

Sister Receives Recognition



Sister Laura Wolf was honored by the St Louis University School of Law on January 25, 2019 as being one of ten alumni inducted into the Order of the Fleur de Lis Hall of Fame. Dean William Johnson describes the Award in the following statement “As a Catholic, Jesuit university, SLU’s mission is the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity. Through their professional success and significant contributions to the profession and their communities, the honorees bring honor to both Saint Louis University and SLU LAW by demonstrating this mission and embodying the Jesuit spirit. This year’s class, like the classes before them, continues to set the standard for what it truly means to be women and men of service for and with others.”

Sister Laura was specifically honored for her work in healthcare. She was in the second class at SLU Law to simultaneously earn a Juris Doctorate and a Masters in Health Administration. Over the past 30+years she used the knowledge and skills learned at the University to create and operate the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity Sponsored Ministries, Inc. The introduction to the award also cited the variety of institutions included in the System and the financial and governance success experienced by these institutions.

The award was conferred at a banquet in St. Louis on January 25, 2019. Guests included members of the Congregation from Wisconsin (Sister Natalie Benversie, Sister Adrianna Schou-

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Novices Reflect on Mission Experiences

Invitation in Yuma Sand

God wrote an invitation within the Yuma sand.
“Come follow Me, come walk with Me, see what I have planned.”
And so, I went, out into the desert.

I’ll always remember Sister Alexandra’s fun-loving grin,
as we greeted the students who were coming in.
Sister Hannah’s excitement teaching myths to her class.
Hiking up and down Telegraph Pass.
“Come follow Me, come walk with Me, see what I have planned.”
God knew what I needed would be found walking on Yuma sand.

It was memorable making muffins with Sister Ann Mary.
Laughing with Secular Franciscans—how I would have liked to tarry.
Adoration at St. Francis, praying together refreshes the soul.
Pulling blessings out of Sister Mary Beth’s blessing bowl.
“Come follow Me, come walk with Me, see what I have planned.”
And now, I cherish memories from the desert.



—Sister Cecilia Joy *Sister Cecilia Joy and Sister Mary Teresa Bettag*

During my second year novitiate mission experience I had the opportunity to visit four of our Arizona Missions; each one was a unique experience.

While in Casa Grande at St. Anthony Padua Convent, we were fortunate to have daily Mass. At a Saturday evening Mass, I was asked by the pastor to recite the rosary before Mass, in front of the congregation.

Sister Carol Seidl and I drove to Sierra Vista to visit our mission. We were given a tour of the St. Andrew Convent and had a nice visit with Sisters Joellen Kohlmann and Doris Jurgenson. While there, I was blessed with the opportunity to meet two year old Owen and his family, at their home. Owen has brain cancer and he currently receives chemotherapy.

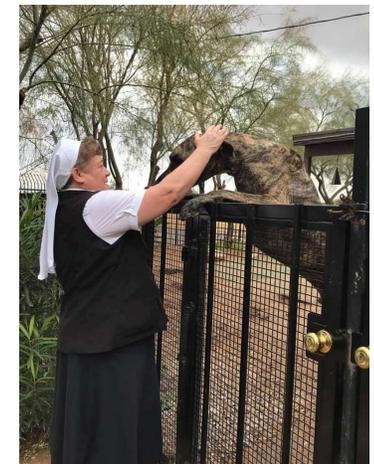
Sister Carol took me to St. Anthony School where she is Principal, and I was

given a tour of the school. We were able to attend a talk about Our Lady of Good Help. Here I was in Arizona listening to a talk about a shrine I knew in Wisconsin!

While in Bapchule at St Peter Indian Mission, I experienced many different forms of God’s creatures. I was able to feed some of the animals, and visit with them. For the first time I experienced a mission funeral. The Sisters played an active part in reading and singing. As this was the first time being on a reservation, I didn’t realize how remote life can be. Travel to the nearest church, store, post office, or even the airport, may be miles away.

I enjoyed my mission experience in Arizona, as the culture is very different from that of the Midwest. I felt very much at home with the people and Sisters from the missions.

