

# Communigram

FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF CHRISTIAN CHARITY

## Meet Our Postulant

Hello Everyone! My name is Katie Logan and I am the new Postulant from Colorado Springs, Colorado. It was wonderful to finally step through the doors of Holy Family Convent last week after almost two years since my acceptance to the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity. As we read in Matthew 19 – "...with God all things are possible."

I wanted to take an opportunity to share a little glimpse into my background. I grew up in a Presbyterian family, the youngest of three, in south Jersey. My parents owned a photography store which is where I believe taking photos was ingrained into me and has stayed a part of my life. If I was not in the store then I was off playing sports or just enjoyed being outdoors. I am a sports enthusiast and I am always looking for some friendly competition and fun. I am looking forward to the possibility of putting on my ice hockey skates for some pond hockey this winter. I am a fan of three sports teams: Colorado Avalanche, Detroit Tigers, and if I had to choose football...not green but blue and not pro but college, the Air Force Academy Falcons. As for my family, my mother lives near Cleveland, Ohio as well as my older brother and his family. My father and his wife live in Bountiful, Utah and my older Sister and her family live in Parker, Colorado. We also have lots of extended family spread across the Midwest and other parts of the U.S. and abroad (Air Force).

As for schooling, I went to Neumann College for my undergraduate degree in Aston, Pennsylvania. I actually went to Neumann to play ice hockey and God had additional plans which included finding my way back to Him and my conversion to Catholicism through the Franciscan tradition—an interesting story of how each one of us can impact the life of another and how sometimes we cannot see or understand the plans that God has for us. I graduated



*Catherine "Katie" Logan*

ed with a Bachelor degree in Liberal Arts with Minors in: Communication Arts, Psychology, Religious Studies, and Youth Ministry. I then served two years in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps in Detroit, Michigan. During that time I lived in a co-ed community of eight and then five. I worked as a University Minister at Detroit Mercy and helped at my parish St. Al's downtown with their homeless outreach center. After JVC I attended Fordham University in the Bronx and graduated with a Masters in Pastoral Care and Counseling.

I felt truly humbled these past two years to be a recipient of such immense generosity in financial support and prayers for those willing to join me on this entrance mission. So many allowed God to work through their hearts and made it possible for me to follow this vocational call to enter the convent and begin this discernment journey with this Franciscan community. I am coming from a wonderful parish, Holy Apostles Catholic Church, which has been a loving home to me over the past years. God truly worked through the hearts, words, and actions of so many in the parish and in family, friends, priests, consecrated women, and seminarians. This was an unexpected call but I can see how God was patient and waited until I had the guidance of those He chose and ability to be open and willing to listen and trust. Pope Benedict XVI said "The love of God sometimes follows paths one could never have imagined, but it always reaches those who are willing to be found." And now my family is growing larger as I accept the divine invitation and begin this journey as a Postulant in my new home. Thank you for the support and kindness I have received during my discernment and since I have walked through the doors of this community. The joy of Christ is truly present with the FSCC Sisters, the Franciscan Friars, and the staff. Please continue to pray for me, all Sisters in formation, and for future vocations. Pax et Bonum!

# Franciscan Sister Appointed to General Secretariat of Synod of Bishops

*Sister Marie Kolbe Zamora will serve the Holy See beginning this Fall.*

Cardinal Mario Grech has appointed Sister Marie Kolbe Zamora, a member of the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity, to serve as an official for the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops. Zamora's appointment commences at the Vatican on Sept. 1, 2021. In her new role, Zamora will be working with Cardinal Grech (General Secretary for the Synod of Bishops), Bishop Luis Marín de San Martín and Sister Nathalie Becquart (Undersecretaries for the General Secretariat), and the other members of the Secretariat team in its preparation for and implementation of Synod Assemblies.

"As a Congregation, we strive to listen, discern and respond to the needs of the Church. This appointment for Sister Marie Kolbe is a recognition of the talents God has given her to develop in order to serve the needs of others. It is a call from the Church to use her scholarship for the work of the Church through the Synod of Bishops. The appointment is a humble privilege and honor," said Sister Natalie Binversie, Community Director of the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity.

