

# 2020 Jubilarians

## Class of 1945 — celebrating 75 years as a Catholic sister



### Sister Rita Marie Bechel

I gratefully remember God's special blessings living in the family of Matthias A. (Matt) Bechel and Emma Dettling on the farm in Plum City, Wisconsin, with seven brothers and six sisters. I benefited by being taught by FSPA at St. John the Baptist grade school through eighth grade. Entering St. Rose Convent as an aspirant in 1939 for four years of high school instruction, I had more excellent teachers. I missioned as a teacher of grades one through five for 37 and a half years in Wisconsin and Iowa. I especially recall teaching music and Latin words to prepare students to sing Requiem Mass. In 1982, I began my 25 years at Villa St. Joseph as a receptionist, feeding elderly sisters and sacristan until retiring in 2015.

Online on Palm Sunday, Sister Gertrude Daugherty and I watched novices Sisters Michele Pettit and Meg Earsley with Sisters Corrina Thomas, Helen Elsbernd and Julia Walsh at our FSPA Novitiate House in Chicago. They celebrated Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem with their own grasses. We can all be inspired by their devotion to the Lord, which stirs my hope for our FSPA future!

## Class of 1950 — celebrating 70 years as Catholic sisters



### Sister Rosalia Bauer

As a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration, my life is deeply grounded via daily Mass, and 24/7 Perpetual Adoration. Energized with this "soul food," I have been blessed serving people from the womb to the tomb ministering as a RN, FNP. Ministry in our five sponsored hospitals, Kimberly-

Clark's first Health Promotion Program, migrants in Virginia, to Cambodian refugees camped in Thailand and on ... "All praise and all Thanksgiving be every moment Thine."



### Sister Luanne Durst

Over the years, in all the places I've served, I've continued to be utterly grateful to my family for my early years, the Manitowoc sisters for my middle years, and my La Crosse sisters for these "later" years. No ministry or life experience would have been possible without the generous support of

all these remarkable people who've crossed my path and supported my life. I pray for them daily.



### Sister Kathleen Kenkel (RIP)

It is with a grateful heart that I reflect on my 70 years as part of FSPA. It has been a time of great joy and many blessings. May God continue to bless the FSPA community, my family and my friends always.



### Sister Marcella Steffes

In high school, I hoped to become a music instructor. With Sister Dolorette's help at St. Angela's Academy in Carroll, I received an excellent background for my future preparation to enter St. Rose Convent to praise the Lord working in a music ministry, teaching Suzuki cello and violin to children.

I am filled with gratitude for all the blessings received these past 70 years.

**Sister Shirley Wagner**

I thank God, my parents and my religious community for all the wonderful opportunities I was given to be involved in so many lives through music, pastoral ministry and art. All of these were pure gifts for which I am grateful.

**Sister Donna Weber**

Mystery accompanies all of life. Walking willingly in faith allows the heart some surprises. THAT is jubilee. Reflecting on having lived as an FSPA fills me with deep gratitude for the gifts and uncountable blessings from my Franciscan community. How incredible the call to journey with Christ whose plans often seemed so “unplanned!” JUBILEE celebrates the mysteries that unfolded with meaning, purpose and deep relationships.

**Class of 1960 — celebrating 60 years as Catholic sisters****Sister Gloria Aguon**

O Divine Master, thank you for serving  
You 60 years in consecrated life.

I treasure:  
Truth engraved in heart and whole being  
Heaven destined since eternity  
Always with me

New brothers and sisters to service  
Kindle light in perpetual adoration for family, friends,  
relatives and the whole world  
Yes, to Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration  
One complete heart  
Union with You, Lord, and all creation  
I love you very much, my Lord.

**Sister Rosemary Desmond**

It is with deep gratitude I review my 60 years as an FSPA. The blessings and opportunities afforded me for education, travel and ministry have enabled me to serve others as together we joyfully made the presence of God visible in countless ways. I am grateful for the love and support of my community, my family and my friends.

**Sister Joann Gehling**

Léon Bloy wrote, “Joy is the echo of God’s life within us.” From this deep place within, I was drawn to religious life by the example of an FSPA teacher who treated each student with love and respect regardless of status or academic ability. This call to religious life continues morning after morning with privileged time for prayer, new ministerial challenges and numerous friendships made possible by belonging to a community of Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. Jubilee is indeed a time of heart-felt gratitude and celebration!

**Sister Diane Boehm**

I look back on these 60 years as an FSPA with joy and with a grateful heart for all the blessings that have come my way. Thank you to all who have been a part of my FSPA years, especially our loving God, my family, our FSPA community, my friends and all those I have had the privilege of ministering to and serving with!

**Sister Mary Ann Gschwind**

Through these 60 years, I feel blessed to be an FSPA. I love the community and have loved being of service in various ministries. I am grateful to everyone whose paths have crossed mine and enriched my life.

