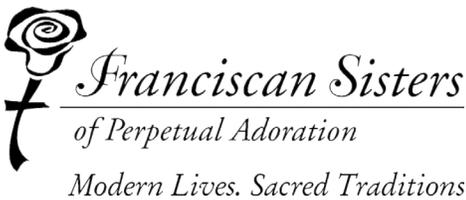


FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF PERPETUAL ADORATION

# PERSPECTIVES

FALL 2024





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Cover image: Photo courtesy of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

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## Litany of Democracy (Abr. Ed.)

By Julia Walsh, Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.  
Christ, hear us. Christ, graciously hear us.

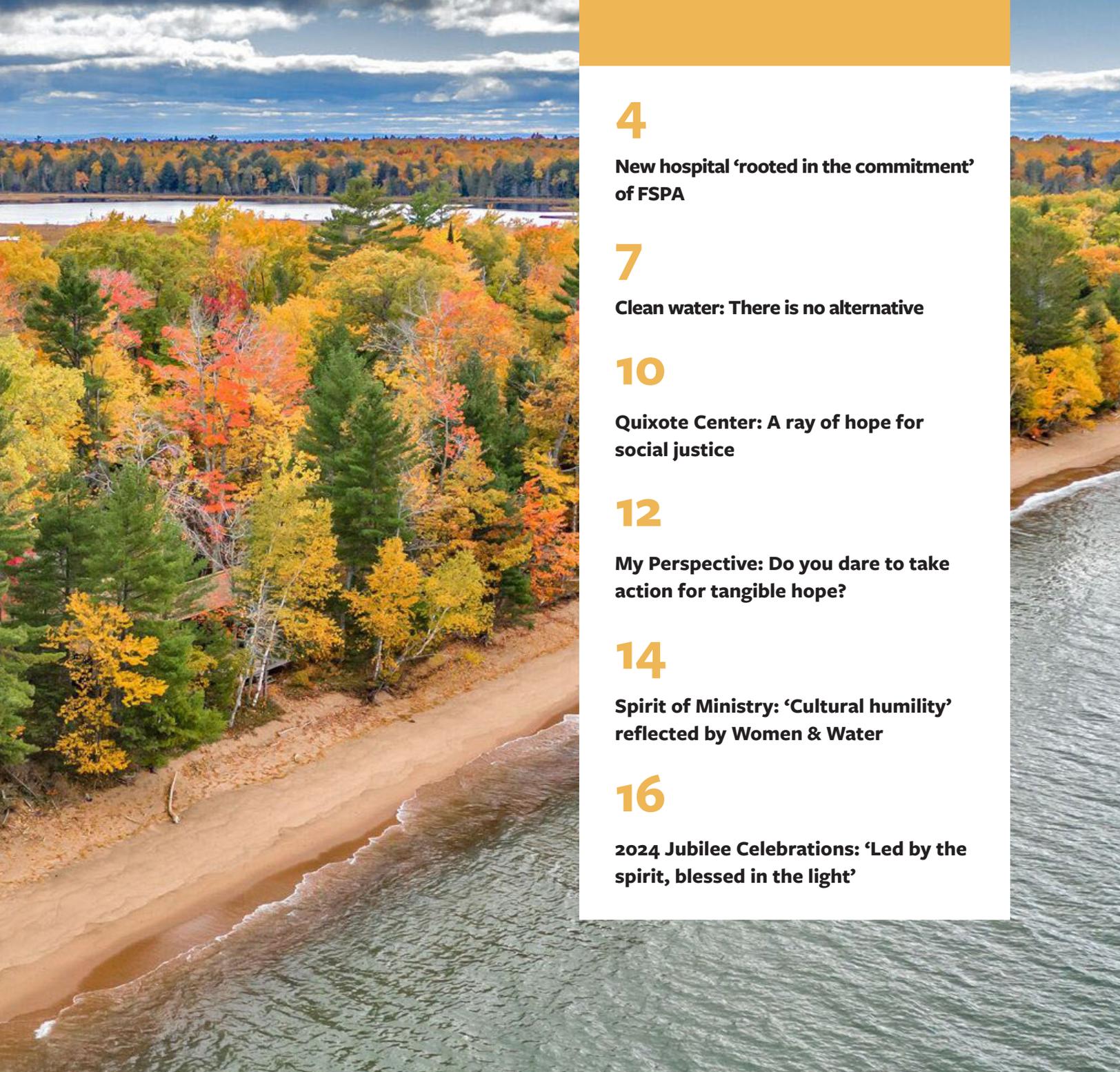
For our failure to protect the common good, God, have mercy.  
For our failure to end unjust laws, God, have mercy.  
For our failure to remain civil and kind, God, have mercy.  
For our failure to respect diversity, God, have mercy.  
For our failure to insist on liberty and justice for all, God, have mercy.  
For our failure to protect all life, God, have mercy.  
For our tendency to cancel others, God, have mercy.  
For our tendency to avoid compromise, God, have mercy.  
For our tendency to choose apathy, God, have mercy.  
For our tendency to associate with only the likeminded, God, have mercy.  
For our excuses, God, have mercy.  
For our stubbornness, God, have mercy.  
For our division, God, have mercy.  
For our despair, God, have mercy.  
For our failure to love our enemies, God, have mercy.  
For our failure to believe in you, God, have mercy.  
For our failure to destroy our idols, God, have mercy.

Heal our sorrow, Help us, Good God.  
Mend our hearts, Help us, Good God.  
Make us yours, Help us, Good God.

For the prophets who challenge the status quo, We thank you God.  
For the leaders who build unity and peace, We thank you God.  
For the public servants who model humility, We thank you God.  
For teachers who help us think carefully, We thank you God.  
For policy makers who lead us on the path of peace, We thank you God.  
For artists and activists who offer us an alternative vision, We thank you God.  
For organizers who build community and inspire action, We thank you God.  
For ministers who keep us focused on the Prince of Peace, We thank you God.  
For ordinary citizens who offer gifts to the greater good, We thank you God.

Heal our division, Help us, Good God.  
End our fears, Help us, Good God.  
Make us yours, Help us, Good God. Amen

Visit [messyjesusbusiness.com](http://messyjesusbusiness.com) to read Sister Julia's poem in its entirety.



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# NEW HOSPITAL 'ROOTED IN THE COMMITMENT' OF FSPA



**By Peter Grabow, Mayo Clinic Health System**

**T**he dedication of Mayo Clinic Health System's La Crosse, Wisconsin hospital on Aug. 1 marked the beginning of a new chapter in a story that dates back more than 140 years.

In 1883 the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration opened St. Francis Hospital in La Crosse. The modest, 35-bed facility was just the fifth hospital in Wisconsin, and the first to be located outside the southeast corner of the state.

