

Communigram

Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity

Volume 52 Issue 2 February 2018



Reception of the Franciscan Insignia

On Monday, January 15, 2018, Sister Natalie Binversie, Community Director, presented Hilda Medina with the Tau cross as a symbol of her formal witness to all of being a Postulant in our Community of Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity.

Meet our Postulant Hilda

I was at a point of reevaluation. My life hadn't quite turned out the way that I had planned. I suppose I was trying to find where I belonged and figure out what I was to do with the rest of my life.

My name is Hilda Concepcion Medina. I grew up in Clovis, New Mexico but found my home in Midland, Texas and yet so much of the New Mexican spirit remains within me. Home for me is in more places than one. I have five siblings, but I am the only one to choose religious life. Currently I am the only practicing Catholic out of my parents and siblings. Even then, the Church has always called to me. I have been active in the communities that I have been a part of. Most recently I have been a member of the hospitality committee, Eucharistic ministry, and in a group called Young Fire. I was also a member of the A.C.T.S community. (Adoration, Community, Theology, Service)

Continued on page 6.



The 3rd Annual 5K Color Walk/Run for Vocations - January 6

Tucson, Arizona—Sister Leonette Kochan and Sister Mary Ann Spanjers had fun participating in the Diocese of Tucson 3rd Annual Color Walk/Run for Vocations. Over 300 people participated in the family friendly event open to all ages and fitness levels to help raise awareness as well as show support for discerners, seminarians, priests, and religious brothers and sisters in the Diocese.

The event culminated with an outdoor Mass celebrated by Bishop Gerald Kicanas.

First Year Novices Experience Mission Life and More

Sister Clare Rose Oswald, Sister Colleen Demro, and I (Sister Cecilia Joy Kugel) returned from our mission experiences the weekend of January 13th with letters/items to deliver and smiles on our faces. Sister Clare Rose returned to Wisconsin from the heat of Yuma, Arizona, while Sister Colleen fortunately arrived safely from the icy snowstorms of Zanesville, Ohio. My eleven hour road trip with Sister Thelma Wiese from West Point, Nebraska went incredibly smooth, though I now know what Sisters mean when they say Iowa seems to stretch on forever. After unpacking and settling back into the Novitiate routine, we got together to share our experiences.

What activities did you do/ ministries did you shadow while on mission?

SCD: I had the opportunity to shadow with a few of the chaplains at Genesis Hospital in Zanesville, Ohio. Sister Bernadette Selinsky and I visited patients and their families in the cancer center, and I was given the opportunity to sit in a session with inpatients at the behavioral health center. I attended a presentation on Pediatric Cardiac Sudden Death, presented by a Cardiologist from Ohio State University. Sister Maureen Anne Shepard took me under her wing for the new employee orientation, and I was able to interact with those that were in attendance. One afternoon, Sister Mary Ann Nugent and I assisted with families in the surgery waiting room.

SCJ: One of my highlights was being



Sister Cecilia Joy is pictured with Emma Stokeley, Communications Coordinator at Franciscan Care Services, West Point.

able to shadow the Communications Coordinator at Franciscan Care Services. It was a fun day of sharing stories, viewing each other's work, and shadowing a type of position God might be calling me to in the future.

SCR: I think I had a few highlights! One was going to the schools and talking to the kids. Another was being involved with the Sisters in their daily routines. I loved helping to cook and helping out in the classroom. I got to spend time with each Sister in their jobs such as teaching, working in an office, or even tutoring. Each Sister had an important job.

Describe "community life" based on your mission experience.

SCR: Honestly it felt like a family. We cooked (and they let me help), cleaned, went for walks, did a puzzle, and laughed a lot together. I loved

every minute of all of this just being there and living as they would. I loved praying together as well. We didn't have to go out to have a good time together.

SCJ: A lot of cooking and laughs. I enjoyed spending time with Sister Joy Rose, Sister Barbara Mathe, and Sister Elizabeth Ann Miller.

