

Jubilarians reflect upon their FSPA journey and ministries

Thirty-three sisters, celebrating 75, 70, 60, 50 and 25 years as women religious in 2008, share their personal reflections.

75 Years

Sister Margaret Mary Conway (written by Sister Carrie Kirsch)

Sister Margaret Mary is unable to communicate on the level of giving a reflection. We are sure that she has always been very grateful for all the opportunities the community has given her during her active years. She had been an excellent teacher.



Sister Dorothy Amon

As I celebrate my jubilee, I feel so strongly that the Blessed Trinity has dictated every step I have taken. Joy fills my heart that I have been wisely directed in my early years by committed and prudent leaders in every aspect. I am deeply grateful for all that the FSPA have taught me and done for me in every way: spiritually, educationally and physically. My heart sings its love and thanks to our great God and to Jesus, who has always been with me and active in what I have been called to do and be. I am grateful to the



FSPA in their prudent, kind and loving leadership, also to all my sisters in religion who have always been loving and helpful. May God's love ever fill their hearts.

70 Years

Sister Rose Rita Collingon

Though I have preferred upper grades, high school, and above all college and seminary, I enjoyed all aspects of teaching and catechizing. Of course, I also played organ and directed choirs. I have been blessed with good community life! We are fortunate to have a retirement home, Villa St. Joseph, that is so beautiful and serviceable. Because of its location, we can see beauty from every side.



Sister Verda Kraemer

It is not easy for me to put into words the gratitude I feel in my heart, for the many years I have spent in the religious life. Apart from my childhood, this is the only life I have ever known having entered the convent at the age of 13. I was raised in a thoroughly Christian home where prayer, discipline and love were the order of the day and where attendance at Mass each day was of utter importance. I am deeply grateful to the community for nurturing the seeds sown by my caring and loving parents. My heart is full of gratitude to my

FSPA community for the many professional and spiritual opportunities that came my way through all these years. I have taught and enjoyed teaching the primary grades and later on, prepared for teaching all musical instruments in grades and high school. I am truly grateful for all the opportunities and experiences I have enjoyed these past 70 years, even to the teaching in the Melanesian college in Papua, New Guinea. Above all is the joy and strength I received through the prayer life and quiet hours spent in the Adoration Chapel as well as the support of the many friends who helped me journey the sometimes rough way.



Sister Roseen Gorst

I am very grateful for life. It has been good to me. The community has given me many chances to minister to children and to adults. I like to be happy and to make others happy even through teasing. I love my family and they are special to me. I am thankful for all the sisters I lived with in community. And for the many things we did. Thank you for the wonderful life here at the Villa.



Sister Helen Lieftring (written by Sister Carrie Kirsch)

She could not recall that it was her jubilee. As I was visiting her, she said she does not sleep during the day as some of those around her do. Sister Helen is a very pleasant person. She is very thankful for coming from a very large family. Her home was in Eau Galle, Wis. She loves to sing and knows many songs. She is very happy and is always humming tunes and tapping her hands or feet to the tunes. I am sure she is very thankful for all that the community has done for her and meant to her.



Sister Cathryn Meyer

It takes time to fully realize that celebrating 70 years is truly awesome. Gratitude arises within me when I realize what this means in my life.

I am truly grateful to my community for the gifts and privileges to serve through teaching, administration and to be of service to the elderly.

Because of the changes that were made after Vatican II, we were given many opportunities to be of greater service

to church and society. For this I am truly grateful.

I have been blessed with what I have been given and hope that the remainder of my life will be as rewarding.

My past 70 years can be summed up with the following quotation: "Yesterday is a memory; today is a gift and that is why they call it the present." Yes, I am thankful that I live in the present.



Sister Elaine McMullin

Since Vatican II brought so many positive changes in the church and in my FSPA community, I have found religious life more meaningful and fulfilling. I am sincerely grateful to all the FSPAs who supported me in my spiritual journey.

To be honest, I found the first 30 years of religious life very difficult. But I am so grateful that God gave me the grace of perseverance. I feel very privileged to live out my years at the beautiful Villa.



Sister Mary Elizabeth Heller

I loved my time at St. Rose. There I could take adoration hours, I was a teacher and I taught little children, a lot of first and second graders. I really loved them and I'm glad I could do that. They made me happy. I remember I loved to paint as a hobby.



