



# Perspectives

Fall 2013 Volume 28 Number Two

A Publication of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration



*“Strengthen me in supporting those in our society who are vulnerable; help me live patiently with my own weaknesses. As I walk in your way, I extend my hands to others so that together we can form a safety net.”*

- Patricia Tekippe, FSPA  
*Eucharistic Adoration: Reflections in the Franciscan Tradition*

Forming a safety net and extending hope. FSPA friends, this is ours to do. The FSPA ministry grant fund supports more than 65 projects each year. The fund focuses on those that benefit the poor and oppressed who have few alternatives open to them, and FSPA are involved—in many ways—in every ministry that receives funding. Your unrestricted gifts grow this fund annually.

And in this issue of *Perspectives*, we roll out for you the safety nets this fund is weaving.

In Omaha, Neb., with FSPA support, young mothers-to-be find love, Catholic faith, support and hope—hope in the form of learning and living with individual and family self-sufficiency. The place is named Bethlehem House, but staff and guests know it better as “home.”

We also visit Guatemala where, with FSPA support, a project is in place that provides human rights accompaniment to Guatemalan activists whose work puts them at risk of threats and attacks. And beyond a financial connection, we look at the human connection in this project. Its leader, a graduate of our sponsored university, Viterbo, credits her work to the bonds formed with two FSPA and her pledge to them to work for the common good.

We don't stop there.

This issue visits Haiti and Claxton, Ga.; it shares a story that starts in California and spans the globe to Zimbabwe.


“... I extend my hands to others so that together we can form a safety net.” And, I'll add, offer hope. It is through your generosity that we continue serving those who are poor, marginalized and the most vulnerable.

Thank you.

Peace and all good,



Linda Mershon, FSPA  
President



*Franciscan Sisters*  
*of Perpetual Adoration*  
Modern Lives. Sacred Traditions.



*Caroline Peters, a contemporary art theory instructor at Colorado State University and sister to FSPA Kristin Peters, visited St. Rose Convent and spent time drawing in the Adoration Chapel. Using pen, Caroline captured the chapel's ornate detail in her drawing, pictured here.*

***Perspectives* represents the spirit and values shared by the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration.**

President:

Sister Linda Mershon

Vice President:

Sister Eileen Lang

Mission Councilors:

Sister Rose Elsbernd

Sister Paulynn Instenes

Sister Suzanne Rubenbauer

*Cover photo: GAP accompanies the Guatemalan organizers of a consultation where the community voted whether or not to allow mining. The people of Uspantán, El Quiché, overwhelmingly voted against the measure that would allow access to—and the exploitation of—their natural resources.*

Photo by Graham Hunt

Editor: Jane Comeau

Writer: Jen Pick; Designer: Nancy Chapman

Proofreaders: Sisters Rita Rathburn and Betty Shakal

FSPA *Perspectives* is published by the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration,  
912 Market Street, La Crosse, WI 54601-4782

Telephone: 608-782-5610 • Fax: 608-782-6301 • Email: [communications@fspa.org](mailto:communications@fspa.org)

Website: [www.fspa.org](http://www.fspa.org)

*Perspectives* is printed on paper containing recycled fiber.



# Georgia

## County gathers to celebrate its bright light

by Judy Bean

If you meet Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Janet Fischer, our Lord's words, "Let your light shine" might instantly come to mind. With her brilliant blue eyes and joyful smile, she's a 1,000-watt bulb, a candelabra and a Broadway marquee, all wrapped up in one shining spirit. Although she's as humble as a tea-light candle, this is a woman who truly lights up a room.

Light up the room she did on the evening of June 13, official "Sister Janet Fischer Day" in Evans County, Georgia. As some 200 to 300 locals gathered in the county recreation center, Sister Janet was gleefully hugged, bountifully fed, joyfully feted and gently roasted all in one festive evening—and all in celebration of her 33 years of service to the community.

This was the day of Sister Janet's not-quite-retirement. Although leaving her official post as pastoral associate at St. Christopher's Parish in Claxton, Ga., (the Evans County seat) she says she has no intention of slowing down.

The 76-year-old (who radiates energy that would do a young athlete proud) intends to continue her life's work of helping the poor and the sick, and caring for animals. She is a board member of Evans County CARES (which raises money for and provides service to local cancer patients) and also serves on the ethics board of the local nursing home, volunteers for the county's Christian food bank, raises funds for preschoolers' first books and volunteers for the local Humane Society. Finally, she fosters two fortunate dogs and is the long-time "dog-mother" to another.

Sister Janet's transition was due to a change in parish management. Once staffed and run by Glenmary Home Missioners (who hired Sister Janet), St. Christopher's and nearby churches grew too fast in recent years to fit the Glenmary model. Staffing and supervision moved to the diocese of nearby Savannah. Since Spanish-speaking

parishioners outnumbered English speakers, diocesan officials decided they needed someone in Sister Janet's job who, unlike her, spoke fluent Spanish.

### Reflections

Born in a small, central-Wisconsin farming town, Sister Janet grew up with three brothers. All attended the same one-room schoolhouse. She first felt her calling at age 15 but initially resisted, moving with a friend to Los Angeles. After about a year, she could no longer ignore her inner voice, so she returned to Wisconsin to study with the Franciscan Sisters in La Crosse. She worked elsewhere in Wisconsin and in Iowa before returning to the motherhouse as its chauffeur for 13 years.

Then came the call to head south. Sister Janet was one of four Franciscan sisters sent to Claxton in 1980. By 1985, the other three had accepted new assignments. Sister Janet then became—and has remained—the county's beloved "nun on the run" and Claxton's only religious sister.



Janet Fischer, FSPA

Photo courtesy of Judy Bean



### The celebration

Even though Sister Janet had never studied Spanish, she seemed undeniably fluent interacting with the evening's many Hispanic guests—and they with her. "She speaks the language of the heart," one said. Parishioner Rosa Martinez delivered a glowing personal tribute in Spanish. An adept translation by fellow parishioner Alfredo Vincente, who also spoke for himself, almost seemed unnecessary.