Patients were few at first. Hospitals were considered suspect outside of metropolitan areas, and the viability of such a venture was uncertain in this river town of 15,000 citizens. Yet those who availed themselves of the services at 10th and Market Streets found the sisters wholly committed to the challenge and fully dedicated to providing quality, comfortable and compassionate

care. While many early hospitals failed, the sisters demonstrated remarkable agility in responding to the changing needs of a growing community and region and also an impressive business acumen to be able to achieve mission-sustaining financial viability.

Indeed, the hospital was soon deemed too small to meet local needs, and plans for additional space were quickly drawn up. In the years that followed, the sisters guided the hospital through turbulent times including two world wars, the Great Depression and the polio epidemic. A school of nursing was established, as well as St. Ann's Maternity Hospital and St. Camillus Annex, which provides care for those with contagious illnesses.

Through the founding and operation of their medical facilities in La Crosse, the sisters illuminated a unique and impressive ability to succeed, not only as compassionate servant leaders but also as exemplary leaders in medicine, business, education and innovation. These attributes — this rich heritage and shared values — created a natural

A blessing for the new hospital, penned by Sister Celesta Day and given by Sister Marlene Weisenbeck (pictured left), was shared with the community at the dedication ceremony.

Photos courtesy of Mayo Clinic Health System

alignment that led to the affiliation involving Franciscan Health System with Mayo Clinic in the 1990s.

As we enter this new chapter, the vision of our FSPA founders lives on. It is as vibrant and relevant as ever. While much has changed, the essence remains the same: We are committed to putting the needs of patients first and providing them with excellence in their medical care. The frontier hospital has paved the way for a new hospital that reimagines the patient-centered experience. The latest medical therapies and the sophistication of innovative technologies is offered in a peaceful, secure environment through the dedication, compassion and clinical expertise of a staff wholly committed to those they serve.

We were honored to have four FSPA directly involved in the dedication of the new hospital. Sister Georgia Christensen, FSPA vice president, who sits on the board of directors for Mayo Clinic Health System in Southwest Wisconsin; Sister Sue Ernster, FSPA president, who

## Blessing a House of Healing

Building made of the materials of Earth ...

We honor the work of those who planned for you and for all those who have crafted you so beautifully.

We consecrate you for the work you were meant to give.

We ask that each space within you be filled

- with the attitudes of compassion and kindness,
- with attention to good science and skills,
- with the realization of the human dignity of each person served and serving.

We send the expectation for the gift of healing in whatever form is most fitting for all who come to you.

AND we thank You, the One who created us and all that is around us, the One who has promised to hear us and tend to our needs.

All this in your name as

- the Source of all being,
- the Word made flesh and
- the Spirit in our midst.

SO BE IT! AMEN!

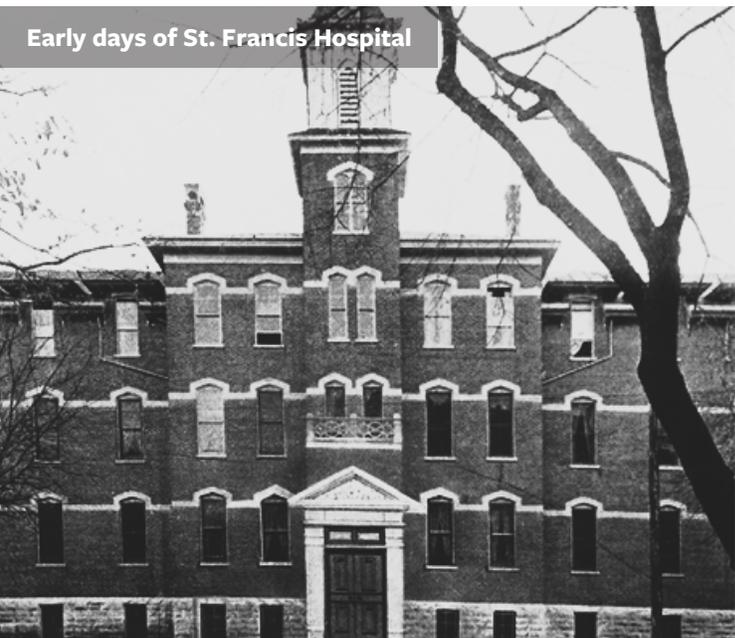
assisted with the ribbon cutting for the new facility; Sister Celesta Day, who served as St. Francis Hospital Administrator in the 1980s and who wrote the blessing for the new hospital; and Sister Marlene Weisenbeck, formerly a MCHS board member and FSPA president, who delivered the blessing at the dedication ceremony.

Like the original St. Francis Hospital in 1883, the new La Crosse hospital offers a tremendous asset to this region — an innovative, responsive source of hope and healing for all who are served. While the new hospital offers advanced technology and capabilities, the care is compassionately delivered in a manner nurtured by a long and rich heritage rooted in the commitment of the founding sisters and the many FSPA who followed. ■

Construction crew at work on St. Francis Hospital in July 1930



Early days of St. Francis Hospital



Sister Eileen McKenzie (pictured right) joins the ground breaking for new hospital on April 12, 2022.

Many FSPA attend a dedication for the new hospital on Aug. 21.





# CLEAN WATER: THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE

**T**here is nothing more precious than our water and our future.

With this rally cry for all of creation, we walk with Pope Francis, our placards held high, declaring our commitment to care for our common home.

And in sovereignty, we stand with the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa on their sacred land in northwestern Wisconsin. We stand at the wellspring of their water and their future, now compromised by Enbridge Inc., a multinational pipeline and energy corporation that transports crude oil and natural gas through Canada and the United States. The company's literal fault line, entrenched in 12 miles of the Bad River reservation, is Line 5.

Enbridge, according to the federal court and by the company's own admission, has been trespassing across the Bad River reservation since 2013 when easements expired and the band declined to renew them. While a federal judge ordered Enbridge to remove Line 5 from the reservation by June 16, 2025, Enbridge proposes rerouting Line 5 upstream of the Bad River watershed. It is a move that would mean trenching, drilling back and filling hundreds of wetlands and streams which play a critical role in preventing flooding and protecting lives

and infrastructure. The work is overflowing with potential for an oil spill. At risk are the water, fish, plants, animals, humans and so much more — the lifeblood of the tribe and all of creation.

In June FSPA stood with the tribe amidst a crowd of over 100 people at a hearing held in Ashland, Wisconsin, regarding environmental assessment of the Line 5 expansion. The sisters' voices and messaging were clear. "The pipeline's impacts on our economy, natural resources, public health and its violations of Indigenous rights are unacceptable. Residents of the Great Lakes should not be forced to assume such risks for a project that is economically unviable in the long-term and serves no clear, public purpose.

"Fossil fuels, especially oil, are known to pollute. With the decline in global oil demand, rapid ongoing transition to renewable energy and urgency of the climate crisis, more and more scientists are calling for clean energy. Our hope is that the ultimate decision makers for this project think long-term; not about us, but generations to come."

