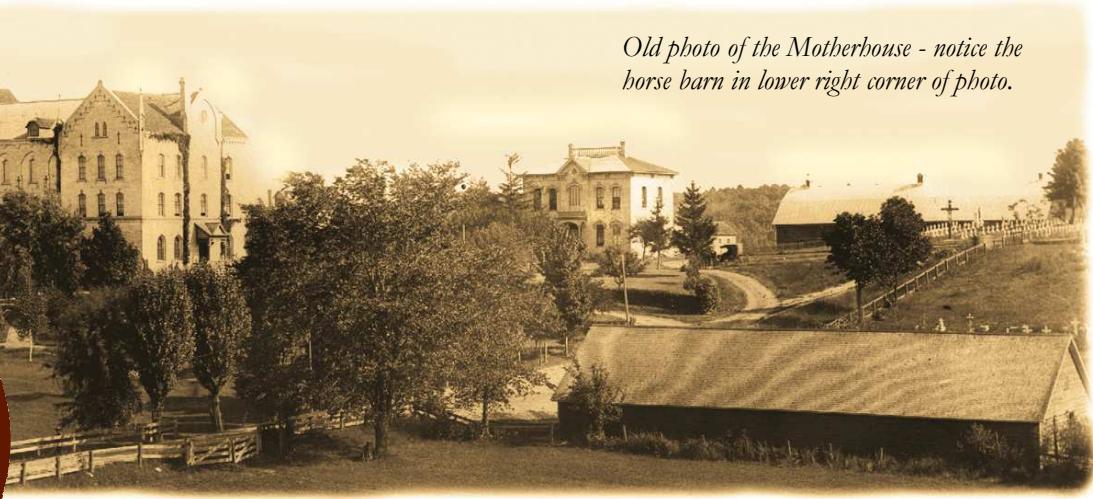
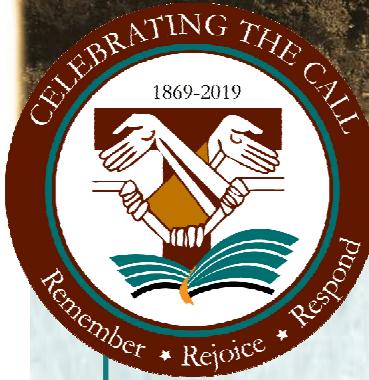


Communigram

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September 2019



Old photo of the Motherhouse - notice the horse barn in lower right corner of photo.

Meet Our Postulant

Hello, my name is Mary Jane Frances Schwartz. I was born in Brandon, Wisconsin and when I was four years old my family moved to L'Anse, Michigan. I'm the tenth child of twelve. I have six brothers and five sisters. Since I was a little girl I have always felt a strong calling to enter the religious life. It wasn't a serious desire until I was a junior in high school. I first looked at the Dominican Sisters of Mary Mother of the Eucharist in Ann Arbor. I went on two retreats and really enjoyed it but I didn't feel like it was the right convent so I went to college for a degree in Elementary Education. I graduated from Gogebic Community College in Ironwood, Michigan with an Associate's Degree and then I transferred to Northern Michigan University in Marquette, Michigan. I left after about a year and lived at home, where I continued to look at different religious orders and I became a substitute teacher for the public schools and the Catholic school in L'Anse.

It was December 2017 before Christmas; while I was reading my emails I noticed an email from a priest friend, Father Ben Hasse. He was in charge of Totus Tuus, a summer catechesis program, and he was looking for volunteers. I wrote him back that I was interested and began filling out the paper work. I was finished around February and as I talked with Father Ben I became very excited to have the opportunity to meet other college students who are enthusiastic about the Catholic faith. I also looked forward to traveling around the Upper Peninsula teaching children about the faith. It was the first parish where my team was doing Totus Tuus that I met Sister



Postulant, Mary Jane Schwartz

Jacqueline Spaniola. She was a Franciscan Sister of Christian Charity and she started to talk to me about her order and asked if I was interested in coming to the next Come and See retreat. After a while I did tell her that I was interested and I came to the September retreat.

The retreat was beautiful and I loved being with all the girls and talking to the postulants and novices about their vocation stories. However when I came home and went back to the busyness of my life I decided to put aside the idea of entering a convent at this time. Then one day after doing my hour of Eucharistic Adoration I was talking with Mom and she told me that I should continue discerning the religious life and that I needed to contact the Franciscan Sisters. So I did, and Sister Julie Ann Sheahan scheduled me for a three day visit in May and helped to get me started on the application. It took about a month to finish the application. I was so very happy when I received the phone call that I was accepted. I felt peace and excitement because I knew I was coming to a very welcoming Community of fun Sisters. Mom, Dad, and my siblings were always very supportive and helpful during my journey as were my parish priest and members of the parish.

