

FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF CHRISTIAN CHARITY

# CommuniGram

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## Unveiling a New Chapter

*Manitowoc, Wisconsin*—Silver Lake College of the Holy Family, announced its renaming September 19 during an “Unveiling a New Chapter” ceremony on campus. The celebration began with Mass celebrated by Bishop David Rickert who challenged us to see change as essential, to join the mission, and to be part of it by asking how we can help.

Dr. Robert Callahan, college president, announced that the college founded in

1935 as Holy Family College by the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity, was reverting to its original name as it returns to its roots. “I believe we will see a future where our college is not only surviving but thriving,” he said. “Achieving a thriving future begins with our name.”

Sister Jane Kinate, General Councilor and 1974 alumna, shared of the times in which the college

*Continued on p. 3.*



# 120th Anniversary of Holy Family Memorial

*Manitowoc Wisconsin*—September 28, 1899, Holy Family Hospital opened and a new era of health care began in Manitowoc County. At the time Manitowoc was a bustling lake port with three successful shipbuilding companies. Although a hospital was needed, the community of Manitowoc did not have the funds for such a complex project. Several citizens went to Mother Alexia Fullmer, Superior General of the Franciscan Sisters at the time, and asked the Sisters to build a hospital. It was a difficult decision for Mother Alexia since the Sisters were already in debt and did not have money to build a hospital. Yet she knew there was a great need for one. Eventually Mother Alexia placed her trust in God, and with Christian Charity and compassion as the motivation, the Sisters said "yes" to sponsoring a hospital.

On September 28, 2019 the 120th anniversary of its founding, the people of Manitowoc and the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity were invited to celebrate Holy Family Memorial's legacy, reflect, and share stories from the past, and look on with hope toward HFM's future serving Manitowoc County residents for the next 120 years.

Sister Natalie Binversie, Community Director, acknowledged the fact that we stand today on the legacy and shoulders of many who have gone before us. Along with the Sisters, she acknowledged the past and present medical staff, employees, patients and their families, the people of Manitowoc and the broader surrounding communities. "The healing ministry of Jesus continues as a strong commitment today, because of the servant leadership over these 120 years."



## Celebration of Franciscans' Service in Zanesville

Zanesville, Ohio—The Daughters of Isabella hosted a celebration of the 150 years of service to the Church by the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity on Sunday, September 29 at St. Nicholas Church Hall. Parishioners from both St. Nicholas and St. Thomas Parish, former students from St. and Nicholas and Rosecrans Schools, and local folks served by the Sisters at Good Samaritan and Genesis Hospitals gathered in a festively fall-decorated hall to extend congratulations and thanks to the Sisters. Father Martin Ralko, pastor of St. Nicholas Parish began the celebration with a prayer of thanksgiving and blessing. The Sisters presently serving at Genesis Hospital in



*L. to r. Sisters Laura Wolf, Mary Ann Nugent, Bernadette Selinsky, and Maureen Anne Shepard.*

were introduced to those assembled. Jeff Tilton, Mayor of Zanesville, was called upon to present the four Sisters with a proclamation of thanks from the city for the many significant contributions made by the Franciscan Sisters to the education and health of Zanesville and Muskingum County for over 120 years. Expressions of congratulations and thanks were accepted by the Sisters now serving at Genesis with much gratitude and a genuine sense of humility. The first Franciscan Sisters arrived in Zanesville in 1893, and since then approximately 560 different Sisters have been missioned here.

—Sister Mary Ann Nugent

## Host Manitowoc County Historical Society Workshop

Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity hosted the on-site demonstrations for a recent Manitowoc County Historical Society workshop focused on headstone preservation. Sister Natalie Binversie, Sister Jane Kinane and Sister Caritas Strodthoff and others discovered more about the importance of cemetery preservation.