At the end of August, Earthjustice, a nonprofit, environmental law firm representing the Bad River Band in opposition to the Line 5 pipeline reroute, hosted a news conference to provide further opportunity for public comment and facts regarding the reroute's

**JUNE 4, 2024**  
**US Army Corps of Engineers Hearing**  
**Oppose: 90**  
**Support: 45**

Bad River Band youth connect with their waterways and traditions during a Boys & Girls Club Fish Camp and Treaty Day event. Photo courtesy of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa.

**AUGUST 15, 2024**  
**Wisconsin Coastal Management Program Hearing**  
**Oppose: 24**  
**Support: 7**



Photos courtesy of Earthjustice



potential detriment to all of creation.

Gussie Lord, managing attorney of Earthjustice’s Tribal Partnership Program, missioned to ensure the protection of Indigenous natural and cultural resources Indigenous community, said, “We know that this reroute is not the solution to the danger of the current pipeline. In fact, it really extends the dangers of the pipeline and increases the threat of devastating oil spills to the Bad River reservation, watershed and Lake Superior watershed. Throughout the U.S., over 150,000 people have spoken out and submitted comments to the army corps in opposition to this pipeline. The truth is that people don’t want this fossil fuel infrastructure entrenched. They don’t want threats to the Great Lakes, and we really appreciate the Bad River Band’s leadership here.”

Several others offered testimony.

**Robert Blanchard, Bad River Tribe’s chief executive officer and chairman**

Robert spoke of the tribe’s cultural and economic sustenance of Lake Superior wild rice and fish and what the loss of the resources would mean for the community. “If something were to happen ... it could really damage our wild rice crop for many, many years to come, maybe forever.” Robert has also relied on fishing to feed his family. “It is a way of life for us. It would put a hardship on

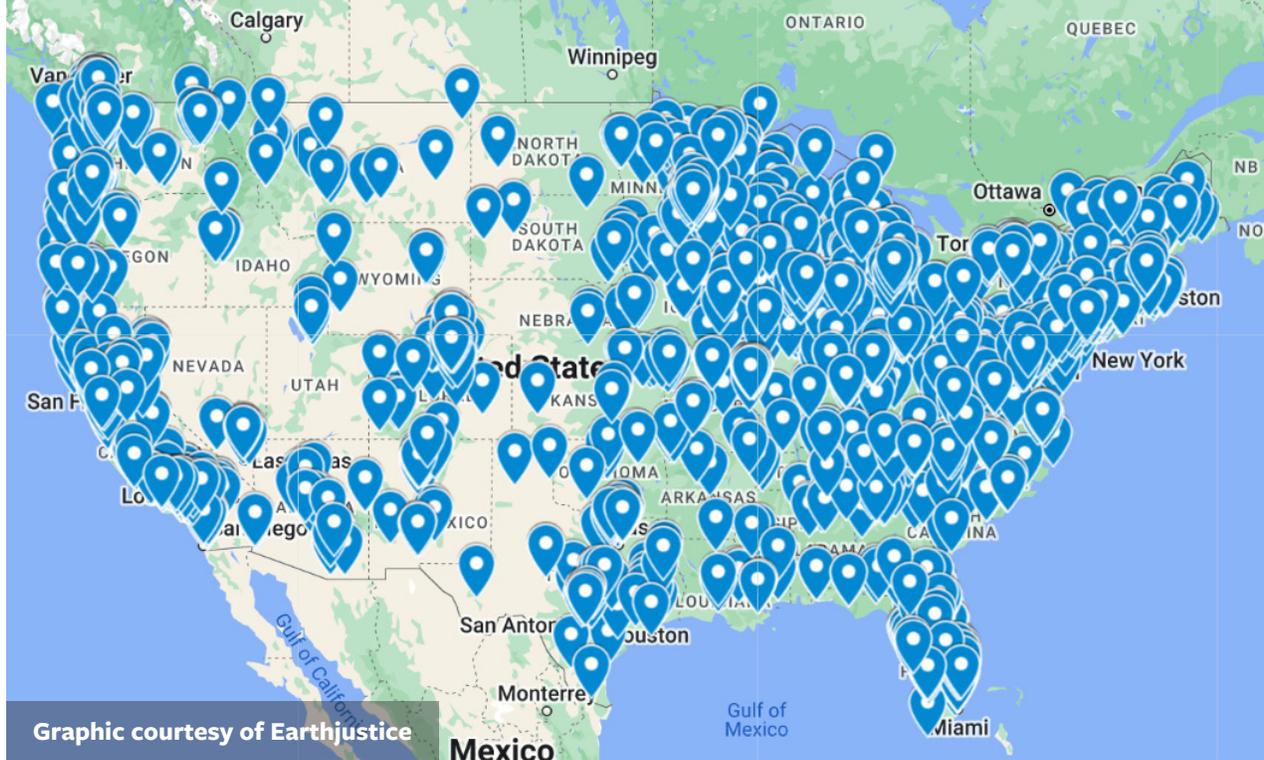
most of our families. That is what we’re fighting for. Our homelands are our way of life.”

**Isak Drangstveit, University of Wisconsin-Madison student activist of Action for the Climate Emergency**

“Studies suggest that over two-thirds of youth in America are plagued by something called ‘climate anxiety.’” The pipeline’s footprint “accounts for 19 million cars per year in carbon emissions and is a direct violation of tribal sovereignty. My generation is afraid of large oil companies, including Enbridge, but we are afraid of the regulators who have ignored the overwhelming scientific evidence and public opposition to the continued operation of Line 5. It must be shut down.”

**Abby Novinska-Lois, Healthy Climate Wisconsin’s executive director**

“Line 5 has spilled 35 times, releasing over 1.3 million gallons of toxic oil. That’s why over 22 trusted health organizations ... more than one million physicians and health professionals ... across the country are opposed to the Line 5 project. Clean water is foundational for public health. It is needed ... for our food, hygiene and mental health. We are speaking up because this project would lock us into a future with more fossil fuels, which drive climate changes that sickens our communities.”



### **Xanders Waters, beef farmer and land owner**

“As a farmer, I can vouch for the fact that a lot of times, things don’t necessarily go as we plan them. Sometimes they go very wrong. Can I afford that risk ... is it too great? And Enbridge [whose Line 5 runs through Xander’s property] is not particularly accountable. Whereas you and I have to be accountable for our actions and make decisions where we weigh the risks of what we do ... Enbridge goes for maximum profits regardless of what could go wrong. So this is extremely terrifying. Allowing a reroute ... would [sustain] a pipeline that should not be here. And is unconscionable.”