My parents brought me to the Motherhouse August 22, the feast day of the Queenship of Mary. It was hard to say the final goodbye, but I'm very happy that I'm here at the Motherhouse. I'm looking forward to continuing my studies, to growing deeper in my relationship with Jesus and meeting all the Sisters.

Tucson Bishop Congratulates Franciscan Sisters' Leadership

Bishop Edward Weisenburger, Bishop of the Diocese of Tucson, featured the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity General Administration in a recent communication to the diocese. We share it here.

The new leadership team for the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, will have a distinctly Southwest flavor with all five having served in the Diocese of Tucson. Take a look at the included photo, and I am certain many of my *Update* readers will recognize someone.



Franciscan Sisters Leonette Kochan, Myra Jean Sweigart, Jane Kinate, Theresa Feldkamp and Natalie Binversie were elected by members of the congregation June 24 and installed July 21. Sister Kochan, who had been serving as diocesan Office of Life and Human Dignity coordinator, returned briefly to Tucson in July and will return to Manitowoc for good in late August. She was elected Third Councilor. Originally from

Francis Creek, Wisconsin, she was missioned in Tucson where she previously served as principal of Santa Cruz Catholic School, Tucson and Immaculate Conception Catholic School in Yuma. While we are proud of Sister, we are going to miss her. Good luck!

Sister Binversie was elected Community Director for a second term, previously serving 2013-19. Before being Community Director, she was a teacher in the primary grades, Novice Directress and spent time at Santa Cruz and San Xavier Catholic schools. Sister Sweigart likewise was re-elected First Councilor and Treasurer General. Originally from Cambridge, Ohio, she has a background in elementary education as teacher and principal, including time at San Xavier. Originally from Wrightstown, Wisconsin, Sister Feldkamp was re-elected Second Councilor. She has a background in elementary education as teacher and principal, including time at Immaculate Conception and San Xavier. Sister Kinate, also from Wrightstown, was elected Fourth Councilor. She has been in education all of her life, teaching in Manitowoc for the past 20 years. She also spent time at Immaculate Conception.

The Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity were founded 150 years ago on Nov. 9, 1869 in Manitowoc. The Sisters presently serve in Arizona at San Xavier Mission, San Miguel High School and the Diocesan Office in Tucson; Immaculate Conception School, St. Francis Catholic School and Yuma Catholic High School in Yuma; St. Anthony of Padua School and Parish in Casa Grande; and St. Andrew Parish in Sierra Vista. Sisters also serve in Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Apple-picking time has arrived

On August 20th, Sister Elaine Turba took Sister May Ann Spangers and the two novices, Sister Concepción and Sister Maria Guadalupe, apple picking at her parent's home.

The early transparent apples made delicious applesauce.



150th Anniversary Gift from the Manitowoc County Serrans



The Manitowoc County Serrans wanted to gift the Community with a tree to be planted in honor of our 150th Anniversary. After searching for an appropriate tree, a white pine from the edge of the woods behind St. Francis Convent was chosen. The tree, approxi-

mately 10 years old (Joe remembers planting it) was moved on June 7th to the Motherhouse grounds to be planted behind the Sacred Heart grotto. Fr. Jerry Prusakowski, OFM blessed it during our 150th celebration days this summer. Thank you, Serrans!

Grant Deanery Youth Attended Denver Youth Conference

Imperial, Nebraska—A Youth Conference held in Denver, CO between June 21-23, 2019, hosted nearly 3,000 youth and chaperones in the Crown Plaza Conference Center. Couched in the Franciscan Spirituality of the Franciscan University of Steubenville, and centered around the Biblical theme of ‘Belong’ (1 John 3:1), students experienced encountering Christ through prayerful worship music, the sacrament of Reconciliation, the profound liturgy of two Masses, powerful catechetical witness speakers, and small group sharing sessions. Joyful enthusiasm and new found friendships flourished among attendees as the conference drew to its



conclusion. For many this was a first-time experience; for some, a repeat visit; for all, a treasured gift of love and acceptance into the family of God’s people—the Catholic Church.

