

# Communigram

FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF CHRISTIAN CHARITY

## Bapchule St. Peter Mission Adds High School

As the saying goes, “All good things take time.” Ten years to be exact. Back in 2013, Bishop Olmsted of the Phoenix Diocese proposed, in casual conversation, if St. Peter would ever consider beginning a high school. One that would broaden the world of the students, opening new doors and placing them on a pathway to success. At that time, it only seemed a dream, however, with the help of the Franciscan Friars of the Holy Spirit and the graces of God, the high school is now a reality.



In 2015, Bishop Olmsted asked the Friars to conduct a study to gauge the feasibility of a Catholic High School on the reservation. The Friars worked with Cana Institute and the back work was off to a start. The study covered a number of areas including input from the families on the reservation, input from current students, possible building sites and a well drawn out four-year curriculum. This study became the framework from which the high school took shape.

As Sister Pamela Catherine was working towards an administration degree through Arizona State University the tangible pieces of the high school began to come together beginning with an Action Plan detailing the structure of the school, a proposed budget for the first year and another in looking ahead at a building project. Much time was spent in gathering together the finer details in order to present this plan to the Diocese, the Tribe and our Community. In August of 2022, the newly installed Bishop Dolan, visited the Mission and gave his blessing for the opening of the high school in the fall of 2023. During this past summer, the Action Plan evolved into a reality with the ordering of books and uniforms, the hiring of teachers, the gathering of classroom furniture, the preparation for temporary classroom usage and the gathering of various materials needed for each of the courses.



The school structure is three tiered. The first tier consists of traditional high school academics following a block schedule format with 70-

minute class periods. The second tier consists of Career Technical Education (CTE). Three CTE classes are being offered this first year and include Auto Mechanics, Cabinet Making, and Culinary. There is a possible fourth class in the making, Graphic Design. The third tier begins during the sophomore year and consists of an internship program similar to the Christo Rey model. Partnerships have been established with the Boys and Girls Club of Mesa, AZ and also with the Tribe to provide paid internships for the students. Stipends will be used to pay for the students' education.

This first year, we opened with the freshmen class of 15 students. We began the year reflecting upon the Parable of the Mustard Seed with our small beginning placing our trust in God's hands to continue to guide us as we grow. There have been numerous times when we didn't think something possible and God has

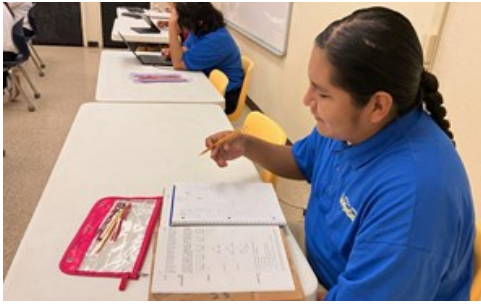
opened a door each time. He truly is in charge of this endeavor. We have also reflected upon the fact that St. Peter Mission began 100 years ago with only 12

students and we marvel at the growth God has provided.

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## High School

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The close of the first quarter is fast approaching and St. Peter Catholic High School is doing quite well. We had a few hiccups in the beginnings, growing pains as we like to call them, but the past month has gone smoothly and we are in the midst of planning a homecoming for the freshmen class. Students absolutely LOVE their CTE classes. These are held at the end of the day when students should be dragging their feet, wanting to go home. Instead, students are changing into their coveralls, or putting on their chef



hats with a renewed energy, ready to use their hands to create, repair, build, cook Another favorite time of their day is United States Military Appreciation Program (USMA). This is our precursor course to ROTC, which we hope to have in full swing by their sophomore year.



Do you recall the name Fabian Terry? He is the gentleman who wears many hats and his latest being our PR person for vocations. His niece, Kaylin, teaches Career Explorations and Culinary while his nephew, Aram Coleman, who currently serves our country in the U.S. Army Reserves, teaches USMA and assists in the PE class. We have nicknamed the mission; Terry Town as Fabian's mom works in the office and another niece is a teacher aide. This family defines dedication.