### **Jason Wilhite, Patagonia Activism Team Lead**

“Patagonia is an apparel company with over 50 years of history, funding an engagement in environmental activism ... a business to save our home planet. We are members of the Great Lakes Business Network, an alliance of over 200 businesses advocating for thriving ecosystems, economies, and communities across our Great Lakes region. Today we join in solidarity with the Bad River Band. If Line 5 was shut down ... it would have a minimal impact on the cost of energy in this region. Enbridge’s own experts have testified that a shutdown would only impact gas prices by one half of one cent in Wisconsin and Michigan. We also know there are alternatives to using Line 5, and that energy suppliers have already

prepared for the possibility. Experts have found that the responsible path forward is clear. We ask the Army Corps of Engineers to stop the proposed Line 5 reroute project and to shut down this dangerous pipeline.

### **Paulynn Instenes, Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration**

“The young people are all about the environment ... we need to listen to them. You cannot make pure water. This is a gift. We need to protect it.” ■

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**Note as of press time:** The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has published a final statement for the proposed Enbridge Line 5 relocation. Permits from both federal and state agencies must be obtained by Enbridge in order to move forward with the project.

### **Take action for our water and our future:**

- Stay up to date with the latest news about the Line 5 pipeline project at [sierraclub.org/Wisconsin/line-5](https://sierraclub.org/Wisconsin/line-5).
- Read “DNR publishes final environmental impact statement for proposed Enbridge Line 5 relocation,” in its entirety, at [wisconsin.gov/newsroom](https://wisconsin.gov/newsroom).
- Check your streaming platforms for access to the powerful documentary, “Bad River.”

# QUIXOTE CENTER: A RAY OF HOPE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE



Exterior of a house built by the Hope for Homes project in Nicaragua

In a world where oppressive systems often hold back the dreams and aspirations of many, the Quixote Center stands as a ray of hope. As an FSPA-sponsored ministry located in Greenbelt, Maryland, the Quixote Center is dedicated to advancing social justice and human rights, especially in Latin America. Motivated by the principles of liberation theology, the center launched a series of new, innovative programs aimed at tackling social and economic injustices. Since its establishment in 1976, with a vision of justice and equality, the organization has spent nearly five decades uplifting communities in some of the world's most struggling regions. As a driving force for transformation, the Quixote Center has broken down systems of oppression and paved the way for people to shape their own futures. From Nicaragua to Panama to Haiti, their work deeply influences lives, promoting lasting solutions.

## From vision to reality

The Quixote Center's journey began in 1976, founded by Bill Callahan and Dolly Pomerleau. Their shared vision of challenging injustice, both within the Catholic Church and in society, led to the creation of an organization dedicated to supporting challenging missions.

Over the years, the Quixote Center's influence grew, with some of its prominent programs, such as the Christic Institute, New Ways Ministry, Prison Radio, Equal Justice USA, the Nicaragua Cultural Alliance and Interfaith Voices, evolving into independent organizations. Despite these changes, the Quixote Center has remained true to its founding principles, continuing to focus on economic development and advocacy in regions like Haiti and Nicaragua, including initiatives like Haiti's Reborn program and Nicaragua's Quest for Peace program. Today, the Quixote Center continues to support vulnerable communities, staying committed to its founders' vision by working hard to achieve significant progress and making a lasting difference.

## Transformative impact: The Quixote Center's lasting contributions

The Quixote Center's programs show its strong commitment to social justice and sustainable development. These programs continue to reflect on the center's long-standing dedication to challenging oppressive systems and advocating for vulnerable communities. Some major programs that the Quixote Center has launched include Haiti Reborn, Quest for

Peace and InAlienable, a migrant justice program at the U.S. border.

The Quixote Center has been involved in Nicaragua since 1984 through the Quest for Peace program, launched in partnership with the Institute of John XXIII. The program began as a stand with the Nicaraguan people during the Reagan administration's Contra War, aiming to oppose U.S. involvement in the conflict and offer humanitarian support to those affected by the war in the northern region of Nicaragua. As the war subsided, Quest for Peace shifted its focus to include community development projects. A notable project, Hope for Homes, began after the reconstruction efforts following Hurricane Mitch in 1998, resulting in 200 homes built there. These initiatives have been crucial in helping Nicaraguans gain economic independence and stability.

The Quixote Center began Haiti Reborn in 1991 during a transitional period in Haiti, marked by the election of Jean-Bertranf Aristide. In September 1991, the focus shifted to advocating for democracy in Haiti and challenging U.S. involvement. The Quixote Center's approach in Haiti centers on three key areas: creating sustainable jobs through economic development, protecting the environment with reforestation and advocating for U.S. policies to support Haitian democracy and local solutions. In 1999 the Quixote Center expanded its work by partnering with the Montfortins and the Jean-Vincent Formation Center to launch a reforestation and sustainable agriculture program in Gros Morne, Haiti. One of their early projects with the Jean Marie-Vincent Center transformed the barren Tet Mon mountainside. In 1991 the mountain was untouched. Today it thrives with over 200,000 trees. Haiti, being the poorest country in Latin America, faces environmental challenges, such as deforestation threatening numerous species. The Quixote Center's program not only focuses on planting trees but also on educating future generations about maintaining them and understanding their importance. The Quixote Center continues to fund the forest's maintenance, making it a regional model.

InAlienable is a recent program the Quixote Center launched in 2018. The program supports migrant rights at the U.S. border and throughout their journey in the United States. It works to end immigrant detention and



Interior of a Hope for Homes house in Nicaragua



Tree nursery, Tet Mon mountainside restoration, Haiti

.....

defend the right to seek asylum, which has become harder due to the Biden Administration's June 4 executive order that restricts asylum rights. The Quixote Center partners with the Franciscan Network on Migration, which links shelters run by Franciscan orders across Latin America, offering help to migrants.

The Quixote Center's ongoing work to foster justice and support vulnerable communities demonstrates their commitment to advocacy. Their impactful work is made possible by the generous support of donors. Visit [quixote.org/ways-to-give](https://quixote.org/ways-to-give) to find out how you can support their mission. ■

# MY PERSPECTIVE: DO YOU DARE TO TAKE ACTION FOR TANGIBLE HOPE?



By Lucy Slinger, Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration

When the air outside begins to feel crisp, it brings to my mind the season of remembrance in the Catholic Church. On Nov. 1 and 2, we celebrate all saints and the souls of those who have gone before us. We remember saints as those who exemplified a way of life that radiates hope, joy and peace, not one that squelches the joy of living. I endeavor to emulate these people of goodness.

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, to emulate is to strive to equal or excel. To emulate another is to incorporate within your life goodness without pretense. It requires a heartfelt change put into action. That is why the Catholic Church invites us to learn about saints; sets aside special days of remembrance and encourages us to emulate their holy beings. When we share what we know about a good person by our own interactions, change within ourselves and others is possible. Hope is made tangible.

