

Communigram

Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity

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Four Sisters Celebrate 75 yrs of Vowed Life

Manitowoc, Wisconsin—Sister Carol Diederich, Sister Cabrini Schmidt, Sister Daniel Wolf, and Sister Malachy Donnelly celebrated their diamond jubilee of vowed commitment with a Eucharistic celebration at 2 pm on Sunday, April 30th. Members of the Community and invited guests joined the Sisters in thanking their Beloved Spouse for His many gifts and graces over these 75 years.

In her comments at the special jubilee breakfast, Sister Natalie Binversie referred to the words of the entrance antiphon for today's Mass: “. . .we begin with this Psalm phrase, “Let all the earth cry out to God with joy; praise the glory of His name; proclaim His glorious praise, Alleluia!” (Psalm 65:1-2) This is what we celebrate today! We thank God for the witness of the commitment of your life, vowed to God in service of His Church, as a Franciscan Sister of Christian Charity.”

Special interest stories surfaced throughout the day as guest arrived eager to share treasured memories of how a particular jubilarian played a unique role in their lives. Three of Sister Daniel's guests were brothers she had at Guardian Angel Boarding School (1950-1953) in Oneida, Wisconsin. Earlier in the week Sister Carol received a beautiful planter from three men she mentored as young teachers while she served at Rosecrans High School (1967-1980) in Zanesville, Ohio.

BISHOP KICANAS CELEBRATES 50 YRS OF PRIESTHOOD



Sister Carol Seidl with Bishop Kicanas

On April 25 some of our Sisters from Tucson, Sierra Vista, and Casa Grande joined the Diocese of Tucson and the local Tucson community in the celebration of Bishop Gerald Kicanas' 50 years of priesthood. The jubilee observance began with Mass at St. Augustine Cathedral, attended by

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Observing Earth Day to Clean Up

Manitowoc, Wisconsin—A number of Sisters supported Saturday's April 22, Earth Day by caring for "God's creation" on the property around the Motherhouse.

St. Francis, in his beautiful Canticle of the Creatures, praises God, Brother Sun, Sister Moon, Brother Wind, and Sister Water. All created things are brother and sister to us. We need to care for them as God has called us to do.



Earth Day energies were spent on beautifying the Motherhouse properties. Sister Katherine Warning and Silver Lake student Megan worked on the ravine on Alverno Road.



Sister Elaine Turba and Sister Caritas Strodthoff also helped by descending to the depths collecting fallen debris.

Sister Theresa Feldkamp canvassed St. Joseph Woods. Sister Mariadele Jacobs walked the cemeteries. Responsible for pulling out garbage from around the Stations on the eastern side of the Motherhouse woods, Sister Charles Ann took time to rake this area.



Sister Caritas said "It felt good to make the woods a place of beauty once again and safety for creatures that live there." The fruit trees showed their gratitude by showing signs of blooming.



Let us pray for the deceased



**SISTER MARY JOSEPHINE
SCHMITT**

Born: November 28, 1923
Died at Holy Family Convent
April 24, 2017

Religious Profession of Vows
August 15, 1941

SLC Symposium 2017

Two of our postulants were among the students giving presentations during the 2017 SLC Symposium, April 27.



Students from the Historical Perspectives of Vikings course discussed their modern interpretation projects. Each student gave a short synopsis of his or her interpretation of topics such as weapons, laws, alcohol, SpongeBob, shoes, opera, jewelry, woodwork, games, Thor and Loki. Tricia Oswald, showed her wood carving of a Viking ax with its intricate detailed design.



Megan Kugel chose the topic, Gaze Upon Christ: St. Clare of Assisi. Hers was an interactive presentation centering on St. Clare of Assisi and her spiritual relationship with St. Francis of Assisi. "Three Ways to Gaze," adapted from Clare's virtuous life and writings, were shared to inspire people to gaze upon Christ through prayer and daily living.

Sister Receives Lifetime Service Award

Zanesville, Ohio—Sister Bernadette Selinsky received the city's lifetime service award. Eight women were recognized in 8 different categories: healthcare, business, etc.

The award Sister Bernadette received is not given out every year. It is the most prestigious of all the awards. It is not in a specific category, but an overall caring, compassionate involvement in the community of Zanesville. It is truly someone who goes above and beyond the call of duty.

Sister Bernadette had this to say about the special honor: "It is very humbling for me to accept this award because I don't feel I deserve it, and so many other people de-



serve it but will never get an award. People tell me: 'But you have touched so many people's lives in such a positive way. That's worth celebrating.' I will accept it with gratitude to God, my family, my religious community and my friends, all of whom have helped me grow to be the woman religious that I am."