Sister Rochelle Kerkhof, Grant Deanery Youth Minister, facilitated access for this event including 13 students, four chaperones, and one priest from the nine parishes

of the Grant Deanery located in the southwestern corner of the Lincoln, Nebraska, diocese. The prayerful support of many parishioners and event volunteers behind the scenes was the engine that blessed these days with fruitful outcomes. —*Sister Rochelle Kerkhof*

Summer Events



L to r: Sisters Caritas Strodtboff, Julie Ann Sheahan, Elaine Turba, Catherine Gilles, Francis Mason, and Anne Turba posed with Katrina on her parents farm during the Breakfast on the Farm event, June 9.



June 9th Jubilee Celebration - Diamond Jubilarians (75 years) seated l to r: Sister Ann Joachim Haen and Sister Cyrilla Jackels. Golden Jubilarians standing l to r: Sister Natalie Binversie, Sister Martha Mary Carpenter, Sister Delores Vogt, Sister Louise Hembrecht, and Sister Mary Beth Kornely.



During Imperial, Nebraska's Totus Tuus Summer School, June 16-21, Sister Rochelle Kerkhof had the opportunity to address all of the 55 students, (grades 1-8) to share details about our Community and her vocation.



Sister Natalie Binversie led a prayer and the Sisters were asked to sing the "Blessing of St. Francis".



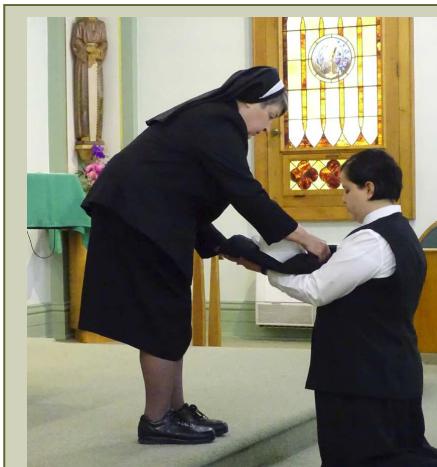
Sister Mary Teresa Bettag renewed her vows on June 23rd. Sister Natalie Binversie, Community Director witnessed the signing of the vow card.

A number of Sisters attended the June 29th dedication of a portion of Dewey Street as Crawford Boulevard. The change was made to recognize Manitowoc's longest consecutively serving Mayor, Kevin Crawford. Crawford first earned the mantle in 1989, and served for 20 years, being reelected 5 times in the process. One of the accomplishments during Mayor Crawford's tenure was the expansion of the Harbor Town district on the west side of the city toward the interstate. This road was chosen because of Mayor Crawford's integral leadership in the creation of this area of the city and for his many years of service to the citizens of the City of Manitowoc.

Summer Events



July 7th Jubilee Celebration - Diamond (60th) Jubilarians seated l to r: Sister Mary Stephen Keller and Sister Alice Marie Hickok. Standing l to r: Sister Mary Gabriel Van Drel, Sister Carol Mathe, Sister June Smith, Sister Marianne Froehlich, Sister Dorothy Wagner, and Sister Mary Ann Nugent.



Reception into the Novitiate, July 15th - Postulant Yazmin receives the habit from Sister Natalie Binversie, Community Director, during the Reception Ceremony.



**Sister Maria Guadalupe
Martinez Lopez**
*Yazmin Martinez Lopez
From: Cary, North Carolina*

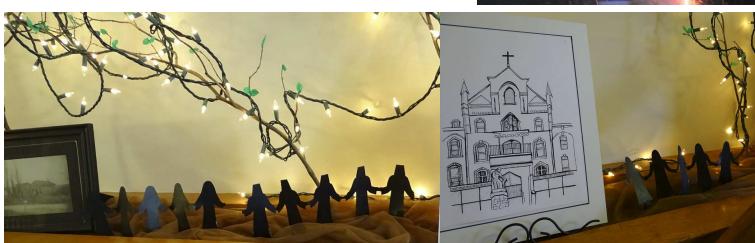


June 17-25, 2019 Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity General Chapter - Delegates and Chapter Officials



July 4, Fr. Dave Beaudry, Celebrant

150th Celebration Days –





July 5, Sister Ann Rebrauer, Speaker



July 5, Archbishop Pierre and Bishop Ricken



July 5, Archbishop Christophe Pierre,
Apostolic Nuncio, Celebrant



July 4-6, 2019



July 6, Fr. Dan Felton, Celebrant.
Concelebrants l to r: Franciscan Friars Placid Stroik, Hilary
Brzezinski, and Gerald Prusakowski.