Other speakers included parishioners from Holy

Continued on page 5





# Central America

## Filling GAPS in Guatemala

**Y**ou may have read stories of atrocities there. You might have seen pictures of carnage there. But, more than likely, you haven't heard of GAP—a lifeline, so to speak, between human extinction and existence there.

The Guatemala Accompaniment Project, a program of The Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala, has been a twine in that tightrope since 1995. The organization has since reinforced the tethered cord that spanned 36 years of civil war and snapped for an estimated 200,000 Guatemalans—disappeared, feared dead. With the aid of a FSPA ministry grant, GAP provides human rights accompaniment to Guatemalan activists whose work puts them at risk of threats and attacks, especially witnesses involved in court cases against ex-military officials who planned and executed attempts of genocide of the Mayan people. With the force of conviction, after a recent

tribunal victory, one such witness proclaimed, “The bones of our people can rest.”

From grassroots advocacy campaigns in the U.S. to protection given on the ground in Guatemala, the project is strengthening “people-to-people ties across the border.” Melinda Van Slyke, president of the board of directors of NISGUA, is one such person. When asked why she works for human rights, she recalls the signing of the Guatemalan Peace Accords, the “tens of thousands of Guatemalan refugees in Mexico hoping to repatriate to their beloved country,” the pledge to Franciscan leadership she made upon her graduation from Viterbo University in La Crosse, Wis., and FSPA like Sisters Marie Leon LaCroix and Jean Moore “who had an enormous impact on my life.” She’s grateful to FSPA most for putting their indelible “words, prayers and hopes into action for the common good.”

Guatemala’s common good continues to be compromised as the current need for human rights accompaniment there “is staggering,” declares Melinda. “Our biggest

---

*“If we can help provide safety to women like these (trial witnesses accompanied by GAP) and also give them an opportunity to advance on their own, then our charity is dynamic and effective.”*

Linda Mershon, FSPA  
Ministry Grant Sponsor

---



*GAP accompanies exhumation teams. In this photo, community members from the village of Petanac are reclaiming their loved ones' bodies, from a massacre exhumation site, to give them a proper burial.*

Photo by Shannon Lockhart



challenge is to keep up with demand.” But the good in the situation also poses legal and lifesaving opportunities for the parents and the children and the extended families of genocide victims there. She quotes a witness (whose name is withheld for security reasons) who stood up at the trial: “GAP lets us do the work that is ours, for our country, without always being afraid. We need you to open the space for us,” said the woman, “to do that work.”

GAP has its own accompaniers—the FSPA community—with whom they hope to secure more safe spaces in which the people in Guatemala can succeed. And in terms of life and death, they are succeeding. “No Guatemalan activists accompanied by our volunteers have been killed, kidnapped or have disappeared,” asserts Melinda. “In short, here’s the take away message: the Guatemala Accompaniment Project,” she says, “keeps people from being killed.” ■



*GAP gathering in Guatemala City. Melinda Van Slyke is pictured second from left. It’s a sign of solidarity to be shared with the Association for Justice and Reconciliation—one of the groups GAP accompanies—that is taking Rios Montt to court for genocide and crimes against humanity. The sign reads “Justice for genocide! We continue to be in solidarity with the AJR.”*

Photo courtesy of GAP

### In 2012, GAP:

- Recruited, trained, placed and supported 13 human rights accompaniers who aided hundreds of Guatemalan human rights defenders from 38 organizations in nine departments of Guatemala.
- Ensured the safety of witnesses and family members by escorting them during the long-incoming conviction of Rios Montt, who was recently sentenced to 80 years in prison for genocide and crimes against humanity.
- Conducted congressional meetings and participated in a weeklong tour of Washington, D.C. (coordinated by Partners for Arlington and Guatemala, a program of the Unitarian Universalists Church of Arlington, Virginia).
- Maintained a media presence in part by publishing over 42 articles via blog at [www.nisquablogspot.com](http://www.nisquablogspot.com), and providing English subtitles for two documentaries: *Nuestra Voz, Nuestra Memoria* about Guatemalan genocide and *Hijos e Hijas de la Tierra*, which uncover the impacts of bio-fuel monoculture in Guatemala.
- Kept every man and woman they protected alive.

## Sister Janet

continued from page 3

Cross Church in nearby Pembroke, Ga. Local songstress Holly Hunto performed *Wind Beneath My Wings*, Sister Janet’s favorite song, in her honor. Then Father Steve Pawelk, an old friend who once served St. Christopher’s as associate pastor, stepped up to the podium. He provided a laugh-out-loud account of Sister Janet’s interests and antics. “Sister and I have three things in common,” he noted, “a love of football, a love of animals—and when we’re

together at a function, no cookie is safe.” A Minnesota Vikings fan, he presented Sister Janet, a Wisconsin native and passionate Green Bay Packers supporter, with a Packers helmet.

Then the honoree herself stepped up to express her appreciation—after a standing ovation—with a characteristic combination of wit and humility. Claiming that “some of this stuff (was) kind of made up,” she thanked the evening’s organizers, performers, caterers and attendees with what seemed like the hint of a tear.

And how does Sister Janet feel now

about the people of Evans County? “To say they’re really nice people doesn’t quite do it,” she muses. “The best I can say is, they’re awesome!”

### Words of wisdom

Asked what she might say to young nuns of today, Sister Janet is quick to relate, “For me it’s been both challenging and fun. I’d say, if you have the calling, follow!” ■

*Judy Bean is a freelance writer based in Savannah, Ga.*





# California

## My Perspective: Teaching the good news from California to Zimbabwe

by Donna Storms, FSPA

I am a teacher. This inspiration for my ministry has always been from the last words Jesus spoke to his followers before he ascended to His Father: "Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to all of creation" (Mk 16: 15ff).

I proclaimed the good news for 14 years in the ministry of religious education in the Diocese of Spokane, driving from one parish to another, training catechists and other parish leaders. I decided it was time to leave Spokane and find a parish where I would have more direct contact with "adults in the pews."

