

Communigram

FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF CHRISTIAN CHARITY

Franciscan Sisters' Chapel Decreed Green Bay Diocese Pilgrimage Site

Most Reverend David Laurin Ricken, DD, JCL, Bishop of the Diocese of Green Bay, has issued a decree in this Jubilee Year in Commemoration of the 800th Anniversary of the Death of Saint Francis of Assisi (1226-2026). The decree begins with the words:

“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Mindful of the singular witness of Saint Francis of Assisi, whose life of evangelical poverty, peace and love for all creation continues to inspire the Church and the world, and recognizing the significance of the 800th anniversary of his blessed passing into eternal life (October 3, 1226-October 3, 2026) to commemorate the Jubilee Year, in accordance with the will of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV, which began January 10, 2026 through January 10, 2027.

This observance is currently in progress and shall conclude on January 10, 2027, inviting all the faithful to renewed conversion, deeper discipleship, and joyful witness to the Gospel in the spirit of the Poverello (the little poor one) of Assisi.”

The decree continues: “To assist the faithful in this holy observance and to encourage spiritual renewal, the following sacred place within the Diocese of Green Bay is hereby designated as a pilgrimage site for the duration of this commemorative year:

St Francis Chapel, Holy Family Convent,
2409 S Alverno Rd, Manitowoc, WI 54220.

The chapel shall be open to pilgrims and visitors **seven days a week from 12:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m.** At this designated site and any other Franciscan site, the faithful may obtain special graces in the form of a plenary indulgence under the usual conditions through:

Devout participation in Holy Mass
Reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father

Acts of charity, especially toward the poor

Elderly, sick, caregivers and home-bound individuals can receive a Plenary indulgence if they are free from sin, intend to complete the usual conditions when able and spiritually join the jubilee celebrations-offering their prayers and daily sufferings to God.

May this Jubilee observance renew within the hearts of the faithful a

spirit of holiness, simplicity, peace and evangelical charity through the intercession of Saint Francis of Assisi.”

Pilgrims have visited from Clintonville, Manitowoc, Whitelaw, Kaukauna, Luxemburg, Green Bay, Oneida, Ashwaubenon, Reedsville, Chilton, West Powell, TN, Sombart, FL, Newton, Kiel, Preston, IA, Two Rivers, Sheboygan, Cecil, and Sauk City. Some individuals were from Tennessee, Florida, Illinois and Iowa.



Pilgrimage Site

Continued from p. 1.

Some larger groups of pilgrims have also visited. On Thursday, August 27, Fr. Dan Schuster brought about 30 parishioners from Luxemburg, Wisconsin to visit St. Francis Chapel. They prayed the rosary and then had Mass with Fr. Dan before touring the Motherhouse.

Sunday, August 30, a group of about 50 people from the Most Blessed Trinity parish in Waukegan, Illinois toured St. Francis of Assisi Church in Manitowoc and attended the Noon Mass in Spanish at the Waldo Site before stopping to visit our St. Francis Chapel on their way home.

Centenarian Celebration



We congratulate Sister Rose Cecile Armbruster for reaching a Birthday Milestone of 100 years on June 1.

Her family, friends and Franciscan Sisters helped her celebrate the cherished blessings of these many years.



Sister Rose Cecile, we thank you for the many lives you have touched in these 100 years, especially as an accomplished Musician. God's abundant blessings and graces be yours.

The St. Rita Sister Team

Sister Concepción Pronounces Perpetual Vows



Kneeling, Sister Concepción Medina pronounced her perpetual vows on August 2, 2026.



Sister Concepción and Sister Marlita signed the vow card and the Community Register.



Solemn Consecration of the Sister.



"Receive this ring, Bride of the eternal King . . ."



Presentation of the crucifix – "Behold Him to Whom you are espoused."



"Receive this rose as a sign of the commitment you are expressing today Its beauty—the joys and love of your life. Its thorns—a reminder of life's sufferings. . . . a sign of your perpetual giving and receiving in love."



