

SHOW ME A *sign*→

A GUIDE FOR DISCERNING RELIGIOUS LIFE

2019



Sister Marcia Baumert, FSPA

HEALING HEARTS THROUGH FAITH

Working as a staff chaplain and coordinator of Catholic ministries at Gundersen Health System in La Crosse, Wisconsin, Sister Marcia Baumert eases the suffering of many patients and their families. From providing spiritual care to terminally ill patients to simply being with them in their time of need, Sister Marcia embodies the selfless service that permeates FSPA's strong tradition in the health-care ministry.

While pastoral care may sound like a major challenge to most, Sister Marcia is grateful to serve in the ministry of chaplaincy. "I have the privilege of being with someone when their life is being drastically changed by a disease, process, death or accident—

when life is never going to be the same for them." In these moments of pain and suffering between both patient and family, Sister Marcia often serves as a sacred keeper of their stories. Like many chaplains before her, she is steadfast in her responsibility; she strives "to help people hold the difficulties and try to walk through and make sense of situations that are so drastic."

Prior to her ministry of chaplaincy, Sister Marcia served for nine years as a home economics teacher at a Catholic high school, but growing inside her was a desire for spiritual fulfillment and a career better

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Show me a sign video series

 *Franciscan Sisters*
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suited to her abilities. Bubbling inside her was a call to explore her growing inclination that there was more to life than her role as teacher. Vaguely aware she had not yet found her true purpose, she turned to her high school art teacher, Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Karen Kapell, for guidance. After visiting Sister Karen in La Crosse, Wisconsin, she felt “a real at home-ness and a nudge” to apply to join FSPA.

Sister Marcia joined FSPA in 1988 and was immediately drawn to spiritual direction and counseling—the ministry she would adopt in her new life as a Catholic sister. Just as she felt a connection after her visit with FSPA, Sister Marcia was drawn toward spiritual ministry after visiting a friend—a chaplain—at a hospital in Iowa. “I just felt a real connection. That was where I needed to be.”

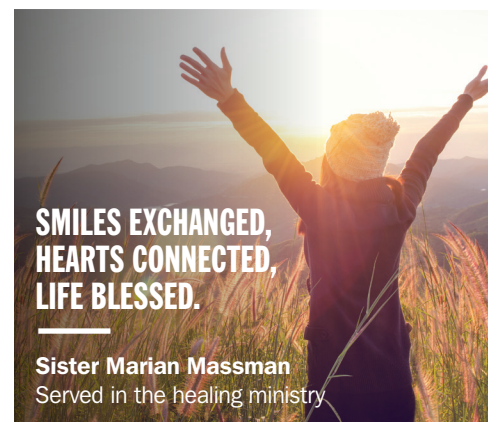
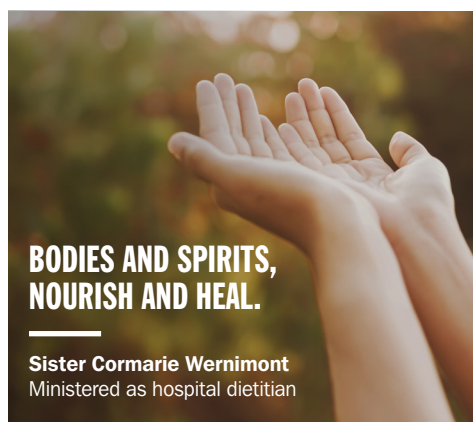
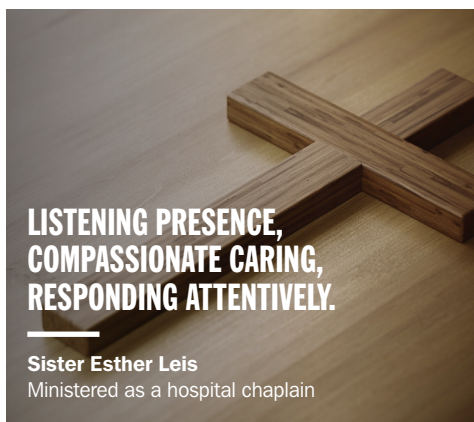
As a former teacher Sister Marcia knows the value of education in enacting real change, a conviction that she continues to foster

through her contributions to Gundersen’s clinical pastoral education training program. In addition to preparing students seeking to become chaplains, the training model incorporates direct patient care. Her department also developed a series of presentations given by representatives from different racial and cultural communities that include LGBTQ, Native American, Hmong, Latin American and Amish. While an absence of religious beliefs can lead to a lack of appreciation for spiritual care, she believes that “everyone has something that gives their life hope and meaning”.