We are hoping to break ground for the high school in October and recently had a very uplifting meeting with East Valley Institute of Technology (EVIT), the cream-of-the-crop of CTE schools in Arizona who would like to partner

with us and create an EVIT campus on our school grounds. This will not only serve our students, but also those in the surrounding area which includes, Chandler students, Casa Grande, Maricopa and Ak Chin. Again, God is very busy and at work. Our students will be bussed to their Mesa campus over the next few years until we have the facility here on the Mission grounds for EVIT to function as a school. CTE will take place in the morning and academics in the afternoon.



We want to thank all of you for your prayers and support as we continue to grow and expand. Your prayers are truly felt and our students are benefiting greatly. We thank our many benefactors who have supported the school both financially and with their prayers. We also praise and thank God for making the impossible possible as we continue to carry out His Will. He truly amazes us! To God be the Glory!

*Sister Pamela Catherine Peasel*

## Celebrating Centenarian Three

Congratulations to Sister Mary Charles Hlinak, who celebrated 100 years of life on Saturday, September 16, 2023! Sister has reached this memorable age with amazing energy and saintly humility. Her celebration included a special remembrance at the 10:30 am St. Rita Liturgy. A birthday party in the afternoon gave her family and the Sisters an opportunity to greet her and enjoy a treat of cake and ice cream. Sister Mary Charles also received meaningful cards and generous gifts to help her celebrate. Our three Community Centenarians, Sister Cabrini Schmidt, Sister Cyrilla Jackels and Sister Mary Charles, give each of us immeasurable hope and joy. God bless each of you with His Hundredfold.

*St. Rita Sister Team*

Photo: Sister Sue Ann Hall with Sister Mary Charles.





## Sister Teachers Attend Vocation Workshop

Sister Mary Ann Spanjers and Sister Mary Teresa Bettag recently attended the Tucson Diocese Vocation Workshop for Catholic School Teachers. Sister Mary Ann teaches at San Miguel High School, Tucson and Sister Mary Teresa is on the faculty at Yuma Catholic High School, Yuma.

Sister Mary Teresa commented: "We actually had a vocations workshop today at the Diocese of Tucson headquarters for all theology teachers and grade school classroom teachers – it was good – especially because I got

to see Sister Mary Ann! There was one of our posters in front of the cathedral that our other theology teachers noticed right away."

Since the workshop, Sister Mary Ann reported: I have a teacher in Douglas, at Loretto Catholic school communicating with me asking if he can show some of our You tube and other interesting parts of our website! I assured him that he is free to show anything on our website with our blessing! We will continue to promote on a grassroots level!"

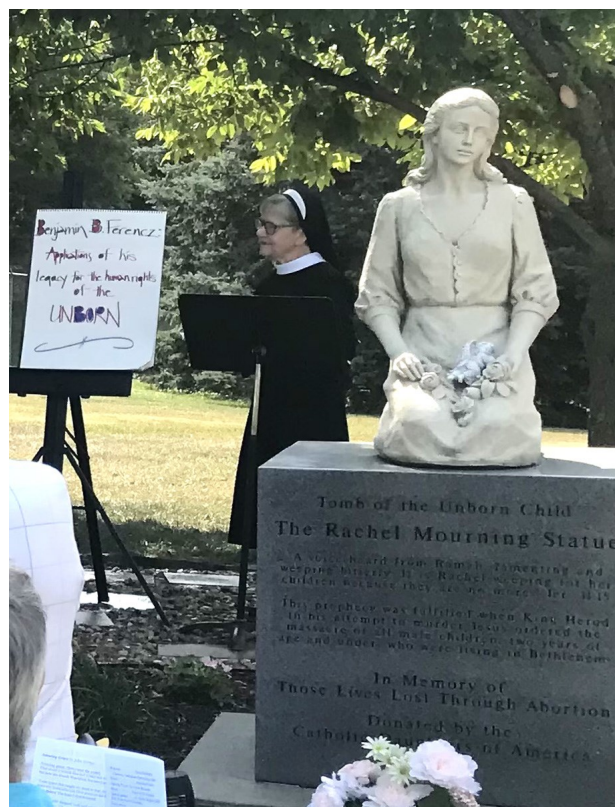
## National Day of Prayer for Victims of Abortion

On September 9th, a very solemn and prayerful group of *Nebraskans Embracing Life* gathered around a beautiful statue of *Rachel Weeping* to remember babies either aborted or miscarried and to solemnly resolve to never rest until every unborn baby is guaranteed the right to see the light of day.