SCD: Each Sister brings her own gifts to the "community life", some like to play cards and read, others cook or help with chores. The Sisters in Zanesville like to play Jeopardy (TV) from their chairs in the living room. The Hallmark movies were a big hit too. Prayer and Mass were a part of our day, and we all shared in the recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours. We cleaned and packed items for the eventual move to a new living space.



Sister Colleen helps clean at Good Samaritan Convent, Zanesville, Ohio.

What were some memorable moments?

SCJ: It was a joy to share and listen to farming stories from Guardian Angels Central Catholic students and St. Joseph Retirement Community residents alike. I also liked sitting in on some of Sister Joy's meetings and

Novices Experience Mission Life (continued from p. 2)

in-services. Oh, and who could forget the cattle auction and volunteering at the movie theater!

SCD: I would have to say the 15 hour car ride to Ohio definitely made the headlines. I will never forget that day of travel. While in Ohio, Sister Bernadette took me on a tour of Zanesville, where she showed me the world famous “Y” Bridge. Tom’s was a lunch stop one of the days, I had a delicious sundae and shared in good conversation, while listening to the oldies on the jukebox.

Driving up one of the hilly side streets and not knowing what is on the other side, proved to be a new experience, especially since the streets were snow covered. The overnight in Cambridge, where we encountered an intruder of the inhuman kind. Thank goodness for Sister Helen Marie Paul!!

SCR: Trying to figure out a crossword puzzle with Sister Alexandra Bettinardi, going to the three schools and playing P.E. and basketball with the kids, and going to the classrooms and talking to all the students. When Sister Hannah Johnecheck told her kids that I was going back to Wisconsin, they all turned around and said “noooo”!!! I also enjoyed walking and talking with both Sister Hannah and Sister Janet Rose. The day Sister Mary Beth Kornely and I decided to grill hamburgers outside it decides to rain!! (We still grilled them though!!!) When Sister Ann Mary Hart and I tackled changing the sweeper bag, and observing both she and Sister Janet tutoring. All the



Sister Clare Rose enjoys oranges from the tree at Immaculate Conception Convent, Yuma Arizona.

talks with Sister Charlene Acker and going shopping with her and having some new spicy foods!

Finish the Sentence: My time on mission taught me _____

SCD: Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity are very much a respected presence in the communities in which they serve. There are so many people in need of spiritual, emotional, and socio-economic assistance.

SCJ: that I can cook. I just need to continue growing in confidence.

SCR: just how much we really are one big family!

How did you grow closer to Jesus/His call for you while on mission?

SCJ: I felt like Jesus was very present in West Point. I could see His smile in the students’ faces, feel His

warmth in the conversations with Franciscan Care Services staff, and hear His love in the Sisters’ voices as we ate, worked, and recreated together.

SCD: Jesus was the cancer patient, the newborn addicted to drugs, the patient seeking treatment for mental illness. I was deeply touched by those I met and appreciate the inner strength of those who face so much adversity.

Anything you’d like to say to the Sisters and readers viewing this article?

SCR: All the Sisters out in Yuma, Thank you!

SCD: I have a deep appreciation for all Sisters who are currently on mission or have been on a mission. Thank you for providing a non-judgmental and compassionate environment for those you have served. Thank you to Sister Bernadette, Sister Maureen Anne, and Sister Mary Ann, for serving the people of Zanesville, Ohio. Thank you for the mission experience!!

SCJ: I’m so grateful I was sent to West Point for my mission experience. I now have a better understanding of why Sisters who grew up in West Point are so friendly and sociable. If you are reading this article and you or someone you know is discerning religious life, please consider visiting our Sisters. The best adventure is the one Jesus sends you on.