Sister Margey Honored on Her Retirement

On Sunday, August 9th, eleven Sisters, from three locations, made their way to Champion, Michigan to join in honoring and celebrating Sister Margey Schmelzle. After serving 40+ years in northern Michigan, and 32 of these years in Republic and Champion, Sister Margey is ready to retire. The people of the area hosted a retirement party attended by so many people that Sister Margey stood in a receiving line greeting people for two hours straight.

The party took place in the Humboldt Township hall. The food was varied and plentiful. Conversation was lively and unceasing! In spite of the obvious love the people have for Sister Margey and the frequent comments admitting that they will miss her, there was a joy among the people. They wish Sister Margey well and are happy for her. The people were quick to remind us, however, that we cannot take her away until October.

May these last months together be blessed for Sister Margey and the people of Republic and Champion. Sister Margey, we will be ready to welcome you home in October with open arms!

Sister Anne Turba

The display of the Sister doll in the midst of flowers reminded everyone of Sister Margey's flower gardens and the care she gave to maintain them over the years. The cupcakes represented the variety of flowers she has in the gardens.



Arizona Diamondbacks Honor Sister Martha Mary

Sister Martha Mary Carpenter was the recipient of the Arizona Diamondbacks 2026 Nicole Hazen 4 Kindness Award in recognition of her dedication and commitment to St. Peter's Indian Mission School.

She was formally honored at a special pre-game recognition during "Women's Night" at the Arizona Diamondbacks vs. Chicago Cubs game on Tuesday, August 25. "We're proud to present the third annual Nicole Hazen 4 Kindness

Award to Sister Martha Carpenter, whose life's work has transformed the lives of thousands of young lives in Arizona."

"Sister Martha has served as a teacher, principal, and principal emeritus at St. Peter Indian Mission School on the Gila River Indian Community Reservation for 41 years. She made it her life's work to provide joy, movement, cultural pride, and a quality education for the thousands of



children who attend and have attended the school during her tenure."

The Nicole Hazen 4 Kindness Award was created in 2024 to honor the legacy of compassion, kindness and generosity of Arizona Diamondbacks General Manager Mike Hazen's late wife.

"Thank you DBacks for honoring such an amazing Sister who, by the grace of God, was able to serve so many generations of students on the Gila River Indian Reservation at St Peter Indian

Mission. She is family to so many. She also served for 14 years with the Menominees and touched many of their hearts as well. It is amazing how God works through one life to have such an impact on so many sharing His love and mercy. Joe Garagiola was such an amazing part as well to the story of the St Peter Mission and a good friend of Sister. He is smiling down on her! Thank you again DBacks. Well deserved!!!!!" [Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity](#)
[- St. Peter Indian Mission](#) | [Maricopa AZ](#) | [Facebook](#)

Continuing Formation- A Lifelong Journey

The summer of 2026 was a summer of renewal for many of the Franciscan Sisters of Charity. Ninety-eight Sisters registered for at least one of the summer offerings.

Topics and Classes included were:

1. Recorder classes taught by Sister Mary Carol Kopecky
2. Journey to Forgiveness Talk presented by Sister Pamela Biehl
3. Book Conversations facilitated by Sister Nancy Kinate
4. Light at the End of the Transgender Tunnel presented by Sister Renee Mirkes
5. FSCC Franciscan Art, Literature and Music presentation organized by the General Administration
6. Heritage Happenings presented by Sister Caritas Strodthoff
7. Artificial Intelligence talk presented by Sister Anne Marie Lom
8. Handbell & Handchime classes taught by Sister Carol Ann Gambky

Sister Carol Ann Gambky



4th
of
July



Saint Francis 800th Anniversary Programs



June 19 - *Franciscan Art, Music and Literature* produced by Community Members over the years.



August 16 - *The Light of Saint Francis* - Presentation by Sister Mary Ann Spanjers and Fr. Joachim Studwell, OFM.



