

# F.S.P.A PERSPECTIVES

VOLUME TWENTY-SEVEN

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NUMBER ONE



Challenge



Relationship



Justice

# In this issue

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This issue of *Perspectives* is centered on the theme of Franciscan values. “What are some Franciscan values?” was a question posed to the pilgrims participating in FSPA’s annual leadership pilgrimage to Assisi, Italy. Words that surfaced included perseverance, service, hospitality, authenticity, honor, commitment and hope (pg. 20). We took those words and infused them with the stories inside.

**Perseverance** is witnessed in Blanca’s story (pg. 3). Through the gentle guidance of several FSPA, Blanca’s long journey to U.S. citizenship culminates in true independence. For Becca, a single mother living with a personality disorder, the **service** provided by a FSPA-ministry grant sponsored program empowers her with parental strength (pg. 5). And in Iowa, for many homeless individuals, Theresa Keller, FSPA, and a staff of nurses offer **hospitality**—and much needed medical attention—at Shelter House (pg. 6).

**Authenticity** is shared in the story of affiliate Linda Kerrigan’s friendship with Der, a Hmong woman finding her way through foreign land (pg. 7). As Linda states, it’s about “making peace one relationship at a time.”

We also share stories of **honor, commitment and hope**.

A visit to a theater in New Orleans introduces you to a play produced to **honor** Thea Bowman, FSPA (pg. 8). The play is based on interviews and memories as written by a contemporary of Sister Thea.

**Commitment. Hope.** We hear from the newest FSPA members (pg. 11). These women share their call to religious life, specifically, their call to FSPA.

Truly it is through our many sisters, affiliates, prayer partners, sponsored ministries, benefactors and friends that Franciscan values continue to be lived out in abundance today.



***Perspectives* represents the spirit and values shared by the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration.**

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*Above: Mary Becker, FSPA, recently volunteered at an orphanage run by the Tertiary Sisters of St. Francis in Cameroon, West Africa. There she delivered toys collected at a toy drive held at St. Rose Convent.*

*Cover: Left photo: Marie Kyle, FSPA, shows her “11x15” campaign support (story on page 14). Middle photo: FSPA affiliate Linda Kerrigan shares her spirit of ministry with her friend, Der (story on page 7).*

*Right photo: Blanca Gomez celebrates U.S. citizenship (story on page 3). Contributed photo.*

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# La Crosse, Wisconsin

## Blessings of immigration for Blanca and FSPA

**F**ifteen years ago, Blanca Esperanza Gomez received a blessing in the form of an invitation to visit La Crosse, Wis., from her native country, Guatemala. She fell in love with the region for its river, its valleys and its bluffs—much like those of her homeland—and set her sights on immigration to America for its educational opportunities and societal freedoms. “You have to risk something in order to do something!” she says, laughing now, about the dream that almost turned out to be, literally, impossible to achieve.

Finally, three months ago, Blanca got a subsequent blessing, this one in the form of a Permanent Residency Card issued to her by the Department of Homeland Security, United States Citizen and Immigration Services. From one to the other these gifts are filled with a tremendously tedious timeline, legal and emotional trials and tribulations and a triumph she now shares with FSPA.

### October 1997

Blanca arrived in La Crosse for the first time to visit Beverly Budelier, FSPA. The story of their relationship really begins in an orphanage in San Lucas Tolimán, Guatemala—Happy House. Blanca is an Amerindian woman who suffered abuse by her adoptive mother and, at the age of 13, escaped to an orphanage. There Blanca met a social worker who helped her overcome the sadness of her trauma and recognized her aptitude for learning. “You are different,” she told me.



*Beverly Budelier, FSPA*



*From left, Sister Betty Shakal, Blanca Esperanza Gomez and Sister Ladonna Kassmeyer proudly display one small set of files—out of many, many stacks—that represents Blanca’s freedom in America and the devotion of FSPA.*

‘Look for education.’” As Blanca knew she “definitely didn’t want to clean houses,” those words put her to work.

She entered Happy House a year later and formed a tighter bond with Sister Beverly, who ministered there. “Everyone called her ‘Madre,’” recalls Blanca. “‘You are good,’ Madre would say to me. ‘Work hard.’” Those words put Blanca to work even harder: earning good grades to become a teacher and learn English, and working in factories during the summer. With the advice she received and her determination to succeed she achieved certification as a teacher and a degree in Spanish language and literature.

Sister Beverly became ill with ovarian cancer, retired, returned to La Crosse and exchanged letters with Blanca. “Madre,” Blanca wrote, “I love you and miss you and want to come visit you.” Sister Beverly wrote back, “You have a dream. Pray to God and he can answer you.” Blanca did travel to La Crosse for a two-month visit with Sister Beverly (who helped arrange a visitor

visa) and now remembers her saying, “Blanca, if you like it here you have to come, be on your own, work hard and pray for your dreams.’”

Blanca did. She traveled back to Guatemala, to the University of San Carlos in Guatemala City, to study and work harder still.

### October-December 1999

Sister Beverly sent more words of good news to Blanca—FSPA awarded her ministry grant funding to attend Western Technical College (formerly known as Western Wisconsin Technical College). Each month, Blanca went to the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City to apply for a student visa (which requires the recipient to maintain full-time student status, with the option to remain in the U.S. 12 months after earning a degree to work through the Optical Practical Training Program). She received the visa in December.

### January 2000

Blanca returned to La Crosse and began English as a Second Language

*Continued on page 12*

## Catholic sisters launch Welcoming Communities for immigration reform

The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration joined nine other religious congregations based in the Upper Mississippi River Valley in an effort calling on President Obama and Congress to work together to enact comprehensive immigration reform. To make their point, they issued a *Welcoming Communities* statement and placed billboards throughout Iowa during the Iowa caucuses.



The statement read, “We declare ourselves *Welcoming Communities* in affirmation of our Catholic tradition that holds sacred the dignity of each

person and we invite other communities and people of faith to join us in becoming *Immigrant Welcoming Communities* through prayer, reflection, education and action.”

The Dubuque, Iowa, media agency Dubuque365.com awarded the ten congregations involved in the immigration campaign with the 365 Impact Award for 2012 in the Inclusion category. The annual event, held in March, recognizes those who “choose to make an everyday effort to ‘impact’ the world around them 365 days a year—those who believe in [their] community and are willing to do something to make it better for everyone,” the award sponsor stated.

## Immigrant to Immigrant ministry responds to those with few alternatives

“About 300 detainees are processed every week at the local Broadview Detention Center in Illinois; more than 20,000 immigrants were deported by Chicago’s Immigration and Customs Enforcement in 2009,” writes a member of The Office for Immigrant Affairs and Immigration Education for the Archdiocese of Chicago. Julia Walsh, FSPA, sponsors the ministry grant that supports the group’s mission—to engage the Catholic community of the Archdiocese of Chicago . . . to build communion between immigrants and non-immigrants, and to welcome, empower and promote immigrants in their formation and integration as full members in the one family of God.

The Immigrant to Immigrant Ministry was created in 2009 to empower lay leaders to support and accompany separated families/other immigrants in their parish communities through a foundation of biblical reflection and leadership formation. Every Friday, through lay leaders, an average of 10 separated families receive pastoral care at the Broadview Detention



Affiliate Marci Madary and Kristin Peters, FSPA, view the traveling display, Iowa: A State of Immigrants, at St. Rose Convent. The display, provided by the Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center’s Welcoming the Stranger Committee, conveys the history and status of immigration in the nation and in Iowa. The traveling display serves as a tool to help inform the public—especially the faith community—about immigration issues.

Center as well as follow-up accompaniment—offering hope and support through their uncertain journey.

“Immigrant to Immigrant allows the oppressed access to advocates, people to pray with . . . it keeps me hopeful,” says Sister Julia who has attended the group’s weekly rosary and vigil held at the deportation center. “I am amazed when people confront injustices through acts of mercy,” she adds. “I pray for change constantly.” ■



Vigil participants from Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish show their support to immigrants who were being deported from the Broadview Detention Center. About 60,000 immigrants have been deported from Chicago since 2006.

