

Communigram

Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity
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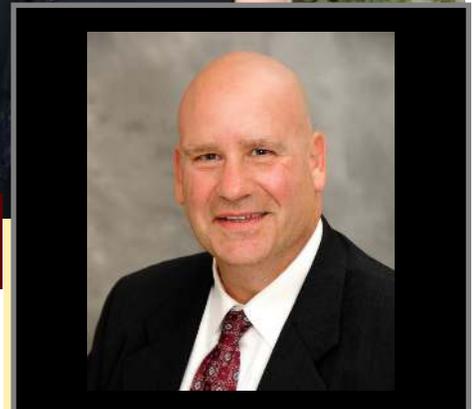


Welcoming the New Bishop

Many of the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity serving in the diocese of Tucson were honored to be present at two moving liturgical services November 29th and 30th. The first was a Solemn Vespers presided by Bishop Kicanas welcoming the newly appointed bishop. The next day was the Installation Mass for Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger Seventh Bishop of Tucson. The Papal Nuncio for the United States, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, read the Apostolic Mandate from Pope Francis appointing our new bishop. In his homily Bishop Weisenburger spoke of how Jesus no longer calls us servants or slaves but friends (John 15:15). He went on to say that this is the relationship he believes God is calling him to have with the people of the Church of Tucson.

The joy of the Vespers and Installation Mass was filled with: magnificent music, prayers spoken in eight different languages, a blessing from the Native Americans of San Xavier Mission, over twenty Bishops and one Cardinal, some 150 priests, the new Bishop's family and friends, principals, teachers and student representatives of the Tucson Catholic Schools, along with numerous civic and interfaith leaders and many others. The hope and new life of these joyous celebrations were blended with extreme gratitude for the pastoral and compassionate shepherding of Bishop Kicanas. God's love is visible in his people.

Submitted by Sister Mary Ann Spanjers



Dr. Robert B. Callahan named new president of Silver Lake College

Manitowoc, Wisconsin—Dr. Robert B. Callahan has been named 11th president of Silver Lake College of the Holy Family, effective January 30, 2018.

Dr. Callahan comes to Silver Lake College from Mount Mercy University, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where he's served since 2012, most recently as vice president for administrative, enrollment and student services.

On Attending the Beatification of Father

Four Sisters from the Manitowoc area were asked to reflect on their experiences at the Beatification of Father Solanus Casey.

On Friday November 17, Sisters Marsaia Kaster, Catherine Gilles, Antonice Lauer and Caritas Strodt-hoff traveled by car to Ypsilanti, Michigan where they were graciously welcomed with hospitality for the weekend by Natalia and Victor Fernandes and their four children. Sister Mardelle Meinholz met the couple on their annual trip to Mother of Good Help Shrine and was invited to stay with them for the beatification. Both she and Sister Mary Ann Tupy were unable to attend the celebration due to knee problems.

Saturday morning greeted us with overcast gray skies and dripping rain throughout the day. By nightfall it was windy and very wet. The song “Joy is like the Rain” came to mind as we braved the weather on this long awaited day: the Beatification of Father Solanus Casey. Our first visit was to the Solanus Casey Center where we viewed on entry the “The Creation Garden.” Sculptures depict the Canticle of the Creatures, the moon, water, fire, wind, etc. On entering the main hall a series of life-like bronze statues greeted visitors. These Beatitude Statues represent



four men and four women who exemplify a particular beatitude during the past 60 years. Here is Mother Teresa of Calcutta representing Blessed are the Merciful.

We joined the lines of visitors waiting to deposit requests for prayers and to pray at the tomb of Father Solanus. For Sr. Antonice this was the most touching place, his tomb, where she was able to pray for a long time. In the museum a visitor graciously took a photo of the four of us. Seeing his bedroom, his desk, articles of clothing, and his violin were so inspirational.

