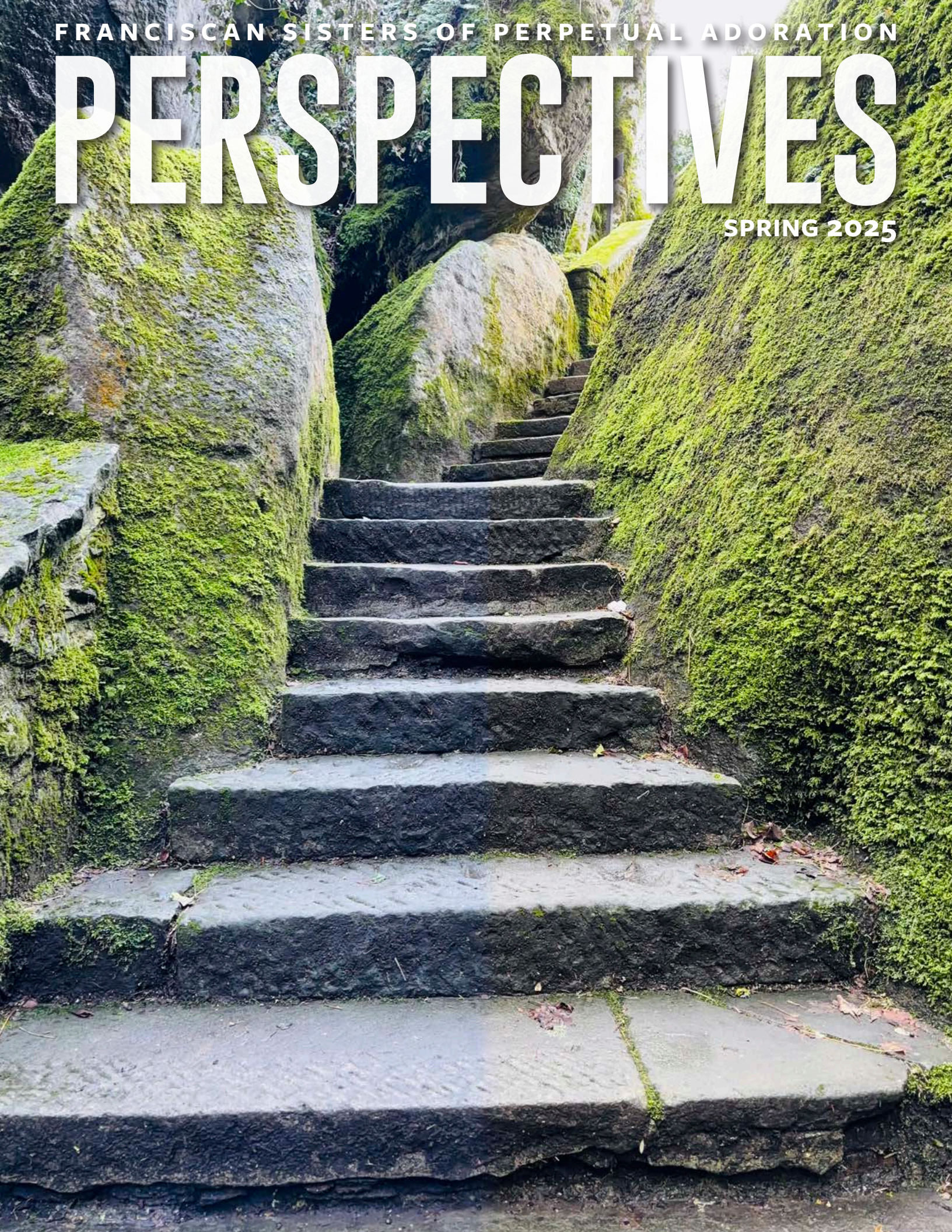


FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF PERPETUAL ADORATION


PERSPECTIVES

SPRING 2025



FRANCISCAN PERSPECTIVE



 *Franciscan Sisters*
of Perpetual Adoration
Modern Lives. Sacred Traditions

.....

2022 - 2026 Leadership Team

President: Sister Sue Ernster
Vice President: Sister Georgia Christensen
Mission Councilors: Sisters Marie DesJarlais,
Julie Tydrich, Paulynn Instenes and Laura
Nettles

Perspectives is published by:

Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration
912 Market Street, La Crosse, WI 54601
Telephone: 608-782-5610
Email: communications@fspa.org
Website: fspa.org

Editor: Jane Comeau
Managing editor and writer: Jen Pick
Designer and proofreader: Brianna Kaiser
Writer and proofreader: Kennedy Cortes
Proofreaders: Sisters Rita Heires and
Mary Ann Gschwind

On the cover: Image of the stone steps at
Mount Laverna, Italy, by FSPA Director of
Affiliation Michael Krueger.

Volume 40 | Number one

“... hope dwells as the desire and expectations of good things to come,” wrote Pope Francis, before his passing in April, in his edict declaring 2025 to be the Jubilee Year of Hope.

“Even so,” he continued, “uncertainty about the future may at times give rise to conflicting feelings, ranging from confident trust to apprehensiveness, from serenity to anxiety, from firm conviction to hesitation and doubt.”

In this issue of Perspectives, we share stories that stem from such incredulity: fear of deportation in Chicago and Iowa; physical and emotional vulnerability in Wisconsin; oppression and division in Mississippi. But the people within these pages give us — our sisters, affiliates, partners in mission, prayer partners, ministry grant partners and donors around the world — great reason to hope. They inspire us to stand true to our calling to building bridges of relationships that stretch us to be people of encounter, standing with all suffering in our Earth Community, celebrating authentic unity in diversity by challenging our white privilege and working toward equity and inclusion of all.

“We are grateful for the voluminous support we receive to live out our Gospel mission,” shares Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration President Sue Ernster. “It gives us hope to know we are not alone in this journey. Together we are better and stronger. Thank you for taking this journey — a joyful sign of hope — together with us.”

.....

Recently a group of FSPA hope seekers, including sisters, affiliates, partners in mission and guests, set out on a journey to Italy. The pilgrims experienced such hope as they walked in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi down stone, mountainside steps at Mt. Laverna, to a place where he spent time in prayer and reflection. It was there, in 1224, that he received the stigmata.





4

Immigration ministry works to bring hope to immigrant community

6

‘Sister Thea’s vision of hope ... an exquisite gift to us’

8

Still you have hope

10

My Perspective: Finding hope in the Word of God

12

2025 Jubilee Celebrations: Spreading love, joy and peace to the world

14

Spirit of Ministry: Finding hope in grace and love

Submit Prayer Request

Online: fspa.org/prayer

Email: fspaprayer@fspa.org

Text: 601-308-1849



Donate Now

Online: fspa.org/donate

Email: rnicks@fspa.org

Call: 608-791-5282

Text: text “donate” to 608-650-6464



 facebook.com/franciscansisters

 instagram.com/thefranciscansisters

 x.com/FSPAtweets

 youtube.com/franciscansisters

 messyjesusbusiness.com

 messyjesusbusiness.com

IMMIGRATION MINISTRY WORKS TO BRING HOPE TO IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY



Photos courtesy of Pastoral Migratoria, Archdiocese of Chicago

By Sarah Rosland, Senior Coordinator for Local Immigration, Archdiocese of Chicago

I often hear the phrase, “tengo miedo” (I am afraid). When people say this, I search for the right response or a concrete answer, but I am left feeling powerless. After a couple of intense weeks of listening to the sentiments of our immigrant community members, I found myself asking God: “Where is hope?” One day, while I was preparing a prayer for a staff meeting, I came across the passage in Mark 6:50: “Take courage, it is I, do not be afraid.” I later learned that these words are repeated 365 times in the Bible. What better reminder of hope than knowing that God whispers to us each day: “It is I. Do not be afraid.” God is with us and God is HOPE. So, when people say, “tengo miedo,” I can respond with: “Do not be afraid, God is with you.” But then it became a question of how can we get this message of hope out to all.