Zamora earned a Doctorate in Sacred Theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome in 2015. Hailing from Texas, Zamora began studying theology as an undergraduate at the University of St. Thomas in Houston, where she graduated in 1989 with a BA in Philosophy and Theology. She made her final vows with the Franciscan



*Sister Marie Kolbe in the Church at the Antonianum.*

Sisters of Christian Charity in 1999 and, except for her time studying in Rome (2004-2011), has been teaching Theology at both the high school and collegiate levels since 1994.

"It is a profound honor to have been invited by Cardinal Grech to serve the Holy Father's labor for the Church in and through the Synod of Bishops. I look forward to learning the work of the General Secretariat and to contributing in any way possible to a deepened sense of ecclesial communion," Zamora said.

## About the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity

Founded in 1869 in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity serve in Catholic Health Care, Education, Parishes and Campus Ministry outreach in the Archdioceses of Milwaukee, Omaha and St. Louis as well as the Dioceses of Columbus, Green Bay, Lincoln, Marquette, Phoenix and Steubenville. Learn more about our ministries and vocations at <https://fsccll-calledtobe.org> God calls you. We invite you.

## About the Synod of Bishops

"The Synod of Bishops is a permanent institution established by Pope Paul VI, 15 September 1965, in response to the desire of the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council to keep alive the spirit of collegiality engendered by the conciliar experience." As an expression of episcopal collegiality, the Synod of Bishops provides the Bishops with the means to assist the Holy Father in his governance of the Church.

# Sisters Took Part in Taps Across America



Near the end of May we heard about "TAPS ACROSS AMERICA." The three of us here in Green Bay thought, "We can do this." So at 3:00 p.m. on May 31, Sister Anne Marie Selinsky played "Taps" on the piano, as Sisters Jan Villemure and Elena Gonzales joined her in singing "Day is done, . . ." It was such a simple thing, but a powerful feeling to know we were part of something so much bigger than ourselves. There were thousands more in our time zone who were at the same time honoring all those who gave their lives for our freedom. God bless them all, and God bless America. —Sister Anne Marie Selinsky



# Franciscan Sisters at Archdiocese of Milwaukee Arise Family Day

*Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity were invited to the July 24, 2021 Archdiocese of Milwaukee Arise MKE Family Day. Sister Cecilia Joy Kugel shares about the experience.*

It was a true gift to be able to participate in an in-person event after the Zoom calls of 2020. Sister Theresa Feldkamp, Sister Kathleen Murphy, Sister Maria Guadalupe Martinez Lopez, Sister Mary Jane Schwartz and myself (Sister Cecilia Joy Kugel) were able to load a van and travel to Arise Family Day at the Village Park in Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin—just outside of Milwaukee. The strong future of the Church was evident as families with children of all ages arrived.



Each child was given a passport to be able to meet with and ask questions of seminarians, priests, and religious like ourselves. The event began with a welcome from Archbishop Listecki, and then the children were off to see what some of our favorite saints were, and to ask us “Why did we become Sisters?” The heat of the day

was made bearable by water, root beer, and even some snow cones. Children also enjoyed face painting and crafts.

The day concluded with Arise Worship Night where there was praise and worship music with adoration and confes-



sion. A special grace was being able to have Fr. Enrique Hernandez travel with the monstrance to each group on the grounds.

The Holy Spirit was truly welcome and present. Sister Kathleen wrote about the day that “it was a privilege to be invited...the spirit of joy and faith was so very evident. I could relate to the sower and the seed. There were many little hearts with great futures and were fertile soil to receive the seed of God’s call.” Along with this, Sister Maria Guadalupe shared: “It was so awesome to be with so many families and their children and other religious on a warm sunny day, especially being face to face with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament as he was passing by blessing us. Glory be to God.” Driving home, all we could do was praise God!

## A Warm Franciscan Welcome

*Manitowoc, Wisconsin*—Our Sisters living in the St. Rita Health Center view their prayers for vocations as a definite priority. They faithfully pray for both our six (6) Sisters in the Formation Program as well as any young woman discerning a call to religious life.

The Sisters are relentless in asking God to bless us with an increase of Postulant applications. Their special prayers are very effective for vocations. Catherine (Katie) Logan, our new Postulant arrived

this week and came to meet the Sisters in St. Rita’s with Sister Mary Jane Schwartz, our second-year Novice. It was a joyous time for all!