Sister Mary Agnes Schachtner

As I look back over the journey of these past 70 years, I have much for which to be thankful. For my parents who taught me early in life to talk to God each day in prayer. During my second year at St. Angela Academy, I asked my parents if I could enter St. Rose Convent. Their faces beamed with joy. I knew they were happy at my choice.

Being called to a community devoted to the Blessed Sacrament is a great blessing for all of us. God bless everyone.

It is with gratitude to the leaders of our community for the help and encouragement they constantly give.

I'm also grateful for the compan-



ionship of all the sisters I have lived with and worked with. They are sources of constant encouragement. May God bless us and guide us as we continue in his service. I am proud to be an FSPA.

Sister Delberta Schmitz

I am very grateful for the life I have been able to live as an FSPA for these past 70 years. I am grateful for all that my family means to me all these years. I love them all and they have been very generous with what they all have. My mother taught me to crochet and do needlework which I have enjoyed doing for relaxing. I thank the community for letting me work on the farm as I cared for my elderly parents.



One of the highlights in community has been to have the opportunity to work in Mississippi. I appreciated the challenges I had by living in a different culture. The community has also given me a chance to work in the grade school, high school and college level, work with the poor and at Marywood. Now I really love living in this beautiful place and with all the sisters here at the Villa. I thank all of you.

Sister Gertrude Thibault

When I think about my past 70 years as an FSPA, I am very thankful for all the wonderful time I had working with Sister Jocelyn in the St. Rose bakery. I enjoyed baking, especially breads. The community had and has very good leadership so that we could do many things. I enjoyed living with our sisters and working with them. I pray that this will always continue for many years. May God guide us and continue to help us on our journey as FSPA.



60 Years

Sister Marcella Hackman

As I reflect over my 60 years of my religious life and what it means to me, I feel a deep sense of love and gratitude within my heart.

First, with gratitude to my parents who taught me the love of prayer and have given me an appreciation of my faith.

I am equally grateful to the community for the many opportunities to enrich my Franciscan spirituality, giving me the time for education and other professional enrichment, along with some time for travel. I felt supported in changing ministries and developing my individual gifts.

My teaching years in Wisconsin and Iowa were years of growth. The sisters that lived with me were life giving. It was a joy to be with them. My years as parish minister and hospital chaplain were years of spiritual growth. My work with the sick and dying was indeed a time of deepening my trust in divine providence. It is amazing to experience the strength and energy that come from the unity of prayer.

My heart is filled with appreciation to be here during my retirement years. What a pleasure it is to walk with all of you. I thank God for you, our companions and friends as we continue into the future.



Sister Jolita Brill

It is with deep gratitude I look back over the past 60 years. First of all for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to enter religious life. For the wonderful superiors and sisters I lived with. For our leaders who trusted me to work in larger missions and last, but not least, for my retirement years where I could develop my artistic skills. Also I am deeply grateful for our Adoration Chapel and the great health care we have.



Sister Carita Carey (written by Sister Mildred Tigges)

Sister was an outstanding English teacher. Her creativity and Irish wit permeated her classroom. The students loved her and years later expressed their appreciation for the knowledge they had obtained.

Sister Carita's great love of her God and his people continued to energize her as she ministered in pastoral care and fostered many in the affiliation program.

She is truly a joy-filled lady of the Gospel, and a very dear friend.



Sister Phyllis Ann Hackman

Living the Franciscan values of conversion, poverty and contemplation gives me great energy, hope and joy. My Franciscan community has been there for me over my 60 years. My first 20 years as a dietician and homemaker, then the years at the province home in St. Paul, Minn., were years of spiritual growth. I am very grateful for the gift the community gave me

to go to college and get my degree in pastoral ministry and become a certified member of the National Association of Catholic Chaplains.

These last 40 years were my happiest years. To me it was a privilege to be at the bedside of hundreds of dying patients, preparing them for the eternal reward. I felt that the spirit of the Gospel was giving me the opportunity to live out my eucharistic ministry in comforting the sick and dying.

Words are not sufficient to express my deepest gratitude for the love and support that I have received from my community with compassion and understanding. Thanks to all of you for walking the journey with me as I celebrate my 60th year and give thanks to God for all that was; for all that is; and for all that will be. May we continue to be "Loving Presence" to one another.