Currently, many immigrant families are facing the threat of deportation and family separation. This is a reality well-known to many in the immigrant community, but it nonetheless left many, including myself, in shock when

it became the headlines of local and national news for weeks on end. I was left thinking: “How can I be in solidarity with the immigrant community?” Luckily, I have the privilege to work alongside immigrant lay leaders via my work with the Archdiocese of Chicago’s Hispanic immigration ministry, Pastoral Migratoria.

Introduced in 2010, Pastoral Migratoria invites Hispanic immigrants to respond to their baptismal call to holiness and engage in service, accompaniment and justice actions in their parish communities. With the support of more than 200 lay leaders active in this ministry, we quickly turned our efforts to listening to parish leaders — seeking to understand what people were feeling and how the church could best respond pastorally to support families facing deportation and separation.

While we quickly began distributing Know Your Rights information and resources and working with lawyers and community organizations to conduct Know Your Rights workshops in parishes, I began to understand the profound need for a more pastoral response. We asked ourselves: “How can we create sacred spaces where people can join together to speak about these difficult



Pastoral Migratoria, a ministry of the Archdiocese of Chicago, invites immigrant families to live out their faith through service, advocacy and pastoral accompaniment. Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Katie Mitchell collaborates with Pastoral Migratoria through Cabrini Ministries at Holy Name Cathedral — a ministry that provides outreach and support to newly-arrived migrants seeking safety and stability in the United States. Through this partnership, Cabrini Ministries and Pastoral Migratoria work together to offer pastoral care, advocacy and resources for immigrant families in need. For Sister Katie, this work is a blessing: She witnesses the face of Christ in those she serves.

realities many are facing?” We turned to the faithful practice of Peace Circles, creating specific Pastoral Migratoria Peace Circles. Peace Circles are a pastoral exercise that invites people to share their challenges, fears and hopes in a safe and trusting environment. This practice leads the person to analyze experiences through their faith in a compassionate environment. These spaces allow us to speak freely about the emotions we feel to help us understand how God speaks to us through the movements of our hearts.

In the face of uncertainty and fear, our immigrant families and myself continue to search for peace and hope through faith and solidarity. While resources and legal information remain important, the power of a church united in solidarity — one that pastorally accompanies to uphold the dignity of every person in our communities with a preferential option for the most vulnerable — cannot be overlooked. I pray that this difficult time serves as an opportunity to become a more united church of the people who stand in solidarity to offer not only resources and information but also the unwavering message of hope: “Do not be afraid, God is with you.” ■





‘SISTER THEA’S VISION OF HOPE ... AN EXQUISITE GIFT TO US’

**By Peggy Johnson, Ph.D.,
FSPA affiliate**

The sounds of teasing and laughter, the curiosity of books, the rapture of music, the joy of adventure, the embrace of family, the devotion to and intimacy with God: In childhood, Servant of God Sister Thea Bowman, born Bertha Elizabeth, was happily wanted and deeply loved. Home, the central place that formed Sister Thea, meant that she never felt alone, never was without hope, never felt unloved, never experienced invisibility, never felt limited. One birth announcement noted that “Bertha Elizabeth already wields the scepter of a queen ruling with the power of innocent sweetness in the hearts of her parents and all who come within her domain.” Prophetic words.

Sister Thea’s upbringing is consequential because it juxtaposed a deep division between white and Black neighborhoods in central Mississippi that continued long into the second half of the 20th century. Sister Thea’s home state was considered one of the most oppressed in the nation in terms of racial discrimination, often with brutal consequences. Sister Thea was alarmed by the Black community’s belief in their own subservience, their own lesser humanity, a perspective that had been ingrained in them for generations. As an adult, she discovered that white people across the nation — even those in her own midst — held on to those same beliefs. So a calling of teaching and preaching to transcend racism and

Artwork by Michael O’Neill McGrath, OSFS/bromickeymcgrath.com

hate was born in her.

It goes without saying that Sister Thea faced suffering in her 52 years, including racial discrimination, the loss of her parents and, ultimately, cancer. Clinging to hope got her through difficult times. Sister Thea's vision of hope, grounded in her childhood, is an exquisite gift to us: She never believed hope could be separated from love. It is this vision of the coexistence of hope and love that completely won people over: They witnessed the unrelenting beauty of her dedication to creating a fuller humanity.

I believe Sister Thea knew that hope without love tears us apart because we ground our hope in the expectation of positive outcomes, usually regarding things we cannot control; things beyond ourselves. We wish for things to change, we pray for things to change, and we think that perhaps strengthening our faith or shouting our upset will lead to the change in our world that we desire.

Yet Sister Thea knew that a hope grounded in love requires us to look within, to examine our own inner movements and perspectives so we can understand our part in the hopelessness of discrimination, separation, isolation and hate. Sister Thea knew there are many ways of dying, and perhaps the worst of them is to continue living utterly without awareness that change only comes through love in action, beginning with ourselves. Sister Thea lived her entire life dedicated to avenging discrimination and hate. That perseverance, that greatness, was possible only because Sister Thea knew that love of self, love of God and love of all — even those with different values — is a necessity because struggle is not a final destination.

It is because of Sister Thea's remarkable ability to challenge societal wrongs in the spirit of hope and love that Dr. Shatonda Jones, also an FSPA affiliate, and I have begun a year-long spiritual pilgrimage over Zoom through the FSPA Affiliation Office. The spiritual pilgrimage was launched on Dec. 29, as our way of honoring the day of Sister Thea's birth. The year-long pilgrimage continues on the first Sunday evening of each month as participants read, discuss and ponder Sister Thea's life and work. It is our desire for this group of seekers to be transformed in mind and spirit by Sister Thea, to catch her radiance, to be affirmed by her voice, to understand her perspectives,

About Peggy and Shatonda

Peggy Johnson is a chaplain at Christ United Methodist Church in Rochester, Minnesota, and an associate chaplain at Gundersen Health System in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Shatonda Jones, Ph.D., MA, CCC-SLP, CBIST and FSPA affiliate, is an associate professor and director of clinical education and MS Speech Language Pathology Program at St. Bonaventure University in New York.

If you would like more information about the Sister Thea Bowman Spiritual Pilgrimage, contact Dr. Shatonda Jones at drshatondaj@gmail.com.



Peggy Johnson, FSPA affiliate



Shatonda Jones, FSPA affiliate



and to find joy and hope, even in the midst of division and discontent.