As Sisters Catherine, Antonice and I (Sister Marsaia) entered the line closest to Gate G of Ford Field, we were approached by two local media gentleman who asked for a quick interview: our names, what congregation we represented, what Fr. Solanus’ beatification meant to us, to the Church and what special gifts did he bring to others. For me, having worked with the Capuchins at Monte Alverno, I said I felt great pride and awe for the Capuchins who have longed for this “next step” toward canonization for their brother. What most impresses me about Solanus? His great closeness to Jesus, to Whom Solanus wanted to give everything! Also, Solanus’ extreme confidence in God’s design for his life; and the beautiful gift of listening that Solanus gave to every person he met. Such is love. Solanus took Jesus words literally “Ask and you shall receive . . .” Sister Catherine adds that she was struck by how Fr. Solanus, the priest who was not permitted to preach sermons, truly preached always, as St. Francis had wanted the Brothers to do! What a Franciscan! What an example!



Unveiling of the image of Blessed Solanus Casey, OFM Capuchin.

The opening rites of the Liturgy and Rite of Beatification reflected the jubilation of the event: “this is the feast of victory for our God” were the very first words sung.

Immediately after the Kyrie came the Request for Beatification and a short biography that made a side note of Solanus’ one weakness—not so good a musician, though he loved to play his violin before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Cardinal Amato’s read Pope Francis’ Apostolic Letter and The Presentation of the Decree of Beatification, the Acclamation (words always on Solanus’ tongue - “Thanks be to God!”) and the Unveiling of the Picture of Blessed Solanus Casey OFM Capuchin. On the photo view of the stadium floor you can see the white covering over this picture. A Song of Thanksgiving and Expressions of Thanks to the Holy Father by Capuchins and members of Solanus’ family followed. Mass continued then with a most beautiful sung Gloria (from the Mass of St. Ann) with a 300 member choir from the Detroit area and an orchestra including strings, brass, and timpani under the

Beatification (continued from p.2)

direction of one of the Capuchins. The 66,000 people, the choir, the instruments and all praying together was great with everyone gathered to give praise.

Distributing Communion had been an earlier concern but it proceeded in a quiet, prayerful fashion with everyone proceeding up the side of their section to receive Communion in the upper hall, and then back down the opposite side to their seats. "Take And Eat" was sung by everyone present—just a very moving time of receiving the Lord.

Once the closing song was finished we connected up with the five Sisters from Cambridge and had our picture taken by a delightful young man who used a friend to form a barrier of the people moving fast thru the hallway. Back into the wind and rain we headed "home" where Talia served a delicious meal of tacos, fruit and lively conversation. Sunday

Our Sisters at St. Benedict's Convent, Cambridge, Ohio: Sisters. Helen Marie Paul, Jan Villemure, June Smith, Carol Juckem, and Sharon Paul also attended the Beatification of Fr. Solanus Casey.

They were welcomed to stay at Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit where Jeremiah Hahn, a Seminarian, doing an intern year at St. Benedict's Parish in Cambridge, attends.

Some comments from the Sisters: "It was a holy, sacred, and humbling time filled with graces and blessings. It was a historic time and we were grateful for our Administration in Wisconsin to allow us this awesome opportunity to attend such a historic event."

"It is a hopeful time in the history of the Catholic Church to see 70,000 and other Christian Churches come together to honor a person whose gifts of kindness, compassion, faith, and a listening ear have helped thousands."

May this canonization of Fr. Solanus bless each of us to carry on his love for all the poor and suffering of our world."

"What touched my heart was watching the woman from Panama who was healed through Solanus' intercession carry his relics to the altar. She came to his tomb to pray for others. She heard a voice say: "Pray for yourself." She did and was healed instantaneously. Gratitude, faith, and love were very evident on Paula's face at the Mass."



L to r: Sisters Marsia, Catherine G., Caritas, Sharon, Antonice, Jan, Carol J., June, and Helen Marie attended the beatification of Solanus Casey, OFM Capuchin.

came all too quickly and greeted us with a gentle white snowfall. After a pancake breakfast we said our good byes and headed home with blue skies, sunshine, and safety. We truly felt the blessing of this wonderful occasion. The Community is to be thanked for such a special time.