Photo courtesy of Mark Goebel

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## Healing, caring and loving Healthy Families

**B**ecca is healing. Twenty-two years old, she is a single, first-time mom who lives with borderline personality disorder, anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder from abuse she suffered as a child.

Jen is caring. A family system specialist for Healthy Families—an abuse prevention program provided by Family & Children’s Center in La Crosse, Wisconsin—she is a nurturing presence who visits with Becca and her daughter in their home every week, hanging out, playing, reading and helping Becca be the best mom she can be.

Amelia is loving. The fifteen-month-old daughter of Becca, she is a happy, healthy toddler who reaches out for her mom, to sit and snuggle over and over again.

FSPA is sustaining. The Franciscan Sisters are ministry grant sponsors of the program who reflect the healing, caring and loving it provides.

“These three core values play a large role in the program—created to prevent abuse and neglect before it starts,” says Jamie Schloegel, FCC’s development coordinator. Prevention begins at the beginning—either shortly before a mother’s due date or by her baby’s third month of life—through referrals made by physicians and other social service providers who are trained to identify risk factors. Family specialists like Jen (McConahay) welcome moms like Becca and children like Amelia and help guide them in the right direction to another

healthy family first—kindergarten.

To help make that milestone, Jamie tracks the circumstances of the families and the outcomes Healthy Families provides. “The majority of our clients are single moms in their 20s with a history of depression or mental disability, some with cognitive behavioral delay that may leave them unable to work. Last year 87 percent of our families lived in poverty. Almost half of our participants are socially isolated with few or no



*Mom and daughter—Becca and Amelia—are a healthy family living together in their happy home.*

positive, supportive people in their lives.” She cites many other statistics—positive and negative—that substantiate Healthy Families:

- Last year more than 260 children in La Crosse, Wis., were born at risk of child abuse and neglect (per a report by Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin).
- Eighty to 100 families receive program-funded aid each year.
- A study conducted by La Crosse’s Viterbo University found Healthy Families 98 percent successful in eliminating child abuse within participating families.
- Since the program’s inception in

1992, over 1,000 families have been served free of charge.

- The per-family investment is estimated to be \$2,500 per year.
- Current funding limits services to less than a third of those eligible for the program.
- Only 13 percent of the budget covers overhead and administrative costs, the balance goes directly to the program—primarily for specialists’ services.

Jamie neatly sums up the pluses and minuses of the program with irony: “Nationally accredited, Healthy Families is the only intensive, long-term home visiting program in the area yet La Crosse County Human Services dropped funding for preventive services several years ago, following a nation-wide trend. FSPA’s ministry grant,” affirms Jamie, “is extremely important because the program relies almost 100 percent on private contributions to operate.”

While these numbers make the program comprehensible, the three core values Jamie speaks of make Healthy Families indispensable.

### Healing

“Until a mom or a dad has dealt with their trauma and learned new ways to parent,” says Jamie, “the risk of abuse will not decrease.” Becca’s own trauma was suppressed as she emerged from two foster homes to graduate from high school, worked part time as a CNA and lived in her own apartment, but relived with her pregnancy as she suffered chronic morning sickness and stopped taking her mood-stabilizing medication. By working with Jen, Becca is mending her vulnerabilities, realizing

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# Iowa City, Iowa

## My Perspective: Hospitality: Inviting strangers to the table

**W**by Theresa Keller, FSPA  
alking into the Shelter House in Iowa City, Iowa, during the cold winter months can be a bit unnerving for those who have not worked with the underserved. Tables and chairs are full of the clothing layers people wear to stay warm. Most of the conversation is loud. Though men seem to dominate the common room, a growing number of women and their children can be found at the dinner tables. Recently, a mother with five small children, a mother with her toddler and newborn, and a mother with two young children surrounded several tables. I smile and wave at the desk clerk. Not long after that an overhead announcement is made: “The nurse is here.”

I have volunteered at Shelter House for more than a year. I watched as the new shelter was built with a dedicated space for a nurse-managed clinic. FSPA provided grant money to develop the clinic’s infrastructure—providing many over-the-counter medicines, dressings, ice packs, chairs and necessary durable medical equipment for the shelter’s 60 to 70 guests per night. Many guests stay for 90 days and work with the staff—learning to save money for low income housing or to get a fresh start.



*More than 600 individuals per year enter through this Shelter House entrance. Inside, guests in need of medical attention are treated in this small office, right.*

Photos courtesy [www.shelterhouseiowa.org](http://www.shelterhouseiowa.org)

The nurse-managed clinic typically operates twice a week and is staffed by a nurse practitioner and graduate students. The goal of the clinic is twofold: first, to provide primary care for the guests and second, to provide an opportunity for graduate students to work with the underserved.

Back at the shelter, I pick up the sign-up board and start calling names. We do not use a receptionist or a medical assistant. I welcome the client into our small office and have them sit at a round table. Not very often will someone invite a homeless person to come and sit down at the table. As I

mentor a graduate student, I observe her exemplifying hospitality to this client with a friendly reception and treatment. The majority of the time treatment is simple and the client is grateful for the help. Other times we are faced with

complex medical issues and additional resources are needed.

When asked to write about Shelter House for this issue of *Perspectives*—focusing on hospitality—I had to look up the word. I know the meaning of the Gospel value, and certainly providing shelter to the homeless embodies that value, but hospitality is more than just providing a warm place or a room. Hospitality is the attitude one carries in one’s heart when working with the underserved. One cannot teach hospitality, one can only reflect it. Those that exemplify hospitality in their hearts radiate openness and willingness to listen. They have an ability to invite and welcome others to the table. ■



*Sister Theresa Keller provides medical care to Shelter House guests.*

*FSPA file photo*



*In addition to volunteering at Shelter House, Sister Theresa Keller, a family nurse practitioner, is an instructor at the University of Iowa in the College of Nursing.*

*Along with fellow faculty members, Sister Theresa earned the University’s Group Governor’s Volunteer Award 1 for her work at Shelter House.*

# La Crosse, Wisconsin

## Spirit of Ministry: One authentic relationship makes peace for two families

**M**aking peace one relationship at a time. It's an ideology to which FSPA affiliate Linda

Kerrigan has ascribed to since she was a child. " 'Linda,' my mother would say to me when I was growing up, 'you've got to look for the good in others.' " Her family didn't have any opportunities to go far from their French Lake, Minn., home, didn't have the means to affect social justice beyond their rural borders, "but my parents were very high on hospitality, assisting anyone who needed help and offering their home as a place of welcome," she explains. "My parents, in their own way, embodied those Franciscan values. That was the model for me." Over time, Linda has experienced international travels and cultures with that mantra in her mind, instilled it in her own children and expressed it through her affiliation with FSPA and her work as a spiritual director for the Franciscan Spirituality Center in La Crosse, Wis.

Three years ago, Linda's conviction motivated her to approach former Franciscan Spirituality Director, Vince Hatt, to reach out to those marginalized in the Hmong community of La Crosse. They collaborated with Western Technical College's Nhia Vang (multicultural services liaison) and FSPA affiliate Diane Withers (English instructor) to enlighten local residents about the Hmong population and integrating cultural education

for Hmong adults, particularly women divorced. An informational session was held, 12 people attended and Linda met Der—a woman she now considers to be her second daughter.

Ten years ago, before this bond began, Der found herself on her own quest for peace in relationship—from Laos to La Crosse and to Linda. As Linda tells it, an older Hmong man from Wisconsin traveled to Der's village in Laos in search

during the rice season—a permanent trait of her life in Laos.