I found the right spot at St. Louis of France Parish in La Puente, Calif. As director of adult and ministerial formation, I had an ideal setting for proclaiming the good news through the very challenging and rewarding task of RCIA. I soon discovered the hunger of adults for a better understanding of Scripture and the need to enrich their lives through the word of God. I set up an adult Scripture study group in that parish which continued on its own when I retired and began volunteering.

After 12 years at St. Louis Parish, I looked around the neighboring parishes for one in need of the gifts of good news I had to offer. I found St. Christopher's Parish in West Covina, Calif., walking distance from home, in need of education (especially the study of Scripture) for adults who had been

searching for such an opportunity.

My weekday Bible study group consists of adults of varied ethnic backgrounds who devote themselves to enriching their spirituality. A significant number are retired persons; some are working people, often nurses or other health care professionals who happen to have the time off. Participants come and go as schedules and family situations change. Several have been



*Sister Donna Storms (front, second from left) is surrounded by her Bible class—a philanthropic group of people that keeps the needs of those less fortunate in Zimbabwe at the forefront of their faith.*

Photo courtesy of Donna Storms, FSPA

together for more than 10 years and are recognized as a ministry of the parish. The youngest participant has been a 19-year-old student; the oldest a 93-year-old grandmother who always sits right beside me so that she doesn't miss anything. I help her to follow along in her brand-new, large-print Bible.

About eight years ago Laurette Sprosty, FSPA, who was ministering in Zimbabwe, shared a story in a letter to the community about a young man who often visited the mission there. It so happened that his cow died. For a poor man who depended on the cow, the animal's death was a terrible tragedy. I was touched by his story and shared it with my Scripture class. So moved by his pain, the group decided to buy the young man another cow. They collected \$300 and the parish added \$200

more to pay for it. When Sister Laurette learned of their generosity, she suggested they continue to support the poor man—monetarily for chores he carried out at the mission site. This, they did.

Sister Laurette's story and their first gift sparked their interest in the needs of the poor in Zimbabwe. The class decided to take collections on a regular basis for the needs of Sister Laurette's mission. She sent photos of people she worked

with. The class was especially moved by pictures of the orphan children benefiting from their generosity. One of our members, Lydia Nueva España, who has suffered for many years from cancer, took it upon herself to collect the money. She decorated a coffee can with pictures of the orphan children and passed it around every week. If she was absent, there was always someone who would speak up to be sure we didn't forget Zimbabwe. With

the help of FSPA Director of Development Madalene Buelow, even after Sister Laurette returned to the U.S., they have not failed to remember Zimbabwe.

This is one example of how people who share faith and conviction for serving the needy have spread, in their small way, the good news to the whole world. I'm proud to use my talent for teaching to continue to be a part of it. ■



*Donna Storms, FSPA, has ministered most of her career in the Western part of the United States, primarily in the education field. She*

*has served as retired-volunteer in California since 2001.*



# Haiti

## Spirit of Ministry: Affiliate reflects on her live-giving volunteer experience

**S**erving people in a developing nation through Peace Corps volunteering has been on my bucket list long before that term was ever coined. Since the age of 18—making it a 40-year-old dream—I have felt the call to do things and go places out of my comfort zone. It's been a call to make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate and by doing so, to make a difference in my own life.

At three different stages in my life I have tried and failed, for one reason or another, to join the Peace Corps (it never seemed practical). So imagine my excitement when I stumbled upon an article highlighting Global Therapy Group's request for speech therapy volunteers to visit Haiti and serve children and adults. This organization was founded by an amazing physical therapist, Donna Hutchins, following the 2010 earthquake. It's founding is an incredible story which I read immediately upon researching the organization's website. The link to "Donna's Story" tells it all. I laughed, cried and literally jumped up and down. I did not stop to think if it was practical this time. By the end of the day, I contacted Donna, filled out the paperwork, committed to a month of service, booked a flight and arranged for all the

immunizations I'd need. I took care of all my obligations at home—arranged a house and animal sitter, studied my finances. Things came together so quickly and easily that I knew deeply it was God's plan for me.

The feeling of anticipation, which I carried inside me until departure day arrived, was so uplifting and positive that I felt like I was floating or being



*Affiliate Janet Papenfuss, right, and Rachel Egbert, a speech pathologist intern, hold two children outside the Global Therapy Group Clinic. The children and their families were living ("squatting") in a building next to the clinic until the owner cleared everyone out—including the clinic and its staff. After the move, Janet lost touch with the children, who she hopes found another suitable building to call home.*

Photo courtesy of Janet Papenfuss

carried by holy hands throughout my days. Even when my family, friends and the U.S. Embassy website reminded me that Haiti is a very dangerous country, I was not deterred. The message was clear: this is what I'm supposed to do and if something negative happens to me there, that is God's plan. Right before I left, an acquaintance could not believe I was traveling to Haiti alone and offered to accompany me for three days just to make sure I was safe. She is a nurse and has been there multiple times—again, proof of Divine providence.

I like to think I made a difference in some of the Haitian lives I touched. But as is so often the case, I know that I was touched so much more by the people I met. I have never been around a more patient people (patience is certainly not one of my virtues). Since we could not get the concept of "appointment times" across, the people who came to our clinic would wait to be seen, sometimes for hours in the heat (there was no such thing as a waiting room much less a sign stating "if you haven't been seen in 15 minutes ..." as we have in our clinics here). There is a pride and dignity of appearance that is important to them no matter their impoverished living conditions. In spite of the heat, rubble, dust and garbage in the streets, our Haitian patients arrived clean and in fresh clothes (some of the little girls, in what appeared to be their communion dresses). If the children had to wait and became dirty playing or eating a snack, their mothers had a change of clothes for them before they came into the clinic.