I invite you to do this exercise. Think about a living person who inspires you to emulate them. For me it's Greta Thunberg, the Swedish environmentalist who, in the summer of 2018, at the age of 15, held the first "School Strike for Climate" outside the country's parliament. Since then she has traveled around the world, talking with leaders of nations, religions and others, educating about the seriousness of climate change. It takes courage to publicly call those in power to be responsible and accountable for the negative actions that will impact future generations. Her courage, perseverance and self-

sacrifice are characteristics I want to emulate.

Share aloud the name and inspirational qualities of the person who inspires you with a family member, friend, coworker or even someone you don't know. Then congratulate yourself because, by making this proclamation to the universe, you have dared to commit an act of tangible hope.

How is this exercise an act of hope? Science says that verbalizing a name sparks sound waves that resonate and impact everything in the universe with which they interact. Just as drops of rain create ripples in a pond, these waves spread out in all directions, causing change to everything around them. The energy of some sound waves will be enhanced, while others are cancelled out.

In the chaos of today, we need to nullify negative sound waves — those of greed, conflict, starvation, death and destruction emitted by news stories, political rhetoric and even our personal conversations — to put forth and uphold the good of others. When we identify and share the names of aspirational people, those living or who have gone before us, we are sowers of tangible hope.

These actions are fitting, as "Let us sow hope" was the theme of Catholic Climate Covenant's 2024 Feast of St. Francis, celebrated on Oct. 4. The message shared by CCC calls us to take in the melting ice caps, rising seas, burning forests, dwindling crops and suffering people. "How could we possibly feel hopeful?" Hope is not only possible but essential along our faith journey. "Let us be instruments of God's peace, and where there is despair let us sow hope by taking action." ■

The view from FSPA Land on St. Joseph Ridge at a Mississippi Valley Conservancy Gardens and Gazing event (photo by MVC's Kären Solverson).

Inset: Sister Lucy Slinger



**Laudato Si' Goal #1**  
Response to the Cry of the Earth

We are called to protect “our common home for the well-being of all, as we equitably address the climate crisis, biodiversity loss and ecological sustainability.” Wildflowers breathe life that is ours to sustain on FSPA land on St. Joseph Ridge in La Crosse, Wisconsin.



**Laudato Si' Goal #2**  
Response to the Cry of the Poor

We are called “to promote eco-justice, with an awareness that we are called to defend human life from conception to death and all forms of life on Earth.” Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Kathy Roberg creates sleeping mats out of recycled plastic bags for unhoused members of her community in Spokane, Washington.



**Laudato Si' Goal #3**  
Ecological Economics

We are called to acknowledge that the economy “is a sub-system of human society, which itself is embedded within the biosphere — our common home.” Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration’s Georgia Christensen and Corrina Thomas joined Sister Sue Ernster at the 2023 Parliament of the World’s Religions in Chicago, Illinois, where she spoke about FSPA’s divestment of fossil fuels.

## Together we take action for tangible hope

FSPA invites you to “sow hope” for the care of all creation by joining us in our seven-year commitment to the Laudato Si’ Action Platform: A journey of self-discovery, guided by seven goals that call us to immediate action.



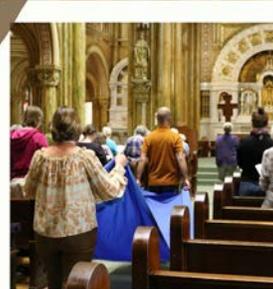
**Laudato Si' Goal #4**  
Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles

We are called to ground ourselves “in the idea of sufficiency and promoting sobriety in the use of resources and energy.” Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Nina Shephard’s carbon footprint is made by the tires on her bike.



**Laudato Si' Goal #5**  
Ecological Education

We are called to rethink and redesign “curricular and institutional reform in the spirit of integral ecology to foster ecological awareness and transformative action.” FSPA Land Sustainability Coordinator Siena Muehlfeld cultivated such awareness at La Crosse-area university and college back-to-school events.



**Laudato Si' Goal #6**  
Ecological Spirituality

We are called to the ecological spirituality “that springs from a profound ecological conversion and helps us to ‘discover God in all things,’ both in the beauty of creation and in the sighs of the sick and the groans of the afflicted.” FSPA affiliates and partners in mission Meg Paulino and Michael Krueger process into Mary of the Angels Chapel during a prayer service celebrating water.



**Laudato Si' Goal #7**  
Community Resilience and Empowerment

We are called to “a synodal journey of community engagement and participatory action at various levels.” Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Antona Schedlo engages and participates by learning about becoming a multi-issue voter via [networkadvocates.org](http://networkadvocates.org).



# SPIRIT OF MINISTRY: 'CULTURAL HUMILITY' REFLECTED BY WOMEN & WATER

**By Wendie Libert, FSPA affiliate**

**T**he second largest ethnic group where I grew up, after the Euro-American population, was the people of the Ho-Chunk Nation. At that time, in my community, Ho-Chunk children were my classmates in grade school. I also saw them occasionally at the swimming pool in the summer; however, we rarely — if ever — were playmates and friends. We did not attend one another's birthday parties. I could never figure out what invisible force separated my world from theirs, nor how to bridge the gap.

## **The mission begins**

Now I live and work at Marywood Franciscan Spirituality Center in Arbor Vitae, Wisconsin, 15 miles from the reservation of the Waaswaaganing, or Lac du Flambeau Band of the Lake Superior Chippewa Indians. One of the tribe's elders came to Marywood last year to lead a fall ceremony; however, we often lack racial and ethnically diverse program attendees, including members of the Chippewa tribe. The insidious forces of colonialism continue to hold us apart. What will it take for me and others who feel called to engage in FSPA's mission of

truth and healing — listening to the painful and tragic experiences of Indigenous communities — to begin to heal that rift?

## **My spiritual connection**

I can think of no better answer to that question than the Women & Water Coming Together Symposium held Aug. 4 to 8, 2024, at the Abiinooji Aki Cultural Healing Center near Hayward, Wisconsin. This five-day immersion in Ojibwe culture and ceremony provided insights that could not be gained in any other way. I was plucked out of my own comfortable milieu and deposited in the very center of a literal dance that I had never experienced before: the ritual dance, song, stories and prayer of the people whom I have longed to know for most of my life.

Being there, included in the lighting of the sacred fire, watching the attentiveness with which the men — the fire keepers — tended both the ceremonial fire and the fire of emotions experienced by those present, filled me with awe and deep humility. I was surrounded mostly by people with whom I was not acquainted, listening to songs sung in a tongue foreign to my ears and trying to remember the unfamiliar protocols of respect for the

fire and the ceremonies. I felt so vulnerable, yet deeply grateful, for the courage and patience of the symposium hosts and presenters. Without diluting the reality of their lived experience, the people who led the ceremonies and sessions set aside generations of pain and distrust to guide us adeptly into the heart of their spirituality. They rallied us with unwavering resolve for the sacred work of protecting and healing Mother Earth.