Then, what a young teenage Der found in her new home in Wisconsin was confusion of clashing cultures, two pregnancies in short order, the burden of providing for her family alone (her husband became ill and then chose not to seek new employment) and work in a factory where the English language is nonessential. In 2006, a determined

Der "landed on her feet in La Crosse," says Linda, sought an interpreter and a divorce and American citizenship, earned a GED and secured a part-time housekeeping job at Logistics Health Inc. Today, a liberated 31-year-old Der has created a future that includes working to further her education in math and English and dreaming to achieve CNA certification—a vision all for herself and her daughters Mai, age eight, and Zoua, age nine.

Now, Linda and Der have learned a lot from each other—Linda tutors and mentors Der, and Der has entrusted her story to Linda. The two women have also created an authentic relationship, one of respect, family, culture and, altogether, a peace they are proud to speak of:

"Others here in the Hmong community think that I came here only for money," says Der, and that given her marital status after she arrived in Wisconsin "should have stayed with my husband or gone back to Laos." Linda asks, "Can you imagine? Der has an innate intelligence and emotional strength—

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*Der, a student at Western Technical College, and Linda Kerrigan, Der's mentor, spend their time studying math and English, sharing their lives and families and laughing easily together.*

of a young wife. He approached her parents—poor, uneducated rice farmers with nine children albeit a happy life. They urged Der to marry the man—to make a new home in America with the comforts of modern society—to have a better life. Willingly, Der did and for her, modernity would truly be a world away. "Clocks did not exist in their culture," tells Linda. Time was told by the rays of the sun hitting the tree canopy above the fields of rice. "Der did not know her date of birth, how old she was." Willfully Der chose to move and to marry. Her husband-to-be secured a passport for Der, decreeing her birthday May 15,

# Thea's Turn

## Sister Thea Bowman returns to the stage

**M**ary Queen Donnelly is the playwright for *Thea's Turn*, a play based on the life of Thea Bowman, FSPA. They both grew up in Canton, Miss., occasionally attended Mass at the same Catholic parish and bonded during an interview three years before Sister Thea's death. "Thea has been so much a part of my life for so long," says Mary.

1. Inspiration for *Thea's Turn* came to Mary in 1988 "After a three-hour celebration of Mass, in the African American tradition . . . [Thea] lay exhausted, riddled with cancer . . . insisted I stay. She wanted me to use my skill as a writer to help others to understand her perspective. I asked, 'Do you think others will take to that?' She darted those big brown eyes toward me, alive now, with fire. 'You've had your turn,' she answered."

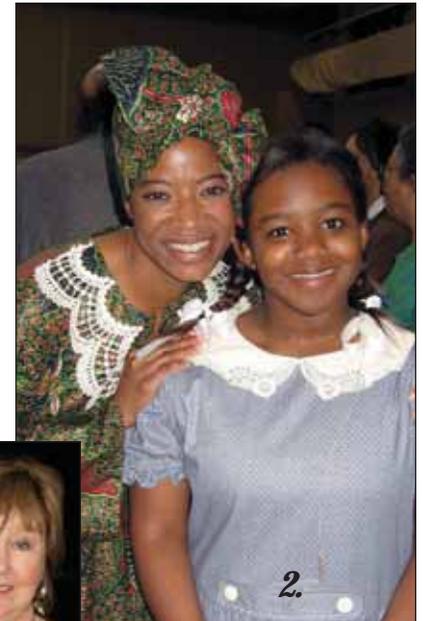
2. Actresses Tione Johnson plays Bertha—young Thea growing up Protestant in the Deep South, and Idella Johnson portrays Sister Thea—serving FSPA, African American Catholicism and conflict of Christian faith. "I decided the best way to portray this conflict was to personify her inner self through her child self as Bertha," says Mary.

3. "Knowing nothing about Thea, Idella actually became Thea," says Mary. The actor has performed in numerous theatrical productions including *Rent* and *Dream Girls* and on HBO's *Tremé*. "People in the audience ' . . . thought they were hearing her.' Idella told me ' . . . this has changed my life.'"

4. Actress Mazie Stewart portrays Dorothy Ann Kundinger, FSPA. "The one person who could understand is Dorothy. They were so close," says Mary. "She sat next to me [in the audience], crying and laughing. It said to me, 'if Dorothy believed what she was seeing and hearing and could laugh and cry . . . Thea would be pleased.'"

5. "Thea wanted to get back on stage—to speak and to sing and to dance . . . to people of all denominations. Where will this play serve universal faith?" says Mary, "Thea got that a long time ago."

To learn more about Sister Thea Bowman visit [www.fspa.org/theabowman](http://www.fspa.org/theabowman). For more information about *Thea's Turn* play, contact Mary Queen Donnelly at [mqdonnelly@att.net](mailto:mqdonnelly@att.net). ■



Photos from *Thea's Turn* by Marcia Peyton

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## Healthy Families

continued from page 5

her empowerment and looking to the future—school for Amelia and a part-time job for herself. “The program is completely voluntary,” says Jen. “Parents put their own goals out there, and we work to help them get there. They really are in the driver’s seat.”

### Caring

“True success of the program comes down to the relationships our specialists create with parents,” emphasizes Jamie. “They truly care, and our families feel that affection.” Especially for a mom like Becca who is almost always at home alone with Amelia, “Just being there is so important,” says Jen. She is there to help Becca track Amelia’s development. “Amelia is reading and playing and definitely on track.” She also follows Becca’s mental health, “to make sure she’s feeling OK. If not, I work with her treatment providers to get her in a better spot.” Jen links Becca to any other community resources available, takes her to get groceries at local food pantries and drives them to the clinic for Amelia’s well-child exams and Becca’s appointments. She also brings donated books, clothes and diapers for Amelia and, when Salvation Army vouchers were recently donated for program participants, Jen helped Becca purchase chairs, haul them to her apartment and move them in.

### Loving

“Love is the foundation of parental strength,” says Jamie. “Healthy Families parents love their children and want to be good parents but, unfortunately, were dealt a bad hand of cards.” Many FSPA have been working to restack the deck in favor of Becca and Amelia and Healthy Families. Lucy Ann Meyer, FSPA, is the grant’s sponsor and FSPA President Sister Linda Mershon has recently been appointed to Family & Children’s Center Board of Directors.

Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA, served the organization’s board from 2003 to 2009. “I agreed to the position because of its historical association with the work FSPA did for orphans and children in the past, not only in La Crosse but elsewhere. I appreciate very much,” says Sister Marlene, “the collaboration on behalf of children that occurs with other community organizations and our sponsored institutions: Families are screened for the program through Mayo Clinic Health System—Franciscan Healthcare in La Crosse, and Viterbo University collaborated in a study that gave strong evidence of the financial savings this program provides.”

“Healthy Families is a wonderful continuation of the healing and education ministry of the FSPA because we are motivated by the Gospel mission to be vulnerable. FSPA has high confidence in the performance of the program,” says Sister Marlene, and for families like Becca and Amelia, “to make a difference in their lives.” ■



*Developing—Becca is committed to caring for Amelia’s cognitive and motor skills, and Amelia loves spending time with her toys, her books and her mom.*

## Spirit of Ministry

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gifts that just sustain her.”

“The best thing I can do for my girls is to be a strong mother and move forward to get a good life,” says Der. According to Linda, “Der has precious, loving, beautiful girls, is better at child rearing and discipline than I was.”

“The girls like Pat (Linda’s husband). It’s good for them to have a male role model,” says Der. “It’s important for the girls to trust men,” says Linda. “Pat’s happy to fulfill that significant role.”

Linda says, “We take the girls to the park. This weekend they helped Pat wash the car. Der and the girls came over during the holidays to decorate my Christmas tree.” Linda also raves about Der’s cooking—the wonderful Hmong dishes she makes. “Pat teases me, saying I should open my own Hmong restaurant,” says Der.

“At first when I came here I cried, felt unsafe, had no support. I am so lucky to have met Linda,” says Der.

