

# Communigram

FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF CHRISTIAN CHARITY

## Founders' Day Program—*Animated Archives: A Goal Come to Life*

Talents of singing, playing instruments, and sharing dramatic roles were all on display in the 2021 version of the Founders' Day Program. Entitled *Animated Archives: A Goal Come to Life*, the program featured moments of history, humor and holiness. Sister Mary Jane Schwartz, second year novice, and Catherine Logan, postulant, starred along with team members, Sister Adrianna Schouten, Sister Ann Carla Baumann, Sister Carol Seidl, and Sister Winifred Crevier. Team members impersonated "saintly Sisters" who came back to share their life stories with Sister Mary Jane and Katie.

Stories included in the portrayal were: Sisters Richard Fitzpatrick, Christina Lemberger, Dolorose Goetzler, Reinhardt Herold, Richard Wagner, Placida Davey, Matthew Hegy, Vera Nagan, and Silvana Ulbrich. These Sisters were a mix of teachers, nurses, and homemakers—each was seen as portraying part of our yearly goal: to pray with faith, listen with hope and respond in love and trust. Some of the events in these biographical sketches were quite amazing and included a play by play descrip-

tion of the life of a homemaker and a nurse in by-gone days at our hospitals, a story of two Sisters who received degrees in Physical Education with a specialty in gymnastics (before 1925 mind you), and letters to Sisters Orestes Kolbeck and Justinian Hagel when they were novices sent out to teach.



The program was warmly received by audiences from St. Francis Convent, St. Rita Health Center, Chiara Convent and the Motherhouse Community. There will be a repeat performance this summer for those who couldn't join us at this time. We look forward to sharing our stories again!

—Sister Kathleen Murphy

## College Library Book Give-a-Way: November 19th and 20th



They came with boxes, bags, carts, and tools—often, with something specific in mind. The lady to the left was packing up boxes of history books. One man was loading shelves for the pantry he was building. A real dent was made in the collection these two days.

# The Faces of Grief



*Sister Anne Marie Lom* shares: “With the recent episodes of COVID deaths and disruptions, the topic of grief needed to be explored. I prepared a presentation given at three different times, covering each shift, for the employees of both Holy Family Convent in spring and St. Paul Elder Services in late summer.

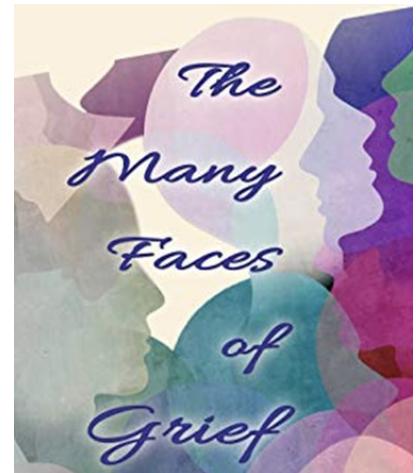
The feedback from these audiences was positive, so I share some notes with you. Feel free to use and share this information as you wish. As often as possible, I share my sources.”

## Causes of Grief

1. Any loss for example, during COVID, loss of celebrations for birthday, graduation, wedding, Church services, etc.
2. Inability to see loved ones, inability to say “good-bye”, missing a wake/funeral, loss of income, loss of friendship, etc.
3. Loss/death of pet
4. Loss of educational normalcy, beginning or ending of school: kindergarten, elementary, middle school, high school, college, etc.
5. Loss of health through disease, aging, accident, etc.
6. Loss of family/friends because of political or religious differences, vaccine participation, etc.
7. Collective/Group grief felt by a group, civic community, family, parish

When I sat  
with my  
anger long  
enough it  
told me its  
real name  
was grief.

8. Anticipatory grief of death by cancer, dementia, aging, etc.
9. Anticipatory grief due to diagnosis of terminal condition.
10. Exaggerated/prolonged grief: nightmares, self-destructive behaviors, drug abuse, thoughts of suicide, abnormal fears, and the development or emergence of psychiatric disorders.
11. Lost childhood, physical, sexual, verbal, psychological abuse, suicide in family, rupture in family relationships
12. Beware of entitlement behaviors: rule breaking, self-medication through food, alcohol, drugs, chemicals



*Image from a book of this title.*

Sources: <https://whatsyourgrief.com/types-of-grief/> and personal experiences

*Grief can take many forms.  
Sometimes it is immediate; sometimes it is delayed.*

## What is delayed/ incomplete grief?

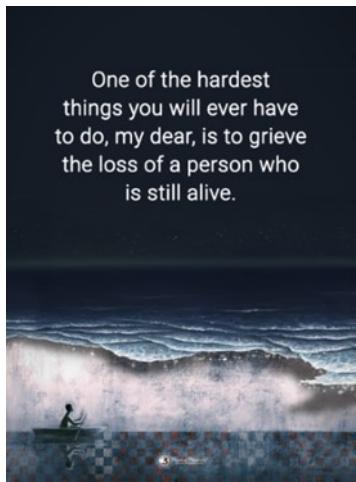
Delayed grief is just that: grief that you don't fully experience until quite a while after your loss.