Comments by Sr. Marsaia, Sr. Antonice, Sr. Catherine G., and Sr. Caritas.

Sisters Sharon, June, Carol J., Jan, and Helen Marie at St. Bonaventure Monastery Solanus Center near the statue.



"Nick Blattner from Silver Lake College approached us at the Solanus Center. He recognized us and was proud to be an SLC alumnus. He is studying to be a Capuchin."

"All of our community intentions were carried to the tomb. Thank you to Sr. Natalie for permission to be a part of this celebration of a man from Wisconsin, a Capuchin, a humble, holy healer."

"Fr. Solanus Casey had a motto that said: "THANK GOD AHEAD OF TIME!" Caring and listening are virtues for each of us to imitate."

Submitted by Sister Sharon Paul

Sisters Attend NFC Congress



Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity participated in the National Formation Conference Congress held recently in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Sister Julie Ann Sheahan, Sister Mariella Erdmann, Sister Mariadele Jacobs, and Sister Theresa Feldkamp, heard speakers address the theme: Grace in the Now, The Gospel of Encounter.

Wondering the content of the days? Sister Teresa Maya, CCVI delivered *Encuentro: A Call for Our Time*. This keynote explored *Encuentro* as the call which holds the promise for the future of our life form in the Church and our world. To answer this call, religious communities need to address the issues that emerge when we encounter the “other”, the unnamed “isms” which distance us from the places of *Encuentro*. Holding the tension of *Encuentro* will open the possibility for Pope Francis’ hope of a reconciled diversity that will “Wake up the World”.

Building on Pope Francis’s understanding of religious life as prophetic and on his hallmark phrase, “culture of encounter,” Stephen B. Bevans, SVD reflected on the various ways that today’s religious need to be formed-initially and continually-to be “prophets of encounter.”

Becoming a “prophet of encounter” begins with encountering ourselves in wonder, humility, and possibility. It grows as we encounter both the world’s beauty and cruelty. It is rooted in the realization that, before we encounter God, God encounters us. It matures as we encounter others “as Jesus did, not just seeing but looking, not just hearing but listening, not just passing by, but stopping with them” (Francis, Sept 23, 2016). Prophets of encounter eschew the “culture of indifference” so prevalent in the world today and seek to witness clearly to the Gospel, offer a word of hope in our difficult times, and never hesitate to confront oppression and injustice.

Encounter Milwaukee



On November 11, 2017, Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity greeted young adults at Encounter Milwaukee. Held at the Cousins Center, Sister Elaine Turba and Sister Julie Ann Sheahan distributed Franciscan Corn (caramel corn) with a kernel of wisdom from St. Francis of Assisi: Start by doing what is POSSIBLE; then do what is NECESSARY; and suddenly you are doing the IMPOSSIBLE. Young adults were encouraged to help us get the word out about our discernment retreats. Give-aways were quick to disappear!

A Variety of New Signs at SLC



The campus of Silver Lake College of the Holy Family is sporting a number of new colorful signs hanging from their outdoor lamp posts.

Photo by Suzanne Weiss, SLC

JUST Gospel!

By Sister Kathleen Murphy
Social Justice Commission

...*Spirit of light, dance within our darkness. Make us your own, now is the time....*” Again, Tom Kendzia’s song is a beautiful prayer for the beginning of our monthly reflection. During this Advent time we join with the Church and her liturgies to consider the coming of the Light of the World into our darkness whether personal, communal, political, ethical or universal. This Light that we await is a person. It is a Baby who brings the light of complete goodness to us. A baby is a bundle of possibilities, of hopes, of desires. Such a light can so easily be seen to dance in our darkness.