“We need to be there for other people,” says Linda, “to lift up, encourage and give help how we can. This feeds what I embrace as being a Franciscan.” ■

# Vocations

## Called. video series features FSPA

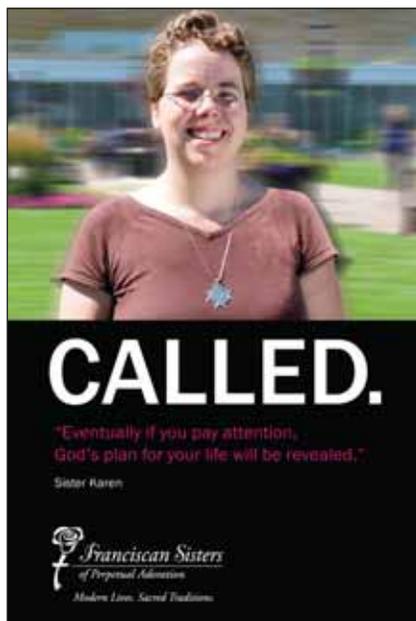
**W**hen asked about her journey to becoming a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration, Karen Grochowski, FSPA, said, “Eventually if you pay attention, God’s plan for your life will be revealed.”

When asked about her call to religious life, Corrina Thomas, FSPA, said, “Somewhere, deep down inside, there was a peace.”

In a new video series, *Called.*, Sisters Corrina, Karen, Sue Ernster, Kristin Peters and Julia Walsh take the viewer through their journey to religious life. During National Vocations Week 2012 the series was promoted in several diocesan newspapers.

“We’re taking the *Called.* message to vocation fairs and student retreats, and we’re spreading it through social media channels such as YouTube and Facebook,” said Romana Klaubauf, FSPA, who together with Emily Dawson, FSPA affiliate, ministers in the FSPA Membership Office. “We’re often asked to present the life of a modern day Catholic sister to youth groups and the *Called.* series allows us to introduce sisters to our audience.”

The first video in the series was recently released and can be viewed at [www.fspa.org/called](http://www.fspa.org/called). Throughout 2012 additional videos will be added to the page. ■



*Cormarie Wernimont, FSPA, talks to sixth graders during Day on Vocations sponsored by Dubuque Area Vocations Associates and held at Divine Word Seminary, Epworth, Iowa.*

Photo courtesy of Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary

## Do you know someone called to religious life?

FSPA encourages you to share this publication with women you know discerning a call to religious life. You may also share the videos featured on [www.fspa.org/called](http://www.fspa.org/called) and contact the Membership Office for additional information and resources. We invite women to learn more at these upcoming discernment events:

### **Marywood’s Got Sisters!**

June 1-2, 2012

Arbor Vitae, Wis.

Marywood Franciscan Spirituality Center is blessed to have three different congregations represented on its staff. Women ages 18-40 are invited to hear vocation stories, share experiences, engage in questions you’ve always wanted to ask and enjoy good food, prayer and beautiful Trout Lake! Whether discerning a call or simply curious, this is a simple and real look at who sisters are today. For more information contact [marywood.center@gmail.com](mailto:marywood.center@gmail.com) or 715-385-3750.

### **Come and See**

La Crosse, Wis.

Our Come and See program is designed for women, ages 19-50, to consider the call to live a Franciscan lifestyle. Come and See allows participants to become better acquainted with our community through learning more about FSPA and Franciscanism in the 21st century as well as through prayer, reflection and discerning in a supportive spiritual environment. To schedule a Come and See contact [membership@fspa.org](mailto:membership@fspa.org) or 888-683-3772. ■

## FSPA women in formation featured in *The Catholic Times*

The La Crosse Diocese's publication, *The Catholic Times*, recently featured the women in formation with FSPA. The publication asked the women "Why did you choose this religious congregation?" Their responses are below.

*Amy Taylor*: With God's guidance I chose FSPA because my heart found a home among visionary women who read the signs of the times and respond.

*Michelle Frazier*: The FSPA charism.

*Laurie Sullivan*: I chose the FSPA because of their Franciscan Spirit, their prayer, as well as their love for one another and those to whom they minister.

*Kristin Peters*: I knew deeply that I connected with these women and their charism and mission in the world.

*Karen Grochowski*: I appreciated that the congregation was willing to give me the opportunity and time to discover where my gifts and talents could best be used in ministry.

*Julia Walsh*: I knew I fit with FSPA when I first visited. They're a dynamic community grounded in Eucharist, contemplation, prayer and the sacred traditions of the church. Yet, the sisters are building the reign of God through their actions of intentional community living, loving service and non-violent advocacy for peace and justice.

*Laura Nettles*: I have been and continue to be deeply inspired and in awe of my community's commitment to eucharistic adoration and our Franciscan call to be living witness to the Gospel. ■



*Amy Taylor*,  
FSPA



*Michelle Frazier*,  
associate



*Laurie Sullivan*,  
associate



*Kristin Peters*,  
FSPA



*Karen Grochowski*,  
FSPA



*Julia Walsh*,  
FSPA



*Laura Nettles*,  
FSPA

## 2012 Jubilarians

### *Diamond - 80 Years*

*Sister Dolorice Schier*

### *Diamond - 75 Years*

*Sisters*

*Virginia McCarville*  
*Drusilla Trussoni*  
*Marie Weller*

### *Diamond - 70 Years*

*Sisters*

*Dorothea Burr*  
*Georgia Hammell*  
*Judine Kranc*

*Josephine Mary Weiler*

*Lydia Wendl*

*Praxedes Wertalka*

### *Diamond - 60 Years*

*Sisters*

*Anita Beskar*  
*Mary Ann Gaul*  
*Mary Ellen Huebsch*  
*Joann Kaiser*  
*Emma Kriz*  
*Clara Mae Kuempel*  
*Bernadette Prochaska*  
*LaVerne Ramaeker*

### *Golden - 50 Years*

*Sisters*

*Carol Arenz*  
*Ruth Berra*  
*Georgia Christensen*  
*Theresa Connolly*  
*Eileen Lang*  
*Shirley Morrissey*  
*Fran Marie Sulzer*  
*Marlene Weisenbeck*

### *Silver - 25 Years*

*Sister Telma Gomez*  
*Affiliate Anna Marie*  
*Cackoski*

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## Blanca

continued from page 3

instruction coursework at WTC. She also worked in St. Rose Convent's kitchen. "I didn't know how to cook but it turned out I love to cook," says Blanca. She also learned that she must reapply for a work visa each year.

### December 2000

When Sister Beverly succumbed to cancer, Blanca was devastated. "I felt so lonely. I lost a good friend. She was more special to me than anyone else I knew." Betty Shakal, FSPA, became Blanca's mentor and ministry grant sponsor. She also became Blanca's tutor and driving instructor. "She earned a B in chemistry, and we were both very happy with ourselves. She earned her license too."

### September 2004

With a WTC degree in instructional assistance and authorization to work through the training program, Blanca achieved her goal of teaching in the U.S.—Latino students as a Bilingual Instructional Aide and Spanish interpreter—which she did for a year and a half in Wilton, Wis. "They wanted to hire me but couldn't without my OPT license, which had expired," recalls Blanca.

### January 2005

About that time, Ladonna Kassmeyer, FSPA, began working with Blanca as ministry grant liaison. Hoping to file for permanent residency for Blanca they went to Madison, Wis., and met with a bilingual immigration attorney. As Blanca was married to an American citizen who emotionally and physically abused her, the attorney advised her to file a petition through the Violence Against Women Act, which would allow



*From left, Sisters Mary Ann Gschwind, Georgia Christensen and Betty Shakal, Blanca Gomez and Leticia Peña celebrate at Blanca's Green Card party in November 2011.*

Photo courtesy of Darryle Clott

her to seek permanent residence independently of an abusive spouse. The process began with a self-biography written by Blanca, causing "great pain for reliving all of my abuse."

In the meantime, the attorney advised Blanca to go back to school, which she did—attending La Crosse's Viterbo University and achieving an integrated studies degree.