July 12 - *Rebuild My Church* theatrical performance by Mike Sacilowski a Catholic one-man play performer and Director of Discipleship known for bringing the lives of saints to life through multimedia storytelling.



4th of July Talent Show



JUST Gospel!

By Sister Kathleen Murphy

This month of September brings us to a new round of *Just Gospel* considerations. Pope Leo gives us much to think about with his monthly intentions. This month's prayer—we pray for a just and sustainable management of water, a vital resource, so that everyone may have equal access to it—is directed toward the issue of water: our use of it, our awareness of issues surrounding it and the realities of justice regarding water.

In a poem entitled *Blessings of Water*, Philip Kolin writes,

*We are flesh made for water, bone and soul.
Our thirst cries out, gritty voices longing for
still waters, the promise of rescue.*

This poet speaks of the figure of still water, an image of the peace and refreshment that our souls seek. It is a good reminder of the primal sense of tranquility that we associate with plentiful waters. Another source of thought on water that goes beyond the inspirational and the scientific is a document offered to the Holy See as a result of the Fourth World Water Forum held in Mexico City back in 2006. It seems that its ideas remain pertinent today. The text reminds us that: *In a family, every member is responsible for each and every other member, the suffering of one becomes the suffering of all. The many children who die each year in poor countries due to the lack of access to safe water and sanitation are a loss for the future of the whole world and for humanity as a whole.*

Common good is understood as the social conditions that allow people to reach their full human potential. Water is a universal common good. Its benefits are meant for all and not only for those who live in countries where water is abundant, well managed and well distributed.

It might be useful to take two examples. The extreme drought in the Horn of Africa is intensifying ethnic tensions and conflicts for the control over the few, still available, water resources. This drought is threatening the food security of already poor populations and has led to a food emergency situation. In the Middle East, the main prob-

lems with water are related to tensions among countries generated by water scarce environments, although often masked by ongoing political tensions. Water scarcity can present a clear danger to the internal stability of countries in the region.

There is an urgent need to regain a "culture of water", to educate society to a new attitude towards water. Traditionally water was revered and protected, even celebrated. Today it runs the risk of becoming a mere consumer product. Water cannot be treated as a mere product of consumption among others since it has an inestimable and irreplaceable value.

In its conclusion, the document states, *The water issue is truly a right to life issue. It is mainly the marginalized who are de-*

prived of the right to water, to health and to food. The primary objective of all efforts must be the well-being of those people—men, women, children, families, communities—who live in the poorest parts of the world and suffer most from any scarcity or misuse of water resources.

Having heard the call of the Church to attend to this problem, perhaps we need a clearer picture of the shape and

size of this issue. A website entitled *The Water Project* shares the following statistics:

900 billion gallons of water are wasted every year from household leaks in the US — enough to serve 11 million homes. Over 2 billion people still lack minimally safe water.

Homes in the developed areas of the world average a total of 9,400 Gal/year per home in water use. 30% of this average goes to outdoor use.

In the face of these realities, what can we do? The same website offers the 5 R's as a plan of action.

Reduce: Use less water through efficient fixtures and everyday behavior.

Reuse: Give water a second job. Graywater from sinks and showers can irrigate landscapes.



Recycle: Treat wastewater for reclaimed use in irrigation, industry, and aquifer recharge.

Repair: Fix leaks and failing infrastructure.

Rethink: Reconsider landscaping, appliance choices, and daily patterns as design decisions, not sacrifices.