Sister Marcia knows from her own experience that spiritual growth occurs at different rates and in various ways for individuals. She finds that her life and ministry is enriched by being a member of FSPA. “Being an FSPA has given me a strong and positive community base grounded in prayer, relationship, support and perspectives.” 🌹

6-WORD MISSION STORIES

Ernest Hemingway is credited with writing a wonderful story in just six words. Show me a sign challenged Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration to write a 6-word story to encapsulate their mission experiences. Here are stories from FSPA who have ministered in the healing and health care ministries.



If you were to write a 6-word story as a discernment prayer what would it be? Share it with us at membership@fspa.org. With your permission, we'll share it on the *Show me a sign* blog! Read more 6-word stories at www.fspa.org/showmeasign.

ASK A SISTER: Q&A SERIES WITH OUR FRANCISCAN COMMUNITY



“Each stage of life has its own natural beauty, from the excitement of bringing new life into this world to witnessing a patient die a peaceful death. My entire career has been inspiring.”

– Sister Dawn Kutt, FSPA

FRANCISCAN SISTER OF PERPETUAL ADORATION DAWN KUTT

Q: What attracted you to the nursing field?

A: I have always been interested in the medical field, and in particular, the geriatric population. I began pursuing my interest by volunteering at our local nursing home. During my junior year in high school, I took a certified nursing assistant course and began my employment as a nursing assistant. I am grateful for my time serving as a nursing assistant because I believe it is the core of the nursing profession. I appreciate the work nursing assistants do for me now as I work as a registered nurse.

Q: How have you used your nursing degree after entering religious life?

A: I have continued to use my nursing degree in various capacities, which have all been very fulfilling. I served as the

Director of St. Clare Health Mission, a clinic in La Crosse, Wisconsin, that assists individuals who are underinsured or not insured in attaining access to medical care. I have also worked in a variety of nursing roles at our community nursing home, Villa St. Joseph. In November, 2018, I added to my nursing responsibilities as I was elected FSPA mission counselor, taking on responsibility for helping with the governance of our congregation.

Q: What has been your favorite or most inspiring time in ministry?

A: I have been in health care my entire life in various capacities from the emergency room, to obstetrics, to acute care, to nursing home; I have many favorite moments. I have been able to witness the complete cycle of life from birth to death.

Each stage of life has its own natural beauty, from the excitement of bringing new life into this world to witnessing a patient die a peaceful death. My entire career has been inspiring, so choosing a favorite would not do justice to the many gifted moments I have experienced, whether they are joyful or during a time of sadness.

Q: What insight would you offer to discerners who are considering combining their desire to work in the medical field and join a religious community?

A: Be authentic to who you are, and follow your heart's deepest desire. 🧘

DID YOU KNOW?

BY SISTER MARY ANN GSCHWIND, FSPA

The first hospital in Western Wisconsin opened a day earlier than planned, with 35 beds, as three sailors arrived by riverboat in need of care. The doctors and a few Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration trained in nursing opened the hospital on December 31, 1883. Originally named St. Francis Hospital, it is now Mayo Clinic Health System – Franciscan Healthcare and is part of a respected network of community-focused hospitals and clinics that serve Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

SPOTLIGHT ON SISTERS: THE LEGACY OF HEALING AND HEALTH-CARE MINISTRY



MARIE KYLE, FSPA

Sister Marie ministered in the nursing field for more than 61 years. She served in Wisconsin, Idaho and New York. Sister Marie continues to volunteer by accompanying sisters to medical appointments and helping with community advocacy in La Crosse, Wisconsin, at A Place of Grace Catholic Worker House, the La Crosse Warming Center and through work on the FSPA Immigration Task Force.



MARIS KERWIN, FSPA

Before stepping across the threshold of St. Rose Convent to become a sister, Sister Maris graduated from St. Anthony School of Nursing in Carroll, Iowa. Her expertise in nursing was quickly discovered and she began working as a supervisor in several hospitals. Sister Maris also served the FSPA community as vice president. Today, she serves as volunteer heritage curator, preserving FSPA history for generations to come.