### March 2007

It was March before Blanca began the tedious work of filing the petition—the first step in what turned out to be a five-year progression. Not just for writing her autobiography, "The time was stressful," she recalls. Blanca pushed herself and her education further yet, into health care. "I really want to be a nurse. I applied to the WTC Nursing Assistant Program, failed anatomy and physiology, couldn't take a job delivering newspapers (without her license) and had to continue taking English classes."

### December 2008

With the autobiography completed, duplicates of many different documents—times six—were collected: affidavits from Sisters Betty, Ladonna

and several friends who helped Blanca along the way, employment documentation, tax returns, criminal records and certifications for birth, marriage, education, passports and student visas. Much of this documentation had been destroyed by her husband. Psychological and medical exams were also required. The application was mailed Dec. 31.

### January 2009

On Jan. 2, the VAWA application was received by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the process of waiting began. The attorney checked the U.S. Department Visa Bulletin monthly for status updates; at that time application processing was backed up from 2007. "We learned a lot of patience," says Sister Ladonna. Blanca continued her studies.

### August 2009

Aug. 27 brought word that Blanca's VAWA petition was in process and she was granted deferred action status for 15 months, lowering the possibility that her application would be denied but also requiring more applications and paperwork. They hit a snag when the American citizenship of Blanca's

husband, of Turkish descent, was questioned—more filing, further delays.

### September 2010

Visa availability for Guatemala opened and the attorney filed Blanca's application to register for permanent residency.

### October 2010

On Oct. 11, Blanca was notified of a scheduled appointment, a biometrics screening, at the citizenship and immigration office in Milwaukee in November.

### January 2011

The immigration attorney traveled with Blanca and Sister Ladonna to Bloomington, Minn., for an application fact-checking interview. With the biometrics testing and interview completed, Blanca was approved for her Green Card, and hopeful that after five long years she would receive it in October. "Too much stress!" declares Blanca.

### October 2011

After a yearlong petition in the St. Rose Adoration Chapel, meticulous work by the immigration attorney and unbearable anticipation by Blanca, her Permanent Residency Card arrived—with a misprint. The card issued gave her residence as of Jan. 2, 2009, when the correct date is Oct. 11, 2011. Corresponding paperwork was filed—as were divorce papers. "Even more waiting, more stress!" says Blanca.

### Jan. 20, 2012

Five tense, taxing years after Blanca submitted the first of hundreds of documents to obtain her Green Card, she held it in her hand, was showered with toasts by several FSPA who'd been saving a bottle of champagne for the celebration. "I was feeling so happy," says Blanca. "I cannot describe it."

### Spring 2012

Blanca carries that card in her purse. She lives in La Crosse. Her divorce is finalized. She is certified as a Spanish interpreter to work in hospitals and schools and is planning her return, after 12 years, to Guatemala. "Now my cage is open," Blanca proclaims. As a legal permanent resident of the U.S., she has authorization to live, work and attend school here and to travel outside of the country. In the future, returning to Guatemala to visit and possibly teach would be a reality. "I can fly wherever I want to go!"

Blanca also bears "a self-sufficiency developed throughout the process," says Sister Ladonna, "that has made all

the difference. She doesn't let any grass grow under her feet."

"It was a major task that she attempted," asserts Sister Betty. "I admire her a great deal for keeping at it—what truly seemed to be the impossible dream—year after year."

It's that initiative and independence that Sister Beverly bestowed to Blanca so long ago, and which made her feel uncomfortable to ask "even more of FSPA." Blanca is grateful, feels "blessed to be in a country where you can reach your goals. Without the sisters, I would never be the Blanca that I am in Wisconsin, in the United States of America, today." ■

## The lard light celebrates a community custom



*"The candle is a simple one made of lard with a twisted paper for a wick." This description recalls the early days when the FSPA lived in Jefferson, Wis. Their prayers to St. Joseph to have the Blessed Sacrament in their chapel were answered on March 19, 1865, the Feast of St. Joseph. Mother Antonia placed a lard light on the altar to serve as a sanctuary lamp. As she did so, she renewed the desire of the founders to establish perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament as soon as circumstances would permit. Her promise was fulfilled 13 years later.*

*To honor this tradition Sister Amy Taylor (left photo) made the lard light at the vigil held March 18, 2012, at St. Rose Convent in La Crosse, Wis., and Sister Rita Marie Bechel (right photo) did the same at the Villa St. Joseph (also in La Crosse).*

## Sisters and affiliates support '11 x 15' campaign

**L**ed by AMOS, Inc., a coalition of faith communities working to empower people to act together to build a more just and healthy society, FSPA and affiliates gathered at a news conference in February to support the launch of a project aimed at reducing Wisconsin's prison population to 11,000 by 2015.

According to the group's open letter to people of the La Crosse-area, "The '11 x 15' campaign takes a major step toward creating a healthier, safer and more compassionate community. Our belief is based upon the work presently being done by our criminal justice professionals and community groups who are leading alternatives to incarceration programs. Under the current correctional model the Wisconsin incarceration rate skyrocketed in recent decades, now around 22,000.

The reduction to 11,000 would take us back to 1995 levels and would bring us in line with the rate of our neighboring states." They added that today, Wisconsin incarcerates twice as many at twice the expense, for example, as Minnesota.

With the 11,000 individuals no longer incarcerated, the group suggests working to break the cycle of recidivism and enable them to become productive members of the community. They also suggest alternatives to

incarceration, which require accountability and commitment to change on the part of participants, as the most effective programs to break the recidivism cycle: "Alternative programs focus on the curable and changeable causes of crime such as addiction, mental illness, illiteracy and lack of employable skills."

In La Crosse, AMOS supports and voluntarily staffs a highly innovative and successful Circles of Support program where five members make a six-month commitment to provide a personal network of support for a parolee or ex-convict. "Criminal acts are breakdowns in human relationships, and healing and strengthening human relationships offers a way to break the cycle of criminal behavior," the statement read.

"We deem it timely and appropriate to call on our elected officials to re-examine policies which have led to extremely high incarceration rates and to make changes that will result in less crowded jails and prisons," campaign representatives declared.



*At the news conference Mario Street explains how the cycle of incarceration for him ended through the help of programs such as Drug Court and Justice Sanctions.*

"We challenge ourselves and the people of faith around the state to re-examine our own attitudes and practices. We believe that the goal of a reduction of incarcerated individuals is possible and prudent. The 11 x 15 campaign is a vision to make Wisconsin a healthier, safer and more compassionate community."

*Sisters and affiliates active in AMOS, Inc. include: Sisters Leclare Beres, Rita Feeney, Romana Klaubauf, Eileen McKenzie, Kristin Peters, Betty Shakal, Nina Shephard and Linda Mershon; FSPA associate Michelle Frazier; FSPA affiliates Sheila Garrity, Shirley Huhn, John Hempstead and George Meirick. ■*



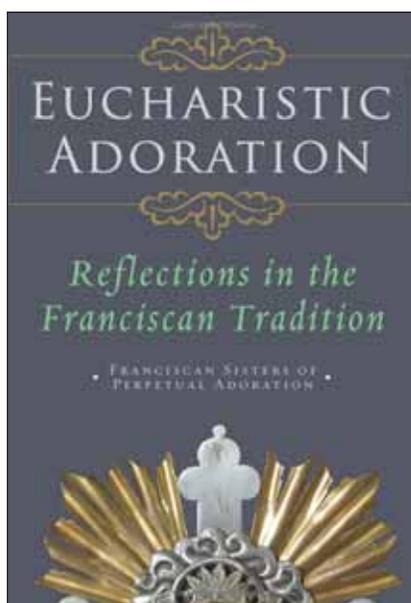
*From left, Sisters Kathy Roberg, Kristin Peters and Marie Kyle, Heath Zion, affiliate Dee Paque, Sister Linda Mershon and affiliate Sheila Garrity show their support during the news conference.*

FSPA, affiliates and prayer partners release book:  
*Eucharistic Adoration, Reflections in the Franciscan Tradition*

**T**he Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration are pleased to announce the release of a new book intended to enrich readers' eucharistic adoration with reflections based on Saints Francis and Clare.