### Inspiration

Each day flowed with the same rhythm of ceremony, presentations and opportunities for healing toward raising our awareness of the history and personal experiences of Indigenous peoples in the Americas and around the world. We were joined by presenters of the Ojibwe, Diné and Maori (New Zealand) tribes who sought to empower us with their words and witness; to enter into the transformation of ourselves and our societal systems for the good of our planetary home.

We were reminded that the cultural destruction wrought by colonization often left Indigenous peoples locked in their own oppression. As they retrieve their identity and heritage, including their languages, they are once again rising as agents of their own future. That may explain the terrible separation of the white and Ho-Chunk children on the playground of my youth and be the ultimate hope for a future that is very different.

### Impact

As planet-wide Indigenous communities heal, all of us are called to seek a better balance between the gits those who tend the fire, of those who honor the water and embody the power of our Mother Earth. We must, as one presenter described in his story, seek an understanding of things that makes sense — the understanding that “the opposite of chaos isn’t law and order; it is HARMONY.” That harmony can be achieved if we strive to shift from a paradigm of “power over” to “power with” that honors the dignity and value of every person and thing within the Earth community. Inspired by the courage and passion of the people I met at the Women & Water Symposium, and steeped in a deep sense of cultural humility, I brought home great hope for the future of our world. Let it be so. ■

### Wendie shares some of her learnings about Ojibwe history rich in language and culture:

Prior to the arrival of French fur trader Jean Nicolet in the 17th century, the Anishinaabe (“True People”), comprised of the Ojibwe, Ottawa and Potawatomi Tribes, migrated westward from the North Atlantic coast in search of a new homeland. The prophecy that had foretold the coming of Europeans also instructed the Anishinaabe people to seek the place where food grew on the water. As the tribes neared Lake Superior, where they discovered beds of wild rice growing atop the sloughs — manoomin — all that had been predicted was fulfilled. Some of the bands from among the three tribes moved north into what would become Canada, while others settled across present day Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Despite the generations of exploitation and genocide inflicted on the Anishinaabe people through treaties and U.S. government policies that displaced them from their land and their cultural heritage, the Waaswaaganing — the Lac du Flambeau Band of the Lake Superior Chippewa Indians — named for the technique for spear fishing by torchlight, was among the Ojibwe bands whose reservation was established by the Treaty of 1854.

**Wendie Libert**, a longtime affiliate of FSPA, serves as director of Marywood Franciscan Spirituality Center in northeastern Wisconsin. Supporting FSPA efforts to promote land justice and reparation for the harms of the boarding school era is an important part of her ministry.



# 2024 JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS: ‘LED BY THE SPIRIT, BLESSED IN THE LIGHT’



**T**he Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration rejoice in the 2024 jubilee celebrations for our sisters who proclaim their ministries to be “led by the spirit, blessed in the light.”

We honor these FSPA — our diamond jubilarians — for their loving presence of prayer, witness and service throughout the world:

Sisters Malinda Gerke, Rachel Kiefer, Marie Kyle and Dolores Lilla, Class of 1954, celebrating 70 years as Catholic sisters.

Sisters Mary Becker and Karen Flottmeier, Class of 1964, celebrating 60 years as Catholic sisters.

We also give gratitude for Nancy Alm, Lola Burge, Sharon Laitinen, Beverly Miller, Janice Munson and Mary Skemp, FSPA affiliates celebrating 25 years who share the call to embrace the Gospel message in their own lives.

To read reflections of gratitude, written by our sister jubilarians, visit [fspa.org/jubilee](https://fspa.org/jubilee).

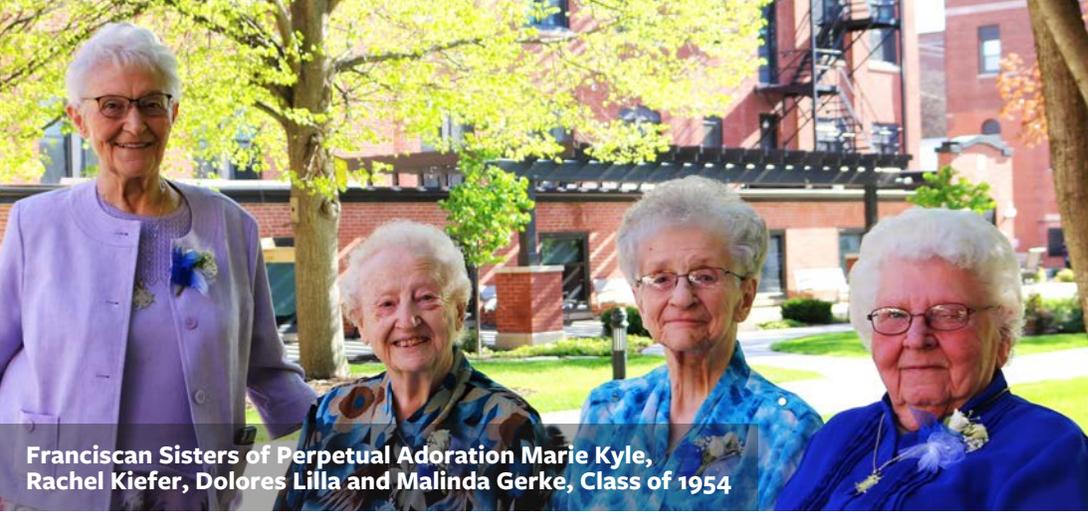
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**“I AM EXTREMELY GRATEFUL FOR THE SUPPORT AND TRUST I HAVE BEEN GIVEN. REJOICE WITH ME AND BE GLAD.”**

**- SISTER MALINDA GERKE**

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Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration Marie Kyle, Rachel Kiefer, Dolores Lilla and Malinda Gerke, Class of 1954



Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration Karen Flottmeier and Mary Becker, Class of 1964



# MISSION ADVANCEMENT: FOSTERING WITNESS AND SERVICE WITH DONORS LIKE YOU

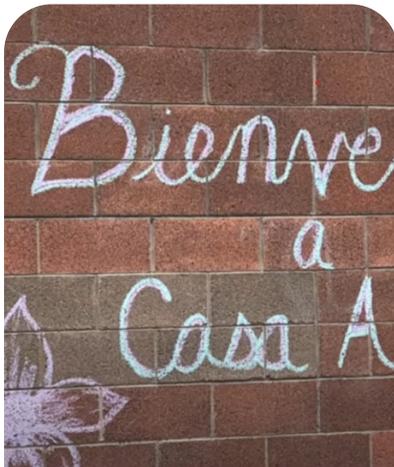
As Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, we live out fervent commitment to these ministries as vowed Franciscan women centered in Eucharist, inspired to bring the love of Christ and dedicated to responding to the needs of this time as we accompany all who face systemic inequities.

These commitments would not reach around the world without you.

