

Communigram

Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity

Volume 52 Issue 8 October 2018



Tau Crosses Received on a Significant Date

On September 8, 2018, Sister Natalie Binversie, Community Director, presented Lindsay Hoge and Yazmin Martinez Lopez with the Tau cross as a symbol of their formal witness to all of being a Postulant in our Community of Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity.

It was a significant day not just because our two postulants received their insignias but they received them on the day, 151 years ago that the Rosa Wahl, Mary Ann Graf, and Josepha Thoenie joined Teresa Gramlich in Clarks Mills and thus planted the initial roots of our formation and Community. We rejoice in beginnings!

Meet Our Postulants

Hello Everyone! It is a joy to be here at Holy Family Convent. My name is **Yazmin Martinez Lopez**. I am originally from Mexico. My family and I came to live in

the United States in 2008. We have been living in North Carolina for the past ten years. I have been discerning religious life for a long time but most seriously around two years ago. I contacted different Communities and I even went on a retreat in Mexico. But there was a time when I forgot about the idea of becoming a Sister. Then suddenly a friend from my home parish encouraged me to keep looking.

One day at daily Mass, the gospel was about the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). The priest, Monsignor Wall, talked about how this gospel had moved a man to work in Africa for the poor because he thought Africa was more like Lazarus. That just hit me at that moment. After I received the Eucharist I prayed to Je-



Meet Our Postulants

sus to show me a convent where I would be welcomed soon. Specifically, I asked Jesus to help me find it during that month, which was the month of March. I wanted it to be Franciscan because I knew that Franciscans are close to the poor. That day I looked at the website, Institute for Religious life, and I found out that the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Chirality had a retreat coming up in March. I signed up and Sister Julie Ann contacted me. I came to the retreat and I loved it. Everyone was so welcoming.



Postulant Yazmin

After a week I wrote to Sister Julie Ann to ask for the application. So I applied, and it took me a month to get all the paperwork ready. I was so happy to hear that I was accepted. All my family and friends were so happy for me. My friends at church and priests supported me along the way. My family brought me to the Motherhouse the 18th of August. It was hard to see them leave the day after. However, I am really thankful to be here. I have a sense of peace and joy. During the time I have been here I have seen that God has provided me with everything I needed. I am looking forward to serving God, the Community, and the Church.

Hi, my name is **Lindsay Hoge**. I came to Holy Family Convent from Watertown, South Dakota. I grew up in northern Arizona and I was born in Flagstaff, but I moved to South Dakota about 12 years ago. I'm 35 years old and I am very happy to be here. My mother and grandmother still live in Prescott, Arizona. I don't have any other family, but I have some great friends in South Dakota that are like an extended family to me. Before coming here, I was attending Mount Marty College in Watertown majoring in psychology and also took care of a family of five kids nearly full time. I came to know them through the Watertown school district where I worked with their middle son who has autism and type 1 diabetes. I worked with him as a paraprofessional for four years. Then I went back to school and was able to

do afterschool care and summer care for the whole family until I came here.

I visited Holy Family Convent for the third time this March and was accepted into the postulancy on July 25. It was a whirlwind after that trying to sell my house and find a good home for my dog, Oliver. Eventually

Oliver found a home with one of his cousins, and he is in heaven living with a buddy that has a huge backyard. I am still working on selling my house, but hopefully that will be wrapped up soon. My days so far have been filled with learning about religious life as lived as a postulant, school work from Silver Lake College, and getting to know everyone. I am slowly getting to know the layout of this building. I still get lost once in a while though. I would like to thank everyone for being so welcoming and kind to me during my time so far here. I am looking forward to getting to know all of you more and growing in many different ways on this journey! Coming here has been a fulfillment of a lot of hope and prayers over many years for me.