Published by Franciscan Media, formerly St. Anthony Messenger Press, *Eucharistic Adoration* provides Catholics who pray before the "real presence" with a new and unique resource to deepen their adoration experience and do so within the Franciscan tradition.

In their introduction Sisters Marlene Weisenbeck and Joan Weisenbeck wrote, "This book of reflections witnesses how we Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual



Adoration come before the Eucharist each hour, every day and night, to gaze, consider, contemplate and imitate Christ. We seek to become like the One we contemplate and to continually make room for the mystery of God within our lives. We invite you to do the same."

Each of the 52 reflections for eucharistic adoration—one for each week of the

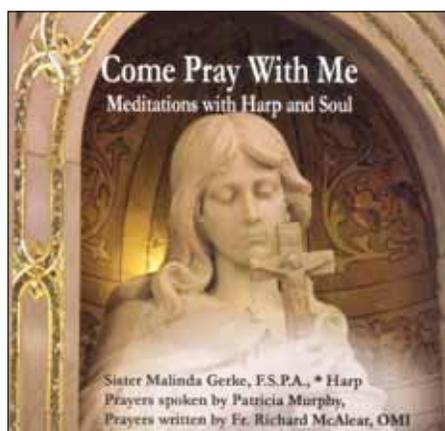
year—features four parts that address the spiritual advice of St. Clare to gaze, consider, contemplate and imitate Christ. Each reflection is written by a FSPA, affiliate or prayer partner and encourages the reader to:

- Gaze upon Christ, using a quote from a Franciscan source, primarily the letters of Clare of Assisi, as well as the writings of St. Francis;
- Consider Christ, using a brief reflection that will inspire you to reverence the Real Presence, the Body and Blood of Christ;
- Contemplate Christ by praying a few lines that help you go deeply into the spiritual experience of adoration; and
- Imitate Christ in your daily life with a challenge to act like Christ after time spent in adoration.

FSPA Jolynn Brehm, Linda Mershon, Julia Walsh and Joan Weisenbeck provided creative direction on the project.

A link to purchase the book is available at <http://www.fspa.org/onlinestore/index.html>. ■

**Malinda Gerke, FSPA, releases *Come Pray With Me***



Sister Malinda Gerke's latest CD, *Come Pray With Me*, is a collection of meditations with harp and soul. Meditation prayers, spoken by Patricia Murphy and written by Father Richard McAlear, are spoken over Sister Malinda's gentle harp music.

To learn more about this new release, visit our partner website, RuahMedia, at [www.ruahmedia.org/praywithme.htm](http://www.ruahmedia.org/praywithme.htm).

**Betty Bradley, FSPA, opens online artwork store**

Original artwork by Sister Betty Bradley is now for sale

online. "It is a new venture for me," said Sister Betty. "I began with posters and cups, then added my first necklaces."

The prints, cups and necklaces are for sale at [www.zazzle.com/artaura](http://www.zazzle.com/artaura). ■



*Textured bird scene painting by Sister Betty Bradley*

# In Memoriam

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## Rejoice, you who are alive in Christ

**Mary Philip Zerwas, FSPA**  
**Feb. 24, 1916-Dec. 21, 2011**

Sister Mary Philip was born in Manning, Iowa, and named Phyllis Marie.

Sister Mary Philip entered the health care profession, working in the reception and cashier's office at St. Francis Hospital, La Crosse, Wis., while earning her nursing degree. She then served as an RN at St. Francis Hospital (11 years) and at St. Anthony Hospital, Carroll, Iowa, (five years) where she also was director of nursing. From 1955 to 1968 Sister Mary Philip ministered as inhalation therapist and nurse anesthetist at Sacred Heart Hospital, Idaho Falls, Idaho. Following a two-year novitiate with the Carmelites-by-the-Sea in California, she returned to St. Francis Hospital for another 16 years as a registered nurse and later as a patient representative. Sister Mary Philip worked in the Wellness Center at St. Rose Convent from 1986 until her retirement in 1995.

Before retiring to Villa St. Joseph in 2004, she volunteered at Sacred Heart Parish in Sun Prairie, Wis.

**Lucile (Cecile) Schettler, FSPA**  
**Sept. 1, 1920-Dec. 31, 2011**

Sister Lucile was born in Breda, Iowa. She taught music in elementary schools in Iowa, Spokane, Wash., and California for 36 years. Sister Lucile ministered to the elderly in Las Vegas for a year and then served as director of religious education at St. Xavier's Parish, Spokane, Wash. From 1991 to 1995



she lived in Palo Alto, Calif., where she gave music lessons to students in the area. Sister Lucile volunteered in the Diocesan Catholic Charities Office in Mobile, Ala., for several years.

In 1999 she retired at St. Rose Convent and made the Villa her home in 2009.

**Louise (Claudette) Wiskus,**  
**June 5, 1924-Feb.3, 2012**

Sister Louise was born in Woodbine, Iowa.

Having earned degrees in education and administration, Sister Louise taught on the elementary level for 30 years in Iowa and Wisconsin. After leaving the classroom, she enrolled in a Clinical Pastoral Education Program. From 1981 to 1995 Sister Louise served as pastoral care chaplain at St. Anthony Hospital, Oklahoma City, Okla. Then she moved to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and was pastoral minister at St. Elizabeth's Parish until her retirement at St. Rose Convent in 2006.

In September 2010 she retired to Villa St. Joseph.

**Mary Catherine (Mary Dennis) O'Donnell, FSPA**  
**Dec. 19, 1921-March 7, 2012**

Sister Mary Catherine was born in Superior, Wis. At her baptism she received the name Mary Catherine but was called Catherine by her family.

Sister Mary Catherine served as an elementary teacher for 43 years in schools



in Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin. From 1986 to 1998 she served as receptionist at Holy Rosary Church, Minneapolis, Minn. For several years she was part-time receptionist/secretary for Brunner, Bunin & Associates in Minneapolis.

Sister Mary Catherine retired to St. Rose Convent in 2006 and to Villa St. Joseph in 2008.

**Antoinette DeLorbe, FSPA**  
**Feb. 24, 1922- March 21, 2012**

Sister Antoinette was born in Waterloo, Iowa, and was baptized with the name Catherine Elizabeth.

Sister Antoinette earned degrees in piano at Viterbo College in La Crosse, Wis., and Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y. She taught classroom music and piano lessons for 18 years in elementary schools in Iowa, Montana, Utah, Washington and Wisconsin. Later as an associate professor at Viterbo College she continued to teach piano and taught courses in the Music Department for 26 years. She became interested in early childhood music and pursued this interest by studying the Orff and Kodaly methods in Austria, and the Suzuki method in Japan. Upon her return she taught the above methods to music education majors and to private piano students in grades pre-school through high school.

Sister Antoinette moved to St. Rose Convent in 2005 and to Villa St. Joseph in 2007.



## Affiliate

**Beverly Dore**

**June 6, 1936- Jan. 26, 2012**

Beverly was born and raised in Spokane, Wash. After graduating from high school, she married her high school sweetheart, Rene Dore. In 1964, Rene died in an industrial accident. They did not have any children. Beverly worked for 36 years as a certified health unit secretary and was very active in her parish, St. Anthony Catholic Church.

Beverly became a covenant affiliate in 1995 with Sister Margaret Mary Conway as her sponsor and initial contact. Sister Joanne McGoldrick was her most recent contact. She was a member of Franciscan Hearts companion community.