I was privileged to address the audience on the life and legacy of Benjamin B. Ferencz, the last surviving prosecutor of the Nuremberg trials, who died recently at the age of 103. The legacy he bequeaths us is rich. First, as chief prosecutor for the Einsatzgruppen trial and, second, for his selfless dedication to establishing the International Criminal Court guaranteeing anyone committing international atrocities--like those of the Nazi regime--would be brought to justice.

In his last public address at the Cath-

olic University of America shortly before he died, it felt like Benjamin B. Ferencz was speaking directly to all who champion the rights of the unborn. "We are looking for human rights," he insisted, "and no one is to be treated as sub-human, or unworthy of being saved. We are trying to advance the principle that all human beings are entitled to be treated as human beings. If we can contribute to that, we should. If we cannot contribute to that, if we believe we ought to be superior people, and that we can treat other people as inferior, then we have our own conscience to deal with. I hope you will finally decide to show that you are believers in equal rights for all people regardless of their race or religion or anything else. And that's what I hope you will stand for."



PS: The challenge of the setting--no electricity--required me to revert to the old visual aids standbys--a tripod and a poster tablet. Many roads lead to Rome.

*Sister Renee Mirkes*

# Labor Day Community Outing in the Desert

Sunday September 3<sup>rd</sup> Sisters Rosalyn, Mary Ann, Marlita and Carla went to Yuma to enjoy the day with our Sisters. Sisters Mary Beth, Ann Mary, Janet and Mary Teresa welcomed us to their home and prepared a wonderful picnic lunch. Sister Marlita and Sister Rosalyn enjoyed a tour of the Convent. Sister Carla enjoyed a bit of puzzle making, Sister Mary Ann helped Sister Mary Teresa with the grilling and all enjoyed playing the game, Catch Phrase.

During the afternoon a former student of Sister Mary Ann dropped in for a visit and treated us with fresh baked brownies. All prayed Evening Prayer together before the Tucson community started the journey back home. It was a real blessing to spend the day together and God blessed our travel with light traffic.

*Sister Carla Riach*



Standing l to r: Sisters Mary Beth Kornely, Mary Ann Spanjers, Marlita Henseler, Mary Teresa Bettag and Janet Rose. Seated l to r: Sisters Carla Riach, Rosalyn Muraski and Ann Mary Hart.

# Holy Family School Festival

On September 16th, Holy Family Catholic School in Green Bay had celebrated their Fall Festival. This was the first day the heat broke and it was beginning to cool down in Green Bay. In the cafeteria they had raffles, and silent auctions. Also, inside they had a wonderful bake sale with many delicious treats. On the school parking lot many families enjoyed the prize booths and bouncy house.

Sisters Jan Villemure, Anne Marie Selinsky and Elena Gonzales had the joy of heading the corn hole toss. Many families came to our booth to win prizes. A fourth-grade girl took the most prizes she made 15 corn holes.

Blessings from St. Agnes Convent, Green Bay.

*Sister Elena Gonzales*



# 176th Guernsey County Fair



Cambridge, Ohio—Sisters Carol Juckem, Mariadele Jacobs and Sharon Paul from St. Benedict’s Convent, attended the 176<sup>th</sup> Guernsey County Fair on September 13. Many animals were displayed and a few students from our school enjoyed winning ribbons. The Senior Citizens tent provided live music entertainment every hour. The Sisters enjoyed lunch

while the Lord provided a gorgeous, sunny, cool day.

Pictures: A look at the sulky races.

Sister Carol stopped by the funnel cakes and we all enjoyed sharing this dessert.

Sister Sharon found the turkeys.



Sister Mariadele Jacobs checks in on our honking friend.

## Change is in the air at the Franciscan Center INC

Hello from The Franciscan Center! As of August 2023, newly becoming incorporated we are now under the umbrella of the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity Ministries Office. We are the Franciscan Center for Music Education and Performance but just with a new shorter name, **Franciscan Center**. The services provided through the center include event venue rentals and educational programs through the Conservatory of Music.