Postulant Lindsay



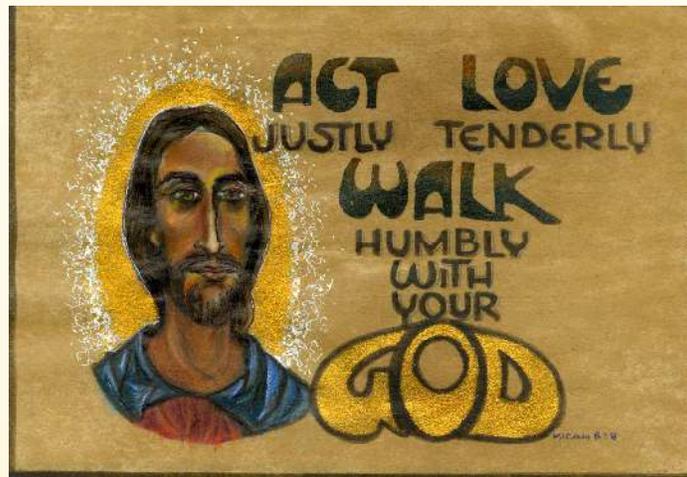
L to r: Sisters Jacqueline Spaniola, Carolee Vanness, and Marcelyn Gervais missioned to Chassell, Michigan made a recent trip to the Bishop Frederick Baraga - Shrine of the Snowshoe Priest on a bluff overlooking Keweenaw Bay.

JUST Gospel!

By Sister Kathleen Murphy
Social Justice Commission

This month we once again try to link the thoughts in Pope Francis' *Gaudete et Exsultate* with his intention for the month. That intention has special significance for us as religious. It states, "That consecrated religious men and women may bestir themselves, and be present among the poor, the marginalized, and those who have no voice."

There are a couple of concepts that stand out in this intention. First, the word *bestir*. The verb implies that we need to be moved, to be stirred out of complacency. We are confronted by our Pope with his perception that we may be collectively in the wrong place at this juncture of history. That may mean that we are physically living and ministering in areas where we are not present among the poor or it may mean that we are not mentally and/or physically sharing with the lot of those who are marginalized or who have no voice. There are many needs in the Church and all of God's children need the presence and witness of religious. However, Pope Francis is giving a preference to the poor. If we are not in a position to pack up and *bestir* ourselves to a poor place, to a home with the marginalized or to become a voice for the voiceless, then we can still *bestir* our hearts to pray powerfully for these little ones in need. We must *bestir*



ourselves to make the effort to be informed about the plight and poverty of those on the edges of society.

In *Gaudete et Exsultate* Pope Francis writes, "Although Jesus' words (in the Beatitudes) may strike us as poetic, they clearly run counter to the way things are usually done in our world. Even if we find Jesus' message attractive, the world pushes us towards another way of living. We can only practice the Beatitudes if the Holy Spirit fills us with his power and frees us from our weakness, our selfishness, our complacency and our pride." These challenging, yet disturbing words don't allow us to simply *think about* the plight of those mired in poverty. We are to practice holiness by changing our way of living.

Along those same lines we note in this month's intention that Pope Francis asks us to *be present* among the poor. He doesn't simply ask us to remember the poor, to consider the poor, or even to fight for the

poor or to stand up for the poor. He distinctly asks us to *be present among* them. This even differs from being present to the poor. We must be among them and we must be fully present there. For many of us this seems impossible.

How are we present among the persons of the

Trinity? Do we not enter their Presence through prayer and contemplation, through study and exploration? We can be present to many distant realities through the power of our mind and spirit, if not by the strength of our limbs or the validity of our passport. When we see one who is poorly dressed or unattractive in some way at a doctor's office or in a store, do we shy away, ignore or show disapproval? A kind word or even a smile can make us present to such a one in a holy way. When we have a choice to read a novel or an informative article on some aspect of the existence of the voiceless, what do we choose? When we have an excess of possessions, do we just throw them away or take the trouble to find a way to share? Do we share things that are not worthy of the dignity of the poor?

As we consider ways we can live out this challenge of Pope Francis, we may benefit from repeating his words from *Gaudete et Exsultate*, "Being poor of heart: that is holiness."

Sisters Celebrate at a Kermes, a Mexican Festival



Greenwood, Mississippi—The Latino community of St. Francis Parish sponsored a “Kermes” on September 15 as a fundraising event to benefit St. Francis Parish. A “Kermes” is a Mexican festival, this one being very family-oriented and placed right in front of the Sisters’ Convent!

This particular celebration coincided with Mexican Independence Day (September 15-16). It was titled “A Mexican Evening”. The evening featured delicious traditional foods.