FSPA website

Read the complete obituaries at

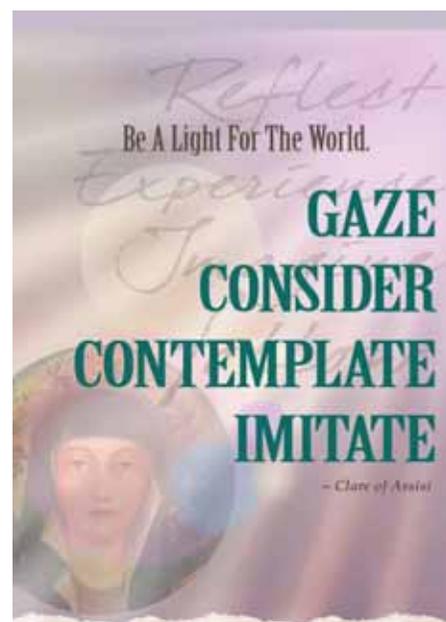
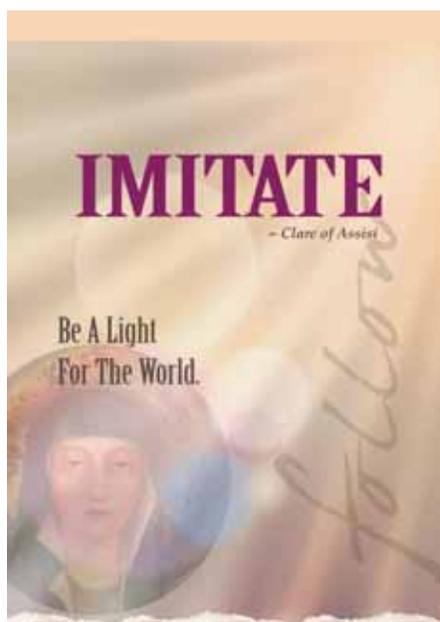
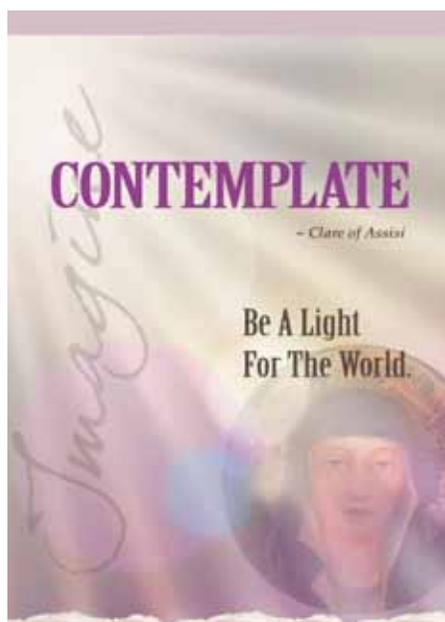
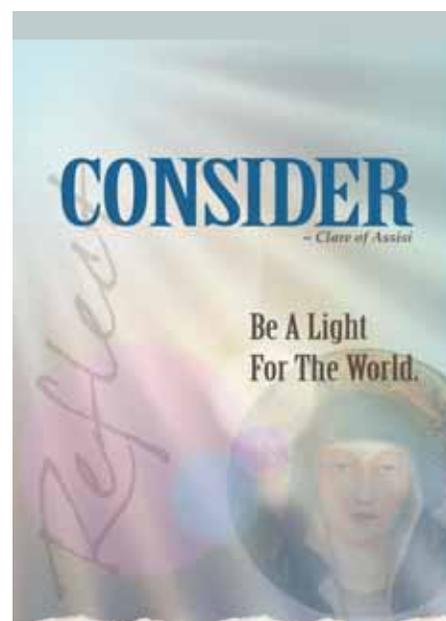
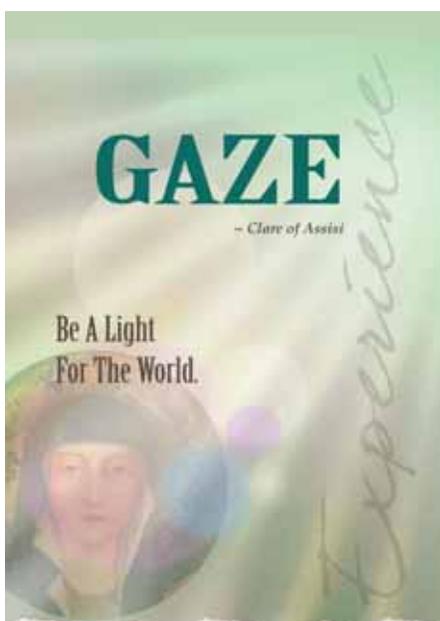
[www.fspa.org/news](http://www.fspa.org/news)

## St. Clare's message shared along Franciscan Way

This year we celebrate the 800th anniversary of Clare joining Francis of Assisi in his vision of a Gospel-centered life. We celebrate her gift to the world—the feminine expression of holiness—and her commitment to the Franciscan life. Her passionate desire to conform to Christ Jesus urged her to claim her own truth which shows us a path of daily transformation.

FSPA recently installed these street banners outside St. Rose Convent, along Franciscan Way in La Crosse Wis. The banners honor Clare and her invitation to gaze, consider, contemplate and imitate Christ.

St. Clare of Assisi still gives light to a world in need of inspiration and healing. ■



# Addenda

## 2012 Franciscan Living Challenge: Reverencing Water

Saving water can involve conscientiously reducing our consumption as well as taking measures to eliminate pollution and contamination of water sources. Our use and care for the waters of the earth affect each of us as well as the plants, fish and wildlife that share this valuable resource.

This year the FSPA Affiliation Office invited sisters and affiliates to experience and appreciate water with a new reverence. They encourage everyone to find ways to save and protect this vital essence of life.

For the Top 10 Ways to Reverence Water and a Reverencing Water prayer, visit [www.fspa.org](http://www.fspa.org) and select Join Us, Affiliate, Franciscan Living Challenge.

*The Franciscan Living Challenge started in 2008 with the distribution of reusable cloth bags—discouraging the use of plastic bags. In 2009, affiliates and sisters were encouraged to eat greener by purchasing locally-produced food and sharing meatless recipes. They cleaned greener in 2010 by sharing environmentally-friendly cleaning product recipes and precycled in 2011. Together they have improved their lifestyles and made a positive difference for the environment.*

## Women & Spirit, Catholic Sisters in America: the documentary

The Women & Spirit exhibition is scheduled to close on June 3, 2012, after its three-month stay at The California Museum of History, Women & the Arts in Sacramento. This concludes a nation-wide tour of the exhibit which debuted at The Cincinnati Museum Center on May 16, 2009. Subsequent stops included Dallas, Texas, Washington, D.C., Cleveland, Ohio, Liberty Island, N.Y., Dubuque, Iowa, Los Angeles, Calif., and South Bend, Ind.

For anyone who missed Women & Spirit, or for those who would like to experience it again, the Leadership Conference of Women Religious has produced a documentary based on the exhibition. According to the exhibit website, the DVD “narrates the virtually untold story of the rich history and contributions of Catholic sisters in the United States . . . it shows how sisters

played a vital role in shaping American life from before the earliest days of the republic and throughout its history.”

The 56-minute documentary is narrated by National Public Radio senior news analyst and ABC news political commentator Cokie Roberts.

To purchase a copy, visit <http://www.womenandspirit.org/dvd.html>.



*The people of La Gloria and Los Lotes celebrate water—the result of a GATE sponsored water project. As Sister Marie Des Jarlais states, “It is a miracle for the Salvadorans, as they would never, ever be able to come up with the funds for this major water project. God bless each and every donor.” The funds from A Drop in The Bucket will work to expand the water project to two additional villages and to two schools.*

Photo courtesy of Marie Des Jarlais, FSPA

## A Drop in the Bucket campaign expands El Salvador water project

FSPA, affiliates, prayer partners and friends responded to an appeal by giving a gift that matters. From June 2011 to January 2012, the FSPA Development Office invited FSPA family and friends to make a gift to the A Drop in the Bucket campaign in lieu of material items.

The campaign raised just over \$28,000 and is providing two villages with water and any further expenses incurred by drilling the first two wells.