Sister Bernadette grew up in Green Bay, Wisconsin. She celebrates her 50th anniversary of profession as a Franciscan Sister this year. She began her professional life as a music teacher in four states, in eight different Catholic parishes and has served for 21 years as a chaplain in Zanesville.

Road Trip to LSSU Newman Center



Michigan's Lake Superior State University students requested some time to just hang out with Sisters. We responded by taking a recent road trip to Sault Ste. Marie. We were warned by one of the students that it always snows some place on the journey north. Well, it didn't. We saw snow on the ground, but not in the air. Spring must soon be here.

Students desired to get a down to earth picture of Sisters. Play *Minute to Win It* and you couldn't help but see anyone in a new light! Sister Marsaia Kaster did well on a cookie



challenge. Postulant Megan Kugel was up to ping pong balls and spoon racing. Fast cup construction, moving small pieces of Cocoa Puffs with chopsticks, etc. brought whole-hearted cheering from everyone. We were all well-fortified with a student-prepared barbeque and Italian chicken meal to offer ourselves for the common good.

Campus Minister Danna Schmitter made arrangements with Chris and Larry Stan and Glorfy the beloved dog for our overnight accommodations. It was a home away from home.



Our stay was enhanced by a pilgrimage to Holy Name of Mary Church, the Pro Cathedral associated with Bishop Frederick Baraga. What a beautiful church! We were captivated by its ornate exterior design and beautiful stained glass. Also in town, St. Joseph Church's windows told the story of its patron. Given St. Joseph's recent patronal feast, it was a perfect find. This parish community is near the Newman Center whose own chapel is too small for the number of students that come to Sunday Eucharist. What a great problem to have!

By Sister Julie Ann Sheahan

A quality Catholic liberal arts education rooted in a strong Franciscan work ethic SLC Works carries on tradition and history of Silver Lake College

By Sister Lorita Gaffney, Executive Director of Mission Integration and Associate Professor of Biology.

Manitowoc, Wisconsin—Silver Lake College’s new Work College program, SLC Works, builds on a long Franciscan tradition of valuing work.



Sister Lorita Gaffney

When the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity established the forerunner of Silver Lake College in 1885, the Sisters all worked to keep the institution running. That included growing and harvesting crops and tending to livestock.

From the time it was founded in 1935 as a liberal arts college until recent years, Silver Lake College was

staffed and operated solely by the Franciscan Sisters, who not only taught classes, but also cooked, cleaned and maintained the campus.

Work is an important part of Catholic social teachings, which emphasize the dignity of work, the duties and responsibilities to one another and to society, and the idea that we are all equal in God’s eyes. As the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops phrased it, “Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God’s creation.”

The Work College model creates a sense of common purpose and forges Christian relationships as members of the college community serve one another.

Working and developing the skills and ethics associated with work are fundamental to the Franciscan tradition from its earliest beginnings.

St. Francis in his “Early Rule” and “Testament” said that all should work, not merely to avoid idleness or as an



example to others, but for the message such work gives socially. The Brothers worked for the inclusion of people in great need and for the just distribution of goods provided by God, wrote David Flood in his book, “The Daily Labor of the Early Franciscans.”

Though invited to roles of leadership, the early friars were advised that it was more important to “serve” and to be “subject to all” wherever they labored. The early Franciscans defined work as service; they were servants through whom the Spirit of God worked. The Brothers, as they worked with others, were able to raise up their co-workers, ennobling their efforts so as to experience dignity in their labors, Flood wrote.

With the college’s launch of SLC Works in the fall of 2016, it is most fitting to ascribe its significance to our Franciscan heritage. We are articulating a culture of collaboration, community, respect, and servant leadership that are foundational to our Franciscan and Catholic values. Incorporating such a culture gives SLC Works great potential for success. More importantly, it fulfills the college’s vision, which is “centered on educating the whole person,” and its mission of empowering students “through a quality education integrated with professional preparation.”

Submitted by Suzanne Weiss, SLC director of public relations

JUST Gospel!

By Sister Kathleen Murphy
Social Justice Commission

It is May, the month of Our Lady. Pope Francis has asked us to pray *that Christians in Africa, in imitation of the Merciful Jesus, may give prophetic witness to reconciliation, justice and peace.* There is such great devotion to Mary among the peoples of Africa and are these not hallmarks of our Mother in Heaven—reconciliation, justice, and peace?