—Sister Colleen



Mission Experiences (continued from p. 2)

My mission experience was in Tucson, Arizona at San Xavier Mission. I had a great time getting to know the Sisters at Tucson. That is what I love the most about mission experiences, spending time with the Sisters. It felt like home. I enjoyed seeing the old missions where our Sisters had been and reading some of the old stories as well. I liked hearing Sister Roselani Gomes story about the prodigal son read to the kids, in pidgin English! It was also fun to swim in January even though it had snowed in Tucson a few days before! Sister Carla Riach taught me how to make crosses and took me around for walks around the mission. Sister Ellen Pachmayer took me around the classrooms at Santa Cruz School. Sister Rosalyn Muraski and I tried to figure out technology. Sister Mary Ann Spanjers and I ran/walked the 5k for vocations! Sister Leonette Kochan took me to help in the diocesan offices. These



*Sisters Mary Ann, Clare Rose, and Carla
with other 5k walkers*

were only some of the experiences; and the people I met there were wonderful. I had a wonderful experience!
—Sister Clare Rose

Sister Rochelle Kerkhof and Sister Monica Mary DeQuardo welcomed me into Imperial, Nebraska on December 28, 2019 and so began our adventure. Both Sisters went completely out of their way to welcome me and show me the charm of the Nebraska plains. The people of Nebraska were very kind and welcoming and it is very evident that the Sisters there love all that they do for the deanery.



There were many cooking opportunities and many ways that we enjoyed the simple joys of living in community. Both Sisters have contributed to my life in a special way and I feel a great sense of gratitude. The experiences and the people that touched my life while in Nebraska will remain in my heart and prayers. Thank you for this opportunity.
—Sister Concepción

Sister Recognized (Continued from page 1)

ten, Sister Louise Hembrecht and Sister Charleen Acker), from St. Louis (Sister Delores Vogt and Sister Sue Ann Hall) and Sister Bernadette Selinsky from the Zanesville local mission. Members of Sister Laura's family from Delaware, Ohio as well as Scott McConnaha, President and CEO of FSCC, and his wife Colleen were also present.

Commenting on receiving this honor Sister Laura said "The whole experience of preparation and conferral of this distinction was both wonderful and humbling. I had no idea that the School of Law was aware of my activities following graduation and was overwhelmed at their desire to include me in the Class of 2019. I am so very grateful to the Community for the opportunity to pursue this degree and to use it to serve our education and healthcare ministries. Over the years I have been truly blessed with support and assistance from members of the Congregation as well as senior managers, boards, education and healthcare professionals and countless employees and local community leaders who embraced our mission as their own. Recognition for the success of the System belongs to them and to the Lord."

Sisters in Wisconsin, Arizona, and Nebraska March with Pro-Lifers

Manitowoc, Wisconsin—Novices Sister Cecilia Joy and Sister Concepcion, Postulant Yazmin, Sister Mary Frances Maher, Sister Elaine Turba, Sister Julie Ann Sheahan, Sister Louise Hembrecht and students from Silver Lake College of the Holy Family joined approximately 6,000 pro-lifers march downtown Chicago.



Sisters Elaine Turba, Mary Frances Maber and Yazmin.

Pro Life Wisconsin organized the bus trips and brought people from across the state. It was a real pilgrimage showing love for life—a journey with a moral and spiritual significance. Although this year's temperatures were more pleasant than last year, there was sacrifice and prayer involved along the way.

The theme of this year's Illinois march was 'Unique from Day One.'

Tucson, Arizona—Sisters Ellen Pachmayer, Rosalyn Muraski, Leonette Kochan and Mary Ann Spanjers, were among more than 2,000 people who attended the March for Life on March 19, 2019. The day began with a Mass for Life celebrated by Tucson Bishop Edward Weisenburger. Sister Leonette was the one who organized all the logistics of the beautiful Mass. Sister Mary Ann's San Miguel students read the prayers of the faithful and joined in the procession! The meaningful, peaceful four mile March concluded at the Catholic cemetery with a rose ceremony recalling the children lost each year since abortion was legalized. The beautiful 70 degree weather was a blessing from God for all of us who marched!



Sister Mary Ann with her students.



Sister Rochelle traveled with the group of pilgrims from Imperial

Imperial, Nebraska—Several students/adults from the Southwestern Grant Deanery traveled five hours to attend the Nebraska Walk for Life held in Lincoln on Saturday, January 26. On Friday evening, prior to event, hospitality was provided by the parents of Rev. Lothar Gilde, Pastor of St. Patrick's, Imperial.