Ricos Elotes was made as we ordered. It is found at every corner food store in Mexico. The cooked corn has a stick “handle” inserted and is then brushed with mayo and a sauce (spicy or not!) and sprinkled with Mexican cheese. We all attest it was delicious!

Sisters on the Move in Sierra Vista

Sister Joellen Kohlmann shares on the move to St. Andrew Convent, Sierra Vista, Arizona.

It has been quite the month getting ready to move into the new fixed up Convent here in Sierra Vista. The parish purchased a four-bedroom house across the street and began fixing it up while we were away this summer. When we returned the crew was just beginning on the new roof.

Monday, Sep. 17th was moving day and we were so busy no one thought of taking pictures...sorry. The local Knights of Columbus moving crew arrived just before 8:00 am and by 10:30 am all of our things and boxes were in the new Convent! Wonderful, but what chaos! And then un-packing began.

After six hours Sister Doris Jurgen-son and Sister Joellen took a few minutes to have lunch amid the boxes etc. And we were still smiling. The tech from Cox was busy connecting us and by 4 pm we had phone, internet and TV...yeah... but really no time to watch.

Monday evening the Secular Fran-

ciscans brought dinner – spaghetti, breadsticks, lettuce salad, waldorf salad, water-melon, cookies and pie! What a feast. Of course we did manage to put stuff away so we had a table to sit around, And oops...forgot pictures again...but then we could barely function! Bed was welcomed and greatly enjoyed.



Tuesday morning we enjoyed a short walk across the street to Mass and when we returned we enjoyed coffee, news, and conversation on our patio.



Here is a view of our back patio and Arizona room which faces west to the mountains and sunset.

The dedication of St. Andrew Convent is on Sunday, October 7, 2018. Immediately following the Mass there will be a Procession of the Blessed Sacrament from the Divine Mercy Chapel to the convent. A light lunch will follow in Madonna Hall.

Sharing News from Our Newest Mission

Two months have passed since Sister Rochelle Kerkhof and Sister Monica Mary DeQuardo arrived in Imperial, Nebraska, and the Grant Deanery. Our friends and Sisters-in-Community have written asking what our lives are like serving in the everyday roles assigned to us by the four Pastors of the nine Parishes—in six Counties of western Nebraska. We are approximately twenty-five miles from Colorado and a forty-five minute drive from Kansas.



Southwestern Nebraska differs greatly in appearance from eastern Nebraska, e.g. West Point, where our Sisters have served for more than 125 years—and where the primary occupation is on the agricultural growing of corn, wheat, and soy beans—along with the raising of some cattle and hogs. The terrain of western Nebraska is terraced landscapes and beautiful, small canyon-creations formed from the wind and by the more extreme weather conditions. Most of the farming is given to open-pasture ranching and feed-lot productions. The air, at this time of year, is crisp, dry, and clear.

Our lovely small Convent Home called St. Clare of Assisi Convent is located at 640 Wellington Street. Immediately after settling in, Sister Rochelle and Sister Monica Mary had to establish themselves via their respective applications for Nebraska Drivers' Licenses, bank verifications, and voting registration. We have been warmly welcomed within our town of 2,000 people and at St. Patrick Parish located kitty-corner across from the Convent.



Sister Rochelle's focus is that of Youth Ministry in all the Parishes. In the Grant Deanery this includes the students on the junior and senior high school level: CYO (Catholic Youth Organization). Besides catechetical instruction, youth retreats (Quest and TEC), Diocesan Camps for youth leadership, and participation in the Annual National Right to Life Walk broaden her scope of Evangelization. In collaboration with Father Matthew Eickhoff, Father Thomas Bush, and Father Chris Miller—Sister Rochelle coordinates these youth activities, keeping the young people involved, acquainted with one another, and aware of the importance of their Catholic faith and the value of Church in their lives. Travel is extensive, as one can imagine—averaging between 20-40-60 miles one-way between Parishes. This is especially challenging in the late evening and early morning hours when sharing the highway with the deer and other critters is a normal expectation. (The appended photo is of Curt Tomasevicz, a young man from Shelby, Nebraska, who was a member of the USA National Bobsled-ding Team at the 2010 and 2014 Olympics and, on October 9th, was a speaker at the Youth Gathering in Imperial. Curt is a Catechist at North American Martyrs Religious Education Program in Lincoln.)