God specially bless Sister Mary Jane and Katie as they learn in their formation experience how to live as a Franciscan Sister of Christian Charity. We thank God each day for the gift of our religious vocation.

*—the St. Rita Sister Team.*



*Right: Sister Jane Marie Loderbauer made a special booklet for Katie and presented it to her.*



It is now the month of September whose name derives from the word for “seven”. Though there have been changes in how the months were numbered over time, “seven” nonetheless holds special meaning for us as we consider Pope Francis’ intention for the month: *We pray that we all will make courageous choices for a simple and environmentally sustainable lifestyle, rejoicing in our young people who are resolutely committed to this.*

2020 marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the celebration of Earth Day. Thus it was a Jubilee Year. Pope Francis offered a special message in honor of this moment in history. He wrote, “We are invited to remember above all that creation’s ultimate destiny is to enter into God’s eternal Sabbath. This journey, however, takes place in time, spanning the seven-day rhythm of the week, the cycle of seven years, and the great Jubilee Year that comes at the end of the seven Sabbath years.” So, we can see that praying about the future of Creation during this “seventh” month is fitting.

In that same message Pope Francis goes on to say, “Each year, particularly since the publication of the Encyclical *Laudato Si’* the first day of September is celebrated by the Christian family as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation and the beginning of the Season of Creation, which concludes on the feast of Saint Francis of Assisi on the fourth of October. During this period, Christians worldwide renew their faith in the God of creation and join in prayer and work for the care of our common home.”

Awareness of this Season of Creation helps us to be more mindful of the prayer intention as well. It is not by chance that the Season ends on the Feast of St. Francis. Pope Francis, in the text of *Laudato Si’*, writes, “Francis’ . . . response to the world around him was so much more than intellectual appreciation or economic calculus, for to him each and every creature was a sister united to him by bonds of affection. Such a conviction cannot be written off as naive romanticism, for it affects the choices which determine our behavior. If we approach nature and the environment without this openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs.”



[Helping Kids Take Care Of The Earth | Wisconsin Public Radio \(wpr.org\)](#) Image by [Gerd Altmann](#) from [Pixabay](#)

It is this all-encompassing attitude of St. Francis that seems to appeal to young people today who see the need to be more mindful in our interaction with the world around us. They have an eye to the future, to *their* future and the future of generations to come. This vision is what seems to move them to action and to challenge the value system in place in so many parts of society and the world.

It certainly would be good during this month to revisit *Laudato Si’* with its call to awareness. You may also want to visit [Ecological conversion story: How Laudato Si’ affirmed by Indigenous heritage - Laudato Si Movement](#). This is the website of The Laudato Si’ Movement. This is a Catholic organization and at their site you will find lots of information. You can learn about *Laudato Si’* Week which is presented by the Global Catholic Climate Movement, in conjunction with the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, and sponsored by a wide range of organizations worldwide, including the Jesuits, the Franciscans, and Caritas International to name a few. On this same site you may want to read the story of one Indigenous Filipina who speaks of the intersection of her heritage and her faith in regard to care for Creation.

We pray with Pope Francis at the conclusion of *Laudato Si’*, “O Lord, seize us with your power and light, help us to protect all life, to prepare for a better future, for the coming of your Kingdom of justice, peace, love and beauty. Praise be to you! Amen.”

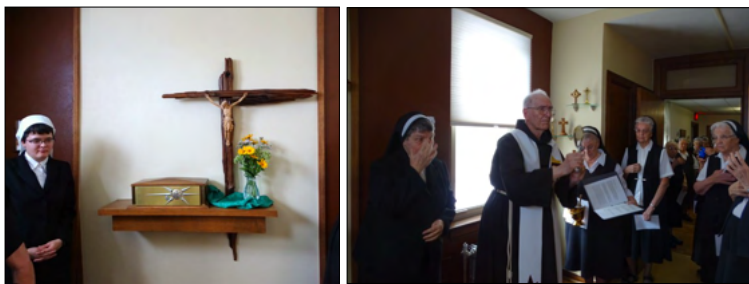


## Blessing of our New Formation Space



*Manitowoc, Wisconsin*—On the Feast of the Portiuncula, August 2, the gentle song of bells rung and the quiet glow of candlelight accompanied a procession opening the blessing of our new formation space at Holy Family Convent. Fifteen Sisters who made their Novitiate in the “Ave-across-the-bridge” served as candle bearers to accompany the Blessed Sacrament from the Ave chapel to the new chapel. Sister Mary Jane Schwartz, novice, led the group carrying the sanctuary light, Sister Theresa Feldkamp, Formation Director, followed ringing the bells and Sister Natalie Binversie bore the Monstrance behind the line of candle bearers which stretched from the Ave to the foot of the stairs leading to St. Al’s.