While the seeds of our little pilgrimage project have just been planted, we already see the impact of hope. By learning about and leaning into the life and work of Sister Thea, we grasp the opportunity we are given to become “pilgrims of hope,” as Pope Francis wrote. And as pilgrims on our walk with Sister Thea, we take the time and the energy to not only experience renewal of mind and spirit but also to gain a deeper understanding of forgiveness for self and others. As Sister Thea knew, both renewal and forgiveness are impossible without the belief that the beauty of love undergirds all. ■



STILL YOU HAVE HOPE

Presentation Lantern Center staff member Ann assists ESL students from Venezuela

By Megan Ruiz, Presentation Lantern Center Executive Director

Dear FSPA sisters, affiliates, partners in mission and donors,

Imagine it's the year 2023. You've been standing in line at a public grocery store for 12 hours. You have three hungry housemates back home, waiting for your return. Like 95% of Venezuela, you're employed full time, but along with the majority of those residing in the country and stagnant wages, outrageous prices and extortion, you can't make ends meet. (In this scenario, nearly half the country makes minimum wage: \$1.50 an hour.) Bread costs \$12 per loaf. Milk, if you can find it in the store at all, costs \$15 a gallon. After paying rent and bills this week, your remaining \$30 will have to sustain you until you get paid in 12 days. You wouldn't have had \$30 "leftover" if it weren't for your brother, a Venezuelan refugee living in Colombia, who sends what he can. Your sister, Sofia, helps on rare occasions when she is able.

Still you have hope. With desperation, bravery and a lot of faith, your sister took both her savings and yours and made the life-threatening journey from Venezuela, through the 60-mile wide Darién Gap — a wild jungle full of poisonous snakes, monstrous mosquitoes and raging streams, seeded with violent cartel members ready to hold her hostage or assault her — to the United States.

Unlike hundreds of others who walk the same treacherous path annually and succumb to death by gang violence, serpents, drowning in the river, thirst, hunger or severe injury, she survived the 2,500-mile journey to

the U.S.! She was fortunate enough to find a checkpoint at the border that allowed her legal presentation to U.S. Customs and Border Patrol to request asylum (which has been legal to do at our borders since the end of World War II). Like thousands of other asylum seekers, she has continued to update her address in the asylum system.

Now, two years later, Sofia finally has a job, making a living wage at a factory in the Tri-State Area. Her search took twice as long as her passage to the U.S. for two reasons:

1. Due to our country's immigration laws, it typically takes asylum seekers or folks seeking Temporary Protected Status a minimum of 12 to 24 months after applying to be considered for and potentially receive a work permit. Due to no fault of their own, but rather the ever-changing immigration laws as well as the simple timing during which they apply, many are never afforded an opportunity to seek or receive work authorization.
2. Sofia needed intensive English tutoring before local companies would consider offering a living-wage job. She sporadically cleaned houses, babysat and mowed lawns for cash; spent hours walking to and from these jobs in all weather. She survived last year by using the minimal cash she made, living with a friend who did not charge rent and utilizing occasional, temporary support from Presentation Lantern Center's student need fund for things like medicine, medical appointments, food, shoes and hygiene products. You, the FSPA, and your supporters have donated generously to this fund the past few years.

In 2024 she and her Presentation Lantern Center English

tutor — who has “become like a sister” to Sofia — spent 125 hours working together to improve her English. Presentation Lantern Center, located in Dubuque, Iowa, is an organization missioned to offer “hospitality, education and advocacy to adult immigrants who are striving to better their lives.” Sofia credits Kelly’s patience, persistence and the one-on-one individualized instruction for her success in learning English. She was also afforded the time and ability to seek help from Kelly and other staff with referrals to services like counseling as well as job and apartment applications.

With Presentation Lantern Center assistance, additional English classes at Northeast Iowa Community College and dedication to study every night, Sofia’s determination and hard work paid off. Instead of finding a minimum wage job for \$7 an hour, her highly-proficient English language skills have her making three times that amount at a local production facility. She is thrilled to make a living wage, thankful to be somewhere safe and proud and grateful that, after these two grueling years, she is making it. Sofia is not just providing for herself but is also helping supplement her mother’s low wages in Venezuela. There, even though her mother and 95% of the population over the age of 16 work full time, 85% experience extreme food insecurity that has worsened over the past five years. This dire financial climate is only predicted to continue declining.

I tell you this story because I want everyone to know that, with your support and volunteerism, you have and will continue to change lives like Sofia’s. There were some low points over the past couple of years where Sofia was ready to give up and even had suicidal ideations. After referrals for counseling, the consistency of her friendly, supportive English tutor (the “only constant in her life this past year,” she shares), she hugged us tightly and said, “When I get my first paycheck, I cannot wait to donate. You saved my life.”

On a windy, chilly day in February, she walked two miles from her bank to Presentation Lantern Center and handed us a crisp \$100 bill along with a bag of staff favorites for lunch.

The donations you have granted us have helped fund crucial staff to implement our programming as well as the recruitment and training of excellent volunteer

tutors, allowing us to welcome people like Sofia. With your support, our urgent financial need fund, which has been expanded in 2025 to help people meet safety and family togetherness needs such as purchasing passports for children of immigrants — U.S. citizens. The fund also helps families make it to appointments with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (located hours away), apply for work permits and provide countless other necessities.

Last year we stood shoulder-to-shoulder with 250 immigrants like Sofia and the volunteers who provided 4,800 hours of support. Every day we pray and advocate for each one of them. We will continue to steadfastly carry on our mission and support their hope-filled journeys.

With love, hope and gratitude,
Megan

Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Suzanne Rubenbauer sponsors a ministry grant that is making an impact on services provided at Presentation Lantern Center, including salaries and immigration crisis funding. She volunteers there as an ESL tutor and invites FSPA, affiliates, partners in mission and donors to join her in support of the organization’s mission to offer “hospitality, education and advocacy to adult immigrants who are striving to better their lives.” For more information, visit thelanterncenter.org.



PRESENTATION LANTERN CENTER

Non-education student needs met in 2024

Living Expenses

- Food & clothing
- Medical expenses
- Rent & utilities
- Phone
- Day care
- Transportation
- Fuel & auto repair
- Auto insurance
- Travel expenses
- Burial expenses
- Funeral travel
- Driver education

Immigration Expenses

- Temporary Protected Status legal fees
- Temporary Protected Status registration fees
- Temporary Protected Status 1-765 EAD (work permit)
- Attorney fees (including Catholic Charities, work permits)
- DACA renewal fees
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services: work authorization renewal
- Passport fees

MY PERSPECTIVE: FINDING HOPE IN THE WORD OF GOD



Photos courtesy of La Crosse County Jail

By Nina Shephard, Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration

I serve on the La Crosse County Jail Ministry Board. The compassion and love we all have for people currently in jail encourages us. Our work is to help them in every way we can. We do this in part by supporting our chaplain, Ann Wales, whose compassion and dedication are an inspiration to all.