**What are the symptoms of delayed grief?** If you're holding off on fully feeling your grief, you might find that it manifests in a different way. Headaches, irritability, aches and pains, anxiousness, mood swings, or feeling numb and apathetic are all typical delayed grief symptoms.

**And yet...** It's worth bearing in mind that everyone grieves differently. Not everyone cries when they lose someone, for example. What might be a sign of delayed grief in one person might just be another person's way of dealing with their loss.

*Continued on p. 3.*

# Grief (Continued from p. 6)



One of the hardest things you will ever have to do, my dear, is to grieve the loss of a person who is still alive.

Making funeral arrangements, sorting out child care and the home, looking after everyone else – if you’re the one who holds the family together, it can be hard to find time to properly grieve. One of the other factors contributing to delayed grief is if you had something significant to deal with immediately after your loss. A divorce, a big injury, a pregnancy or a major work event: anything that might have kept you from the usual grieving process.

## What to do about delayed grief?

- Look after your health.**
- Talk to your friends and family.**
- Make time to think.**
- Avoid unhealthy coping strategies.**
- Look for local bereavement support.**

I hope these tips will help you. Just remember, there’s no shame in asking for help. Don’t be afraid to reach out to friends and family for support while you take time to heal.

Source of above material: <https://beyond.life/help-centre/grief-loss-bereavement/what-is-delayed-grief>

Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/fixing-families/201706/six-signs-incomplete-grief>

## Some thoughts:

- Death is not the end of a relationship. After death you are perfectly understood by the deceased.
- Do not torture yourself with replaying self-defeating phrases: If only... I wish I could have...
- Blaming, finger pointing etc. are normal but unhealthy when prolonged.
- Put your grief to work: plan a memorial, write a letter, donate to a cause in someone's memory.

**What causes delayed grief?** There are a lot of different reasons why someone might experience delayed grief years later. Sometimes, the immediate grief can be too overwhelming to cope with, so you put off coming to terms with your loss until later. Shock and denial can play a big part. It's also not unusual for people to set their grief aside as they deal with practical problems, especially if they're 'the strong one' in the family.

## News Bits from Mexico

Our Migrant November 8 went very well. About 300 folks showed up, and we walked from a plaza downtown to a park near the border gate in the center of town. They had lots of new posters and messages to Pres. Biden about opening asylum again. One of the photos I am sending has an excellent message. "No excuses": The N is missing in the photo with the cell bars. A visiting Jesuit, Fr. Pepe, seated next to me for hearing some of the witness talks, lives at the same parish in San Francisco where my brother, Mike, attends. I took the selfie to send to Mike, but was glad I caught the poster. I stayed with the group from 8 until Noon, and the talks continued until 4:00 p.m. There were lots of little kids with Moms and Dads. The Kino Center sent a truck at 11:00 a.m. with sandwiches and bottles of water for all. They were happy about that, as by that time they would have come for food at the center. Good leadership came forth from among the migrants themselves.

I have begun Spanish classes three times a week with four Jamaicans who are stranded right now in Mexico. Not knowing other than GRACIAS, I am teaching them "survival Spanish," lots of useful phrases that they need and vocabulary that will help them in daily life. I do not know how long they will be around, but while here, they can learn. They seem very grateful.

—Sister Marlita Henseler



# JUST Gospel!

By Sister Kathleen Murphy  
Social Justice Commission

December is the time for waiting, praying, celebrating and drawing to a conclusion. It is also the time for us to join with Pope Francis in praying for catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God: may they be its witnesses, with courage and creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Somewhat sadly, the thesaurus offers three synonyms for catechist: lecturer, moralizer and preacher. Not finding inspiration there, we can turn to the root of the term catechist which is derived from the Greek katekhein. This translates as, “to instruct orally, to resound in someone’s ear, to teach by word of mouth”. Such an inspiring understanding sets the tone for prayer on behalf of those who join us in all the actions of this busy month.