We thank you for your generosity, compassion and dedication to helping us provide prayer, witness and service for many ministries, including:



**The Outdoor Adventure Club**, providing opportunities for students in sixth, seventh and eighth grades to explore nature, hike and camp, all while learning essential safety skills in La Crosse, Wisconsin.



**Casa Alitas**, offering shelter, necessities and travel assistance to asylum-seeking families in Tuscon, Arizona.



**SALT Center** — Shining a Light Together — serving unhoused individuals with housing and food assistance, substance abuse treatment and refuge from extreme temperatures in Fort Dodge, Iowa.



**Project Rehama Ministries**, providing physical, educational, emotional and spiritual support to the more than two million orphans in Tanzania, West Africa.

Visit [fspa.org/waystogive](https://fspa.org/waystogive) to join us in the mission of bringing the love of Christ that we encounter out to the world.

# FSPA ACCOUNTABILITY



July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

## Use of funds

Total Disbursed

**\$482,255**



*Donor Support*



**\$301,668**

Unrestricted | 63%



**\$154,002**

Ministries | 32%



**\$26,585**

Sisters' Retirement | 5%

## Funding Income

|                             |                  |             |
|-----------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| General Contributions.....  | \$446,633        | 93%         |
| Bequest/Planned Giving..... | \$ 32,832        | 6%          |
| Memorial Gifts.....         | \$ 2,790         | 1%          |
| <b>TOTAL.....</b>           | <b>\$482,255</b> | <b>100%</b> |

## Grants awarded

|                              |           |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Basic Needs.....             | 33        |
| Health & Wellness.....       | 13        |
| Family Strengthening.....    | 13        |
| Religion & Spirituality..... | 12        |
| Education/Tuition.....       | 11        |
| Eco-spirituality.....        | 8         |
| Justice & Peace.....         | 7         |
| <b>TOTAL.....</b>            | <b>97</b> |

## Ways to give



Online: [fspa.org](https://fspa.org)

Mail: 912 Market Street  
La Crosse, WI 54601

Phone: 608-791-5282

Text: text "donate" to  
608-650-6464

Number of donors enrolled:

**Perpetual Friends** 67  
(planned giving)

**Faithful Friends** 95  
(monthly donors)



*Join Us!* **608-791-5282**

# IN MEMORIAM: REJOICE, YOU WHO ARE ALIVE IN CHRIST



## Affiliate Darlene Wozney

May 24, 1941 – September 6, 2024



Darlene Mary Wozney, 83, of Onalaska, Wisconsin, passed away unexpectedly on Friday, Sept. 6, 2024. Darlene was born in Arcadia, Wisconsin, on May 24, 1941, to Phillip and Victoria (Bautch) Kupietz. She graduated from Arcadia High School and was united in marriage to Bernard Wozney on April 15,

1961, at St. Stanislaus Catholic Church, where she served with the PCCW and as a member of the Rosary Society.

Despite the tragedies that she endured, Darlene demonstrated a lifetime of unwavering devotion to her faith, exhibited by her selfless and giving nature. She volunteered at her local church, hospitals and nursing homes, and was an affiliate with the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. In her spare time, Darlene enjoyed walking, reading and completing puzzles.

## Affiliate Ursula Chiu

April 6, 1925 – April 11, 2024



Ursula Elisabeth (Blank) Chiu passed away on April 11, 2024. Born in Solingen, Germany, on April 6, 1925, Ursula lived through World War II as a teenager. She spent her high school years at the Ursuline convent in Duderstadt, Germany, to avoid the National Socialist education program.

Following the war, she graduated college and soon received a teacher's fellowship in Chicago, where she met her husband Alec Chiu of Taiwan, who preceded her in death in 1995. She spent most of her life in La Crosse, Wisconsin, where she and Alec raised three children: Marcel, Monica and Michael, in that order, all surviving her. In La Crosse Ursula worked as a special education teacher in an elementary school. As an extra-curricular activity, she taught after-school lessons in French, culminating in short, all-French plays for their parents. She spoke to her dentist in French, translated Spanish to English when on a trip with family to Costa Rica and

chatted in German with friends and relatives overseas.

As a creative soul, she wrote and published stories, poems, a book of fairytales for her grandchildren, her autobiography and her husband's biography, assembling information as she could from memories, letters and photographs. She spent hours crafting at various dining room tables, using skills she learned from her goldsmith father, including carving wooden birds and making necklaces by drilling holes into stones and shells. Her grandchildren, who were ushered into various projects with grandma, remember painting rocks, making board games on opened filing folders, baking cookies and cakes and adding pressed flowers, picked while on short walks around the neighborhood, to artwork they created.

Ursula moved to Somerville, Massachusetts, in 2013, to be closer to all five of her grandchildren. Fiercely independent, she lived in her own apartment in the home of her son, Michael, his wife, Maren, and their family. Having domesticated parakeets for a time, Ursula adored birds. As she slowed down in life, the feeders outside her windows provided hours of viewing entertainment. Well into her 90s, she continued to take inspiration from all manner of bird observation and drawings — from art books to photographs — for greeting cards she made for friends and older adults in her church.

She harbored a deep spirituality through her Catholic faith, assisting her through World War II, her parents' and husband's passing and in the final years and days of her life. Her children and friends remember this remarkable woman of many talents, languages, creative impulses and interests; a teacher, a wife, a mother, a friend; a woman who talked with anybody, found good in everybody and forgave everything. Always the optimist, we remember her with all our love.

## Affiliate Suzanne Dahms

October 19, 1942 – May 8, 2024



Suzanne Farooq Dahms, 81, of Verona, Wisconsin, passed away on May 8, 2024, at Agrace Hospice Care in Fitchburg, Wisconsin. She had been diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor in April. During her time in hospice, Sue met with family, prayed with friends and shared her positive attitude

of life with everyone she met. Sue was born on Oct. 19, 1942, in Peoria, Illinois, the daughter of Edward and Janet Clifford. Her mother died when she was only 15 years old.

Sue was one of the remaining survivors of the polio epidemic of the 1950s. Hospitalized at the age of 16, she had a near death experience that influenced her beliefs in life after death; informed her devout Christianity. The disease had a lasting effect on her body, leading to hip, knee and spine surgeries. "Despite all her sufferings," says a friend, "Sue was joyful."

In the early 1960s, Sue met her future husband, Dr. Masaud Farooq, with whom she would have three children: Michael, Yasmin and James. The family moved from Minneapolis to Waupun, Wisconsin, where they resided from 1971 to 1987. Between 1976 and 1982, Sue studied psychology at UW-Fond du Lac and UW-Oshkosh, earning a master's degree in counseling in 1982. Dr. Farooq passed away in 1982. In 1986 Sue met Leonard "Bud" Dahms. They married in 1992, living in Verona until his passing in 2007.