With my companion, Pat Ruda, retired FSPA partner in mission, I meet monthly for evening scripture sharing with a small group of women who are currently serving sentences there. A number of these women also participate in a larger scripture program facilitated by Ann. Those who meet with Pat and me always speak positively about what they experience together and with Ann. They proudly bring the Bibles they earned by participating in a study group and sometimes invite others in the block for Bible readings and discussion.

Pat and I are also part of a La Crosse County Jail program called Circle of Support in which four or five people meet with someone who has been released from jail to walk with them on their journey forward.

The jail ministry motto is “Building bridges to better

futures.” The pasts of these women have been filled with difficult things such as abuse, trauma, neglect, rejection by a mother or the family and the addiction that often follows. Incarceration allows time for self-reflection, building hope for the future. Too many times, the difficulties they encounter upon release overwhelm them. Often they have no place to live and do not have a job. They don’t have new friends and so turn to the old ones with whom they got into trouble in the first place. Even at that, many retain the hope they built while in jail. Sometimes it takes several tries to act on these resolves.

Scriptures we share reinforce the self-image these women hold as someone eminently lovable. That love begins with God. My hope for them is to never stop believing that God holds each one of them as His special creation. They may then begin to have compassion for themselves. We invite the women to continue developing a relationship with God, maybe renewed or for the first time.

It is then I can see hope for the future kindled in their hearts.

My heart aches for these women when recidivism occurs and they fall back to the beginning all over again. But when I see them seeking help, and beginning to trust God, I feel hope along with them.



Pope Francis, in his edict declaring 2025 to be the Jubilee Year of Hope, invited all to be pilgrims of hope; to embark on personal journeys and experience moments of “genuine, personal encounter with the Lord Jesus.” Ann Wales, La Crosse Jail Ministry Chaplain, ministers to incarcerated individuals in the maximum-security facility that holds men and women convicted of federal offenses that range from child support delinquency to murder. She is sharing some encounters she’s had in one-on-one meetings with them, many who are true pilgrims of hope.

“Just yesterday a resident of the jail told me that when he became incarcerated last year, he read a comic book version of the Bible from the jail library. It was after reading the comic book version that he decided he understood enough to try reading the traditional Bible. He is also reading it along with other guys in his block. He will be getting out of jail next month and has already decided which church he will attend. He also plans to bring his kids to church as he wants them to learn, too.”

“Another resident, seeking a relationship with God, approached me. I gave him a Bible and encouraged him to start with the Book of John, 20:31: ‘But these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that by believing you may

have a life in His name.’ I also encouraged him to begin meeting for study with a cell block mate. He said later he learned a lot from the man. He was especially grateful the block mate didn’t make him feel stupid for what he didn’t know. He will be released next week, has a church to attend in mind and is hoping to find someone to disciple him. I gave him ideas and told him to call me at the jail if he needs help with that. He shared that he was supposed to have been released sooner but believes God kept him there a little longer so he could learn about the Bible.”

“Residents are allowed to make two free phone calls each day from their blocks. If a call requires navigation through automated prompts, it won’t go through. I have permission to give phone call privileges to residents and recently assisted a veteran who was trying to work out finances and health care. These important calls were numerous and required automated navigation to complete. With the additional privileges, she successfully secured the information she needed and is now set to go to treatment without care or worry. She is so looking forward to the whole body healing she will receive for her PTSD and addictions. If she completes the treatment program, her record will be expunged, greatly increasing her living and working opportunities.” ■

Celebrating

our 2025 Jubilarians

75 years
class of 1950



Sister Luanne Durst



Sister Shirley Wagner⁺

70 years
class of 1955



Sister Juanita Hytry



Sister Blanche Klein



Sister Rochelle Potaracke



Sister Johanna Seubert

**60 years
class of 1965**



Sister Fran Ferder



Sister Nancy Hoffman



Sister Paulynn Instenes



Sister Carrie Kirsch

**50 years
class of 1975**



Sister Carol Hanus

+ In loving memory

Affiliates

25 years - class of 2000

**Yolanda Arredondo, Mary Ellen Dunford, Linda Kerrigan,
Janene McCollough, Linda Railsback, Mary Elizabeth Schneider**

SPIRIT OF MINISTRY: FINDING HOPE IN GRACE AND LOVE



Alice Holstein, FSPA affiliate, connects with Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Mary Kathryn Fogarty at St. Rose Convent in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

By Alice A. Holstein, Ed.D., FSPA affiliate

Before his passing in April, the world was called by Pope Francis to journey this Jubilee Year as pilgrims of hope: “Everyone knows what it is to hope ... In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future will bring.”

The “not knowing” at this time in our history is so far and wide and vast that too many of us feel lonely and lost and abandoned. Yet hope abounds. We are sharing what it means for some in the FSPA community, including Alice Holstein, FSPA affiliate, who has answered “a call to write something that might give hope to others.”

.....

In a world hurting with disappointments, war and uncertainty, hope can make a difference. There are some who don’t believe in it, but for me, hope often comes when hope seems missing. Despite the disbelievers, hope, for me, is also a multidimensional challenge. The challenge is to shift gears, to devise a different “game,” to reach for new methods, to be there for one another, to process hurts and disappointments, to ask how can I best bear this, to be creative and loving, to consider options and to accept that life is often unfair. It may also push us to find the best in ourselves and others.

I have to admit that I spent some time in darkness

before I worked it through. The darkness consisted of some three months of pain and agony which partly included difficulty walking and caring for myself. Some of the time I was literally “trapped” in my apartment, highly dependent upon others. Finally the problem was diagnosed, leading to back surgery and profound relief. I am back to re-creating my life. Before the relief, however, I began to realize how much goodness I was receiving. It was then I knew that, once again, hope had returned. I was blessed with many who stepped forward to help me cope. I was amazed and grateful.

Some brought food. Some helped change my sheets. Some just checked on me. One bought me a heating pad. Several visited. Two people fetched my daily mail. Several ferried the food I ordered from the Eagle Crest kitchen. A couple took me to urgent care one bitterly-cold night. Another couple stayed with me during the surgery. Five different women helped get me ready for surgery. Several bought groceries for me and a number brought good cheer. Very little of it was planned per se. It was an informal team which just functioned to meet my needs.

My belief is that the state of the world, despite its dark side, can still contain hope for the future. For many, however, there may be the need to first grieve, outward or inward, the losses. Finding hope in the ashes may be possible only through tears. Crying can be healthy if we do not allow it to severely cripple us. A helpful attitude may be that relief might just look different than what we

expected. I especially believe this is true if we can turn to one another for courage, interpersonal generosity and support. Never before have we needed each other more. We can decide to value more of these qualities instead of depending so much on external resources or riches. We can all become more responsible for goodness. This may require new forms of collaboration and more knitting together of community resources. Whether it be coping with emotional, financial or neurological vulnerability, many might need help.

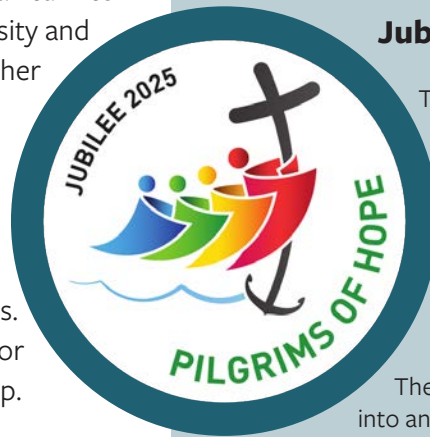
I can even see a future for creation if we become a more conscious vehicle for love and support amidst the so-called “bad news.” In my case, I was cared for by an unorganized team of people. Perhaps similar needs could be served by more formal teams.