Fr. Jerry Prusakowski, OFM and many Sisters awaited the procession in St. Al’s homeroom and sleeping area. After a song rejoicing in the holiness of this place, Fr. Jerry blessed the chapel space, the crucifix, and the tabernacle.



He then raised the monstrance in blessing over all present and finally placed the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. The prayers of blessing were the same ones used in 1975 by Father Julian Resch when he blessed the then new Ave chapel.

All listened to a reading telling about the history of the Portiuncula. Father then solemnly proclaimed, “In remembrance of this holy and beloved place in the Franciscan tradition, let this little sanctuary be named and known as the Chapel of St. Mary of the Angels.”

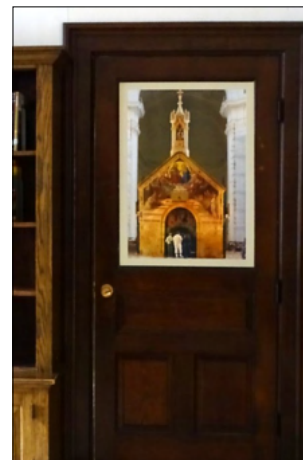


Then, all moved into St. Al’s Homeroom where Father blessed this space saying, “In the Portiuncula Francis of Assisi began to understand more about the truth of his life, his service of God and how both of those connect with service to other people. So, in the spirit of that holy place treasured throughout the history of the Franciscan Order, let this space dedicated to the formation in holiness of those who dwell here be dedicated to, and known as, The Portiuncula. The blessing concluded with the joyous singing of the *Celtic Alleluia*.

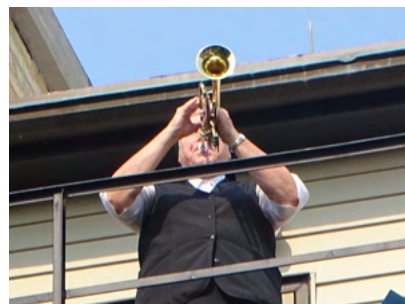


The group of over 50 Sisters continued to celebrate by visiting and sharing punch and snack mix. There was much reminiscing about the days of Postulancy and Novitiate in each of our lives. Though the names of the Ave and St. Al’s will no longer be used, we pray that the new names of The Portiuncula and the chapel of St. Mary of the Angels will identify places of growth in Franciscan holiness, joy and simplicity. May this new step in our formation program be blessed by the Sisters who have gone before us and supported in prayer by each of us today.

—Sister Kathleen Murphy







## While Standing by the Flag

*Written by Sister Cecilia Joy and Sister Maria Guadalupe*

In this year of so much sickness  
 In this year of so much pain  
 We gather together around this flag  
 United as sisters, together again  
 God bless America,  
 The land that we love.  
 A country in transition  
 A country trying not to be in division,  
 But united as one people under God

So many causes to be aware of  
 Immigrants searching for a better life  
 Cultures being misunderstood and attacked  
 Shootings, oh the shootings Lord,  
 Let them end,  
 May the only weapon we carry be Your Word of life,  
 And our differences be something to celebrate.

Let this land be where God comforts His people,  
 Where God lets the oppressed go free  
 And heals the brokenhearted,  
 The brokenness in each one of us.  
 The brokenness that brings us to our knees  
 Praising you today as we gather round this flag.