An unofficial look at apparitions of Our Lady in Africa yields a total of 32 occurrences, some of which are approved and some which have not yet been proven. Yet, this survey indicates such a reverence for Mary. She is our perfect model of mercy, of witness. On the flip side of statistics, of the 53 nations of Africa 15 are embroiled in war and this does not account for the many tribal skirmishes and terrorist uprisings that plague the continent. It seems it is time for the Queen of Peace to come to the aid of her people.

Pope Francis said, “Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. She appears to us as a vessel filled to the brim with the memory of Jesus, as the Seat of Wisdom to whom we can have recourse to understand his teaching aright. Today Mary makes it possible for us to grasp the meaning of events which affect us personally, events which also affect our families, our countries and the entire world. Where philosophical reason and political negotiation cannot reach, there the power of faith,

which brings the grace of Christ’s Gospel, can reach, opening ever new pathways to reason and to negotiation.” So much war and strife mars the ancient beauty of the African continent. So much tribal history keep old wounds open and festering. Let us make our prayers heartfelt as we remember these many suffering peoples.

St. Francis longed to travel to the lands of Africa to evangelize, to preach the Good News. Here, in Egypt he met with the Sultan and tried to bring an end to the 5th Crusade with all its violence. In the encounter between them, both Francis and the Sultan were changed. When Francis finally left to return to Italy, the Sultan showered him with many gifts and treasures. Because he had no interest in worldly wealth, Francis refused them all, except one special gift: an ivory horn used by the muezzin to call the faithful to prayer. On his return, Francis used it to call people for prayer or for preaching.

Francis also shared with his community his new and deep respect for his Moslem brothers and sisters, breaking down the cycle of enmity and misunderstanding that fueled the Crusades. Francis was especially struck by the Moslem five times daily prayer, and the practice of prostrations in worship of God; his letters urged Christians to adopt a similar practice: To make prayer a part of everyday life, in effect to remem-



ber God in everything you do. So, as Franciscans, we are called to lend our prayers to the cause of peace, justice and evangelization.

With Pope Francis we pray, “Blessed are you, Mary, for you gave the Son of God to our world. But even more blessed are you for having believed in him. Full of faith, you conceived Jesus first in your heart and then in your womb, and thus became the Mother of all believers. Send us your blessing. Show us the face of Jesus your Son, who bestows upon the entire world mercy and peace.”

Community Service Assignment Benefits Sisters at St. Francis Convent



Manitowoc, Wisconsin—As part of one of their Silver Lake Collage courses, Sister Thi Nhu Le and Sister Tuyen Ngoc Le needed to do thirty hours of community service. The Sisters at St. Francis Convent were the beneficiaries of this assignment. Between March 13 and April 8, the two Sisters served in a variety of ways: carrying trays, cleaning all the library book shelves, doing activi-

ties with the Sisters, presenting an informative program, etc. Some of these are spotlighted in the pictures. Sister Thi and Sister Tuyen were delightful and very helpful. We enjoyed having them. The two Sisters were appreciative of the opportunity to interact with the Sisters at St. Francis Convent.

Submitted by Sister Mary Ann Feminella

Enjoy Annual Trip to Amish Country

Cambridge, Ohio—On Easter Monday the Sisters missioned at St. Benedict Convent took their annual trip to Amish Country—a gift from one of our generous benefactors. Following morning Mass at our parish began our Emmaus Trip. This time we spent the day in Sugar Creek & Walnut Creek. It was interesting to watch the process of candy making and packaging at the Chocolate Factory. We visited many shops and furniture stores. A delicious, homemade dinner was enjoyed at Der Dutchman where we met Mark Johnston & Vicky Smith Wetzels who recognized us as being the "Franciscan Sisters from Manitowoc." They shared many stories of their teachers over the years who taught at St. Nicholas and Bishop Rosecrans in Zanesville, Ohio. They recalled them by name: Sisters Vivian Geimer, Clarine Mergen, Mary (Mary Sebastian) Sulko, Janet (Sebastian) Tess, Eva Wissbaum, and many others.

When it was time for us to pay the bill the waitress said: "Your bill has been taken care of by someone."



Enjoying a spring day in Amish country are l to r: Sisters Anna Maar, Sharon Paul, Helen Marie Paul, Carol Juckem, and Carolee Vanness.

As we proceeded on our journey, we met Mark and Vicky at three other places—so more stories unfolded and then we asked them if they were our generous dinner benefactors—they were. It was truly an Emmaus Journey as we recalled the many dedicated Sisters that have gone before us, as well as our benefactors. God bless them all!