Another area of statistics to consider is the amount of water needed to produce elements of our everyday life. Every industry depends on large quantities of water. Consider, for instance the amount of water needed to produce the following items:

Cotton t-shirt – 2,700 liter

Beef burger – 3000 liters

Smartphone – 12,670 liters

Data center (per year) – 25+ million liters

Our own St. Francis, who we specially honor during this 800th anniversary of his death, had something to say about water as well. In the Canticum of the Creatures, he writes:

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water,
which is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.*

In an article on the Canticum written by Michael P. Foley we find a reflection on the descriptors Francis chooses to characterize water. He writes:

First, it is “very useful.” Water not only sustains our lives but the lives of every other creature on whom we depend for sustenance, every plant and animal. Water is also essential to cleanliness and, despite its dangers, it brings us much joy and comfort.

Second, Francis calls water precious. Thanks to our impressive modern water-treatment plants and an amazing network of indoor plumbing, it is easy to forget how difficult it was for many of our ancestors to have a reliable source of potable water, and how difficult it still is in some parts of the developing world.

Third, the Saint calls water “chaste.” The image here is of Sister Water as a humble and dear maiden, not unlike the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is a surprising image but fitting, since Francis has personified water by calling it/ her his sister. This image of chastity should make us more concerned about polluting or sullying Sister Water.

So, let us finish our consideration of the gift of water with the same poet with whom we began. Philip C. Kolin concludes his poem, *Blessings of Water* in these words:

*Our lives are written in water. The womb’s sea
brings us into the world and sprinkling
holy water over our gravesite carries us out,
out into the Deep.*



August 23rd was a special day of celebration for Tucson’s San Xavier Mission Parish. At the 8:00 am Mass Sister Rosalyn and Sister Rachel renewed their Profession of Vows in the presence of the congregation. (Sister Rachel Sens, OP is the parish D.R.E. and works with Sister Carla.) Several Dominican Sisters came to celebrate with Sr. Rachel.

All were invited to the school cafeteria after Mass for refreshments. Sister Carla had prepared a poster for each Sister with photos from their celebrations with their Communities.

Sister Carla Riach



On August 12, 2026 Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity were invited to provide music at the Holy Family Froedhert Hospital Wellness Fair. Musicians who took part left to right: Sister Winifred Crevier-Piano, Sister Maria Goretti Scandaliato, Sister Carol Juckem-Vocals and Piano, Sister Marsaia Kaster-Harp, Sister Carol Ann Gambsky-Flute.

FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF CHRISTIAN CHARITY

Holy Family Convent
2409 S Alverno Rd
Manitowoc, WI 54220

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

Celebrate the Jubilee Year of St. Francis
Inviting women 20-40 who may be considering a call to Consecrated Life.

OCTOBER 3
Transitus Service of Saint Francis

NOVEMBER 8
Founders' Day 800th Anniversary of Death of Saint Francis Presentation

DECEMBER 13
Grumpy in Greccio Play

JANUARY 10
Celebrating the Easter of Saint Francis Prayer Service

OR DESIGN YOUR OWN CONVENT VISIT
Prayerfully reflect on your own calling and future in the serenity of our Motherhouse. Call or text Sister Julie Ann at 920-323-9632.

FRANCISCAN SISTERS of Christian Charity

Scan the QR code for info.
FSCC-CALLEDTOBE.ORG

Rosaries for the Archbishop Fulton Sheen Beatification Celebration

Lots of Sisters from the Motherhouse, Chiara Convent, St. Francis Convent and mission Sisters home for the summer worked together in making rosaries for the occasion of the beatification of Archbishop Fulton Sheen on September 24, 2026 in St. Louis, Missouri.

Within three weeks, 1,010 mission rosaries were made and sent as our part of that celebrative Mass of Beatification where 70,000 or more are anticipated to attend, and where many will be receiving a mission rosary.



Sisters Janet Rose, Maureen Anne Shephard, and Paula Vanden Hogen are counting out beads enough for five rosaries per box for the Sisters to assemble the rosaries.



Sister Carla Riach cutting and gluing the ends of the cord to make it easy for threading the beads.



Sisters Myra Jean Sweigart and Adrianna Schouten are stringing beads in process of making the rosary.



Sister Christine Stoller checks each completed rosary and makes the final barrel knot.