The Book of Wisdom proclaims, “When peaceful silence lay over all, and night had run the half of her swift course, down from the heavens, from the royal throne, leapt your all-powerful Word.” (Wis. 18:14-15) This Word who is Jesus is not to be contained or quieted, but is to be announced particularly at this time of year. Pope Francis writes in an Advent address, “God is present in the history of humanity, He is the ‘God-with-us’, He walks beside us to support us.” Ours is a God of action, of participation. His Word leaps down from heaven, not to simply come to rest, but to continue that vibrant movement among His people. This God-who-acts is still with us today and longs to live and work and inspire and teach and preach through us and particularly through the ministry of those who are catechists in a direct way.

But what does this ministry, this calling have to do with the practice of social justice? If we take the Pope’s lead in thinking of catechists as ones who are summoned to “witness with courage and creativity in the power of the Holy Spirit”, then the ties to the practice of social justice become clearer.

In an editorial in America magazine, Rebecca Collins Jordan writes: “We’re naturally waiting these days, for vaccines and outings and reunions with family and live music and normalcy, whatever that once was. I remember when waiting felt countercultural and new, when I had to intentionally pause my life. But I don’t feel that way this year. The need for the Nativity is so clear to me this year—is it clearer for you, too?

Throughout the ages, Advent and Christmas have called people to meditate on what we all are collectively bringing to birth. What might we uncover? How do we birth a kinder, gentler, more just world this year? Advent offers a moment each year to be midwives to new visions of justice, visions revealed in the traumas of the waning year.”

Another catechist, Melanie L. Harris writes in *U.S. Catholic* magazine: It is time for all of us to live a new way of being with the Earth and with each other. Carrying forth an antiracist, Earth-honoring faith is to map a new way of being. Live more fully into the challenge to be justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. Be light. Be justice. Stop and notice.”

Finally, as we anticipate the celebration of the Incarnation and ponder how we can personally help to catechize the world we touch, and pray for those who announce the Word to even further reaches, we may take inspiration from the poem, *The Work of Christmas Begins*.

When the carols have been stilled,  
When the star-topped tree is taken down,  
When family and friends are gone home,  
When we are back to our schedules  
The work of Christmas begins:

To welcome the refugee,  
To heal a broken planet,  
To feed the hungry,  
To build bridges of trust, not walls of fear,  
To share our gifts,  
To seek justice and peace for all people,  
To bring Christ’s light to the world.

- by Michael Dougherty, a variation on Howard Thurman's  
*'When the Song of the Angels is Stilled'*

May these December days of inspiration find you pondering the thoughts of Pope Francis as well as these authors and announcing the Word of God as you can with courage and creativity!

## And Then There Were None

This Christmas our Sisters at the Motherhouse and St. Francis Convent will be actively promoting the spirit of LIFE by joining in efforts to limit abortions. They are participating in a program called *And Then There Were None* (ATTWN). This program engages volunteers in sending messages of love to workers in abortion clinics who are having a conversion of heart and wish to leave the abortion industry.

This ministry is based on a letter-writing process whereby abortion workers are invited to reach out to ATTWN. To those who do respond, support is provided through limited transitional financial assistance, legal help for whistleblowers, licensed professional counseling services, healing retreats, scholarship opportunities, spiritual advisory services, the opportunity to share their stories of conversion, and more. ATTWN truly uses a relational model to walk with each one of these workers in their exodus from the abortion industry.

Over 40 of our Sisters have volunteered to participate in ATTWN's Christmas card project. Cards, stamps, envelopes, and a suggested script are provided by ATTWN. The Sisters will write the scripted message or compose their own to be sent to over 50 abortion clinics in Wisconsin, Colorado and Florida. The card will contain contact information for ATTWN should an employee choose to reach out. To protect our privacy, the Sisters will sign only their first names and the return address on the cards we send will be the P.O. box of ATTWN. Each envelope will include a business card with ATTWN contact information and services provided.

There is no assurance that the person who opens the card at the abortion clinic will pass it on to workers. However, the Spirit IS at work. So far ATTWN has been able to help over 575 men and woman walk away from the abortion industry forever.

The scripted message can include, but is not limited to,

“My Sisters and I have been praying especially for you this Advent and Christmas season.  
All life is precious, including yours.  
Peace and joy are waiting for you.”

Please join us in prayer that these sincere messages will reach receptive minds and hearts as we seek to spread the gift of LIFE this Christmas Season.