San Xavier Mission Bids Farewell to Fr. Steve

Tucson, Arizona—These days have been filled with farewells of gratitude for Fr. Stephen Barnufsky, OFM! Fr Steve ministered here at San Xavier Mission for the past 16 years to the Tohono O'odham people and to our Community of Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity! The basket dancers paid special tribute to him, many testimonies were spoken, and prayers of blessing were prayed over him.

There was delicious food at every event along with many expressions of gratitude. One of the most mentioned gifts Fr. Steve shared with us were his inspired homilies for so very many Eucharistic celebrations, funerals, anniversaries and at Mass each day! Please join us in prayer for Fr. Steve as he continues his Franciscan journey into retirement at San Louis Rey, California.

—Sister Mary Ann Spanjers



L to r: Sisters Rosalyn Muraski, Carla Riach, Mary Ann Spanjers, Karen Subr, and Leonette Kochan pose with Fr. Steve.



Students at St. Benedict's School, Cambridge, Ohio enjoyed a Swim Party at the City Park on Wednesday, August 28, 2019. Sister Helen Marie Paul, Librarian, challenged the students to read books over the summer. If the student read the age appropriate number of books they could participate in the Swim Party in the afternoon.

The Lord blessed them with a gorgeous, sunny day with the temperature in the 80's. The children also enjoyed pizza. The students walked to and from the park and enjoyed God's Creation and each other.



Sisters Mary Frances Maher, Caritas Strodthoff, Dolores Herrmann, Winifred Crevier, Marlene Schwaller, Colleen Demro, Marcus Steede, and Helen Marie Paul went to the Green Bay Botanical Gardens



on July 24 to view the “Butterflies and Blooms” exhibit. Live butterflies, all native to Wisconsin, were showcased in a natural habitat with a variety of activities pertinent to the butterflies. On any given day, 500 or more butterflies are fluttering around and one had to be careful not to step on any of them. Sister Winifred had one of the butterflies land on the visor she was wearing! In addition to the butterfly exhibit, they also took the opportunity to tour the rest of the gardens. There was a wide variety of lilies and coleus, just to mention a few of the flowers.

Sister Caritas relates: “You could ‘feed’ the butterflies by holding a mouth swab that had been soaked in Gatorade and water 50/50. They would lite on the sponge and drink up!! They also love sweet juices like chunks of watermelon (the red), orange slices, cantaloupe chunks, banana slices. I’d like to hang some out in the garden but I’m wondering about the bees etc. This butterfly display was all enclosed so “Butterflies Only”...and people. It was a delightful time with butterflies lighting on your shoulder, your head, all over. Marvelous.”

JUST Gospel!

By Sister Kathleen Murphy
Social Justice Commission

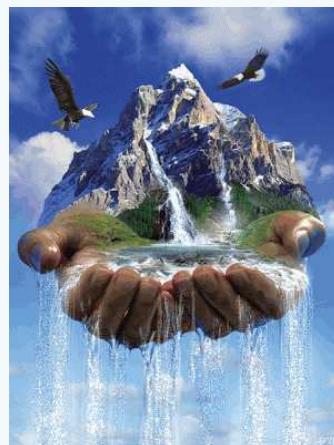
Here we are ready to step into a new series of *Just Gospel* articles. If you consider that title, of course we know it refers to the theme of justice in the Gospel. But, what about that other meaning of *just*? The dictionary offers the parallel words *exactly, precisely or barely*. We can take the last choice out of consideration here, but *exactly or precisely* really frame our purpose in these articles. We want to explore exactly how the Gospel relates to our everyday living as well as to the issues and challenges found in our contemporary world. Pope Francis includes this need to bring the Gospel into the flow of current events with his monthly prayer intentions. So once again, we will take a look at each month's intention in the light of the Gospel and in the context of justice issues facing our global community.

This month Pope Francis asks us to pray with the following intention: *That politicians, scientists and economists work together to protect the world's seas and oceans.* You might catch yourself saying, "Well this is not a job for me, as I live far from any sea or ocean. What can I do about it?" Geographically this is true, but we live in an increasingly connected community that spans the globe. Jacques Yves Cousteau, famed oceanographer tells us, "The sea, the great unifier, is man's only hope. Now, as never before, the old phrase has a literal meaning: we are all in the same boat." In other words, the care of our great gift of water and the life it supports has been given to all of us. From the days of Genesis in the garden, we have all been entrusted with the work of stewardship of all that God created.