Sister Monica Mary is the Parish Minister for the people of St. Patrick Church serving as assistant to Father Gilde, as needed and requested; visiting the



Sister Rochelle and Sister Monica Mary posed with Curt Tomasevicz.

home-bound and nursing home residents; taking part in the weekly parish bible-study; preparing and typing the weekly parish bulletin; and teaching religious education at all lower-grade and high school levels according to the schedule outlined by the Religious Education Coordinator. Once during each semester, Sister Monica Mary will attend a weekend Mass at the various out-lying parishes providing 'Sister Presence' when Sister Rochelle is in another part of the Deanery.

Living and serving in Imperial we follow Mountain Time; this is true, also, for the towns of Wauneta, Benkelman, Grant, and Elsie. However, when traveling to Wallace, Palisade, Stratton, and Trenton we cross over into Central Time! So, if there is a Mass scheduled in Trenton at 7:00am Sister Rochelle and/or Sister Monica Mary would need to leave at 4:45am to be on time for the occasion. (Remember about the deer and the night-time prowling critters—so speed must be much slower than usual!) When shopping in McCook, Nebraska located in Central Time—Sister Monica Mary usually leaves at 10:30am (MT) and travels the 65 mile distance, arriving at Walmart about 12:30pm (CT). But there is sufficient time to prepare supper arriving home an hour earlier at the end of the journey. One must constantly think and adapt accordingly. The two of us share Morning and Evening Prayer, home-

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Enjoying Time Together



Manitowoc, Wisconsin—Community Days for Saint Francis Convent involved meetings Friday, August 24 and Saturday, August 25 to establish our Spirit for this new mission year. On Sunday, August 26, we celebrated with a special meal and then some Sisters traveled to Green Bay for the Diocesan Jubilee Mass. Four of our Sisters were among the 60th Jubilarians—Sister Andrene Flasch, Sister Jolynn Kohlbeck, Sister Ritarose Stahl, and Sister Verone Leeman.

Labor Day weekend was set aside for our Community FUN Days. On Saturday, September 1, four Sisters went to Neshota Park for the *Kites over Michigan* event. Sister Georgellen Vissers, Sister Mary Ann Tupy, Sister Mary Lou Loonsfoot, and Sister Verna Osterhout watched people perform kite ballet with their kites, stood in awe at the huge kites flying in the wind and enjoyed the food from the different food stands.

Thirty of the Sisters traveled to different Ice Cream shops for an afternoon treat on Sunday, September 2. Culver's, Menchie's, and Cedar Crest (the Cow) enjoyed our business.

Then on Monday, September 3, the house gathered for board and card games. Sister Georgellen provided in-door S'mores for those wanting to satisfy their sweet tooth.

By Sister Mary Ann Tupy



75 Years of Enriching Lives

Kaukauna, Wisconsin—St. Paul Elder Services, officially founded on September 13, 1943, is celebrating its 75th Anniversary this year.

Sondra Norder, CEO, writes: "Throughout the past 75 years, thanks to the vision, wisdom, and tenacity of our Sponsor, the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity, we as lay associates have been fortunate enough to use the gifts that God has given us to help the Sisters answer the call to serve this community. It hasn't been an easy journey by any means, as the pressures we face with regulation, reimbursement, and workforce, are real, and can break even the most dedicated among us. Yet, here we are, at the 75 year mark, planning for continued growth and expansion, in a very real way as we prepare to take McCormick Assisted Living under our wing. Our success is attributable to a few things, but most importantly, it is because of our steadfast commitment to our mission of enriching the lives of those who need us. And over the last 75 years, we have enriched literally countless lives."



Our Sisters ministering at St. Paul Elder Services 1 to r: Sister Charleen Acker, Sister Juden Lang, and Sister Delores Wisnicky.

News Updates from the Sisters in St. Louis



Sister Delores Vogt and Sister Sue Ann Hall enjoyed a Community Day at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, Illinois on Sept. 3. The two hundred beautifully landscaped acres have numerous prayerful devotional sites. A newly married couple shared their story with us at the Lourdes Grotto.