New to the team is Sister Joellen Kohlmann, Mission Leader and volunteer Financial Assistant, and all-around assistant whenever possible. After nearly fifty years in education, she enjoys this refreshing new beginning. Also new to the Franciscan Center is Charyce Welch, Events Coordinator who has quickly made an impact. Everyone especially loves the new look to our marquee which she accomplished on her first day on the job. She has also been busy researching, advertising and managing many events.



Everyone is eager for a year filled with lessons, group classes, recitals, the concert series, and venue rentals from birthday parties, business meetings to class reunions and galas.

With Sister Carol Ann Gambsky as Administrator, Dr. Stanislava Varshavski, Director of Music Education and teacher, and many other professionals the future looks very bright for the **Franciscan Center**.

*Sister Joellen Kohlman*

# JUST Gospel!

By Sister Kathleen Murphy

Did you know that October 1-7 is Junk Mail Awareness Week? Junk mail, Spam and all of those “nuisance” types of communication usually prove worthy of being ignored rather than being attended to. Pope Francis’ intention for this month leads in a different direction. He calls for attentiveness in the form of listening and dialogue. The intention reads: **Let us pray for the Church, that she may adopt listening and dialogue as a style of life at every level, allowing herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit towards the world’s peripheries.**

Marilyn Nelson, in her poem *Generous Listening*, writes:

A conversation can be a contest,  
or a game of catch with invisible balloons...  
Out of gray matter a star spark of thought  
leaps between synapses into the air,  
and pours through gray matter, into my heart:  
how can I not listen generously?

The dictionary defines listening very simply. Listening is to give one's attention to a sound.

We see this definition in action when the Prophet Elijah recognizes God in the sound of the gentle breeze as well as when those gathered in the upper room hear the noise like a strong driving wind and are then filled with the Spirit. We also note that in both of these accounts of Scriptural sounds, they are attended to and then acted upon. The poet Alice Duer Miller writes: *You can listen like a blank wall or like a splendid auditorium where every sound comes back fuller and richer.*

It seems that Pope Francis desires us to be the listener who acts on what is heard and who echoes back the sound in tones that are fuller and richer for our having absorbed the message. In a blog on listening, William Clemens states, *to listen is to see the beauty and worth in another and embrace this by joining another in his or her own life's journey, wherever they may be, in whatever they are going through. St. John Vianney teaches us that listening can save lives. Regardless of how small a conversation may be, to listen is to embrace another, to shine forth that spirit of community that builds the foundation for the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. Each and every person has something to say and is worth the time.*

As the pope announced the current synod on synodality he reminded us that *it is all about listening—such that, for many, the question becomes, “But to whom? Someone has to speak!”* The Holy

Father answers this question when he says that the Holy Spirit is the protagonist of the synod. He goes on to say that, *faith is born from listening, and is strengthened by proclamation.* Thus, we hear that prayerful listening to the Spirit is a first requirement. Then we are to act on what we’ve heard from the Holy Spirit as well as from other listeners. Such action is as important as the listening.

In an article entitled *The Joy of Listening and Walking Together*, Geevarghese Kaithavana reminds us, *Synodality is not a new concept. In fact, the call for listening and dialogue is not the innovation of Pope Francis. It is not a new way of doing things in the Church. Listening was the practice of the Early Church. Whenever there was a problem, the leaders convoked the entire community and they listened to all of the faithful.* You may be interested in taking a deeper look at this entire article by checking out this link.

[Geevarghese Kaithavana The Joy of Listening and Walking Together | Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church \(catholicethics.com\)](http://catholicethics.com)

In another homily, Pope Francis asks, *In the Church, are we good at listening? How good is the hearing of our heart? Let us not soundproof our hearts.* This notion of sensitive listening particularly applies to any intersections we experience with those on the peripheries. Though we may not have occasion to listen directly to the poor, the immigrant, the refugee, the prisoner, or the addict we can keep ourselves current and knowledgeable about the needs of such groups so that our hearts will not become soundproofed in regard to their plight

Jessica Powers, in her poem *To Live With the Spirit*, captures in beautiful language a sense of what Pope Francis desires in the Church community. In part, the poem says,

*To live with the Spirit of God is to be a listener.  
It is to keep the vigil of mystery,  
earthless and still.*

*One leans to catch the stirring of the Spirit,  
strange as the wind's will.*

*The soul that walks where the wind of the Spirit blows  
turns like a wandering weather-vane toward love.*

Let us make such soulful listening a way of life in this time of the Synod.