Submitted by Sister Sharon Paul



NaProTECHNOLOGY: Going International

Omaha, Nebraska—Eighty some physicians and practitioners from the U.S. and eight foreign countries descended on the city for the closing phase of their training conference in NaProTECHNOLOGY and its hub, the Creighton Model FertilityCare System. Quite honestly, the Sheraton Hotel felt like headquarters for the United Nations.

Pictured are the Polish and Slovakian physicians, OB/Gyns all, who tackled the material, presented in English in great stride. The total immersion classes kept participants

busy from 7:15 AM until the wee hours of the morning, depending on what projects and reports were due.

I was swept up into their refreshing enthusiasm and just marveled at their keen interest in the ethics presentations I gave. They were captivated by the topics at hand; I was captivated by their sincere desire to understand the moral dimensions of our brand of women's healthcare. So what was a very exhaustive week turned out to be, at the same time, equally restorative!

Submitted by Sister Renée Mirkes

The Tournament of Truth 1st Place Winners



First place winners pictured l to r: Kelly Goggin, Samantha Rush, Anna Wright, Josh Merva, Jacob Rush, and Sister Anna Maar.

Cambridge, Ohio—Seventh and eighth grade students from St. Benedict's School took 1st Place in "The Tournament of Truth" sponsored by the Steubenville Diocese. Sister Anna Maar was their religion teacher and coach. *Congratulations!*

Submitted by Sister Sharon Paul

Convent Tour for Kiel Catholic School Students

Manitowoc, Wisconsin—Sisters at Holy Family Convent recently welcomed grades 3-7 from Divine Savior Catholic School, Kiel, Wisconsin for one of the blended learning opportunities that the school's curriculum encourages.

Faculty member Linda Tibo reached out with this visit request. Sister Veronica Schad, who is familiar to the students because of monthly visits to area schools, was happy to organize the pilgrimage.

Desiring that the young people meet other Sisters, Sister Caritas Strodthoff, Sister Karen Suhr, and Sister Elaine Turba assisted with the tour groups around the



Motherhouse. Sister Maureen Bomaster and Sister Georgellen Vissers made the effort to catch up with Linda after once being faculty members together. The visit included Mass with the Sisters in St. Mary Chapel and lunch in the gym.

By Sister Julie Ann Sheahan



The students sent a thank you card to Sister Veronica. Someone certainly took the time to create an appropriate card. We were touched by their thoughtfulness.

Bishop Kicanas Celebrates 50 Yrs of Priesthood *Continued from p.1.*

large numbers of priests, deacons, vowed religious, and laity from the Diocese. Special guests also included clergy from many faith congregations as well as civic leaders. Attendance by seven brother bishops was led by Metropolitan Archbishop John Wester of Santa Fe. Archbishop Wester joined Bishop Kicanas' sister, Barbara, and Rabbi Thomas Louchheim of Tucson in speaking with great love, appreciation and respect for Bishop Kicanas. The many gifts that Bishop Kicanas brings to the Tucson Diocese and community and to the global Church were well expressed in the following words of those who know and have worked with him:

Fr. Sean Carroll, S.J., Director of the Kino Border Initiative: *Bishop Kicanas has shown me and teaches us what it means to be instruments of mercy, of that gift we have all been given by God.*

Kevin Courtney, Pima County and Southern Arizona



L to r: Rev. John Leech, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, and his wife Sarah Congdon Leech; Sister Ellen Pachmayer, OSF; Sister Esther Calderon, O.P.; Sister Carla Riach, OSF; Sister Consuelo Pacheco, SC; Sister Hyun-me Kim, SC and Sister Jeanne Bartholomeaux, SC, Diocese of Tucson Vicar for Vowed Religious.

Interfaith: *Bishop Kicanas is a consistent voice on behalf of the poor, immigrants, refugees and all those on the margins.*

Dr. Carolyn Woo, Past President of Catholic Relief Services, in traveling with him on behalf of CRS: *Always in his eyes was a gaze that shone with empathy, love, pain at their suffering, and the promise that God is present.*

Rabbi Thomas A. Louchheim: *I think of him as our modern-day Betzalel, who built the Tabernacle in the Sinai Desert. God said of him, "I have filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom and in understanding and in knowledge in every kind of work." This is descriptive of our blessed Bishop of Tucson. For his skill, understanding, and wisdom, we are most thankful.*

The Diocese of Tucson and all whom Bishop Kicanas' has touched in his 50 years as priest are richly blessed by this Servant Leader.

Submitted by Sister Leonette Kochan