Sue was a services associate in the University of Wisconsin Chemical Engineering and Electrical Engineering departments from 1987 until her retirement in 2009. In Verona Sue was actively involved at St. Christopher Catholic Parish, volunteering, lecturing and leading the rosary. She was also a Widows of Prayer Servant Leader and an affiliate with the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. During her stay in hospice, Sue's friends commented on how positive she was in her last days. Sue expressed how important it is to appreciate each day and to live our lives helping others.

READ COMPLETE FSPA  
OBITUARIES AT FSPA.ORG  
UNDER NEWS/EVENTS

# FRANCISCAN GOODNESS



This painting of Servant of God Sister Thea Bowman, FSPA, was created by renowned portrait artist, Marshall Bouldin, in 1988. It is said that Sister Thea would burst forth into song when sitting for the portrait. Photo by Mary Woodward, Chancellor and Archivist of the Diocese of Jackson in Mississippi.

## Sister Thea Bowman’s canonization cause updated

In its publication Mississippi Catholic, the Diocese of Jackson is sharing an update on Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Thea Bowman’s cause for sainthood.

The canonical process, which began in 2018, is in what is called the diocesan phase. According to Mississippi Catholic, “The work being done meticulously right now includes gathering all of the Servant of God’s writings, studying them for sound doctrine, gleaning them for virtue and piety, and transcribing them into type written format. For those who knew the Servant of God, they are fully aware that she would often jot things down on envelopes, napkins, and any scrap of paper she could find.”

Meg Paulino, FSPA Archivist and affiliate, has been spearheading the process, assisted by a team of student volunteers. The historical commission meets monthly with the postulator who is guiding the process in Rome and visited St. Rose Convent in La Crosse to “put eyes on the collection, talk with other FSPA’s who knew Sister Thea and create a framework in which to complete their mandate of capturing her virtues.”

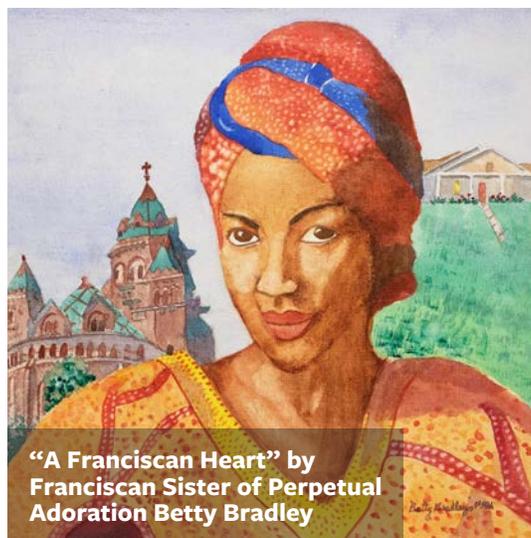
The goal is to complete the diocesan phase prior to September 2025.

All are invited to pray for Sister Thea’s cause for canonization and ask her “to guide us from above with patience and joy.”

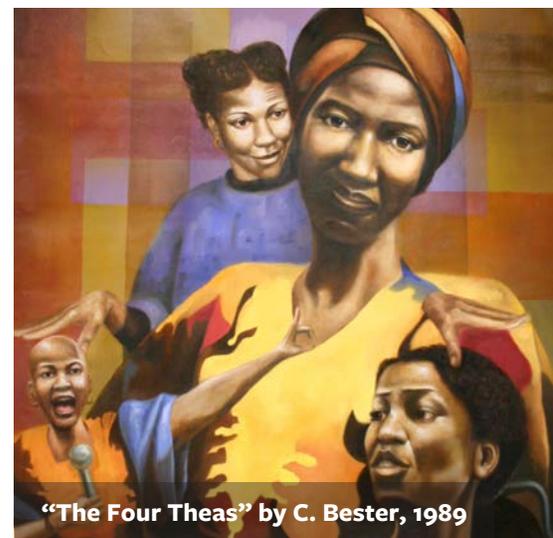
To read “From Servant of God to sainthood — an update on Sister Thea Bowman’s cause” and find an abundance of resources about her and her legacy to Black Catholicism in the United States, see [fspa.org/thea](https://fspa.org/thea).



“Thea” by Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Maryam Gossling



“A Franciscan Heart” by Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Betty Bradley



“The Four Theas” by C. Bester, 1989

## Sister Mary Ann Gschwind, Oktoberfest Maple Leaf Parade Marshal



**O**n Sept. 28, Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Mary Ann Gschwind had the honor of serving as Maple Leaf Parade Marshal at the annual Oktoberfest event in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

Maple Leaf Parade Marshals, who have led the Oktoberfest procession and participated in many fest activities since 1961, are selected from a pool of nominees each spring and sworn to secrecy until the announcement is made in September.

“This recognition, from my perspective, is for all of us Franciscan Sisters as we celebrate 175 years since our founding in Milwaukee,” shared Sister Mary Ann during a public reveal event on Sept. 18. “As you know, we sisters collectively have contributed much to La Crosse since coming here 153 years ago in 1871. And since 1878, in our prayer chapel, La Crosse and its residents are prayed for daily.”



## FSPA affiliates Pat and Linda Kerrigan receive St. John XXIII Award

**P**at and Linda Kerrigan, longtime affiliates of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, are among the 2024 recipients of Viterbo University’s Saint John XXIII Award for Distinguished Service. The prestigious honor, given by the institution in La Crosse, Wisconsin, was established in 1975 to recognize individuals who have “distinguished themselves through service to higher education, to community, to human kind.”

Recipients are selected for “outstanding leadership and exemplification of the spirit of St. John XXIII,” which for Pat and Linda includes practicing the Franciscan values of hospitality and peacemaking. Their abundant service to community includes involvement with the United Way, La Crosse Mental Health Coalition and La Crescent Rotary Club; participation in parish and jail ministry and FSPA initiatives for unhoused persons; and volunteerism with the La Crosse Area Restorative Justice Program, La Crescent Neighbors in Action, The Salvation Army and the Franciscan Spirituality Center.





# Franciscan Sisters

*of Perpetual Adoration*

*Modern Lives. Sacred Traditions.*

Communications Office  
912 Market St.  
La Crosse, WI 54601-4782  
fspa.org



This December 3, join us and our matching partners in the movement that unleashes the power of radical generosity around the world. Mark your calendars and visit us at [fspa.org/donate](https://fspa.org/donate), text “GT” to 608-650-6464 or call 608-791-5282 to make a secure payment. Your donation will be doubled!

## CONNECT WITH OUR PARTNERS IN MINISTRY

**Franciscan Spirituality Center** | La Crosse, Wisconsin | [fscenter.org](https://fscenter.org)

**Marywood Franciscan Spirituality Center** | Arbor Vitae, Wisconsin | [marywoodsc.org](https://marywoodsc.org)

**Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center** | Hiawatha, Iowa | [prairiewoods.org](https://prairiewoods.org)

**Global Awareness Through Experience** | [gate-travel.org](https://gate-travel.org)