Continued on page 13



*Janet R. Papenfuss is the speech pathology supervisor in Mayo Clinic Health System-Franciscan Healthcare's Rehabilitation Services department,*

*La Crosse, Wis. She became an affiliate with the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in 2002.*





# Development Update

Greetings dear FSPA friends,

*“What you hold, may you always hold. What you do, may you do and never stop ...”*

*Beautiful words from St. Clare of Assisi. We hold so many things dear in our lives: our beliefs, our families and our possessions. But what I have found true in my years as the development director for the FSPA is that our benefactors and friends hold dear the good works that are performed each day by our sisters and partners in ministry.*

*As this year comes to a close, I wish to thank our benefactors and friends for supporting the FSPA Ministry Grant Program. This program awarded funds to more than 65 different ministries that provided the necessities in life to those less fortunate and to whom God has put in our care. Wherever our sisters and partners serve, they serve with love, kindness, patience and perseverance. They do their work with joy.*

*Our retired sisters also benefit from the love and concern of our benefactors. They enjoy hearing from you and visiting with you. The sisters have long memories and it astounds me how they can remember student and family names! You are always welcome to stop by St. Rose Convent and visit while you are in La Crosse.*

*The FSPA recently celebrated 135 years of continuous prayer. I can hear St. Clare’s words echoing... “what you do, may you do and never stop.” Perpetual adoration is an important ministry: our sisters and prayer partners pray for the needs of the entire world. I know too, that this ministry is one our donors hold dear.*

*Thank you again for believing in our ministries and mission. May the one who holds us all continue to bless you.*

*Peace and all good,*

*Madalene H. Buelow  
Director of Development*

## FSPA: accountable to donors, the mission



The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration have been members of the National Catholic Development Conference since the formation of our development office in 1986. We are faithful to its preamble, pledge and promise.

### Preamble

We, the members of the National Catholic Development Conference, respond to Christ’s invitation to build the kingdom. We hold sacred the trust established between the donors and the mission they choose to support.

Inspired by the Gospel call to stewardship, we serve the church by respecting the hallowed ground on which donors and the mission meet. As trustees of what literally belongs to God, we strive for the highest ethical standards.

As disciples called to serve all of God’s people, we are accountable and responsible to religious authority, to donors and to the mission. We believe, above all else, that the Gospel values of human dignity and worth need generous space to flourish and grow.

### Pledge and Promise

Therefore, the members of the National Catholic Development Conference pledge to embrace these precepts and values.

We promise:

1. Fidelity to the principles of stewardship and the Gospel mandate to make a return to God for all the goodness we have received and to encourage and assist donors in their call to share their blessings.
2. Integrity of mission so that requests for donations are in keeping with the charism and mission of the organization.
3. Loyalty to those who benefit from the ministry of the organization for which funds are raised and respect for their personal dignity.
4. Trustworthiness and respect for donor intent in assuring that donations are used for the purpose expressed.
5. Loyalty to donors by respecting their choice to remain anonymous and/or to restrict the use of their personal information.

*To read the full NCDC Pledge and Promise, visit [www.fspa.org/Donate/developmentteam.html](http://www.fspa.org/Donate/developmentteam.html).*



## Ways to give: make a gift from your IRA

Federal laws in 2013 are again allowing individuals 70½ or older to make donations to charity from an IRA. Do you have charitable intent and have no need of the money for personal use at this time?

You can take a portion of your distribution without paying income tax on the distribution amount (though you may not claim a charitable deduction for the donation). The funds need to be transferred directly from your IRA account to FSPA. Contact your IRA administrator.

This can be a wonderful way to provide a gift to the FSPA rather than paying taxes. Experts estimate that heirs receive less than 25 percent of most IRA assets that pass through estates. For more information call the FSPA development office at 608-791-5282.

*Dear Sisters,*

*God has blessed us with excellent crops again this year. The harvest went well also.*

*Thank you for your prayers and for reminding me of what is really important in life.*

*May God bless you and those that you help along the way.*

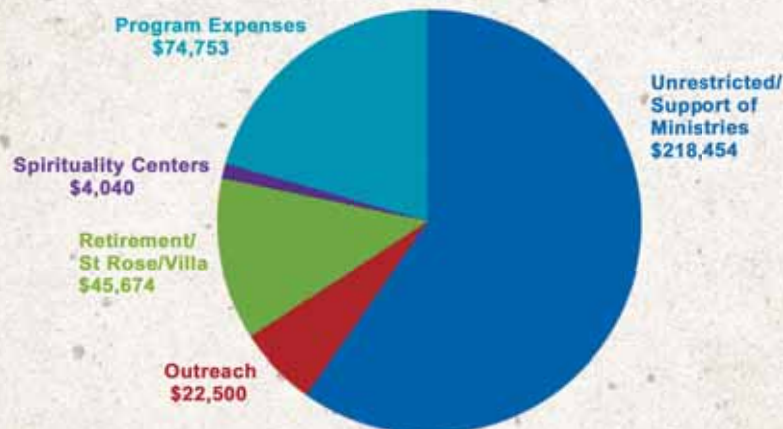
*Sincerely,  
Lorin S.  
FSPA Benefactor*



*Flowers from a FSPA benefactor decorate the adoration chapel during the 135th anniversary of perpetual adoration.*

### FSPA Development Office Accountability Report July 1, 2012-June 30, 2013

**FY2013 Use of Funds**



#### Source of Funds:

General Contributions	\$247,905	68%
Memorial Fund	18,118	5%
Bequests/Planned Gifts	24,645	7%
Support from Congregation	74,753	20%

#### Total Revenue

**\$365,421 100%**

#### Use of Funds:

Unrestricted/Support of Ministries	\$218,454	60%
Outreach	22,500	6%
Retirement/St. Rose/Villa	45,674	13%
Spirituality Centers	4,040	1%
Program Expenses	74,753	20%

#### Total Expenses

**\$365,421 100%**





# Nebraska

## Home to a family of Catholic faith: Bethlehem House

**W**hen Mary Crosby talks about Bethlehem House, she doesn't use the word "shelter." Mary, executive director of the Omaha, Neb., transitional living program that gives residence to young women who are pregnant and homeless, explains that the house is truly a home. And it's a home full of the nutrients of self-adoration and parental proficiency and Catholic spirituality. "Bethlehem House is a place where each woman is shown how to love herself and also to find and develop her own unique talents so that upon departing, she will be on a path to make the contribution to the world God has planned for her and her child," she says.