The Adoration Chapel was and is a "Power House" for me. "It is the sanctuary of heaven."



Sister Margaret Ann Mason

It is with praise and thanks to God that I look back over the past 60 years as a Franciscan Sister. I'm grateful for my companion sisters, parents, family members, the Franciscan priests and brothers who ministered in the parishes of Ashland and Odannah and have inspired me with a love of Saint Francis and continue to do so. May God bless those who have journeyed with me over the years.



Sister Gertrude Daugherty

It is with gratitude that I look back 60 years. Gratitude for the opportunity of spiritual growth and loving companionship. May God continue to guide us and bless us.



Sister Margaret Schmolke

I am grateful to my family and wonderful FSPA community. Forever will I be thankful for God's loving care, for graces and opportunities that have supported me these past 60 years.

I have always had a great appreciation for my faith and love of the Eucharist.

Throughout my teaching ministry I



was privileged each year to prepare young children to become friends of Jesus. To see them receive the Eucharist for the first time was a great joy to me.

In my later years I realized a need to retire and move to St. Rose. For this I am again grateful, to be able to spend more time participating in hours of prayer in our Perpetual Adoration Chapel.

I am proud to be an FSPA.

Sister Loretta Penchi

I am grateful to the Lord for my religious vocation, and for giving me along the way many dear relatives and friends who have influenced my life in many and varied ways.

I am thankful for all the beauty of the world, for the gift of music, which lights up my life, and especially for the music of worship, that speaks eloquently to me of faith and the love of God.



Sister Ruthmary Waterstreet

Sixty years! It hardly seems possible. My dreams of becoming a nurse and going to China never materialized. Why not? The Lord decided otherwise. I listened to him and tried to be the best possible FSPA wherever I found myself. I am still listening and still trying.



Sister Lucille Winnike

I love this community! My whole being is filled with gratitude to God, to my family of origin, and to our FSPA family which has been home to me for these 63 years. That our congregation reaches out to minister to the people of God and to anyone in need, to engage in interreligious dialogue, and to interact responsibly with Mother Earth—all these facets of our ministry and our lives are sources of great thankfulness, encouragement and delight to me. Thank you!



50 Years

Sister Helen Elsbernd

My heart is filled with gratitude to God as I reflect on the many gifts I have received by saying "yes" to my call to religious life. I am grateful for my FSPA sisters, my family and friends who have accompanied and supported me on my life

journey. I have been blessed with great enriching experiences in my community life, education, personal growth and travel. I am thankful for the many wonderful opportunities (and challenges) I have had in my ministries—opportunities to serve others in ways I could never even dream 50 years ago. My life as an FSPA is truly a blessing. For all this, I say “Thank you, God!”



Sistr Jolynn Brehm

Deep gratitude and awe fill my whole being as I review all the gifts, opportunities and blessings of 50 years of vows. Friendships and companions in community are the sustaining and supporting blessings. Many personal, professional, ministry and spiritual opportunities are the incredible gifts.



Sister Maryam Gossling

It is with gratitude and a certain amount of astonishment that I look back over the past 50 years. Time goes away so quickly! I am especially thankful for all the beauty I have encountered along the way. So many beautiful people have been so good to me: family, friends and community. I have had the chance to observe the most beautiful places from Iowa to Wisconsin to California and places in between and to Germany and Italy and Israel. I hope to continue to create a little more beauty as I live out the rest of my life for many years to come.



Sister Marian Massman

As I reflect on my 50 years as an FSPA, I am filled with gratitude for countless blessings. The deep faith and Christian values that were nurtured in my family and my education provided a strong foundation for my commitment as an FSPA. God has worked marvels in my life and ministry through the help of gifted teachers, wise guides, Spirit-filled sisters and faithful persons all along the way. I am grateful to all who have encouraged and supported me in my service to others and in my journey to wholeness. It



has been both a privilege and a blessing to have received and shared love and companionship all these years. For you and with you, I give thanks to the Giver of all gifts.

Sister Jean Kasparbauer

I appreciate the many relationships I've experienced during the past 50 years. I am grateful to be an FSPA and for the opportunities offered for growth. I treasure the people: FSPA, affiliates, those I've ministered with and for over the years. I continue to be inspired by the growing number of “circles” of wisdom that offer support and hope for a better world. I consider all this and more to be divine blessing.