Pope Francis seems to reach out to the other end of the spectrum of life in his intention for this month. He asks us to pray, *That the elderly, sustained by families and Christian communities, may apply their wisdom and experience to spreading the faith and forming the new generations.*

With characteristic affirmation Pope Francis sees the elderly as gifts of wisdom and experience, as evangelizers and formators. Is this the way our society regards our senior members? This intention allows us to consider respect for the elderly which includes looking at the issue of euthanasia and assisted suicide.

We turn to the writings of Cardinal Gerhard Müller, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. “Supporters of legal euthanasia argue that respect for self-determination entitles individuals to

choose the time and manner of their death. They assert that this is a decision that only affects the patient and doesn’t cause harm or even involve anyone else. But human beings do not exist as atomized units whose actions are entirely limited to their own sphere of consequences. People exist in relationships to others. Euthanasia is not a self-contained act. If the key value involved in euthanasia is respect for self-determination, how would it be possible to set boundaries for who and for what reasons euthanasia would be acceptable. Would this argument not require all to be respected for their end-of-life decisions at any time and in any circumstance? Others advocating for euthanasia ground their claims in compassion for the suffering and dependent. Statistics prove that in areas where euthanasia has been legalized, there soon follows a decrease in effective pain management of all patients. Once euthanasia is an option, it quickly becomes the easiest path for decision-makers. We also see grave issues developing around the whole question of quality of life. When others are readily called upon to judge the quality of life of someone else we can begin to see both nonvoluntary and involuntary euthanasia. The goodness of a society can be measured by how well it treats and protects its weakest and most vulnerable members. Nations that legalize euthanasia fail to care



rightly for the least of our brothers and sisters.”

We have only to look to some of our Advent Biblical characters to see the immeasurable treasure found in our elders. We look to Zechariah and Elizabeth, Anne and Joachim, to the Prophetess Anna and to Simeon. We look back to the Old Testament giants like Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob who served mightily in their old age.

In terms of our own daily living, we are not often faced with the tragedy of euthanasia, but we can examine how we regard the elderly children of God we meet each day. Our Core Values state: *We work at building community by being grateful for each other.* Do we treasure those who struggle to walk, to see or to hear? Do we bring gentleness to our interactions with those who can’t always remember or find the words they need to express themselves? Do we value their wisdom and giftedness? We are blessed by their presence, for *now is the time!*

Sisters Engage Young People in Conversation and Activity



The Sisters at San Xavier had a delightful monthly meeting sharing with the seven Jesuit Volunteers serving in Tucson! They discussed Pope Francis' Preparatory Document on the upcoming Synod for Youth!

As you may know “the document is divided into three parts. The first urges listening to reality. The second highlights the importance of discernment in the light of faith in order to make life choices that truly correspond to the will of God and



to the good of the person. The third focuses on the pastoral action of the ecclesial community. The evangelical image of the ‘beloved disciple’ introduces the three parts as a brief presentation of the journey”. The theme of Youth, faith and vocational discernment is one dear to the heart of our own community. We consider it a priority to seek ways to reach out to young adults in the contemporary world.

Our community is also very conscious of the young people at San Miguel High School, Tucson.

The Sisters supported the Lasallian Volunteers ministering at San Miguel and around the country as they gathered for a fundraiser Walk/Run in Tucson. The Sisters hosted two of the volunteers and Sister Mary Ann participated in the event!

Submitted by Sister Mary Ann Spanjers

Cambridge News



Sister Helen Marie Paul standing near the beautiful quilt donated by her mother, Margaret Ann Paul for the St. Nicholas Craft Sale

Cambridge, Ohio—On Saturday November 11, the Sisters at St. Benedict Convent enjoyed an outing to the St. Nicholas Craft Sale in support of the Catholic School in Zanesville. A beautiful quilt, made and donated by Margaret Ann Paul, was raffled. Sister Jan's brother, John Villemure accompanied us. He enjoyed seeing St. Nicholas Church with the beautiful stained glass windows and the Rose Window.