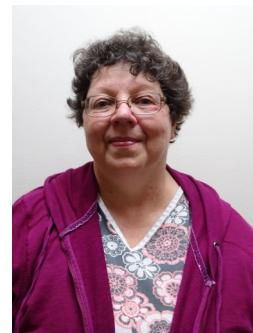
*Submitted by Sister Leonette Kochan*

## Employees Honored

Sixteen employees of Holy Family Convent were honored this past month for years of service completed in 2020. The traditional dinner to honor them was put off last spring because of the pandemic. Instead, Sister Elaine Turba, Human Resource Director, and their immediate supervisor presented them with their gift, individually.



Joe Spurney  
40 years



Lori Bauknecht  
30 years



Irene Novak  
30 years



Karen Huske  
15 years



Barb Pieschak  
15 years



Angie Schulz  
15 years



Kerry Belongia  
10 years



Jon Kaderabek  
10 years



Barb Backus  
5 years



Mirka Jones  
5 years



Tom Meissner  
5 years



Jodi Rogala  
5 years



Megan Schaefer  
5 years



Mary Seichter  
5 years



Maisee Vu  
5 years

Joyce Sukowaty—5 years (No photo available)

*Photos by Sister Elaine Turba*

# Michigan Universities Nun Run with Franciscan Sisters and Sisters of St. Paul Chartres



Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity and Sisters of St. Paul Chartres were joined by eleven young women from Lake Superior State University, Michigan Tech and Northern Michigan University on a Nun Run November 5-7, 2021. It was an opportunity to visit us and experience our Consecrated Life. Our pilgrimage began at Koski Corners in Champion, Michigan. While Sister Jacqueline Spaniola arrived with passengers from Houghton, Michigan, Sister Carol Seidl and Sister Julie Ann Sheahan welcomed students from other locations into two vans. The next official stop was Holy Family Convent, Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity Motherhouse in Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

On arrival guests first dropped off personal items in their individual rooms in guest houses within walking distances from the Motherhouse. Sister Linda Brandes and our Sisters in Initial Formation were prepared to serve a simple supper and enjoy some initial conversation with our visitors. A video on The Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help, Champion, Wisconsin was next shared to better prepare everyone for Saturday's travel itinerary. Night Prayer followed in St. Francis Chapel.

Indeed, prayer was an important part of the weekend. Saturday began with morning prayer followed by Eucharist and breakfast. Next, Sister Jacqueline offered a scriptural reflection on Jesus the Bridegroom as an introduction to a Eucharistic Holy Hour in St. Francis Chapel. Moving from contemplation to action, Sister Cecilia Joy Kugel lead the group in a Motherhouse tour allowing plenty of time for everyone to explore the grounds around the Motherhouse.

After lunch as our convent 'Angelus bells' rang at noon on Saturday, pilgrims departed for Our Lady of Good Help

Shrine. The group made the most of their time of personal prayer at this only one of its kind National Marian apparition spot only 40 minutes from Manitowoc. Continuing our travels, we stopped at a nearby Devotional Chapel and Rosary Prayer Garden open year-round about five miles east of Denmark, Wisconsin in the small town of Curran.



More of our Franciscan Sisters joined us for Mass at St. Francis of Assisi Parish Church on Grand Avenue and some served as musicians for the liturgy. The evening included a taco and ice cream bar at Chiara Convent with outside s'mores and indoor board games.

Sunday, we headed after breakfast to visit the Sisters of St. Paul Chartre in Escanaba. We toured Bishop Noa Home for Senior Citizens, a beautiful setting offering quality services of various kinds of care. We were able to meet one



of the residents, Gail Houle, wife of Irving C. "Francis" Houle who received the wounds of Christ in his hands. He was 67 years old when he received the stigmata on Good Friday, April 8, 1993. His wife attested that Francis Houle was a humble man who didn't appear out of the ordinary where he lived in Escanaba, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. But he had the stigmata for nearly 16 years when he died on Jan. 3, 2009, at age 83.

After enjoying lunch with the Sisters, learning about their international flavor of living religious life and touring more of their wonderful facilities and convent home, pilgrims completed their journeys to Northern Michigan University Campus Ministry, Koski Corners or Houghton. God gave us a safe and memorable time of learning, sharing and praying together. May St. Francis and St. Paul continue to intercede for us.