Participants learned about the different types of headstones, how they deteriorate and methods of preservation. For actual

practice, the group headed out to Holy Family Convent Cemetery for on-site demonstrations and practice in cleaning and resetting grave stones.

It was real cemetery preservation basics and hands got dirty! Each person received a gravestone cleaning kit.



## Renaming (continued from p. 1)

was founded. The demand for teachers in Catholic Parish Schools challenged and stressed Religious Orders in the early 1900's.. Mother Generose knew the pressures.

“Her solution (during the depression)—trust in God and build a college! A four story building that contained classrooms, three well-designed laboratories, a

gym and sleeping quarters for teachers and students!

Where? – attach it to the east end of Holy Family Convent! Name? – Holy Family College!

The Mission then (1935) was as it is today – empowering students in a liberal arts education integrated with professional preparation in a Franciscan tradition!”

## Enjoying One Another in God’s Creation

*“The heavens are telling the glory of God and all creation is shouting for joy!”*

Green Bay, Wisconsin—The fresh air! The blue and somewhat, sometimes gray sky! The perfect kite-flying wind! The lapping waves of Lake Michigan! The sandy beach snuggling our feet! The smiling, clapping young and old and in between!

We, Sisters of St. Agnes Convent, concluded our annual community days and began the “Season of Creation” with a trip to the Two Rivers Kite Festival. Since Sister Colleen Demro had spent the night at our convent after her nephew’s wedding at St. Agnes, she was able to join us in this joyful event.

From the cheering of the crowd and the music for synchronized kite-flying, we departed for the quiet of “West of the Lake”. In the peace of the garden we could wander around, wondering at the color, the intricacy of the flowers, and the wonderful layout of the garden—we could actually hear the lapping waves of Lake Michigan.



*Sisters Colleen Demro, Jan Villemure, Dorothy Wagner, and Anne Marie Selinsky at the Two Rivers Kite Festival. A spot at “West of the Lake” where they prayed Evening Prayer.*

How could we not end this event (before going to Dairy Queen) with Evening Praise for World Day of Prayer for Care of Creation? Yes, *“Sing, sing to the glory of the Lord!”*

## Spending Time in Community Takes Creative Planning

Newton, Wisconsin—Gone are the days when the Sisters are all ministering in the school setting and share a common mission. Many of our missions are now with Sisters serving at different locations, and in varied ministries. The challenge that brings is special effort to plan calendars carefully in order to share time and quality community activities. That was the case recently at St. Thomas in Newton, where Sister Marlita Henseler serves as pastoral leader of the parish, Sister Kay Klackner is vice president of mission in the FSCC Sponsored Ministry office, and Sister Louise Hembrecht is vice president of mission at Holy Family College.

Sister Marlita has busy weekends and is present for the four Masses. Sisters Kay and Louise are free. When they go back to work on Mondays, Sister Marlita is off duty. For their community days this year they had the chance to have some worthwhile discussions and time enjoying one another. A visit to the Butterfly House at the Botanical Gardens in Green Bay was one chance, and sharing in the Sheboygan County Fair in Plymouth on Labor Day was another. Special planning reaps special sharing.

—Sister Marlita Henseler



*Sisters Kay, Louise, and Marlita*



This month's intention from Pope Francis is: *That the breath of the Holy Spirit engender a new missionary "spring" in the Church.*

The Holy Father places the word *spring* in quotation marks, so let's think about that for a moment. The dictionary tells us that spring can be a time or season of growth. This surely speaks to the pope's intended action. He joins us in praying that the Holy Spirit will nourish and inspire this growth in the work of evangelizing.

But the dictionary also says that spring can mean the act of leaping forward, of bounding with energy. This action-filled definition also lends itself to the Holy Father's call to prayer. The Church longs for a recharge of the power of the Spirit which enlivens the People of God, which has us leaping forward bursting with the news that love abounds and that God is here now, and is ready to fill our longings.