# Community Gathering

*It was a delight—and a blessing—to have the Sisters from the various missions home for the summer after not being able to do so last summer because of the pandemic restrictions.*

*We gathered for an Educational and a Founder's Day program on July 8th.*

*The July 9th Community Day included reports by: Sister Natalie Biversie, Sister Julie Ann Sheahan, Sister Myra Jean Sweigart; and Scott McConnaha. There were, also, committee reports by: Sisters Mary Ann Spanjers, Mary Ann Tupy and Adrianna Schouten. Scott McConnaha facilitated a community discussion for the properties committee.*

*The Mass on July 9th was a special memorial Mass for all the Sisters who died since the start of COVID for whom we were unable to have a funeral. It was, also, the Mass during which four of our Sisters renewed their vows. At Evening Prayer our new Franciscan Office books were blessed (below).*



*Sister Mercedes McCann, RSM, Ph.D. presented on July 8th.*



*The annual Founder's Day program featured the history of the German Sisters coming to America. It was written and performed by Novice, Sister Mary Jane Schwartz, and two novitiate team members, Sisters Adrianna Schouten and Ann Carla Baumann.*



*Sister Natalie Biversie Community Director*



*Sister Julie Ann Sheahan reported on Vocation efforts.*



*Sister Mary Ann Spanjers and Sister Mary Ann Tupy presented committee reports.*



*Sister Myra Jean Sweigart gave the bursar's report.*



*Sister Adrianna Schouten presented a committee report.*



*July 9th—four Sisters in temporary vows renewed their vows during the all Community Mass. Pictures l to right: Sister Concepcion Medina, Sister Cecilia Joy Kugel, Sister Colleen Demro, and Sister Mary Teresa Bettag.*

*Photos on right—Candle procession and display honoring the Sisters who died in the last year for whom we were unable to have a funeral because of COVID 19.*





# Mass of Thanksgiving for Holy Family College

## Commentary for the Mass of Thanksgiving for Holy Family College June 30, 2021

We gather this morning to celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving to thank God for the many blessings that have come through Holy Family College. On November 14, 1935 Mother Generose wrote in a letter to the Community, "In order to comply with the requirement of Church and State in the work of education, we are obliged to build a small addition to the Convent.

Nineteen years later on Nov. 1, 1954, Mother Edna wrote to the Sisters. "As religious, our first task is to make ourselves fit for His service. As a Community we, the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity, have the obligation of training our young members properly for the work that will be assigned them, and in order to do that, we must build a college. When we sit to count up our assets, we find none except you and our Blessed Mother, Queen and Mistress of the Holy Family."

The College eventually opened its doors to educate women and men from across the county, the United States and the World. We remember in prayer the thousands of people who were a part of and whose lives were impacted by the Liberal Arts College in the Franciscan Catholic Tradition. The Franciscan Legacy will live on in the people who were educated at the College, those who educated them and all who ministered there.

We remember with love all who supported the College these past 86 years and we now pray the greatest prayer of Thanksgiving!





# News from Good Samaritan Convent, Zanesville, OH

## 1950's Cruise In

How long does it take to dress a Sister in the 1950's habit? It took three of us 45 minutes to dress Sister Bernadette Selinsky like that on June 6! The Cancer Center, where Sister works, had a "Celebration of Life" for their cancer survivors that day. The theme was the '50's Cruise In. There were a number of classic '50's cars in the area for "atmosphere" while the cancer survivors' cars cruised from one station to the next where they received animal balloons from the Hospice clowns and a bucket of munchie food, water, and a plant from the Cancer Center team. The team was dressed in the '50's style with poodle skirts, jeans of the day, even one pair of saddle shoes! Sister Bernadette fit right in with her '50's habit! (The joke of the day was when one elderly cancer survivor looked right at Sister Bernadette and said: "I don't know who you are, but I surely love Sister Bernadette who came to see me at the cancer



center!") Thanks to Sister Kay Warning who had kept parts of an old habit for all these years! We created the parts of the habit that were missing.

## Franciscan Home

When Sister Kay went out to get the morning newspaper one day, she was gifted with the beautiful sight of a tiny fawn nestled next to the front porch steps. The very next day this



same fawn was nestled right against our back door! Do you suppose the fawn has a "sixth sense" that tells her this is a Franciscan home and she would be welcome here?

Two years in a row on Memorial Day, in 2017 and 2018, a mother deer gave birth to a baby fawn in one of the court-yards of Genesis Hospital. Again was there a "sixth sense" that this was a Franciscan hospital and she would be welcome there??? It makes one wonder . . .