## Celebrating Community Days

The St. Rita Sisters celebrated their Community Days on September 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. Sister Elizabeth Benvie and the Sister Team members planned a business-meeting day on Tuesday, September 5. Besides the St. Rita Healthcare Community local business items, the agenda included introducing the St. Rita Community Monthly Spiritual Focus for 2023-2024, which is “Act Justly, Love Tenderly and Walk Humbly with God.” The Sisters also gave their responses following the reading of Pope Francis’ message. Sister Elizabeth reminded the St. Rita Sisters that the way they participate in the mission of the Church is to “pray and suffer for the needs of others as we daily unite ourselves to our good and loving God.”

Friday, September 8, featured an Ice Cream Social with each of the St. Rita Sisters’ Buddy [Sisters from the Motherhouse]. What a treat for all! Vanilla ice cream with all the toppings was the menu. Without a doubt, the Ice Cream Social was most enjoyable, not forgetting to mention all the visiting with each other. We thank God for blessing our St. Rita Sisters.

*The St. Rita Sister’s Sister Team*



## Vocations Event: Priesthood Sunday Pizza Party

Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity celebrated with the Immaculate Conception Parish, Yuma, Arizona the call of priesthood. A potluck pizza party was held to honor the priests and to talk about vocation efforts that are starting to be made in the parish. The Sisters were invited to share a few words as well.

This was the first event with more to come! May our Blessed Mother intercede for us.

## Pregnancy Center Fundraising Banquet

The Franciscan sisters of Christian Charity from St. Benedict’s Convent, Cambridge, Ohio attended the 13<sup>th</sup>. Annual Open Arms Pregnancy Center Fundraising Banquet at Deerassic Park on September 14, 2023. There were 39 tables of 8 people & 8 church sponsors & 10 other table sponsors including the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity, Manitowoc, WI.

The speaker was Roland Warren, President & CEO of Care Net which is a nonprofit organization that supports one of the largest networks of

pregnancy centers in North America & helps with providing pregnancy decision coaching.

Mr. Norman said there are 2,500 Pregnancy centers in N. Am. doing amazing work, but they need the help of 405,000 churches & their pastors to lead the way. “We need “first responders” in every church to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of women, men & children facing pregnancy decisions.” “I have come so that they may have LIFE and have it to the full.” Jn. 10:10

*Sister Sharon Paul*



*Enjoying the dinner: Sisters Mariadele Jacobs, and Carol Juckem, Barbara Mingione and Sister Sharon Paul.*

**FRANCISCAN SISTERS  
OF CHRISTIAN CHARITY**

Holy Family Convent  
2409 S Alverno Rd  
Manitowoc, WI 54220

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

**FALL 23  
Discernment  
Retreats and Events**

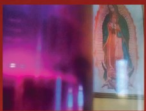
FOR SINGLE CATHOLIC WOMEN 20-35



**October 13-15 or November 17-19:**  
Saints Francis and Clare "Saints of  
Light" In Person or Zoom Retreat  
*Prayerfully explore how St. Francis and  
St. Clare illuminate our Catholic Faith*



**October 20-22:** Discernment of  
Spirits Retreat  
*Silent retreat to guide in your decision  
making and spiritual life. Based on  
St. Ignatius Spiritual Exercises.*



**November 29:** Living the  
Buzzwords of Advent:  
Wait, Watch and Prepare  
*A One Hour Zoom to inspire a  
more prayerful Advent*

Visit [fsc-calledtobe.org](http://fsc-calledtobe.org)

**FRANCISCAN SISTERS**  
*of Christian Charity*

**God Calls You.  
We Invite You**



## Angels Watch Over Us!

On Thursday, September 21, 2023, Sister Elizabeth Benvie was peering out of a Sister's hospital room window when she spotted an angel in the sky! It appeared to be a visible sign that God was reminding us that he sends angels to watch over us. As we celebrate the Feast of the Archangels on September 29 and the Feast of our Guardian Angels on October 2, we can thank God for the presence of these heavenly beings sent by God to strengthen, comfort and give us courage as we journey through life