By Sister Cecilia Joy Kugel

Sister Moderates a Session at International Congress in Rome

2017 marked the 800th anniversary of Giovanni Fidenza who, as a Friar, became renowned as Bonaventure of Bagnoregio. Franciscans committed to the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition celebrated this important anniversary in a variety of ways. The Pontifical Gregorian University, in collaboration with the Pontifical University Antonianum and the Pontifical University of St. Bonaventure sponsored a 3 day international congress in Rome (November 15 - 17, 2017) entitled *Deus Summe Cognoscibilis (God the Most Knowable of All Reality): The Relevance of St. Bonaventure's Theology*. Conference organizers brought together esteemed Bonaventurian scholars from Europe and the United States to demonstrate the relevance of Bonaventure's theology for today. A year out from the conference, Sister Marie Kolbe Zamora received an invitation to moderate one of the scheduled sessions entitled "Trinitarian Institution of the Sacraments." The panel for this session included Wayne Hellman, O.F.M. Conv. as the main presenter (who presented in English), a young theologian from the Antonianum (whose response to Wayne Hellman's paper was delivered in Spanish) and a theologian from the Gregorian (whose response was delivered in Italian).

Well before the conference, the work of moderating tasked Sister Marie Kolbe with mediating an online conversation (via email) between all three presenters to ensure that their texts complemented one another. In some cases, she suggested editions



Sister Marie Kolbe in the Church at the Antonianum after the closing Mass celebrating the feast of Elizabeth of Hungary.

to their papers in order to strengthen the "live" conversation in Rome. During the Congress, Sister Marie Kolbe 1) moderated the presentations to guarantee that there would be enough time at the end for a live debate with the audience and 2) moderated the live debate by directing questions (whether written or oral) to the appropriate panel member.

The days of the conference began at 9 a.m. and ended at 9 p.m.. The morning included 4 hours of panel presentations / debate, followed by a 2 hour lunch break. The afternoon recommenced with another 4 hours of panel presentations / debate followed by Mass and a late supper. Sister Marie Kolbe likened the experience to "being present to a living bibliography. All of the scholars whose work contributed to my own dissertation were making presentations and engaging in conversations

that were enlightening and even inspiring. This is the first time I have been able to listen to such Bonaventurian experts live. It was a real blessing." Thankfully a good number of Sister Marie Kolbe's colleagues from her time in Rome also participated in the conference, making it possible to continue what she calls "important pilgrimage conversations".

The work of moderating continues as she edits a number of the English language presentations, preparing them for the publication that will serve future scholars as a record for all of the contributions made at this Congress. "It was an honor to have been asked to contribute to this very important moment in Bonaventurian studies as well as to have been asked to contribute an article to the volume that will be published. I remain grateful for the investment that the community made in my education / formation that has made such contributions possible."

-- Sister Marie Kolbe Zamora



The Greenwood, Mississippi community held the 34th annual Martin Luther King March on Sunday, January 21. Following tradition, the Franciscan Friars and Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity join in to commemorate one of Dr. King's most effective tool – the peaceful march.

Submitted by Sister Annette Kurey

COMMUNIGRAM

JUST Gospel!

By Sister Kathleen Murphy
Social Justice Commission

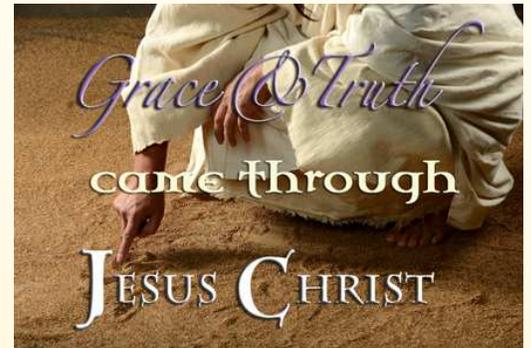
...*Spirit of truth, save us from our lies. Make us your own, now is the time...*
Tom Kendzia's lyrics again lead us to reflect on some themes for this month. Notice that the words plead to be saved from our own lies. We do not ask for protection from the deceits of others. What is more insidious than our own deceptions and corruption of the truth? If we are truly to belong to God, we need to make His truth our own and be set free from lies.

In a similar vein, Pope Francis asks us to pray, *That those who have material, political or spiritual power may resist any lure of corruption.* The word *corrupt* comes from Latin and means to be broken apart. When we break the truth apart and appropriate only what suits us, when we break the truth into parts small enough for our personal comfort, when we break the truth apart and reorder its parts to make it more palatable we are guilty of corruption. Our power level may not be great, but we all have power in some measure and thus we need to examine our use of that influence and our faithfulness

to the truth given us.