Our day also included a stop at Our Lady of Mercy Monastery in Belleville where Sister Anne Marie Lom will lead a discernment day on active and contemplative Franciscan Life on Saturday, October 13.

What a surprise to find our tongues burning when we thought we were eating our favorite ice cream from Turkey Hill Dairy! So we read the label more closely. It said, "Caramel HOT Chocolate", a hot spicy caramel swirl and mini chocolate chips in milk chocolate ice cream. The fine print of ingredients included **red pepper**. It's a Limited Edition so visit soon if you wish to have some.



Sister Sue Ann and Sister Delores were guests at the annual Night for Life Gala celebrating the 47th Anniversary of Birthright Counseling. Would you believe that the centerpieces on the tables were made with new-born diapers which in turn will be given to mothers with infants? Over five hundred people, including Archbishop Robert Carlson, attended the Gala for Birthright Counseling which provided free professional counseling as well as practical assistance to mothers facing untimely pregnancy.



On Sunday, September 16, Archbishop Robert Carlson offered the Blue Mass, an annual liturgy offered for those serving as emergency responders. It was a way for the local community to show gratitude to emergency responders as well as those who have died in the line of duty. Two fire trucks displayed the American flag during Mass. At the end of the ten o'clock Mass, the first responders received a Crucifix from Archbishop Robert Carlson.



What do the Sisters in Arizona do on Labor Day—gather together in Casa Grande from Yuma and Tucson! We had such fun catching up with each other, enjoying great food, and swimming—all in Jesus' name!



News from Imperial Continued from page 5.

duties, and cooking arrangements as was decided during our Community Days at the beginning of fall, along with participating at daily Mass at St. Patrick Church. Once a week, Mass (and Rosary) is at the local Nursing Home, for the convenience of the Manor Residents and those living at the Imperial Estates Retirement Home.

It is a pleasure and privilege to be serving the People of God in the Grant Deanery of the Diocese of Lincoln! If you come to Nebraska please feel free to visit us!

Submitted by Sister Monica Mary DeQuardo



Sisters (l to r): Helen Marie Paul, Jan Villemure, Carol Juckem, June Smith and Sharon Paul attended the Annual Open Arms Pregnancy Center Fundraising Banquet on September 20, 2018 at Pritchard Laughlin Civic Center, Cambridge, Ohio.

Two hundred people attended the Banquet. Christ Our Light Parish and parishioners sponsored several tables.

Submitted by Sister Sharon Paul

Spirit of the Rivers Dedication

Sister Mariella Erdmann received a special invitation from R.T. “Skip” Wallen for the dedication ceremony for the Spirit of the Rivers Monument which took place Sept. 16, 2018.

The bronze sculpture consists of a birch bark canoe and three human figures: a Man portaging a birch bark canoe from Lake Michigan, a Woman carrying their belongings and an Elder showing the way, literally and figuratively. Each figure is approximately ten-feet high, with the canoe reaching 20 feet in length. The birch bark canoe itself is at the center of focus as it is held aloft upon the shoulders of the person portaging. Its significance to the monument reflects its significance to the American Indians who crafted this beautiful light-weight vessel and used it to travel the waterways of the upper



*Sister Mariella, Skip Wallen, artist and Di-
onne Landgraf*

Great Lakes.

The Ceremony Dedication featured: The Menominee Boys and Girls Drumming Circle; A Native American Blessing by Earl Meshigaud, great- great Grandson of Chief Mishicot; Joseph Metzen and Carol Wergin, Co-Chairs Spirit of the Rivers Board of Directors; R.T. Wallen,



Sculptor of the Monument; David Bourgeois and MPSD student singing *Spirit of the Rivers*, an original song by David Bourgeois; Sara Klavas, Deputy Director of Wisconsin Department of Tourism; Cristina Danforth, President of Native American Finance Officers Association; Pete Honzik, singing his original song; Justin Nickels, mayor of Manitowoc; and Greg Buckley, City Manager of Two Rivers.

The sculpture is located at 4815 Memorial Drive, Two Rivers on the Lake Michigan shoreline between Manitowoc and Two Rivers.