Georgetown Vineyards in Cambridge, Ohio: Sister Sharon Paul, Sister Helen Marie Paul, Sister Jan Villemure with her brother, John Villemure, Sister Carol Juckem, and Sister June Smith

Jeremiah Hahn the seminarian stationed at St. Benedict's Church for the year joined us at Georgetown Vineyards—a family owned business which sits high atop a scenic ridge overlooking the city of Cambridge. It is surrounded by five acres of vineyards and features brick oven pizza. What a treat as we thanked God for nature and for our many generous benefactors including John Villemure.

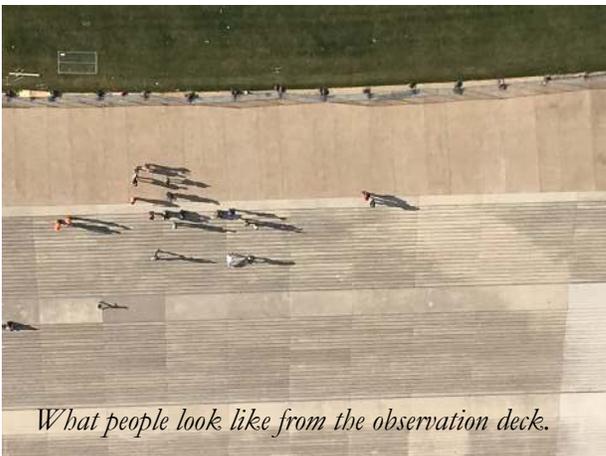
Submitted by Sister Sharon Paul



Visit to the Gateway Arch

Sister Patricia Sevick and Sister Sue Ann Hall visited the Gateway Arch and the Old Cathedral in St. Louis, Missouri with Sister Myra Jean Sweigart who was there on visitation Monday, November 11. The two sites are next to each other in downtown St. Louis.

The ride up the arch takes four minutes on a Tram—a closed cylinder seating five tightly. If you want to watch you can see through the door all the inner workings of the Arch on the ride up. At the top is an observation deck you can walk out onto and look out the many windows on both sides.



What people look like from the observation deck.

We spent about 40 minutes looking around and taking pictures. The ride down was three minutes. We were a little tense as our bodies tightened up and ached a bit the next day but we really enjoyed it.

Submitted by Sister Sue Ann Hall



Thanksgiving dinner at San Xavier, Tucson, included the Franciscan Friars, Sisters and Sister Mary Ann Spanjer's, mother.



The Sisters at Immaculate Conception Convent in Yuma, Arizona welcomed Bishop Edward Weisenburger! Sisters l to r: Mary Beth Kornely, Alexandra Bettinardi, Charleen Acker, Hannah Jobnebeck, Ann Mary Hart, and Janet Rose.



Sister Louise Hembrecht and Sister Elaine Turba were among those participating in the November Blood Drive at Silver Lake College. Photos by Suzanne Weiss, SLC



Sister Joy Rose sorts canned goods while Sister Elizabeth Ann Miller prepares pasta and rice for distribution to the needy of Cuming County, Nebraska.

Pinecrest Historical Village Church Decorated for Christmas



As a Pinecrest Historical Village volunteer, Sister Caritas Strodthoff enlisted help from our novices, Sisters Colleen Demro, Sister Clare Rose Oswald, Sister Mary Teresa Bettag, and Sister Cecelia Joy Kugel, along with Sister Mariadele Jacobs and Sister Francis Mason, to once again trim the historic Niles Church built in 1896.

On a bright, sunshine-filled morning, the church was transformed into a Christmas delight. Sister Clare Rose and Sister Mary Teresa hung garlands

of green from window to window and then added red berries. Sister Cecelia Joy made hanging swags of greens with red bows for the two front doors while Sister Mary Teresa hung garland over the door entry. Sister Frances and Sister Colleen placed the old wood manger on the main altar and adding all the Nativity figures.

Sister Mariadele wrapped greens filled with pinecones and red berries around the ambo and baptismal font. *Submitted by Sister Caritas Strodthoff*