It is appropriate to question what the lessons are. What are the gifts? How can we turn tragedy into growth? In what ways can we help others? Will listening carefully make a difference in assessing needs and solutions?

What you do and say in the world can make a difference. Each of us could look for things, large and small, such as volunteering, finding a cause, simply sharing a heartfelt greeting or being with someone when they are in need. Soulful listening can make a huge difference in someone’s coping skills. Sometimes soulful listening needs to take place in the form of writing. What matters is that the person knows they have been “heard” and supported. Yes, I know that letters are not in vogue, but that’s the point. They are special enough to be treasured. Surely an email is possible.

The practice of exchanging emails is one I practice daily. I also make weekly phone visits. These people I reach out to, especially since I live alone, keep me feeling very alive; that I am both a caring person and a person cared about. The subjects vary greatly, mostly about how and what we are doing and thinking about. We are all in need of more hope in our inner and outer lives. Being responsible for that in very active ways can make a surprising difference.

Besides the email sharing, my informal team helped me survive my crisis with grace and love. These gestures, in turn, encouraged me to answer a call to write something that might give hope to others. Hope can be contagious! ■



Jubilee Year of Hope logo explained

The cross of Christ is the hope that cannot ever be abandoned because we are always in need of it, especially in the most difficult moments.

The figures represent humanity from the four corners of the world, embracing each other to illustrate the solidarity between the peoples, as the first holds onto the cross.

The cross, in the shape of a sail, is transformed into an anchor that imposes itself over the waves in motion: A universal symbol of hope.

The rough sea is a reminder of the difficulties of the pilgrimage of life. Often personal events, as well as those of the world, press on us more intensely, demanding a greater hope.

Source: Roman Curia’s Dicastery for Evangelization

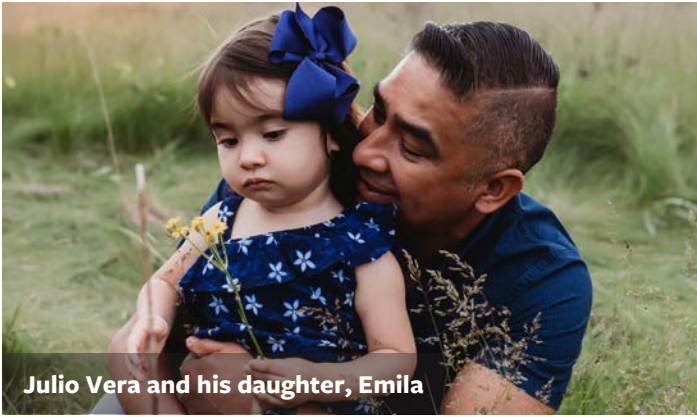


There are so many pilgrims of hope in the midst of FSPA: people journeying through the not-knowing and sharing their inspiration to be grace and love to others along the way. We have been gifted with these perspectives of hope to share.



**Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration
Maria Friedman**

“Hope is the impulse in my soul reminding me, when I feel a tiny, an ordinary or a humungous need, that I have the wherewithal to allow good to happen. Hope is the impulse in my soul reminding me that however challenging a situation is, good can happen. Hope is the glimmer of light, deep in my soul, that has the ability to grow to whatever size necessary for a current situation.”



Julio Vera and his daughter, Emila

Julio Vera, Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center massage therapist

“Hope has been a constant throughout my life, increasing in intensity each day with opportunities to hope given by God. Seeing my toddler learn and grow with new opinions and phrases gives me hope for the bright path she will walk in life. Family meals around our dinner table bring moments of connection, communication and joy that encourage hope for many years of happiness and love in our future. When I finish a massage, helping a client through a pain that has been hindering their ability to experience life to its fullest, I am happy to know I created a positive impact; hopeful for where my career can take me and who I can help in the future. I am thankful to God for each opportunity to find hope in seemingly small moments that in turn create a huge impact.”



“Hope” by José María Rojas Nuñez

Patricia Roth, FSPA donor and partner in mission

“Spirituality essentially IS hope — hope that there is something more and greater. Hope that, at the end of the day, there will be rest; and that, at the end of the journey, the wide doors will swing open. ‘Welcome home.’”



Tau cross shape in stone wall, Assisi, Italy

Madalene Buelow, FSPA affiliate and prayer partner

“These words and phrases about hope guide my weekly chapel prayer hour:

- H – Heightened awareness to remain faithful to my God and my true self.
- O – Openness to calls of unity.
- P – Perseverance: Making change happen in small ways.
- E – Experiencing agape: The unconditional love of all creation.”



Light breaking in the desert of Fountain Hills, Arizona

FSPA ministry grant partner, Eastern Iowa Health Center, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

“Hope is built upon grit and determination, hurt and fear, sadness and despair,” shares Eastern Iowa Health Center Director of Development and Community Outreach Stacie Eastman, “but it is because of this that we inch towards the light, always searching for the path that leads to illumination. Sometimes we crawl towards that light, but we continue because we are all seeking to not be a part of the darkness. Determination fuels us. Despair challenges us. Hurt rebuilds us. Hope inspires us. And love ... love transforms us.”

IN MEMORIAM: REJOICE, YOU WHO ARE ALIVE IN CHRIST

Sister Rosalia Bauer

Feb. 20, 1929 - Oct. 11, 2024



Sister Rosalia Bauer died at the age of 95, in the seventy-fourth year of her religious profession, on Oct. 11, 2024, at St. Rose Convent. She was born on Feb. 20, 1929, to Joseph A. and Rosa (Danzinger) Bauer in Lima, Wisconsin. One Christmas, when Rosalia was

in the third grade, she received a toy nursing kit from Santa Claus and began practicing on her brothers. From that moment on, she knew she wanted to be a nurse. She attended Sacred Heart School in Lima where she completed her schooling.

In 1947 she followed her aunt, Sister Ritalina Danzinger, and entered St. Rose. She was received into the novitiate in 1948 and given the name Sister Mary Ambrose. She later returned to her baptismal name and made her profession of first vows on Aug. 12, 1950. Sister Rosalia became a registered nurse, graduating from St. Anthony College of Nursing in Carroll, Iowa, went on to receive a BSN from Marycrest College in Davenport, Iowa, and a MSN from the University of Washington, Seattle, and eventually became a family nurse practitioner through Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia.

Sister Rosalia ministered as a nurse in nine states and Thailand, in large and small hospitals, nursing homes, private residences, university clinics, county clinics, public health centers, a migrant camp and a refugee camp. She saw nursing as “a doorknob allowing entrance into people’s homes and hearts.” Her varied experiences, especially with the migrants in Virginia and refugees

in Thailand, gave her a deep appreciation of cultural differences, the miracles of medicine and the resilience of people. In 1992 a new passion was born for Sister Rosalia when she was invited to join Pro-Life Wisconsin. She continued her pro-life commitment into retirement.