Franciscans Join in 35th Annual Martin Luther King March



Sisters Annette Kurey, Kathleen Murphy, Judith Norwick, and Maria Goretti Scandaliato with a Secular Franciscan and Brother Mark, OFM. They proudly hold some of the signs made by Sister Kathleen.

Greenwood, Mississippi—The 35th annual march honoring the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was held Sunday, January 20, 2019. The march began at the St. Francis Center and headed to the Friendship Missionary Baptist Church where Dr. Leroy Williams was the keynote speaker.

Greenwood's annual march is designed to unite races, religions and cultures across the community in honor of Dr. King.

You may not see the problem, but it's there. It's estimated there are more than 21 million human trafficking victims worldwide. This is not something that only occurs in dark alleys in the far corners of the Earth, though. It's happening around the world every day. Human trafficking is considered modern-day slavery, and there are more slaves today than at any time in history.

"They are hidden from view. You don't recognize them in the back kitchens, shops, gas stations and in hospitality. They are also tucked away in fields. They don't come out and ask for help. It's a different kind of slavery than long ago," says Dr. Lucy Steinitz, Catholic Relief Services senior technical advisor for protection. "They are not in shackles or on plantations. People are coerced into harsh employment under horrible conditions, and then have no freedom to leave. They are beaten, violated and told they are worthless—that no one else wants them anymore."

The above quotation is taken from the Catholic Relief Services website, www.crs.org/stories/stop-human-trafficking. This is an excellent source for information on the many faces of human trafficking as well as suggestion for action.

Pope Francis asks us this month to pray "For a generous welcome of the victims of human trafficking, of enforced prostitution and of violence."

Notice that the Holy Father does not ask us simply to pray for an end to these practices nor for the salvation of these suffering souls. He asks us to wel-

come them and further, to welcome them generously!

In *Gaudete et Exsultate* Pope Francis cautions us against finding suspect the activism of others. He writes, "There are those who see social engagement as superficial, worldly, secular, materialist, communist or populist. Or they relativize it, as if there are other more important matters, or the only thing that counts is one particular ethical issue or cause that they themselves defend. Our defense of the innocent unborn, for example, needs to be clear, firm and passionate, for at stake is the dignity of a human

life...Equally sacred, however, are the lives of the poor, those already born, the destitute, the abandoned and the underprivileged, the vulnerable infirm and elderly exposed to covert euthanasia, the victims of human trafficking, new forms of slavery and every form of rejection."

He goes on to say, "Those who really wish to give glory

to God by their lives, who truly long to grow in holiness, are called to be single-minded and tenacious in their practice of the works of mercy. Saint Teresa of Calcutta clearly realized this: "Yes, I have many human faults and failures...But God bends down and uses us, you and me, to be his love and his compassion in the world. He depends on us to love the world and to show how much he loves it. If we are too concerned with ourselves, we will have no time left for others."

Let us see the face of Jesus in these suffering ones. Let us make room for them in our prayer, in our awareness and in our compassion.

"The trade in human beings, a modern form of slavery, ... violates the God-given dignity of so many of our brothers and sisters and constitutes a true crime against humanity."

—Pope Francis

Pilgrimage to Tohono O'odham Missions



Having one of our novices, Sister Clare Rose Oswald, with us for a mission experience here at San Xavier we had the joy of sharing the beauty, memories, places and stories of the history of our Sisters here at the Tohono O'odham missions.

As we drove into the desert with the temperature at only 37 degrees, one of the coldest winters in memory with heavy snow visible on the mountains, we read from the Historical Issue of *Mission*, by the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity Western Region, Summer 1974, vol. 4, no.3. Sister Agatha wrote, "We three sisters first arrived in Pisinemo in January, 1937. The next day we had a heavy snow fall. We had to dismiss classes to let the children out to enjoy the first snow they had ever seen."

Our pilgrimage began at Pisinemo, the village has grown so much that Sister Carla Riach had a hard time recognizing once familiar landmarks. The picture of the Sisters Clare Rose, Rosalyn and Carla in front of our former convent and church reveal it continues to be cared for.

When we stopped at Covered Wells, Fr. Bill Minkel, OFM welcomed us and opened up the lovely chapel with the traditional Christmas crib and saguaro cactus rib ceiling. Fr. Bill serves more than 16 villages. He was quick to invite any of our Sisters to be part of this missionary life.