Pope Francis shared a many-faceted plea for care of our global waters at the 2018 World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation which focused on water. Francis drew special attention to the more than 600 million people who do not have regular access to clean drinking water. He went on to say, "Access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival." He continues, "In considering the fundamental role of water in creation and in human development, I feel the need to give thanks to God for 'Sister Water,' as St. Francis of Assisi said. Wa-

ter is "simple and useful for life like nothing else on our planet."

Again, Pope Francis urges us, "Fulfilling the Gospel mandate to give the thirsty something to drink involves more than acts of charity, although those are important. It also involves concrete choices and a constant commitment to ensure to all the primary good of water." The Holy Father went on to challenge us as he said, "Believers have an obligation to work together to keep the oceans clean instead of allowing them to be littered by endless fields of floating plastic."



soyluzenelcamino.blogspot.com/2012/12/donde-esta-dios.html

These thoughts help us understand why we pray for scientists and economists in regard to oceans. So, why does the Pope include politicians in this prayer intention? Thinking of oceans and seas, also led the pope to think of the thousands of migrants and refugees who "risk their lives at sea in search of a better future." He continues, "Let us ask the Lord and all those engaged in the noble service of politics that the more sensitive questions of our day, such as those linked to movements of migration, climate change and the right of everyone to enjoy primary goods, may be faced with generous and farsighted responsibility and in a spirit of cooperation, especially among those countries most able to help."

Pope Francis also offered prayers for people who fish and others who earn their living at sea, for those who minister to them and for all the scientists and public policy experts who help the public recognize the treasures of the sea and work to protect them.

Now we know that the Church sees care of the oceans as a challenge based in Scripture and tied to the human rights of our brothers and sisters. So, what can we as individuals do about this problem? Here are some suggestions:

1. Our waters are part of the interconnectedness of creation. Energy issues effect evaporation rates and the health of oceans and seas. We can contribute to better

Continued on p. 10.

Sisters Celebrate with New Parents

Manitowoc, Wisconsin—Sister Paulynd Hogen is a Sister Presence in the surgery lounge and at the front escort desk at Holy Family Memorial Hospital.

On July 9, Sister Paulynd was at the escort desk when a young couple carrying a baby car seat entered and informed the volunteer that they needed to go up to the 4th floor. As the escort was taking them up to the floor they shared that they were there to pick up their new adoptive baby girl and that they were from out of State.

Before Sister Paulynd left the hospital for the evening, she walked up to the 4th floor to visit with this couple and their new adoptive baby. In the course of this visit the man asked Sister Paulynd where she lived. Sister informed him that she lived at St. Francis Convent along with 38 other Sisters. Sister then asked if they wanted to come for a visit with the Sisters and see St.



Sister Paulynd with the newborn.

Francis Convent. The couple both smiled and said they would be delighted to come for a visit and see the Convent.

They arrived at St. Francis Convent around 11:30 a.m. the next day while the Sisters were in the cafeteria for lunch. The couple walked from table to table introducing their little three day old baby girl to all of the Sisters and then joined the Sisters for lunch and for a visit after lunch.

Some days later they asked if they could come to pray with the Sisters on Wednesday, July 17 and would we please bless them with our Franciscan Blessing Prayer. As we were leaving chapel the Retreat Master also gave this new family a blessing and then they joined us for supper.

God bless this new family.

—Sister Mary Ann Tupy and Sister Paulynd

JUST Gospel!

Continued from p. 9

balance as we lower energy consumption by making less car trips, turning off lights when not in use, wearing a sweater or using a fan so that heat and cooling does not require so much energy.

2. Try to eat only sustainable kinds of seafood. Here is a list of possibilities Bass, Catfish, Clams, Alaskan Pacific Cod, King or Snow Crab, Oysters, Perch, Prawns, New Zealand Salmon, Farmed Scallops, Farmed Shrimp, Smelt, Tilapia, Lake or Farmed Trout, Albacore Tuna, Lake Whitefish. (*Seafood Watch website*)

3. Use less plastic. Carry a reusable water bottle. Store food in non disposable containers. Bring your own cloth tote or other reusable bag when shopping, and recycle whenever possible. Avoid using a plastic straw in your drink and choose paper plates, bowls and cups rather than plastic or Styrofoam.