Sister Rosalia is remembered for her determination and love of life. She was a great storyteller. Her eyes would light up when talking about her ministry in the migrant camp in Virginia or with the refugees in Thailand. She was a pro-life activist to her very core and was passionate about sharing conversations that supported all forms of life, particularly that of the unborn. She loved her FSPA community and her family and participated in as many activities as she could.

Sister Maris Kerwin

July 3, 1935 - Oct. 25, 2024



Sister Maris Kerwin died at the age of 89, in the sixty-fifth year of her religious profession, on Oct. 25, 2024, at St. Rose Convent. Sister Maris was born on July 3, 1935, to Thomas and Lillian (Foley) Kerwin in Carroll, Iowa. At her baptism, she was given the name Anna

Marie, but was known as Ann. She attended St. Angela Academy (staffed by FSPA) in Carroll, where her interest in science, math, drama and prom began. During an academy retreat, despite never thinking it was for her, Sister Maris asked herself, “What is my vocation?” After graduation she attended St. Anthony Hospital’s School of Nursing in Carroll, where she was class vice president, a student council member and a sodality participant. During her junior year, she attended Summer School of

Catholic Action in Chicago, Illinois and then realized God was calling her to something special.

After graduating with a nursing degree from St. Anthony's School of Nursing, she entered St. Rose, was received into the novitiate on Aug. 12, 1957, and given the name Sister Maris. She made her first profession of vows on Aug. 12, 1959. Sister Maris attended Viterbo College, where she earned a bachelor's degree in biology with a minor in nursing, and began her long health care career that spanned St. Francis Medical Center in La Crosse, St. Mary's Hospital in Sparta, Wisconsin, St. Joseph Hospital in Hillsboro, Wisconsin, Sacred Heart Hospital in Idaho Falls, Idaho, and St. Anthony Regional Hospital. She also spent time in Salt Lake City, Utah, where she was introduced to intensive care units — a specialization she helped establish in Sacred Heart.

In spring of 1984, Sister Maris was elected FSPA vice president. Her 10 years in congregational leadership provided her the opportunity to not only become more deeply aware of the life and work of the FSPA, but also enabled her to touch the lives and challenges of society, the Church and religious women everywhere. After a year's sabbatical in 1994 at Sangre de Cristo Retreat Center in New Mexico, and participation in a Franciscan program at the Tau Center in Winona, Minnesota, she was appointed administrator of Villa St. Joseph in La Crosse. After serving in that position for 13 years, she ministered at St. Rose as FSPA Heritage Curator from 2008 to 2022.

In retirement Sister Maris served as an active board member and chair at Mayo Clinic Health System-Franciscan Healthcare La Crosse and St. Anthony Hospital. Sister Maris received numerous awards in recognition of her service to the health care field which included the Spheres of Influence Award from the St. Francis Foundation, the President's Lifetime Achievement Award from RSVP and a Certificate of Appreciation from the Catholic Health Association.

Community members, family and friends remember Sister Maris as kind, quiet, always involved with other people and very proud of her Irish heritage. Many of the relationships she made over the years stayed strong. Everyone at St. Rose knew Sister Maris because she was interested in every sister and partner in mission.

Sister Eileen Neumann

May 31, 1929 - Nov. 22, 2024



Sister Eileen Neumann died at age 95, in the seventy-third year of her religious profession, on Nov. 22, 2024, at St. Rose Convent. She was born Eileen Gayle on May 31, 1929, to Henry and Katherine (Desmond) Neumann in Ancón, Panama. Her father served the Canal Zone Police until his retirement in 1950 when the family moved to a farm in Onalaska, Washington.

Prior to their move, he took the family to visit relatives in the United States every year, boarding the SS Panama and arriving in New York five days later. Sister Eileen, planning to study medical laboratory technology, had learned about Viterbo College in La Crosse during those family visits. It was just what they were looking for in a school. Sister Eileen stayed in La Crosse, found a part-time job at St. Francis Hospital and began her studies. Influenced by an FSPA catechism teacher, she entered St. Rose.

Received into the novitiate on Aug. 12, 1949, she was given the name Sister Mary Dominic, later returning to her baptismal name. She professed first vows in 1951 and final vows in 1957. Receiving a bachelor's degree in Medical Technology from Viterbo and a Certificate in Cytotechnology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Sister Eileen ministered as such in Wisconsin, Idaho, Iowa, Arizona, Louisiana, South Dakota and Washington. After a year studying University of Seattle's CORPUS program, she served from 1983 to 1987 in prison/jail ministry in Las Vegas, Nevada, as well as San Francisco and Palo Alto in California. She then served at Clare Spirituality Center as a Master Gardener in Spokane, Washington. In 2009 she made her home at St. Rose, ministering in prayer and hospitality.

Sister Eileen will be remembered for entertaining people with stories about her lab tech and jail ministries, her due diligence in setting jigsaw puzzles and her affinity for Tabasco sauce, evidence of her Panamanian upbringing. Her compassion for those in need and love for her community and Jesus was evident in her conversations with others.

Sister Marcella Steffes

Jan. 1, 1927 - Nov. 27, 2024



Sister Marcella Steffes died at the age of 97, in the seventy-fifth year of her religious profession, on Nov. 27, 2024, at St. Rose Convent. She was born on Jan. 1, 1927, to John A. and Anna (Halbur) Steffes in Roselle, Iowa, and grew up on the family farm, just outside

of Roselle. She was quite sick at age four and said, “The Lord spared me for something special.”

She attended Holy Angels Elementary School in Roselle and wanted to enter the St. Angela Academy in Carroll, Iowa, after elementary school, but her mother needed her help with her seven younger brothers and sisters at home. They commonly gathered as their “own little orchestra” to play music and sing with Sister Marcella directing while playing the violin. After staying home from school for four years, she began thinking more seriously about her future — pursuing her interest in music or becoming a sister. At that time, she didn’t know that her life’s ministry would include both. She attended St. Angela Academy for three years before completing her senior year at St. Rose High School in La Crosse. She was received into the novitiate on Aug. 12, 1948, and given the name Sister Ignatia. Sister Marcella later returned to her baptismal name. She made her first profession of vows on Aug. 12, 1950, and her final profession on Aug. 9, 1956.

Having earned a bachelor’s in music education with applied cello from Viterbo College in La Crosse, a master’s in music theory from Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, and a master of fine arts in cello from the University of Iowa-Iowa City, Sister Marcella served as a music teacher and offered private lessons in elementary schools in Wisconsin (La Crosse, Menomonie and Fountain City) for 16 years. From 1970 to 2010, she served as a faculty member of Viterbo College’s Music Education Department. As part of Viterbo’s Preparatory School of the Arts, she was known as an outstanding Suzuki cello and violin teacher. For 34 years, she played cello with the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra, serving as principal cellist for several years.

Community members, family, colleagues and students remember Sister Marcella as a dedicated musician,

both as a teacher and a performer. Over the years, she frequently played the cello for community celebrations at St. Rose. Her students often came back to visit her to share their musical experiences. Sister Marcella was also keenly aware of justice matters, signing many petitions and writing hundreds of letters to elected officials.