Once again Father Federico Lombardi has something to say to us on this topic. As he reflects on his experiences with Pope Benedict XVI when he served as papal spokesman, he writes, "It was necessary to recognize the truth even when it was extremely painful, to go deep into the truth before God and people. To not be worried about the image first or concerned about saving face. Benedict has always insisted on the primacy of truth and the search for truth." We must be aware of our call to be speakers of the truth, but also as ones called to pray for those in positions of power that they might have the strength of character and the dignity given them by God to speak the truth and to act with integrity.

Personally, we are often held in esteem due to our vocation in the Church. Our Core Value statement reminds us of the responsibility we have to truth as it says, *In joyful acceptance of poverty, we, as vowed women*



<http://forhisglorytexas.com/videos/grace-truth-came-jesus-christ/>

religious, affirm the need to honestly evaluate how we use material goods so as to become a 'disturbing presence' in our materialistic culture. This statement has many applications, but for our purposes here, it is good to consider the aspect of honest and truthful evaluation of our use of material goods. This is a part of our life that is evident to those who live and work with and among us. If we are not honest in our living of poverty, then the rest of our living, speaking, witnessing and evangelizing can be called into question. Let us use the power given us by the privilege of our calling in an honest and forthcoming way. Truth must characterize our living for, *now is the time!*

Regular Masses Scheduled for Our Lady of Guadalupe Convent



St. Louis, Missouri—Since January 12, 2018 we have Adoration and Mass on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month to counteract what is going on across the street from us at Planned Parenthood. With the help of the parishes throughout the Archdiocese and their respect life groups, along with their pastors and associate pastor this has become a reality. January 12th's group was from the Respect Life Apostolate of the Archdiocese of St. Louis. Karen Nolkemper (left) is the coordinator. The priest is Father Anthony Wieck S.J. from the retreat center, Sister Pat Sevcik, a young man from Coalition for Life, and Mariol.

Submitted by Sister Sue Ann Hall

Meet Our Postulant Hilda *Continued from page 1.*

When I received my “call” I was sitting in a pew next to my cousin during a Sunday Mass. There was no voice but rather a deep sense of knowing. In that moment everything past, present, and future made sense. God had given me an answer to a question that I wasn’t aware I was asking. Initially I cried and refused, so much of me didn’t want to stop being selfish. So much of me didn’t want to leave my comfort zone. As I resisted, my calling grew stronger. God was very straight forward in what he was asking of me. Every homily from then on out, until I agreed, was about saying yes to God and not waiting. A seize the day type of memo. So much of what Fr. David Herrera spoke about, changed my perspective so greatly. Some things he said that stuck in my mind are: “Make what is important to God important to you.” “Fall in love with the Eucharist and everything will fall into place.” “In the moment you were baptized, God gently took you into his arms and as a new and adoring parent would say, He said, ‘Oh, the plans I have for you.’”

Luke 17:10 “So when you have done all that you have been commanded say, “we are unprofitable servants, we have done what we were obliged to do.”

This verse changed my life. It quickly pulled things into perspective for me. Saying yes to God was completely my choice but to be a servant to God would require me to do all that he asks. In this realization, I



Hilda Medina

knew I was obliged to start actively discerning. Once I started my discernment, it was quickly the hardest and greatest thing that I had ever done. Fr. Felix Archibong was a tremendous aid in helping me through my first months of discernment. Delving into my calling has been like learning a secret that my soul had always known. I have learned so much about myself, including how as a small child I was very adamant about becoming a Sister. Everything has truly blossomed in a beautiful way.