Why does Pope Francis say that we need a **new** missionary spirit? Has the Church not been blessed with effective and holy missionaries throughout its long history? Yes, of course! But perhaps now we need a reminder that **we** are being called to fill that role of a renewed and reenergized missionary. We cannot rely on the statuesque Saints and Missionaries of times past to enliven the Faith today.

G. Sweeting shares a story that may help us see the need to be active in offering a fresh and en fleshed version of the Good News. He writes, "During the reign of Oliver Cromwell, there was a shortage of currency in the British Empire. Representatives carefully searched the nation in hopes of finding silver to meet the emergency. After one month, the committee returned with its report. 'We have searched the Empire in vain seeking to find silver. To our dismay, we found none anywhere except in the cathedrals



<https://www.catholicmission.org.au/news/latest-news/world-mission-sunday-a-reminder-that-we-are-all-mission>

where the statues of the saints are made of choice silver.' To this, Oliver Cromwell eloquently answered, 'Let's melt down the saints and put them into circulation.'"

We, nor the Saints are called to stand on a pedestal of frozen faith, waiting for people to come to us seeking our wisdom. Rather, we are called to be

melted down, to be made one with those we serve so that they can truly experience a way to live in faith, rather than just hear about it.

Pope Francis writes in his Message for World Mission Day 2019, "I am a mission, always; you are a mission, always; every baptized man and woman is a mission. People in love never stand still: they are drawn out of themselves; they are attracted and attract others in turn; they give themselves to others and build relationships that are life-giving. As far as God's love is concerned, no one is useless or insignificant. Each of us is a mission to the world, for each of us is the fruit of God's love. Even if parents can betray their love by lies, hatred and infidelity, God never takes back his gift of life. From eternity he has destined each of his children to share in his divine and eternal life (cf. *Eph* 1:3-6)."

What a remarkable challenge is ours. What a work of love is called forth from us. How can we fail to attempt this Gospel-rooted commission? Let us remember that we are those who are sent and by virtue of our baptism we share in the mission of the Church. This month we go forth to be melted down so as to be put into circulation. We are to make ourselves available as models of Gospel living who can be found in the very fabric of the life of the Church around us.

## Secular Franciscan Fraternities Meet in Imperial, NE

The *El Poverello of the Plains* and the *St. Stephen the Martyr* Secular Franciscan Fraternities met in Imperial, NE on September 9 for their annual Retreat. The day began with a Eucharistic Adoration Holy Hour, followed with Benediction, the Holy Mass and communal Mid-day Prayer in St. Patrick Church with Fr. Lothar Gilde and Fr. Bernard Lorenz officiating. The noon meal provided leisure time to become better acquainted with sixteen Fra-



*Franciscan fraternities prayed, studied, and enjoyed time together in Imperial.*

ternity participants who had traveled from multiple locations in

eastern Colorado and southwestern Nebraska to attend. Sister Rochelle Kerkhof focused on themes relating to St. Francis of Assisi's life during the afternoon presentations: pilgrimage, 'spirituality of place', the fall of feudalism, the rise of the middle class, the landscape of Assisi terrain, the parents and personality of St. Francis and the personal conversions that took place during his entire lifetime.

—Sister Rochelle Kerkhof

## New, Larger Elder Center.



*San Xavier Mission, Tucson, Arizona*—The Elders of San Xavier Village now have a new, larger Elder Center. The District had a wonderful Grand Opening celebration on September 12<sup>th</sup>. Sister Carla Riach was able to attend and enjoyed seeing elders from the whole reservation who gathered for the occasion. San Xavier Mission School eighth grade students were available to help with serving the elders and cleaning the tables.

Father Bill Minkel, our new pastor at San Xavier, was invited to offer a blessing. Jerry Carlyle, the District Vice Chairman, introduced the architect and construction team. Dennis Ramon, the Director of the Elders Program, explained that the money for the center and for the new Community Center, which is being built at this time, came from the Water Settlements.