**Sister Betty Bradley**

What a blessing it has been to be called by God to be an FSPA! I love the Franciscan call to live a life of peace and inclusiveness. My experiences have been many and varied. With the love and support of my family, my FSPA family and friends, I have been able to love life and be of service to others. God is

good! I thank God and all for these blessings as I celebrate 60 years of vowed life.

**Sister Virdean Meyer**

I have been blessed! My journey to and with FSPA could not have happened without those who have walked with me. All who have touched my life — FSPA community, family, friends and co-workers, have gifted me with the support to accept the challenges and graces of my life and ministry. My life and ministry have been filled with experiences in which I have received much more than I could possibly give. I am so grateful.



**Sister Mary Morrissey**

No words will do justice to express my gratitude to my family, FSPA community, friends and all who have touched my life. Opportunities and challenges enriched my life. Thanksgiving to God for calling me forth and giving me the support and love in my journey. May I continue to be open to God's continual call.

**Sister Ione Nieland**

The call to be a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration has been a tremendous blessing in my life. I have been given many blessings and have had great opportunities. God has graced me with wonderful persons to live and work with.

**Sister Irene Nieland**

As I reflect on the journey of these 60 years, I feel humbled and grateful for all that FSPA, my family and the people of all the communities with whom I lived and ministered have given me. When I answered the call to religious life and FSPA, the community gave me the opportunity to study nursing. This gave me a ministry in which I realized a childhood dream of serving others as a nurse, be it clinical nursing, nursing education or administration. The world I encountered in these ministries was much larger than the one I could ever have imagined as a child. With encouragement and support from my sisters in community, I moved from Iowa to the surrounding states and beyond. I lived and served also in Idaho, Colorado, the Micronesian Islands in the Pacific and, for a short time, Cameroon, Africa. Truly, I have had a graced life. The ministry gave me purpose, challenge and relationships. The lifestyle gave me an enjoyment of the riches of the earth and the peace of the contemplative call. So I celebrate. I say thank you.

**Sister Grace Ann Schiffer**

I have always loved hearing the story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus, and the phrase "their hearts were burning within them." These words take me back to fifth grade when I began to hear the call to religious life. Ever since then, this call has deepened and "burned" within me, for which I am most grateful. Being an FSPA has given me many opportunities to serve — as primary teacher, group mother at St. Michael's for adolescent girls, pastoral care, and 32 years as massage therapist through A Touch of Grace. I am forever grateful to family, friends and FSPA. I continue on with joy and a grateful heart.

**Sister Jo Ann Serwas**

"What return can I make to the Lord for the blessings He has given me ... my vows to the Lord I will pay in the presence of His people." (Psalm 116). As an OSF in Manitowoc and, in even greater abundance as an FSPA in La Crosse, I have enjoyed a twofold blessing. Thank you Jesus!

## Class of 1970 — celebrating 50 years as Catholic sisters

**Sister Carolynn Heil**

The thought of this jubilee time fills me with joyous gratitude for all the blessings gifted me by our Beloved through my sisters, family, friends and all those whose lives have graced me over these years. Thank you for supporting me, allowing me to walk with you in our life journeys.

I am greatly honored to be in community with my FSPA sisters as we strive to "Act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8)

**Sister Lucy Ann Meyer**

My life as a Franciscan Religious woman has been filled with many wonderful and enriching experiences. God has invited and challenged me to be a sign of loving presence as a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration. I have been blessed to know and work with caring and generous people in my years of ministry as an educator, administrator, novice and affiliation minister. For all these blessings and the support of my family and communities, I am deeply grateful.

# Congratulations to all!



## Congratulations to all FSPA affiliates celebrating 25 years of affiliation



### **Affiliate Ann Fox**

“Act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with your God,” (Micah 6:8) has always been my guide for affiliation these past 25 years and remains current today. It has guided my involvement in various ministries, prayer life and community, both FSPA and locally, wherever I live.



### **Affiliate Barbara Lawless**

I’ve known FSPA since I was 13 years old and placed at St. Michael’s Home. I lived there until I was 18, at which time I was on my own. The values and love I received there have stayed with me through my whole life. When we moved to Woodruff, I again was close to my FSPA family: Sister Alice Kaiser at my church and Sister Jolynn Brehm at Marywood. To this day, Sister Jolynn is one of my best friends and someone I consider to be “my sister.” I worked at Marywood for a number of years as an assistant to Sister Pauline Wittry. After leaving Marywood I did mission work in Jamaica and Kenya for quite a few years and made my last trip two years ago. The values of the FSPA and the FSPA themselves have made me who I am today.



### **Affiliate Linda Pieper**

I was very fortunate to attend Viterbo University where I first met Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. The education that I received from the sisters at Viterbo made a huge impact on my life. When Sister Rita Mae Fisher invited me to become an affiliate, the Holy Spirit stirred my heart to say “yes!” This was one small way for me to stay connected to a community that had given me so much. Being an affiliate has helped me grow in my prayer life, deepen my appreciation for Eucharistic Adoration and continually learn how to serve Jesus.