Sister Fran Morrissey

Nov. 28, 1937 - Jan. 21, 2025



Sister Fran Morrissey died at the age of 87, in the sixty-fifth year of her religious profession, on Jan. 21, 2025, at St. Rose Convent. Born Frances Ethel on Nov. 28, 1937, in Fairfield, Iowa, Sister Fran was one of 13 children of Charles and Lois (Klingbeil) Morrissey. Her family

moved to Carroll, Iowa, two years after she was born. Having enough children for a baseball team, her father bought uniforms for all nine siblings, including the baby.

Sister Fran entered the FSPA novitiate in 1957 and was given the name Mary Malachy. She later went back to her baptismal name and made her first profession of vows on Aug. 12, 1959. Sister Fran’s early ministry centered on serving the community of sisters as a homemaker. She ministered in various convents in Iowa (Spencer, West Bend, Carroll, Cedar Rapids, Milford) and Wisconsin (Stanley, Menomonie, Marathon) for 25 years. During that time, she occasionally taught music and served as the school librarian.

From 1985 to 1987, she attended Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, and participated in Credo, a spiritual renewal program. Sister Fran returned to the Midwest and ministered as a seamstress and driver at Villa St. Joseph in La Crosse, a position she held for 25 years. In 2012 she retired to St. Rose, where she continued to volunteer by using her sewing skills and praying. She moved back to the Villa in 2019 when her health began to fail and returned to St. Rose in 2022.

Community members, family and friends remember Sister Fran as always happy and ready with a good story. Her smile was as big as her heart. She could be counted on to help with any project, regardless of its magnitude. As a practical joker, she was constantly pulling tricks on someone. She loved a good party and participating in

any craft project or activity while she was able, with her exquisite sewing keeping the Villa and St. Rose gift shops well-supplied with lovely items.

Sister Nancy Lafferty

Jan. 22, 1936 - Feb. 25, 2025



Sister Nancy Lafferty died at the age of 89, in the sixty-seventh year of religious profession, on Feb. 25, 2025, at St. Rose Convent. She was born Nancy Ann on Jan. 22, 1936, to Andrew Raymond and Elizabeth Elenore (Tritz) Lafferty in Le Mars, Iowa. She and her 10 siblings grew up on the family farm until they moved to Carroll, Iowa, where her father worked at a grocery store.

In Carroll Sister Nancy graduated from St. Joseph Grade School in 1949 and St. Angela Academy in 1953, going on to La Crosse, where she attended Viterbo College. During her junior year there, she decided to join FSPA and entered St. Rose. She was received into the novitiate and given the name Sister Cathrina. She later returned to her baptismal name and made her first profession of vows on Aug. 12, 1958.

Sister Nancy excelled in academics, both as a student and a professional. She achieved a bachelor's degree in sociology with minors in history and English from Viterbo, a master's degree in sociology from The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., a master's degree in social work from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, and a Ph.D. in the interdisciplinary studies of social work, sociology and education from Washington University.

Sister Nancy began her teaching career in secondary schools in La Crosse (Aquinas), New Vienna (St. Boniface), Iowa, and Carroll (Kuemper), Iowa. For 25 years, Dr. Lafferty, as she was known by her college and university students, taught at Viterbo, Washington University, the University of St. Louis, St. Ambrose University, Davenport, Iowa, Morningside College, Briar Cliff University and Western Iowa Tech Community College in Sioux City, and Wayne State College in Nebraska. She also served for one year as principal at Holy Child Jesus School in Canton, Mississippi, and as ESL Bilingual Education Program Director from 1995 to

2001 at Cathedral Parish in Sioux City. She then served as Dorothy Day Retreat Center Director in Sioux City until 2006 when she moved to La Crosse where she volunteered in various ministries at the Franciscan Spirituality Center until 2015 when she retired to St. Rose.

Community members, friends, family and colleagues remember Sister Nancy as someone continuously interested in helping others. There was always a twinkle in her eye. Quiet in her demeanor, she had a wide array of peace and justice interests with a special place in her heart for the Vietnamese and Hispanic communities, especially in Sioux City. Sister Nancy was arrested several times for protesting against the Vietnam War and U.S. military spending, twice for praying the Prayer of St. Francis at the Rock Island Arsenal in Rock Island, Illinois, and Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha, Nebraska. Sister Nancy also participated in several educational mission trips teaching in Taiwan, Hong Kong, People's Republic of China, Tanzania, Mexico and Nicaragua.

Affiliate Brian Schilke

Dec. 9, 1941 - Sept. 23, 2024



Brian Schilke died peacefully surrounded by family on Sept. 23, 2024. Brian was born on Dec. 9, 1941, in Green Bay, Wisconsin, to Ransom and Georgette (Murphy) Schilke. He was united in marriage to Jane Rollin at St. Willebrord Catholic Church in

Green Bay on June 27, 1981. Brian attended St. Joseph Grade School and Premontre High School in Green Bay. He attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison and earned a computer programming degree from the Arkansas College of Technology. As a veteran of the U.S. Army, Brian specialized in the French language at the Defense Language School and served in East Africa.

Brian was an outgoing and friendly man. He loved to meet new people and make new friends. Brian's diverse interests included the history of languages and other cultures. His interest in model trains led to family outings to train shows and railroad museums. Brian loved York Peppermint Patties. No problem could remain unsolved after eating a York Peppermint Pattie.

His outgoing personality matched well with a career

in sales and customer service. Brian worked in haberdasheries in Green Bay and Columbia, Missouri. Later his interests turned to the emerging personal computer market. In retirement Brian repaired and retrofitted computers for disadvantaged students at the Cooperative Ministry in Columbia, South Carolina. In Spokane, Washington, he was a volunteer for the English as a Second Language program at Country Holmes Christian Church.

Brian was a longtime member of St. Thomas More Catholic Parish in Spokane and a member of Knights of Columbus Assemblies 11134 and 3283. Brian was also an affiliate of the Order of Franciscans Secular and the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration.

Affiliate Beverly Miller
Mar. 16, 1937 - Nov. 18, 2024



Beverly Margret (Bev) Miller of La Crosse, Wisconsin, devoted daughter, sister, aunt and friend, passed away peacefully on Nov. 18, 2024. She was 87 years old. All who knew Bev will miss her gentle nature, her quick wit and her deep commitment to her faith and serving and caring for others. She spent her career guiding children in Wisconsin and Illinois as a teacher, school social worker and principal. Upon retiring from education, Bev served the sisters of St. Rose Convent in La Crosse, for many years as a secretary in the liturgy department. After retirement, she continued her service through volunteer work and ongoing attention to her family and friends.

Bev enjoyed the quiet pursuits of reading, doing puzzles, sewing, crafting and gardening, but she also found joy in spending time around a card table playing Euchre and Pinochle where she never stopped teaching and rarely lost. She loved family gatherings where she specialized in entertaining babies and playfully teasing her nieces and nephews. Bev was a baker and shared her kolaches and caramels throughout the year. She was adventurous, building memories while traveling with family and friends and spending time relaxing at the lake. Most of all, Bev was kind and selfless with her time, never ceasing to serve those who needed special care, a friend in a time of need, or simply a willing partner for shopping and lunch.