Through the FSPA-sponsored ministry Global Awareness Through Experience, water projects are often underway. Therefore, donations will continue to be accepted toward A Drop in the Bucket. The next water project will benefit residents in Veracruz, Mexico. Past campaigns that remain active include Greening FSPA Land and Share A Sheep. For more information contact Madalene Buelow at [mbuelow@fspa.org](mailto:mbuelow@fspa.org) or 608-791-5282.

## La Crosse Tribune features FSPA gift to St. Clare Health Mission

St. Clare Health Mission Director Sandy Brekke describes the timing of a recent donation to the clinic as providential. She told a *La Crosse Tribune* reporter that before the FSPA gift the La Crosse-based health mission was “just barely” able to keep the clinic’s dental program going.

The story highlighted the need for dental care for the underserved population—as many as seven people per week seek dental care through the program. With the additional funds, the program will expand to include restorative dental care

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rather than just providing the funds for extractions.

About the gift, FSPA President Sister Linda Mershon said, "As health care continues to become a justice issue, FSPA became aware that St. Clare Health Mission needed to offer additional dental care to those in need."

### **Catholic Sisters of the Upper Mississippi Valley awarded Gold Addy**

Catholic Sisters of the Upper Mississippi River Valley, which includes the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, along with McCullough Creative of Dubuque, Iowa, received both a Gold ADDY® and Final Fifteen award for the design of the Women & Spirit local exhibit held at the Dubuque Mississippi River Museum during 2011. The sisters and McCullough received the award in the category of Advertising for the Arts and Sciences/Arts, out-of-home.



Presented by the American Advertising Federation of Dubuque, the mission of the ADDY competition is to recognize and reward creative excellence in the art of advertising.

### **Spirituality centers: summer programs and retreats**

At the Franciscan Spirituality Center, La Crosse, Wis., enjoy the Virtual El Salvador Pilgrimage Retreat from June 24 to 29. Experience a sacred journey to El Salvador, from the comforts of the center, to discover the vision of a people who live and act from deep faith. Meet those who carry on the legacy of Archbishop Romero in seeking justice for the poor, the majority, and witness the courage of those who seek to improve their country from within.

At Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center in Hiawatha, Iowa, enjoy the Nurturing the Sacred Within retreat with facilitator Corrina Thomas, FSPA. During this week-long retreat, July 15 to 21, participants will answer fundamentally spiritual questions by getting in touch with their Chakras.

In Arbor Vitae, Wis., at Marywood Franciscan Spirituality Center, participate in A Franciscan Retreat: Franciscan Vision and the Gospel of John. This retreat is facilitated by Marla Lang, FSPA, and Kathy Lentsch, OSF, and is scheduled for July 24 to 28, 2012.

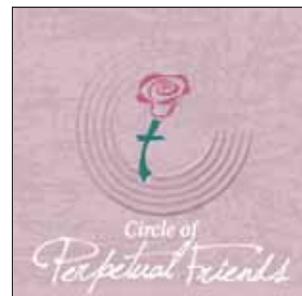
In September, WomanWell in St. Paul, Minn., will offer an Inner Transformation for Global Change program. This program is a Learning Community for Integrative Leadership and Spiritual Guidance.

Visit <http://www.fspa.org/news/eventscalendar.html> for more programming information and links to these spirituality centers.

### **Now enrolling: Circle of Perpetual Friends**

Earlier this year the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration unveiled the Circle of Perpetual Friends, a new planned giving program. Information explaining the ways in which your legacy gift can perpetuate the ministries of the congregation and a response card indicating your willingness to participate as a perpetual friend is available online at [www.fspa.org/Donate/plannedgiving.htm](http://www.fspa.org/Donate/plannedgiving.htm).

The FSPA Development Office enjoys helping our friends plan lasting gifts. You may contact the Development Office for more information, 608-791-5282 or [mbuelow@fspa.org](mailto:mbuelow@fspa.org).



### **Viterbo University awards Pope John XXIII Award for distinguished service**

Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA, well known for her work in religious, academic and health care circles, and Dick and Cherry Lommen, prominent La Crosse, Wisconsin community leaders and generous supporters of important community initiatives are recipients of the 2012 Pope John XXIII Award for Distinguished Service. They will receive their award at a banquet May 23.

"Sister Marlene has generously shared her gifts with others as a talented musician, a canon lawyer and a highly-accomplished leader," said Rick Artman, president of Viterbo University in La Crosse. "She has demonstrated a longstanding and faithful commitment to promote the common good and better the lives of others. She truly models servant leadership."

The Pope John XXIII Award is the highest non-academic award bestowed by Viterbo University. Recipients are chosen on the basis of contributions in one or several of the following categories: education, business, philanthropy, peace and justice and religious life. ■



*Marlene Weisenbeck,  
FSPA*

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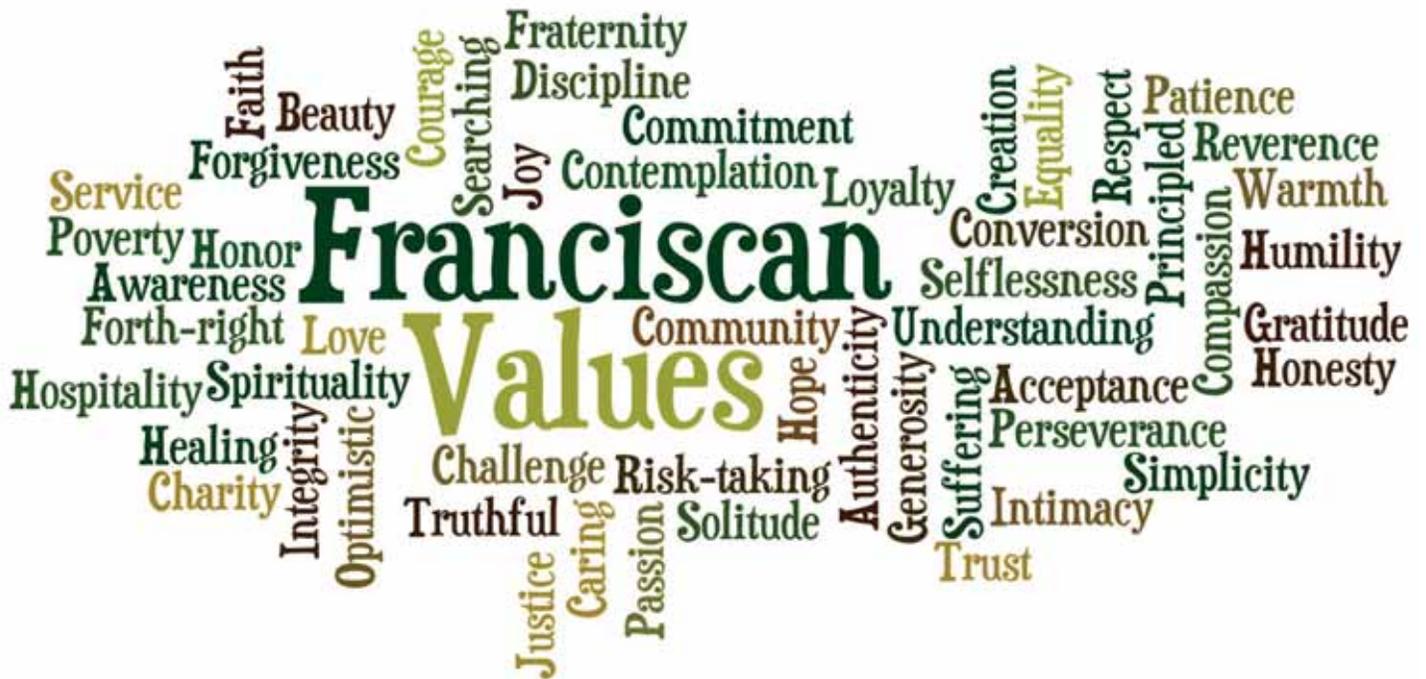


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*Franciscan Values wordle, or word cloud, created by Kevin Buelow  
2011 Assisi pilgrim, Mayo Clinic Health System-Franciscan Healthcare employee*