Instead of referring to the women and their children as clients in Bethlehem House, Mary speaks of them as family. "Functioning as a family makes this house a home—not a shelter—a home. Our home is a place where each woman is shown dignity, respect, compassion, unconditional love, mercy and hope." Pregnant women 19 years of age and older who are without a place to live, lack family support and have no other positive alternatives are welcome there. "Approximately 95 percent of our guests don't know what a healthy family looks like, feels like or functions like. Eighty percent of them have no knowledge of or relationship with their father. And, without ever feeling connected to a family, another 45 percent have aged out of Nebraska Foster Care and have found themselves pregnant and homeless," she says, "within two years."

Bethlehem House, offers Mary, not only guides women through an intensive educational program that includes counseling, mentoring on both healthy choices and relationships, and classes on nutrition, parenting and life skills, it also gives them the option of life for their unborn child in a home embraced in spiritual guidance and Catholic faith. "Founded by Catholics with a desire to put their faith into action, our program has identified respect for all life—born and unborn—as crucial issues our community must address," says Mary.

And Bethlehem House embraces their moms not only with love and dignity but also the empowerment to become contributing members of the community. They are assisted in making healthier choices and reaching for new goals in hopes of creating a better life for themselves and their babies. Women are welcome to live in the home throughout their pregnancy and up to 11 weeks after the birth of their child during which time staff works with them to find permanent and affordable housing. Obtaining a GED is required. Access to and understanding of medical benefits is provided. Counseling and mental health



*The home for Bethlehem's families, that neighbors a church, was formerly a convent. Lydia Wendl, FSPA, sponsors the grant for the program in the house that is, perhaps, imbued with the compassion of those former residents. She wants donors to know that—with continued assistance—Bethlehem House hopes to invite more moms and babies to stay; and to stay longer with them. Sister Lydia also says that Mary Crosby, pictured top left, and her staff "are really passionate about the welfare of each woman—they are really loved. When mom leaves," she says, "their Bethlehem House family stays in touch."*

Photos courtesy of Mary Crosby; top photo by Samantha Meiners

support is available. Creating a family life plan (including the establishment of permanent housing) to tackle behavioral problems, stress, worries and legal issues is vital. Faith formation is essential. "Prayer is often heard before meals, church is recommended and daily examples of God's love are always present," says Mary. "We hope these actions will set each woman on the path to individual and family self-sufficiency."

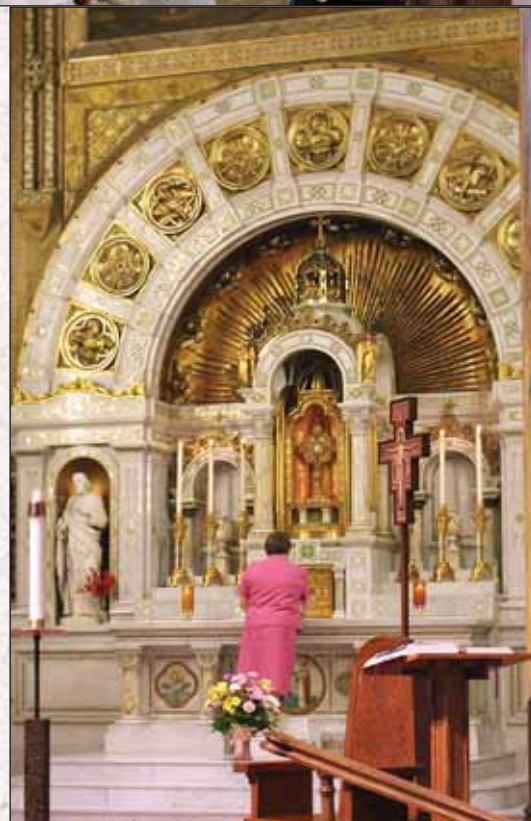
And so, Bethlehem House is a home, filled with family and Catholic faith formation; structured for appreciating self-worth and realizing parental responsibility and societal accountability. It's also occupied with dreams. "FSPA's financial support is helping us to reach closer to our goal of making all 12 bedrooms of our home available," says Mary (adding that "financially and programmatically, we are growing in a very exciting direction"). "I believe that when we come together as a greater community and function like an extended family, we will transform lives and begin to see the changes we want in the world." ■



# Sacred Traditions: 135 years of continuous prayer

The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration celebrated a record 135 years of uninterrupted perpetual adoration on Aug. 1. The celebration included a public hour of prayer in Mary of the Angels Chapel attended by close to 300 guests. In preparation for the anniversary, FSPA took the celebration outside the chapel walls delivering special treats to The Salvation Army, Boys & Girls Club, A Place of Grace and St. Clare Health Mission.

Sisters, affiliates and friends of FSPA unable to attend the celebration in La Crosse prayed along with the sisters using a special prayer guide developed to honor each decade for which the sisters and their partners have prayed. La Crosse's *Catholic Times* newspaper covered the event stating, "What solidly unites FSPA members with God, to one another and to those they serve is the perpetual adoration of the Eucharist exposed, which is given a special reverence and devotion by FSPA." ■



*Top photo, bellringers Sisters Mary Myron Stork, Louise Rahe, Bernyne Stark and Rosile Pernsteiner. Second row from left, sisters and guests walk to the courtyard for an ice cream social; prayer partner and affiliate Darlene Wozney rings the bell marking the beginning of the 136th year of perpetual adoration. Third row from left, a child at the Boys & Girls Club enjoys a treat from the FSPA; Sister Helen Castner hands out programs prior to the service; Sister Ronalda Hophan prepares the monstrance and altar for the prayer vigil in Mary of the Angels Chapel.*





# In Memoriam

## Rejoice, you who are alive in Christ

### **Sister Clare (Rose Claire) Teeling, FSPA**

**Dec. 23, 1913-May 4, 2013**

A native of Lyncurgus, Iowa, Sister Clare served as a nurse at St. Anthony Hospital in Carroll, Iowa, for 12 years and at St. Francis Hospital in La Crosse for 19 years where she was operating room supervisor. In 1967, Sister Clare moved to Chicago and became health care director for the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice. She also worked at Martin Luther King Clinic and at the University of Illinois Hospital in Chicago.