—Sister Bernadette Selinsky

## Mass Celebrating Life



*Archbishop Emeritus Robert Carlson posed with Sisters Sue Ann Hall and Delores Vogt.*

*St. Louis, Missouri*—On Friday August 13, Archbishop Emeritus Robert Carlson celebrated Mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe Convent for all of us from the Respect Life Apostolate. He joined us for lunch and shared some great stories.

In 2017 Sister Natalie and her Council said yes to Archbishop Carlson's request for two Sisters at Our Lady of Guadalupe Convent. Sister Sue Ann Hall and Sister Pat Sevcik arrived here on August 28, 2017 to provide prayer and hospitality for an end to abortion at the last Planned Parenthood in St. Louis, MO. Five

years ago on September 29, 2017 Archbishop Robert Carson blessed Our Lady of Guadalupe Convent.

Archbishop Robert Carlson retired in August 2020 and moved to Florida. This Spring he moved to St. Charles, MO (the first capital) and now helps with Masses and Confirmations in the St. Louis Archdiocese. Archbishop Emeritus Robert Carlson and Archbishop Mitchell Rozanski are wonderful supporters of the pro-life mission in St. Louis. God bless them!

—Sister Delores Vogt



# Summer Jubilee Celebrations



On May 14, 2021 the following Sisters celebrated their 61st anniversary of profession of religious vows. Their 2020 60th jubilee celebration was cancelled because of the Covid 19 pandemic. Pictured in front from l to r: Sister Rosita Bunge, Sister Ann Mary Hart, and Sister Marcollette Madden. Standing in back l to r: Sister Mary Victoria Koenig, Sister Antonice Lauer, Sister Emy Beth Furrer, and Sister Margey Schmelzle.

June 20, 2021—The Community celebration for our 2020 Golden Jubilarians and our 2021 Silver Jubilarians.



2020 Golden Jubilarians seated l to r: Sister Mary Karen Oudeans and Sister Anne Marie Lom. Standing l to r: Sister Rochelle Kerkhof, Sister Christine Stoller, Sister Mardelle Meinholz, Sister Mariadele Jacobs, and Sister Maria Goretti Scandaliato.



On May 23, 2021 the following Sisters celebrated their 75th anniversary of profession of religious vows. 1st photo—Sister Mary Bodwin and Sister Michael Majeskie. 2nd photo—Sister Alice Thome (seated). Standing l to r: Sister Humbeline Demers and Sister Paulus Maresb. 3rd photo—Seated l to r: Sister Theresa Schleis and Sister Mary Charles Hlinak. Standing l to r: Sister Rose Cecile Armbruster and Sister Pascal Baylon Klarkowski.



2021 Silver Jubilarians l to r: Sisters Mary Ann Tupy, Francis Mason, and Caritas Marie Le Claire.



June 27, 2021—Sisters celebrating 60 years of vowed commitment—seated l to r: Sister Annette Blonde, Sister Maureen Bomaster, Sister Jean Anne Moser, Sister Mary Lee Schommer, and Sister Lorita Gaffney. Standing l to r: Sister Anna Maar, Sister Barbara Jean Butler, and Sister Mariella Erdmann.



July 11, 2021  
Celebrating their 50th  
jubilee of  
religious profession of  
vows l to r:  
Sister Joy Rose,  
Sister Carol Juckem,  
Sister Pamela Biehl,  
and Sister Delores  
Wisnicky.



## Baptismal Consecration: Blessed are the Meek

The Beatitudes reveal the heart of the new law. Unlike the 10 Commandments, this new law is not written on tablets; it is not a list of cognitive propositions that can be known and then applied. The Beatitudes' enigma attests to this truth. Rather, the confounding *dicta* proclaimed in the Beatitudes put us face-to-face with the **person of Jesus as the new law**. In other words, **the new law** with which the Lord Jesus has surpassed the old law **is a person**, requiring an in-kind response of *my entire person*.

Few of the Beatitudes are as astonishing as "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land." <sup>Matt 5.5</sup> If we receive this beatitude with the fullness of our humanity "on" and with alert minds, we might feel a wave of skepticism wash over us. For starters, "meek" is understood generally as being a doormat; as permitting others to take advantage of us without defending ourselves. In an age where we are attentive to bullying in its many forms, no one in their right mind advocates for meekness. If **meek is weak**, who, in good conscience, can teach a child to be meek? On the contrary, we teach our children to stand up for themselves in the face of bullying. We teach our children not to be weak and to defend themselves.