Joining the wonderful Community of the Franciscan Sisters of Chris-

L to R: Sister Clare Rose Oswald and Sister Mariella Erdmann provided an opportunity for Sister Tuyen, Sister Luyen, and Hilda (all from warmer climates) to play on the frozen lake and build a snowman.



tian Charity was not a decision that I made on my own. After my first visit, I went through a difficult time in which I tried to take control of my discernment. As I am sure you all know the success rate in taking matters into your own hands is very low. I began to pray that God would lead me to where I need to be because without Him, I am capable of nothing. As an answer, he sent me Saint Francis of Assisi. I continued to pray because I had to be sure that this answer was from God and not from me. After a month of prayer and seeking, I asked to visit again. So much peace came from scheduling another visit. During my second visit, everything came with such ease. There was no struggle or resistance. When I applied and upon my arrival, everything has just seemed to fall into place. Home, peace, and family have all been received from this Community. As I continue forward, I keep an open heart, mind, and spirit so God can guide me and go before me so that any success and glory will be in Him.

— *Hilda Medina*



arrival there was a beautiful rose ceremony remembering all the lives lost through abortions for each year since 1973.

By Sister Mary Ann Spanjers

Washington D.C. March for Life

Sisters March for Life in Three Locations

Pictured above l to r: Sister Mary Frances Maher, Sister Jean Anne Moser, Hilda Medina (our Postulant), Sister Mary Teresa Bettag, Sister Theresa Feldkamp, Sister Linda Brandes, and Sister Julie Ann Sheahan took part in the Chicago March for Life.



Chicago March for Life

On Sunday, January 14, 2018 seven Sisters from Holy Family Convent boarded one of two buses from Green Bay across from Perkins Restaurant at 8:45 a.m. for the trip to the Chicago March for Life. Two buses from Green Bay plus five others from Wisconsin, totaling close to 300 people, young and old, traveled to Federal Plaza in Chicago to march for life. We prayed the rosary on the way down, ate our lunch on the bus and also prayed the Angelus shortly after noon. It was a blustery 25 degrees in Chicago but we were dressed for the occasion. Talks lasted about 45 minutes before the 1.25 mile walk began. The crowd was estimated at around 10,000, so we were in good company. We prayed the Chaplet of Divine Mercy as we left Chicago. It began to snow but we stopped for supper and were home by 8:00 p.m. We agreed that it was a wonderful experience and being able to visit with others, especially families and young people was rewarding.

We were also grateful to our benefactors and the Knights of Columbus who sponsored the buses.

By Sister Mary Frances Maher

Tucson March for Life



The Tucson Diocese March For Life began with a moving Eucharistic Liturgy celebrated by our Bishop Edward Weisenburger along with a number of priest concelebrants. Students from San Miguel and other Catholic high schools participated in the liturgy prepared by Sister Leonette Kochan.

Following the liturgy around 1600 people participated in the walk to the Catholic Cemetery, 4.5 miles. Upon

Sister Elizabeth Ann Miller and Sister Barbara Mathe traveled by bus for 26 hours with young people from Guardian Angels Central Catholic High School, West Point, NE to the Washington D.C. March for Life.

Our first full day in Washington, DC included a tour of the Capitol in the morning, Mass with Archbishop Lucas at St. Matthew's Basilica in the afternoon, and the "Life Is Very Good" concert with Eucharistic Adoration that evening. Another full day followed!



Above a photo of five bus loads of pilgrims from Omaha Archdiocese outside St. Matthew's Basilica.

By Sister Elizabeth Ann Miller

Photo Stories



UW Platteville students volunteered between semesters at St. Francis Mission, Greenwood, Mississippi ... here's the landscaping crew!



The girls from the confirmation class in Yuma, Arizona visited the Sisters at Immaculate Conception Convent to learn a little bit about our life. Time for prayer, a tour, videos, questions, a snack, and vocation materials hopefully blessed their time with us.
Submitted by Sister Mary Beth Kornely



Greenwood, Mississippi—As our country marks the anniversary of the passage of Roe vs. Wade, Sister Kathleen Murphy's St. Francis School Kindergarten children began their week long set of lessons on respect for life. By Sister Annette Kurey

LET US PRAY FOR THE DECEASED



SISTER EUGENIA VANDE HEY

June 5, 1929

January 25, 2018

Religious Profession of vows:

June 14, 1947