Moving into pastoral care ministry, Sister Clare served as chaplain at Bergan-Mercy Hospital in Omaha and St. Mary's Hospital, Sparta, Wis. After retiring in 1990 she visited the elderly and sick in her parish in Sparta for three years before moving to St. Rose Convent. Sister Clare made Villa St. Joseph her home in 2002.

### **Sister Rose Catherine Kuehner, FSPA**

**Dec. 18, 1913-May 15, 2013**

Sister Rose Catherine was born on a farm near St. Lucas, Iowa, and named Mary Anna.

Sister Rose Catherine served as a homemaker in convent homes in Idaho, Iowa and Wisconsin for 51 years including 14 years in the kitchen



and bakery at Villa St. Joseph. She worked with the poor for several summers through the Shared Horizons Program sponsored by FSPA. In 1991, Sister Rose Catherine retired at St. Rose Convent, volunteering in the kitchen and bakery until 1995. She made the Villa her home in 2006.

### **Sister Jolita Brill, FSPA**

**Jan. 27, 1923-May 18, 2013**

Sister Jolita was born in Colby, Wis., and given the name Josephine.

Sister Jolita served as a homemaker for 26 years in convent homes in Iowa, Washington and Wisconsin, including 11 years at St. Michael's Home, La Crosse. She ministered for three years each at the Villa and St. Rose Convent kitchens. In 1980, Sister Jolita became the chauffeur at St. Rose, accompanying sisters to their appointments or taking them to visit family. She retired at St. Rose Convent in 2001 and in 2010 moved to Villa St. Joseph.



### **Sister Norene (Marie Francile) Bollech, FSPA**

**May 5, 1921-May 27, 2013**

Sister Norene, born in Athens, Wis., served as a teacher for 40 years.

She taught elementary grades in Ashland, Superior, Eau Claire, Sparta, Rozellville and La Crosse, Wis. Sister Norene also served in schools in Spokane, Wash., and spent two years at Sacred Heart School in East Grand Forks, Minn.



Following her teaching career, Sister Norene worked in the mailroom and copy center at Viterbo College for nine years. She then ministered at Marywood, Wis., as regional secretary for the FSPA Eastern Region for four years. During her retirement years at St. Rose Convent, Sister Norene wrote the history of Villa St. Joseph and volunteered for ten years at the IndoChinese Clinic/St. Clare Health Clinic. She made her home at the Villa in 2008.

### **Sister Maryla Chapek, FSPA**

**Dec. 19, 1917-June 21, 2013**

Sister Maryla was born near Richmond, Iowa, and named Margaret Teresa, but was called Teresa.

Entering the field of education, Sister Maryla taught for 47 years in parochial schools in Iowa and Wisconsin, including 16 years at Sherill, Iowa, and 16 years at Odanah, Wis. For the next five years she cared for her elderly mother. From 1992 to 2001 Sister Maryla lived in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, volunteering at nursing homes, the Central Region home and Prairiewoods Spirituality Center. She retired to St. Rose Convent in 2001 where she volunteered at the Franciscan Spirituality Center. Sister Maryla moved to Villa St. Joseph in 2005.



### **Sister Judine Kranc, FSPA**

**Dec. 29, 1920-Aug. 18, 2013**

Sister Judine was born in La Crosse, Wis., and was named Irene Rosemary. Sister Judine was an elementary teacher in Iowa, Washington and Wisconsin for 15 years. She then taught at Aquinas High School, La Crosse, and Lima and Lansing high schools for a total of 11 years. For six years she



served her FSPA community as treasurer of the Southern Province. From 1967 to 1991, Sister Judine returned to Aquinas High School, teaching business courses. Through her 23 years of service as secretary of Aquinas High School's Council of Administration, Sister Judine received the institution's St. Francis Staff Award for outstanding service. She retired at Aquinas Convent in 1991 and to her family home in 1992. In 2012, Sister Judine moved to Villa St. Joseph.



**Sister Mary (Magloire) Hornick, FSPA  
Sept. 15, 1919-Sept. 9, 2013**

Born in Dallas, Iowa, Sister Mary served as an elementary teacher for 29 years in schools in California, Iowa, Montana, Washington and Wisconsin. She taught in a religious education program in Holdrege, Maine, for a year and from 1984 to 1987 was employed in social services in Elmhurst, Ill.



Before retiring to St. Rose Convent in 1989, Sister Mary resided in Wallace, Neb., where she assisted the ill. Sister Mary retired to the Villa in 2004.

**Sister Joann (Annita Clare) Kaiser  
July 18, 1931-Sept. 17, 2013**

Sister Joann was born in Stratford, Wis., and grew up on the family farm. She ministered for almost 50 years as a homemaker, including 25 years in La Crosse at St. Rose Convent and Villa St. Joseph. In 1986, she spent a year attending the Global Awareness Program

in Cincinnati, Ohio, and then a year in Chicago in the food service industry with the School Sisters of St. Francis. Sister Joann served as cafeteria manager at St. Rose Convent from 1988 until she retired in 2002. During that time she taught English to her Hmong co-workers.



Sister Joann made her home at St. Rose Convent in 2009.

**Affiliate George Lukach  
Feb. 10, 1934-April 30, 2013**

George and his wife Garnette were married in 1956 and had 13 children.

George served as a deacon for 35 years in Minnesota and Washington. After moving to Washington in 1997, George ministered at Our Lady of the Lake, then a Mission Church in Tum Tum, Wash. He became acquainted with FSPA in the Spokane area and became a covenant affiliate in March 2000. George had several contacts during the last 13 years: Sisters Jeanne Keating, Kathy Roberg and Patricia Gordon.



He is survived by 11 children, 24 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren.

**Spirit of Ministry**

continued from page 7

One of our Haitian interpreters lived in Cité Solei, the worst slum in Haiti. He would change into a clean button-down shirt and slacks for the walk back to the slum at the end of his workday. I mention this because it seems so incongruous to me. Most people don't have running water much less a washing machine, and even the wealthier people do not have hot water (my host family included). Shoeshine boys and car washes (hoses attached to a barrel of water) are seen about every hundred feet or so along the streets or roads, in the middle of dust and rubble. It seemed to me a pointless endeavor but for the Haitians it is very important: somehow, they managed to arrive at their destinations clean and put together. I, on the other hand, could never quite look as good.