4. Participate as you can in shoreline cleanups and when visiting these areas be sure to clean up after yourself.

5. Influence change in the local community where you live and vote. Research the ocean policies of public officials before you vote or contact your local representatives to let them know you support marine conservation projects. Consider patronizing restaurants and grocery stores that offer only sustainable seafood, and speak up about your concerns if you spot a threatened species on the menu or at the seafood counter.

As we try to do our part in caring for the world's gift of water, it is good to consider the words of Fabien Cousteau, Grandson of Jacques Cousteau, "Without water, our planet would be one of the billions of lifeless rocks floating endlessly in the vastness of the inky-black void." Let us pray that God's spirit continues to hover over the waters and that this same Spirit will lead us in our work as stewards of creation.

Something New at House of Prayer: Laywomen's Retreats



Manitowoc, Wisconsin—June 11-14 and August 13-16 were very special weeks this year. Five laywomen came from various Wisconsin cities for each of the first Laywomen's Retreats held at St. Francis Convent.

Sister Marsaia Kaster wrote: For some time, several of my spiritual directees had been remarking on the peacefulness, simplicity and beauty of the House of Prayer and its chapel; and the quiet prayerfulness of the place. They began to say they would love to come there for a retreat.

Probably in March, I ran the question past Sister Natalie and then Sister Anne Marie Lom. The Council took up the question and said "yes." Our first laywomen's retreat began early afternoon on a Tuesday and closed around 1:30 PM Friday early afternoon. Five women from various Wisconsin cities attended each retreat.

Using Ignatius of Loyola as our guide, we "cast all our care upon the Lord" Who came "to set the captives free." We prayed. And we spent many hours sharing

on topics related to prayer, healing, conversion, forgiveness, discernment of spirits in everyday life. We pleaded with Him to help each of us to become more filled with faith in His Triune love; equipped with forgiveness, hope and "fuerza." "Fuerza" is a Spanish word Ignatius used meaning "courage and active energy" to face each day with hope, courage, and active energy; eagerness to LIVE HIS LOVE no matter what challenge.

The retreatants, the 10 different women who came to the two retreats, expressed much appreciation to and for Sister Mary Ann Tupy and the St. Francis convent Sisters (and the Motherhouse Sisters via the St. Rita bulletin board) who supported our retreats. Thanks especially to Sister Natalie and the Council who made these retreats possible.

At the end of the first retreat, the women dubbed it "The First Fuerza Retreat." They would like to come back next year. Sister Marsaia is hoping to schedule another retreat for November and possibly one for early January. If you know of someone who would benefit and is close enough to come, feel free to contact Sister Marsaia.

Sister Enters St. Kateri Seed Packet Art Contest

Manitowoc, Wisconsin—This Spring our Motherhouse land was blessed and registered as a healthy Saint Kateri Habitat for people and wildlife.

The St. Kateri Conservation Center sponsors the Saint Kateri Habitat Program which encourages individuals, parishes, schools, religious orders, and working land-owners to restore their natural homes in a way that praises God and fosters a greater connection between people and nature.

The Saint Kateri Conservation Center held its first art contest to design the cover of their custom native seed packets. Sister Mariella Erdmann was alerted about the contest and submitted a creative design. The design had to contain an original drawing or painting of St. Kateri along with flowers and pollinators.

Since different regions have different native plants the Saint Kateri Center will be creating four different seed mixes so each of the four entries will be used.



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Sisters Offer 3 Butterfly Reflections

This summer Sisters and staff at the Moth-erhouse watched about 95 butterflies flutter into the world. Here are three reflections on these creatures in process.



Milkweed is essential to survival for these creatures. It is good to contemplate that we begin similarly relying on a singular diet of milk alone our own first days as infants.

An intake of air is needed to expand and split open the chrysalis, allowing the butterfly to emerge. (Caterpillar



and adult butterflies have breath through tiny pores called spiracles. From each spiracle a tube called a trachea carries oxygen to the body.)

Again, we were reminded of how a human person is born. A baby must gasp for air and begin breathing on its own within 10 seconds after delivery. Breath is a sign of life.

Every fourth generation of butterflies is different. It goes through egg, caterpillar and chrysalis stages, but the butterfly stage is much longer. It is 6-



8 months. The butterfly migrates to Mexico and then returns to lay eggs for the first generation.

During this 150th anniversary, we can't help but be grateful for all the generations of Sisters that make up our Community. How can we not be amazed and in awe at each generation of creatures as they fulfill their mission in our world?