sister Dorothea Burr; card by Sister Mariquita Luby.**