I never tired of the ride to and from the clinic every day and actually, the ride was probably the most danger I was ever in while in Haiti. Traffic laws are nonexistent or maybe they are just traffic suggestions. There doesn't appear to be any specific side of the road to drive on and some roads are really steep drainage gullies.

I was taken aback by how every conceivable religion on Earth seems to be trying to "save" the Haitians. There were ostentatious churches, temples and tabernacles out of sync with the rest of the buildings or shacks around them where people actually lived. I was always heartened when I saw a church that actually blended in with how they lived.

This short story cannot do justice to the Haitians or the country. But I do know that this was not simply something to cross off my bucket list, because I'm going back. I'll be carrying this bucket with me until I can't carry it anymore! ■

FSPA website  
Read the complete obituaries at  
[www.fspa.org/news](http://www.fspa.org/news)





# Addenda

## Franciscan Federation honors Sister Kathryn Roberg

The Franciscan Federation honored Kathy Roberg, FSPA, with its annual award given to a religious sister who is “passionately embracing Gospel living.” She received the award at the Franciscan Federation’s annual meeting in July.



Kathy Roberg, FSPA

Asked to submit a brief biography, Sister Kathy wrote: “... I firmly believe all life is a journey of concentric circles that continue to intertwine, spiraling in and out of relationships. My communal Franciscan relationships have united me to my sisters in community and others who aspire to Franciscan values. People relationships, enriched by cultures and ethnicity, have been found in my ministry

of teaching, especially English as a Second Language. Spiritual relationships are connected in Gospel living, spread throughout my experiences in pastoral ministry. Heart throbbing relationships have beaten in my involvement with the marginalized.

“And an earthy relationship continues to be nourished in my passion for Mother Earth. This is where Franciscanism and God abounds and continues to develop. These are the God presences—passions—that have nourished me on my journey and will continue to be the life-giving source of energy that strengthens my daily ‘yes’ to God.”

## State’s Catholic newspapers promote a Catholic Roadtrip across Wisconsin

Wisconsin’s five Catholic newspapers provided readers with a two-page spread that maps out 10 Catholic sites in Wisconsin’s dioceses. *Catholic Roadtrip across Wisconsin* sends readers all throughout the state and includes a stop at St. Rose Convent in La Crosse. To view the map, visit [www.fspa.org/news](http://www.fspa.org/news).

## New affiliates welcomed during summer event



Affiliates Deb Cannon, Ginger Gullan and Peggy Jo Fulton

During a week-long live-in held at St. Rose Convent this summer, Deb Cannon, Peggy Jo Fulton and Ginger Gullan were welcomed as covenant affiliates.

Deb, a resident of North Liberty, Iowa, says that it was through a

connection with Lucille Winnike, FSPA, that “an innate sense of belonging to and living out Franciscan values” filled her. For Peggy, her connection with Lorraine Forster, FSPA, in Las Vegas, Nev., where they both live, brought her “spiritual connection and conviction” that is carried out through FSPA affiliation. Ginger’s chance encounters with Marla Lang, FSPA, in Wisconsin’s Northwoods led her to affiliation and ultimately, she says, “it has brought fresh nourishment for my personal and faith life.”

## Sisters’ compositions recognized at national convention

FSPA liturgist Mary Thompson, vice president of Musicians Serving Religious Communities, recently attended the 36th Annual National Pastoral Music Convention in Washington, D.C. There, out of 14 congregations participating and 35 songs submitted, two original compositions by FSPA—*Prayer of Praise* by Barbara Freed and *Psalm 139: Oh God, You Searched for Me* by Malinda Gerke—were among 12 selected and sung.

**Prayer of Praise**

Text: St. Francis of Assisi

Barbara Freed, FSPA

**O God You Searched for Me**  
**PSALM 139**

Malinda Gerke, FSPA

## FSPA-sponsored university launches scholarship campaign

Linda Mershon, FSPA, pictured below at left, joined Viterbo’s leaders in August to celebrate and announce a new phase in the university’s campaign—University of Opportunity: Hope and Help. The campaign has raised \$37 million of its \$40 million goal since 2008. In the campaign’s final push, \$3+ million for scholarships, the university is targeting affordability, talent and mission.

“This campaign,” stated Rick Artman, Viterbo president, “is aptly called, University of Opportunity: Hope and Help. The campus is beautiful, our buildings are attractive, many opportunities exist for student and faculty





research, and we have increased the scholarship support offered to students. In this final phase, in focusing the campaign almost exclusively on scholarship, we seek to assure that Viterbo remains affordable for the many generations of students to come.”

*Photo and copy reprinted with permission by Viterbo University.*

### Two FSPA blogs recognized in ‘Top 100’ list

FSPA’s Messy Jesus Business blog and FSPA for Justice and Peace blog were recently recognized in the online article *Top 100 Blogs by Catholic Sisters and Nuns*. “The top 100 blogs listed here are the best nun blogs on the net, full of terrific anecdotes and lessons learned from years of serving the Lord.” Listed as number 21, Messy Jesus Business, composed by Sister Julia Walsh, “... contemplates the challenge of really living the Gospel when Christianity has become fluffy and watered down.” Also on the roster at number 59 is the FSPA for Justice and Peace blog by Elizabeth Deligio. Follow FSPA blogs at [www.fspa.org/news/blogs.html](http://www.fspa.org/news/blogs.html).

### Spend time in prayer this New Year’s Eve

The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration invite all to rejoice in the coming of the new year at St. Rose Convent’s Mary of the Angels Chapel, La Crosse, Wis. The New Year’s Eve prayer service, Evening Prayer for Peace with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and the blessing of time, will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 31, at 6 p.m.