# Catholic Youth Pilgrimage to Palisade, Nebraska for Religious Education Experience

*Sister Rochelle Kerkhof shared a recent field trip with Catholic Youth from St. James Parish, Trenton, Nebraska to Holy Family Parish Church and Mihm Hall in Palisade, Nebraska.*

CYO students from St. James Parish, Trenton, NE traveled to one of two 'Mission Churches' served by Fr. Christopher Miller on October 27 as a religious education field trip experience. Their destination? Holy Family Parish Church and Mihm Hall situated in Palisade, Nebraska. Sister Rochelle Kerkhof, Youth Minister for the Grant Deanery, coordinated the event.

Holy Family parishioners welcomed students to a delicious, homemade meal, followed by an informative program outlining the history of Holy Family Church, dedicated on April 22, 1917, and, the more recently built 'Mihm Hall' in 2013. Mihm Hall serves as a gathering space for village and parish functions, as well as religious education classes and as a reception area for sacramental celebrations.

Interior photos of the Church's previous physical appearance and structure demonstrated to students that a total renovation of the Church building has taken place. In 2017, Holy Family Church had a complete structural renovation and face lifting in preparation for its 100<sup>th</sup> Centennial Celebration.

Two unique facts about Holy Family Church: 1.) A local Methodist businessperson paid for the building of the original Church; many of his employees were Catholic and



*CYO students listen attentively to parishioner, Jon Anderjaska, explaining details of Holy Family Church's beautiful interior design and decorum in spite of resource and limitations.*

he wanted them to stay in the area. 2.) Holy Family Church has the distinction of being the smallest Catholic church in the Diocese of Lincoln.

At the conclusion of this visit, students commented: "Very innovative!" "How very small it is, but it works so well." "How churches learn to work within their resources." "Great Craftsmanship!"

The overall theme for this CYO season is "How do Catholics Worship and Why?" The goal of this study is that students gain a sense of the value of religious faith worship and practices carrying them into their adult life forever.

*With the October General Synod over, Sister Marie Kolbe had occasion to meet with some friends from her student years in Rome. She shares: My tendency to dodge the camera at public functions means that I do not often have a picture of myself to send home. However, this was such a happy reunion that we wanted a good picture taken we asked a random client at the restaurant to take it.*

Fr. Mario was a seminarian when I was a student at the Greg [Pontifical Gregorian University] studying for the Diocese of Catania on the southern shore of Sicily. He has been a priest for 15 years; at first was the Youth Minister for his Diocese. He is now the pastor of a parish. Alberta, who was a house-mate of mine at Via dell'Arancio, and I drove down to Catania for his Diaconal ordination. I can still hear the congregation singing with all their heart. This trip was my introduction to Sicily, where Alberta had lived for several years. Alberta was two years ahead of me in Dogma, so we traded many, many notes. Actually, I could not have written my dissertation without her collaboration, and she would probably say the same about her dissertation in relation to me. It continues to be a joy to cite her in my work whenever I can. She is now a professor at the Greg. We had a lovely lunch, laughed so much—all amazed that we were able to sit at the same table again.



## On the Road

Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity took a recent road trip to St. Katharine, Beaver Dam, Wisconsin for the noon Spanish Mass. Even before seeing the church, we knew we would feel at home here. Why? Because of our own appreciation for history and tradition, it is so meaningful to walk into a 120-year-old building. This is holy ground. Our hearts felt at one with the people of the past, present and future in this space.



Before the liturgy began, we were able to visit the beautiful Eucharistic Chapel. The tabernacle is located in the wall between the sanctuary and the Eucharistic chapel itself. Jesus's Eucharistic presence is truly present from either side. The steps leading to the tabernacle on the chapel side are a good reminder of God being found in mountain top experiences. Mount Laverna for St. Francis and Mount Tabor for Jesus jogged our memory in this special space as we knelt aware of the heights of God's majesty taking in the scene.

In the midst of the first snow fall of the season, we were on the road to St. Henry Parish, Watertown, Wisconsin for an early afternoon Hispanic Sunday Mass. Approaching downtown, the church couldn't be a more impressive building. Like our religious community, the early congregation was founded by a faithful group of German immigrants. Today, too, it is comprised of a mosaic of multi-cultural interests and backgrounds.



On entering the gathering space, we were immediately welcomed by a family who were happy to serve in all aspects of liturgy. They were friendly greeters, ushers, readers and passed on important announcements. Fr. Jorge Antonio Miramontes was the presider. A choir of singers, guitarists, and rhythm instrumentalists led the congregation of young families. Music was selected from brand new song books. The people were proud of this new purchase.

*—Sister Julie Ann Sheahan*