Sister Nancy Lafferty

Dear Friends,
 “Hope sees what is yet to be!” This has been my mantra for many years, so in this jubilee year I continue to reach for the stars of our universe and beyond. This is because I received so much from those who have given me great hope over the years. Even more so in recent years, I began rejoicing as a global citizen—living in gratitude for all the FSPA opportunities to be a loving presence in the global village. At present, I'm looking forward from this golden filigree of relationships to the ever-widening web of possibilities into 2012 and beyond. I am remembering many favorite moments of contemplation-in-action and all the years of action-in-contemplation as well.



My adoration hour prayer is often:
 “May the wind continue to be at our backs,
 and the road continue to rise to greet all beings
 in the NOW
 and on into a future filled with HOPE
 in LOVE'S continuing good care.”

So, of course for me, “HOPE sees what is yet to be”—deeper LOVE, PEACE and JUSTICE as we all learn to care for Planet Earth.

Sister Joanne Moeller

What a gift it has been to be an FSPA for 50+ years! The opportunities I have received for spiritual and personal growth, as well as the opportunities to belong to a community that is so forward-looking has enriched my life in ways I would never have thought possible. I have been allowed to develop my own abilities and skills and minister in education,

parish ministry and retreat center ministry. I have had opportunities to be on the cutting edge of Earth consciousness, to live my Franciscan calling in the spirit of our founder, and to minister to people in various places and cultures.

At this time, I sense a spirit of deep gratitude to my family, my FSPA community, and to the people who have allowed me to minister with and to them in the past 50 years. I have met so many wonderful, faith-filled people who have been a model for me and whom I can call "friend." I am grateful for all of them and to my FSPA mentors who have given me opportunities for growth, education, travel and ministry. I am thankful for the life I have been given, for the good health I have experienced, and the opportunities to serve.

Fifty years and still going and going and going.

Sister Marla Lang

Standing on the shoulders of 50 years of vowed life as a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration and almost 20 years before of family, my thoughts become simple and grateful. My life journey has been about walking one step at a time. It has been more like a trust walk, of being pulled along a magnetic path through a haze that leads to the unfolding of commitments.

Savoring my baby footprints that grace my bedroom wall, standing at my parents' grave, crossing three continents to Cameroon, communing with the daily echo of my sisters' "every moment thine" that draws me inward and outward, experiencing the web of God's sustaining presence with every particle of creation, and relating with countless pilgrims on the journey, I can only gratefully respond: "What gifts move me and give me meaning!"

Sister Dorothy Pieper

As I look back on my 50 years as an FSPA, I am grateful for my education and the opportunities for spiritual growth, especially in the types of books, retreats and workshops that have been provided by our leaders. I am also grateful for community members who are an inspiration and support, especially our homemakers, who have lived and exemplified Franciscan values for me.

When I think of my ministry, I am especially grateful for my 10 years in Canton, Miss. There I came to know the older blacks who had lived through the time of segregation and who had a deep faith that emerged from their suffering. I also



appreciated the challenges of teaching in a school where the children were more disadvantaged and did not automatically pick up the stimulus for learning, but needed special incentives. I appreciated the teamwork and the support of my FSPA colleagues in working for a high quality of education for these students.

And finally, through all my life I have been grateful for the graces of God's presence.

Sister Cormarie Wernimont

I am grateful for God's goodness that has come to me through the congregation, the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, over these past 50 years.

I am grateful for every person who has come into my life. Each one was, in some way, an instrument of God's presence and God's love. I am particularly grateful for the privilege of perpetual adoration, which has brought so many blessings to us, as well as to others.

25 Years

Sister Jean Moore

One of my favorite quotes from St. Francis of Assisi is "I have done what was mine to do; may Christ teach you what is yours." While I am not at the end of my life, I know that Christ continues to teach me what is mine to do through the inspiration and support of my sisters in community. This incredible community of women has inspired me through their example and wisdom to strive for wholeness and integrity, and it continues to encourage me to follow my inner truth, to trust in myself, and to use my God-given gifts for the common good.

I am grateful to the congregation for the many opportunities and experiences I have been given; and I am grateful to my God for the love and faithful companionship that have helped me to continue on this journey as a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration the past 25 years. I look forward to what the future holds for me and will continue to utter a daily "yes" to my commitment to God, my community and the people of God. *Doy gracias al Señor.*