Affiliate Arlene Bonacci
Apr. 3, 1935 - Dec. 28, 2024



Arlene Bonacci, of Omaha, Nebraska, Council Bluffs, Iowa, Pittsville, Wisconsin and Antigo, Wisconsin, passed away on Dec. 28, 2024, at Bethany Lutheran Home in Council Bluffs, Iowa. She was born on April 3, 1935, in Superior, Wisconsin, to the late Cyriel and Irma (LaGae) Liebaert. She married Michael Bonacci on Aug. 2, 1958, at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Superior.

Arlene attended St. Anthony's Catholic School and Superior High School. She graduated from UW-Steven's Point with a bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree in educational administration from UW-Superior. She served as St. Joachim's Catholic Church Director of Religious Education in Pittsville, Wisconsin, as a grade school teacher at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Marshfield, Wisconsin, and as an elementary school principal at West Elementary School and Pleasant View Elementary School in Antigo, Wisconsin.

Arlene was an elected official for Langlade County in Antigo for 20 years, serving on the County Board of Supervisors. She also served as a guardian to many people in the Antigo area. She was a member of St. John's Catholic Church in Antigo and St. Joachim's Catholic Church in Pittsville. She was an FSPA affiliate and Religious Hospitaller of St. Joseph in Antigo. She also served on the Board of the Directors at St. Anthony Retreat Center in Marathon, Wisconsin, and was a member of the County Retired Educators Association.



**READ OBITUARIES IN THEIR
ENTIRETY AT [FSPA.ORG](https://www.fspa.org)
UNDER NEWS/EVENTS**

FRANCISCAN GOODNESS

Franciscan Spirituality Center celebrates 40th anniversary

Forty years ago, the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration founded the Franciscan Spirituality Center in La Crosse, Wisconsin: a sacred space to experience peace and hospitality for those seeking spiritual renewal, personal and professional growth, healing, transformation and deeper self-awareness.

At its core, FSC is a ministry dedicated to all who seek God, meaning and wholeness. The center's offerings include programs and retreats, spiritual direction for groups and individuals, mindfulness workshops, qigong and yoga classes, opportunities for artistic expression and an innovative, three-year training program designed to guide people to becoming compassionate, nonjudgmental listeners.

Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Mary Kathryn Fogarty, who served as FSC director from 1988 to 2000, shares that "from its beginning, FSC has been a place of hospitality where everyone is welcome. Today it continues to be a safe place in which to tell your story and to be invited to grow into greater freedom and wholeness."

Explore what FSC has to offer you, including special anniversary events, at fscenter.org.



Sister Mary Kathryn Fogarty served as FSC director from 1988 to 2000 and continues to volunteer in retirement.



Fish for the Future: Protect our water, break world record



Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Georgia Christensen

"We have the chance to set a positive example for the rest of the country by embracing renewable energy and holding corporations accountable for the long-term health of all," says Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Georgia Christensen in a joint statement made by supporters of Fish for the Future, a campaign that is calling all to act for a shutdown of the Line 5 pipeline.

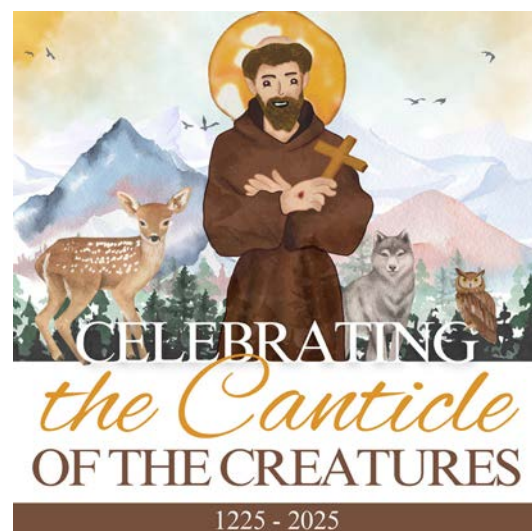
Fish for the Future is a collaboration of organizations throughout the Great Lakes region supporting the shutdown, including FSPA, aiming to break the record for the world's largest display of origami fish: currently 18,303 handmade creations by a group in Japan. FSPA is a strong advocate of the movement to shut down the Enbridge pipeline that carries crude oil and natural gas liquids from Canada through sensitive ecosystems like the watershed of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, thusly endangering all of creation.

Want to join the world record campaign? Visit fspa.org/news to read "Fish for the Future: break a world record and protect our water" and get a link to Fish for the Future's step-by-step instructions for making and submitting origami fish (by June 5).

Canticle of the Creatures: Celebrating 800 years

This year Franciscans worldwide are commemorating an 800-year-old prayer that, from its inception, has been a clarion call to protect our common home and live in solidarity with all creation. The celebration of the Canticle of the Creatures revolves around Brother Sun, Sister Moon and all living things, radiating humility, gratitude and interconnectedness — virtues of Franciscan spirituality that we hold dear.

Together with our spirituality centers, FSPA is inviting all to join us in celebrating reverence for creation, care for the Earth and living in harmony with one another. Visit fspa.org/centenary to find Canticle of the Creatures videos, prayer, resources and events, including “Adoration Talk: Canticle of the Creatures Explained” narrated by Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Sarah Hennessey, offered by FSPA sisters and affiliates.



Drawing from FSPA’s Wells of Wisdom

“Do the best you can. That’s all God wants,” says Sister Malinda Gerke. “What is, is, and it’s good,” offers Sister Maria Friedman. “Peace is receiving each moment,” shares Sister Marcella Anibas.

Now more than ever, as many women religious in the United States are entering their 70s, 80s and 90s, their rich experiences are moments to preserve and cherish for all generations to come. FSPA is taking up this charge, capturing these sentiments and sharing them in our series, Words of Wisdom. Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Karen Lueck is sitting down with our sisters who are telling their personal and ministerial stories. To read about their lives, see pictures from their past and draw inspiration from their words, visit fspa.org/stories.



Celebrating a brand new FSPA centenarian

Many guests — sisters, staff, family and friends — gathered at St. Rose Convent on Feb. 18 in La Crosse, Wisconsin, to celebrate Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Marguerite Bruening’s 100th birthday. Sister Marguerite began her century-long journey in Maple River, Iowa, where she was born. She ministered as a teacher in Wisconsin, Iowa and Montana for 51 years and later as a parish visitor and health care volunteer. Her response to all the hoopla that day? “Oh for heaven’s sake!” To see more pictures featuring Sister Marguerite over the years and view more celebration images, scroll down to our Feb. 18 post at facebook.com/FranciscanSisters.





Franciscan Sisters

of Perpetual Adoration

Modern Lives. Sacred Traditions.

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



Sue Weidemann, FSPA donor, shares “the pure joy of this stunning view” as her reason for inspiration in the 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope. “How can you not feel grateful, happy, blessed and amazed that, if God can create all of this, there is hope we can bring a little bit of heaven to the world?”

Stay tuned to fspa.org and our social channels for more reflections of hope to come.

CONNECT WITH OUR PARTNERS IN MINISTRY

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

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

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

Global Awareness Through Experience | gate-travel.org