From Covered Wells we drove into a "painting"—surrounded by breathtaking mountains and desert scenery to the San Solano Mission of St. Catherine in Topawa. We were delighted to share our bag lunch with Elizabeth a dear friend of Sister Carla, who has



been ministering at the mission for more than 30 years. Our former convent is now being used for meetings and days of reflection by the Franciscan Friars who serve all of these villages with such dedication and faith. We were grateful to share this day together!

—Sister Mary Ann Spanjers



Sisters Hannah Jobnebeck, Mary Teresa Bettag, Alexandra Bettinardi, Lorita Gaffney, Ann Mary Hart, Janet Rose, and Mary Beth Kornely.

Sister Mary Beth Kornely shares this picture of the recent Yuma Run with the Nuns. The event is a fund raiser for Immaculate Conception School. Sponsored by the parish, this was the second time for the run with the hopes of making it an annual event. Sister Mary Teresa came in second in the race. She was cheered on loudly.

Sister Joins Mission Trip to Haiti

Newton, Wisconsin—Sister Marlita Henseler traveled to Haiti with five other adults (St. Thomas parish member, Jim Fitzgerald, and four others from the Green Bay diocese: Ed West, Ken Deteville, Cathy Allen and Debbie Knox) to work at painting, inside and out, a building to be used in February through April for doctors, dentists, and nurses who will come to serve the people and help the Haitians to receive health care. Later it can be a dwelling for other missionaries.



Sister Marlita's knowledge of Spanish was a great help for the group who volunteered in Haiti.

The building next door, a round building with solar lighting, served as a place to teach literacy classes to young and adults, three afternoons a

week. A Sister from Brazil who spoke creole (a French/native dialect) conducted the classes.

The group stayed in Pedro Santana, a town in the Dominican Republic, right across from the border to Haiti. They traveled three and a half miles each day in a pickup that took forty minutes—terribly rocky roads.

Pray for the people, as they are very poor in this eastern part of Haiti, and need better government intervention to help them with the basics, like food and shelter.

—Sister Marlita Henseler

Mission Experience in Cambridge Ohio

My mission experience was awesome. After spending two weeks with my family in North Carolina, during the Christmas season, I flew to Columbus, Ohio to start my mission experience. Sister Helen Marie Paul and Sister June Smith were waiting for me at the airport. They took me to St. Benedict Convent at Cambridge and I was impressed to see how beautiful it is. I met Sister Jan Villemure, Sister Sharon Paul, and Sister Carol Juckem as well. They were so welcoming and so kind to me. I really enjoyed spending time with the Sisters at Cambridge because they are really joyful and they have a very youthful bliss. Sister Helen Marie took me to introduce myself to the children in Sunday school. I also talked to the children in St. Benedict School. I participated in the kindergarteners' PE class which was so great. Overall, I really enjoyed being at St. Benedict School and meeting the students and the teachers. They were so well behaved and respectful. It was incredible.



Sister Sharon also took me to see Genesis Hospital in Zanesville, Ohio. She took me to various places where the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity have worked. Not only that, I was able to be a part of the Christmas celebration of the staff of St. Benedict School and I attended the Epiphany celebration with the parishioners of St. Benedict Church and the Sisters. All the people in Cambridge were so kind to me. I will never forget this experience.

—Yazmin S. Martinez Lopez

National Catholic Schools Week



National Catholic Schools Week was observed January 27–February 2. This year’s theme was “Catholic Schools: Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed.”.

Some of the activities at St. Benedict School, Cambridge, Ohio were: Students read and presented the offertory gifts at the Sunday, 10:30 Parish Mass; fleece blankets were made for the Cardinal Place residents as an all school community service activity; upper grade students worked with lower grade students in making the dog chews for the animal shelter; and thank you cards were made for local, state, and federal officials.

There was a Mass with Bishop Jeffrey Monforton, a family luncheon, and a special staff luncheon.

Students at St. Peter Indian Mission, Bapchule, Arizona honored veterans as one of their special Catholic Schools week activities.

The Chilton Area Catholic School, Chilton, Wisconsin started the week on Sunday, January 27th with Mass at Good Shepherd Church where Sister Elizabeth Benvie’s 6-8 grade choir led the singing while other students and faculty took active ministry parts, as well.