The celebration included a ribbon cutting ceremony, breakfast and lunch, tours of the center and traditional music and dancing. It was a day of rejoicing!

—Sister Carla Riach

### Tucson Vocation Pilgrimage

Sister Carla Riach and Sister Mary Ann Spanjers were part of the Tucson diocese Vocation Pilgrimage from various parishes to San Xavier Mission culminating with a Mass celebrated by Bishop Weisenburger and a lunch on the patio!



*It was a warm day for the Vocation Pilgrimage!*

## 150th Celebration at St. Francis Convent

*Manitowoc, Wisconsin*— Saint Francis Convent celebrated the Community's 150th Anniversary with an Open House Sunday, August 25<sup>th</sup>. Prior to the event the Sisters volunteered to be on different committees.

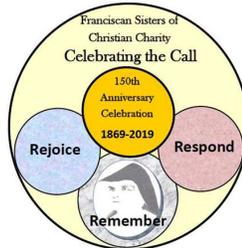
One group designed and organized the invitations that were sent to Sisters relatives. This committee also designed a prayer card insert for the invitations. The invitations and inserts contained the logo designed by Sister Mary Victoria Koenig (right).

Another group was in charge of collating and organizing all the photos and photo albums collected over these past 30 years. They created a welcome board and displayed the photos for all to enjoy.

A third group was in charge of planning and selecting the food for the Open House. It was decided to have ice cream sundaes with some snack mix and veggie trays.

A fourth group worked on plans for a possible tree planting in honor of our 30 years and 150 years.

The Open House, which took place between 1:00 and 4:00 p.m. August 25, was a huge success. Around 120



people attended. Each guest was gifted with a home-made bookmark and special pen to mark the occasion. Comments that day and after were very positive. Families expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to celebrate with us and see our wonderful facility.

—Sister Mary Ann Tupy

### *St. Francis School Celebrates Grandparents*

*Greenwood, Mississippi*—On Wednesday, September 11, the St. Francis of Assisi School community welcomed our students' grandparents, and other family members. Guests joined us for the school Mass where they were especially welcomed and received a special blessing from Franciscan Friar Fr. Camillus Janus.



The students then escorted their family members to the classrooms for a little visit before lunch. Our cafeteria staff outdid themselves with a true southern feast featuring fried chicken, sweet potatoes, greens, mac and cheese, cornbread, iced tea and cake. Proud students and happy grandparents finally received cards and greetings from the little ones and all said their goodbyes. It was a great day to share the joys of family.

—Sister Kathleen Murphy



*Cambridge, Ohio*—The Franciscan Sisters at St. Benedict Convent honored Mary on her birthday: Sisters Sharon Paul, Helen Marie Paul, June Smith, and Carol Juckem.

## St. Francis of Assisi School Global Climate Strike Activity

*Franciscan Sister Kathleen Murphy reports on a Global Climate Strike Activity at St. Francis of Assisi School, Greenwood, Mississippi.*

Sister Janet's second graders cut out letters for the Global Climate Strike banner. The caption read Earth Matters. Painting the globe for the sign was the task of Sister Kathleen's first grade class.



Once the two classes combined their efforts, they proudly carried their banner outside to the front fence of the school. Since the school is directly alongside of US Highway 82 there is plenty of traffic. Students held their banner high and waved with great energy. Many drivers waved and honked. Before long an enthusiastic chant of "Earth matters now!" arose from the young voices of the students.

Upon returning to the classroom, students viewed youth activities taking place around the world on the smart board. The children were very proud that they had contributed in a small way to this global effort.

### Anticipates 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday

*Manitowoc, Wisconsin*—Sister St. Agnes Stuttgen invited members of her family "to come while the weather is still good" to celebrate her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. Sister's sister, Rita (96), a number of nieces, nephews, and those younger came from various parts of the U.S. for the September 15th celebration. Sister's birthday is December 25.