CELESTA DAY, FSPA

Sister Celesta was first inspired to pursue ministry in nursing based on her experience of caring for her grandmother. She has served in many ways to support patients, beginning in bedside nursing and later hospital administration. Her administrative abilities continued to be evidenced as she served the community as vice president, and later, director of FSPA Mission Effectiveness. Today, Sister Celesta leads chapel tours and mentors the next generation working in health-care ministry.



JACINTA JACKSON, FSPA

Sister Jacinta has served in the health-care field for the past 12 years. She has worked in a variety of positions, focusing primarily on mental health. For a time she worked in a health insurance mental health department and in a shelter for domestic violence as a trauma specialist. She currently serves as a licensed alcohol and drug counselor. Sister Jacinta enjoys helping her clients discover their own pathways to living a healthy and wholistic life.



DONNA STEVENS, FSPA

Sister Donna has served in nursing in Ohio and Nebraska, during which she became aware of a rising need for competent counselors. She returned to school and received a doctorate in clinical psychology and began working with the White Mountain Apache people in Whiteriver, Arizona, with a focus on domestic violence prevention. Today, Sister Donna continues to use her counseling skills there in the field of addictions. She is the supervisor and coordinator of Rainbow Treatment Center and Butterfly Drop-In Center in Whiteriver.



DISCERNERS SEEKING DIRECTION:

Common discernment questions



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"I've seen her change and grow ... since she's been a sister. It's nice to see her settle in and be more at peace with herself. It's been a beautiful process to see."

– Eileen, Sister Lucy Slinger's sibling

"I don't know if I noticed it when she became Catholic, but when she made the decision, there was a light in her eyes."

– Mary Kay, Sister Sarah Hennessey's mom

"Even though there was some questioning among the family, I chose to go ahead."

– Sister Lucy Slinger

Women discerning religious life (and anyone walking with them) have the opportunity to meet Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration who share the joys and struggles they experienced in personal relationships as they walked their own pathway of discernment. Their stories are intended to help discerners looking for ways to build bridges of conversation with family and friends.

Watch at www.fspa.org/showmeasign



youtube.com/franciscansisters

SISTER LAURA NETTLES



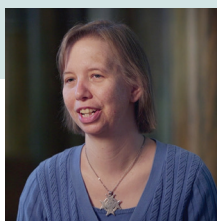
**HOW DO I
NAVIGATE MY
CHANGING ROLE
AS A DAUGHTER?**

SISTER JACINTA JACKSON



**HOW WILL I STAY
IN CONTACT WITH
MY FAMILY?**

SISTER SARAH HENNESSEY



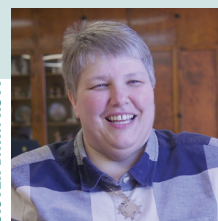
**WHAT IF MY FAMILY
ISN'T CATHOLIC?**

SISTER LUCY SLINGER



**WHAT IF MY
FAMILY DOESN'T
AGREE WITH MY
CHOICE?**

SISTER DAWN KUTT



**HOW WILL
RELIGIOUS LIFE
AFFECT MY
RELATIONSHIPS?**

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DEVELOPING LONG-TERM, SUSTAINABLE RELATIONSHIPS

Pictured with Sister Marcia Baumert (left to right):
Sister Marcella Steffes, Sister Theresa Keller, Sister Lisa
Zmuda, Sister Fran Sulzer, Sister Mary Arnoldussen

A REAL CONNECTION, DRIVEN BY CARE AND COMPASSION

“Being a part of FSPA has meant having a strong and positive community base grounded in prayer, relationships, support and perspectives.”

– Sister Marcia Baumert, FSPA

Read Sister Marcia’s story “Healing hearts through faith” on pages 1–2.



CONNECT WITH YOUR FEET

Franciscan Spirituality Center La Crosse, Wisconsin, www.fscenter.org

Marywood Franciscan Spirituality Center Arbor Vitae, Wisconsin, www.marywoodsc.org

Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center Hiawatha, Iowa, www.prairiewoods.org

Global Awareness Through Experience www.Gate-Travel.org



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