To make matters worse, the Lord Jesus really seems to be "out of touch" when He assures his listeners that the meek (that is, the bullied, the conquered) will inherit the land. This assurance flies in the face of every human experience. Losers to bullies in war "lose" land; only the conquerors in war stand to gain anything at all, especially land. At this point, the one listening to Jesus either has the courage to explicitly write Him off; or lacking that courage, explicitly **says** "Yes, Jesus" but **lives** "No way, Jesus." In my own experience of thinking and praying this Beatitude, the only way out of these two responses is to *really focus hard* on Jesus and ask Him the honest question confounding me: "what do you mean?"

To get at what Jesus might mean, let's step back just a moment to focus on His Person (as suggested above). Jesus is both the Creator Word (through whom all came into existence) *and* a master teacher. As creator He *places* order in all things: as master teacher He *reveals* that order. Because the Beatitudes embody **the order of His Person as law**, it is possible, by grace, to discern that order either through study or contemplation and prayer (or both). These observations lead us to return to our reflections on the previous two beatitudes so that we can begin to see "the system" at work.

Jesus revealed as blessed those who are Poor in Spirit. In reflecting on that beatitude, we realized that the Poor in Spirit

are those who reject the lure of individualism and "willingly and completely depend on the living God, knowing that in this dependence is our very life." Poverty of Spirit is what establishes us in relationship to the living God and enables our persons to become a place of encounter (for ourselves and others) with the living God. Jesus then revealed that those who mourn will be comforted. What are we to mourn? Anything that is an obstacle to embracing our dependence on the living God. We are to mourn sin and, literally, its deadly impact on our lives. Those who mourn sin and its impact will be comforted by the living God *not* for a time, but for eternity in the resurrection.

At the heart of what we mourn when we mourn sin is precisely an individualist attitude to life that craves survival and sees both God and other human persons as competition (*a la* "Hunger Games"). We must renounce the hostility we feel toward others ("competition") along with our secret (or not so secret) desire to eliminate them. We do this by resolving *not to harm another*. In revealing the "meek" to be blessed, Jesus is revealing as blessed those who have firmly resolved *not to harm another* and, therefore, are resolved only to *do good to another*, even when the other is my enemy. Intentionally doing good to and for my enemy is the heart of what it means to be meek; a far cry from being weak, *most especially when* we end up bullied or betrayed.

Now, to understand why the meek inherit the land, it is helpful to think about land not only in a literal sense, but also in a metaphorical sense as the "fabric" of our relationships.

The non-meek individualist sees every "other" as an enemy and as competition to be destroyed in the interest of their survival. They reject God and blow through every other relationship, thus destroying any "land" they might possibly inherit. The meek, on the other hand, have embraced their dependence on the living God. In choosing to mourn sin and its impact on our lives, they choose to mourn anger and renounce hostility or the "making of war" on others (in the many ways we do this). The meek consciously choose to imitate God's love for *His* enemies. As a result, only the meek can inherit the rich land of relationship with God and others because **only the meek have not destroyed that land**.

Pope Francis summarizes all of this when he says "Meekness is yet another expression of the interior poverty of those who put their trust in God alone." *Gaudete et Exsultate*, 74 The meek inherit the earth in that "they will see God's promises accomplished in their lives." *GE*, 74 Saint Paul teaches us that meekness is a fruit of the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives. *Gal 5.23* Come Holy Spirit! Mold us into a perfect likeness of Jesus, meek and humble of heart!

© Sister Marie Kolbe Zamora, OSF, S.T.D.  
*smkolbeschol@gmail.com*



## First Profession of Vows



June 6, 2021—Sister Maria Guadalupe Martinez-Lopez pronounced her first vows (photo 1) and received the black veil of a professed Sister (photo 2). Photo 3—Sister Maria Guadalupe signs her vow card and the Community register. Sister Natalie Binversie, Community Director and Fr. Placid Stroik, OFM signed as witnesses. Photo 4—The Martinez-Lopez Family l to r: brother, Roben; sister, Fatima; Sister Maria Guadalupe; and parents, Ana and Ruben.