### Discerning religious life? Come and See in 2014

FSPA will host two Come and See events in 2014: Jan. 17-19 and Aug. 1-3. Women between the ages of 18 and 49 are invited to learn more about Franciscan life in the 21st century. Guests will stay in the FSPA formation house in La Crosse, Wis., and engage with the women in process of becoming perpetually professed Franciscan Sisters. In addition, participants will spend time with the vocation directors, several Franciscan Sisters in ministry around La Crosse and will have the opportunity to spend quiet time in Mary of the Angels Chapel. For more information send an email to [membership@fspa.org](mailto:membership@fspa.org) or call 888-683-3772.



*Laura Nettles, FSPA*

### FSPA vocations: sister professes final vows, two renew commitment

Laura Nettles, FSPA, celebrated her final profession of vows with the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration on Saturday, May 25, 2013. Sister Laura, a native of Los Alamos, N.M., now wears the FSPA ring—a community symbol with a decorative insignia, IHS (“Jesus” in Greek).

“To this day, the Franciscan tradition continues to emphasize the unique revelation of God in each person, in every culture and in all creatures, and fosters special concern for those on the margins of society. As a vowed Franciscan, this is my inheritance and my life calling,” said Sister Laura.

Sister Laura currently serves as an assistant professor in religious studies at Viterbo University, La Crosse, Wis. She received an M.A. from both St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, N.Y., and the Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, Ill. She earned a B.A. in music education from the University of Wyoming in Laramie. During her nine-year journey toward final vows, Sister Laura participated in the Common Franciscan Novitiate in Joliet, Ill. (now located in Missouri), where she spent time in classroom instruction on the vows and Franciscan studies. Her ministry at that time was at the Will County Jail where she tutored inmates in preparation for their GED tests. During her apostolic novitiate she spent the fall in New York City, where she volunteered with City Harvest (a food rescue and distribution center), a homeless shelter and Franciscans International.

Kristin Peters, FSPA, and Julia Walsh, FSPA, renewed their temporary vows with FSPA this summer. Several sisters and affiliates celebrated with Sister Kristin as she renewed her vows during the congregation’s general assembly in June—an event attended by more than 200 sisters and affiliates intended to help set the community’s direction for the next four years. Sister Julia’s celebration, held in July, included an evening of Taize prayer. Guests enjoyed both guided prayer as well as time for silent prayer and meditation. Both sisters reside in La Crosse, Wis., and continue their journey toward final profession.



*Julia Walsh, FSPA*



*Kristin Peters, FSPA*



# Further your spirituality

## Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center, Hiawatha, Iowa

Do you long for quiet time and beauty amid the busy-ness of the holiday season? Join us for *Dances of Universal Peace in Song and Silence*, Dec. 6 – 7, 2013. Use simple music, lyrics and movement from diverse spiritual traditions to touch the essence within yourself and others and connect to the Spirit. For more information or to register, contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700 or [www.prairiewoods.org](http://www.prairiewoods.org).

## Franciscan Spirituality Center, La Crosse, Wis.

Come ponder the mystery of the Incarnation and the meaning of Christmas for us today at *Illuminating Advent: Meditations on the Art of The Saint John's Bible*. We will use Scripture and illuminations from *The Saint John's Bible*, a modern, hand-written and illuminated Bible.

Presenter Audrey Quanrud will guide you through visio divina on Tuesday evenings, Nov. 19, 26; Dec. 3 and 10, 2013. Visit [www.FSCenter.org](http://www.FSCenter.org) for more information or call 608-791-5295 to register.

## The Well Franciscan Spirituality Center, St. Paul, Minn. (formerly WomanWell)

Icons are more than religious paintings—they are “windows to the Divine.” Come and experience the joy of writing your own icon at *An Icon Painting Retreat: Messengers of God*, led by Maryann Gossling, FSPA, Jan. 12-18, 2014.

Participants will paint one complete icon from a choice of three early icons of Archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. No previous experience is required. All materials will be supplied. Go to [www.womanwell.org](http://www.womanwell.org) for more information, or call 651-739-7953 to register.

## The Christine Center, Willard, Wis.

Take the weekend of Dec. 20 – 22, 2013, for a guided silent retreat. Enjoy a time of solitude, prayer, rest and a daily meeting with a trained spiritual director as well as group sharing and meditations. Your guides are Henrita Frost, SSND, and Johanna Seubert, FSPA. Visit [www.christinecenter.org](http://www.christinecenter.org) for more information or call 866-333-7507.

## Global Awareness Through Experience

Join GATE in Guatemala for Holy Week, April 9-19, 2014. Meet people of faith, dedication, and courage who seek to improve their country from within. Witness how hope and solidarity flourish in the face of challenges. Join us for a unique experience that will change your vision of the world. Visit [www.gate-travel.org](http://www.gate-travel.org) for more information or call 608-791-5283.

## Marywood Franciscan Spirituality Center, Arbor Vitae, Wis.

Visit [www.marywoodsc.org](http://www.marywoodsc.org) for a complete listing of upcoming retreats and programs.



# Volunteer with FSPA

## Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center, Hiawatha, Iowa

From washing laundry to cutting vegetables, grounds keeping to praying, there are many ways in which volunteers help Prairiewoods grow. Some choose to serve once a month or once a week, while others give a little time each day while here on retreat. If you would like to join our much-appreciated rank of helpers, please contact Marj English, OSF, at 319-395-6700, ext. 216, or [menglish@prairiewoods.org](mailto:menglish@prairiewoods.org).

## The Well Franciscan Spirituality Center, St. Paul, Minn.

Welcoming guests from the region to our weekday or weekend programs, answering phones, assisting with hospitality tasks, tending our gardens and helping keep our bedrooms “guest ready” are some of the volunteer opportunities at The Well. Many of the opportunities have flexible times that can fit into your schedule. We welcome you to join our family of volunteers. Please contact Heather Walters at 651-739-7953 or email [seeking@womanwell.org](mailto:seeking@womanwell.org).



Visit us on Facebook:  
[facebook.com/franciscansisters](https://facebook.com/franciscansisters)



Follow us on Twitter:  
[twitter.com/FSPAtweets](https://twitter.com/FSPAtweets)



Follow us on Pinterest:  
[www.pinterest.com/fspapins](https://www.pinterest.com/fspapins)



Visit us on YouTube:  
[youtube.com/franciscansisters](https://youtube.com/franciscansisters)