

# Perspectives

Fall 2014 Volume 29 Number Two

A Publication of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration



*“Faith is joining a great dynamic dance with the community of all living beings, creating together a future of fulfilled promises. Faith is being blessed.”*

– Betty Daugherty, FSPA

Faithful presence since 1849.

For 165 years, the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration have offered a faithful presence at their motherhouse in Wisconsin and in ministries throughout the world. They have educated, cared for, prayed for and been the voice for so many—immigrant children, uninsured patients and those dealing with injustices. The sisters’ faithful presence is constant.

In this issue we look back at faithful service in Idaho Falls, Idaho, where, beginning in the 1960s, two sisters served a predominately Mormon population. And we visit Odanah, Wisconsin, where Sister Margaret Ann Mason once taught Native American children at the FSPA-established St. Mary’s Indian Mission School (pg. 5).

And in this issue, we look at the FSPA presence today. A presence that brings, thanks to a FSPA ministry grant, additional days of educational instruction to at risk children—fortification for those who need challenges (pg. 3). In Cedar Rapids, Iowa, it is a Franciscan Sister—with several parishes—who is helping clients put food on the table—and pay rent and utility bills. That FSPA presence has one client feeling “empowered to do better and not give up” (pg. 4).

As we reflect on the words above, “Faith is ... creating together a future of fulfilled promises,” we thank you, our generous benefactors. It is through your gifts that we are able to continue spreading our faithful presence—our promises—to ministries throughout the world. We are blessed.

Peace and all good,  
Sister Karen Lueck  
FSPA president



*During a recent Franciscan pilgrimage, four FSPA visited Bagnoregio, the birthplace of St. Bonaventure, in the Province of Viterbo, Italy. Read more about their pilgrimage on page 6.*

Photo by Laura Nettles, FSPA

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

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*Cover photo: Rochelle Potaracke, FSPA, sponsors a FSPA ministry grant that is enriching the lives of children at an elementary school in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Read the full story on page 3.*

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# La Crosse, Wisconsin

## Sustenance for Superman

**L**ittle bodies, big minds, and all well fed. You'll find them—thriving—at Hamilton Elementary School in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

And this isn't what, considering the school's population of at-risk children served, you might expect. Student enrollment is, in the preschool to fourth-grade classrooms, 150 kids. Of all those little girls and boys, sitting in those small seats, 39 percent go home to families (many single moms, grandparents, extended families) of minority ethnicity—the highest concentration of underserved people in the school district of La Crosse. When the bell rings, calling all children to the tables in the lunch room to refuel the most essential educational tool there is, 86 percent are able to partake in plates of protein as provided by the free and reduced meal program (supplemented by FSPA and other organizations). Yes: 129 tummies, otherwise possibly empty, are fortified for the rest of the school day.

You'll also find Hamilton Principal Steve Michaels. Not necessarily in his office but more than likely mingling in the mix of kids and teachers, mindful of movement throughout the overheated, crowded, aged school building. And not just inside those walls; really, his heart is always aware of his community. "I love the people who live in this neighborhood and believe education is the key," he insists, "for helping families." And for this Steve has stepped out of the educational toolbox: his office, the hallway, the lunch room, the school, the neighborhood and the school district, to enrich it.

You'll find at Hamilton, in mid-July, students returning to the classrooms after a 15-day break—not three straight summer months during which time retention rates regress, families struggle to secure safe childcare and those stomachs, like schools, might be empty. It's a year-round education plan—45 school days followed by 15 days off (equivalent to the student/teacher time and built-in holiday breaks of the traditional education model). Implemented in 2013 after three years of dialogue with parents, staff, the community and 32 different

school districts, Steve reports significant reduction in summer slide rates (teachers began introducing new content the first week of school) and disciplinary action (by 50 percent). And the increased proportion of pride among teachers and parents? It's palpable. "They're proud of this school," he says, "because they created it."

On some of those 15 days, when Hamilton's bell doesn't officially ring, you'll still find kids in the building attending intersessions—another new program funded in part by FSPA which provides seven to 10 mornings of additional instruction available to all students that includes math/reading or



*One of Hamilton Elementary School's intersessions is captured in action. Students use collaboration and imagination, from costumes and set design, to produce and perform a play.*

Photo courtesy of Steven Michaels

enrichment. Fortification, says Steve, not just to preserve remediation reduction but to sweeten the senses of children who "have met expectations and need challenges." The school structure, he sees, can take advantage "of wonderful resources ... our retired teachers ... to provide learning in such areas as natural sciences, medical sciences, sculpture, drama and song writing."

And, recently, on one of Hamilton's regular 45 day school sessions you would've found Superman. Superman, otherwise known as a student wearing a bright superhero

t-shirt in Mrs. Erickson's second grade classroom, sat quietly after lunch and recess, reading intently, beside Rochelle Potaracke, FSPA. Sister Rochelle sponsors the FSPA grant that helps to ensure that he and all students are provided a protein-balanced lunch and have the opportunity to experience intersession instruction; "Food for their bodies and enrichment for their souls." It reminds her, she says, about a time in early FSPA history when food supplies were lean but a piece of artwork displayed in the kitchen helped to sustain the community's soul. Sister Rochelle sees it as a reflection of supplementing sustenance and nourishing souls and inspiring FSPA "to help change the lives of the children at Hamilton School."

And in every nook and cranny of Hamilton, you'll find gracious gratitude to FSPA. "How to thank Sister Rochelle and all the sisters who support us: where do I start?" asks Steve. Because, he says, this new-found nutrition for bodies and minds came not from him but from them and their "real connection to the students and parents and Hamilton community." Empowerment for all, he says. Including Superman. ■



# Cedar Rapids, Iowa

## FSPA outreach: to give is to receive

“I am humbled and grateful for her assistance in our mission ... supplying hope and solidarity to all ages, races and faiths,” says Barb Kane, program director for Metro Catholic Outreach, an organization in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, that gives food and rent and utility assistance to those in need. She is speaking of Laurie Sullivan, FSPA, who manages the food pantry there.

“I feel the desire to give to others instead of just receiving,” says a MCO client, who has partaken gratefully in the food program facilitated by Sister Laurie.

“The clients have taught me about gratefulness and reliance on God,” says Sister Laurie of her MCO ministry. She sponsors a FSPA grant that helps strengthen this trinity of social justice, human need and grace and trust. Each perspective provides proof that to give is to receive; that to give is to receive; that to give—is—to receive.

### MCO Program Director Barb Kane:

Of the organization—a consolidation of 11 Catholic parishes in the Cedar Rapids metro area—Barb says, “We supply immediate, tangible goods to help our clients solve current crises of hunger, utility disconnection and eviction, but while walking with them in search of resources we also offer a human touch that is more valuable.

“Since opening in February 2012, MCO has served more than 9,027 people from its food pantry and our financial assistance program has helped 750 families. We see a cross section of the population from retired couples to single adults and both two-parent and single-parent families, all ranging in age from birth to over 75 years old. They are working and unemployed. Some speak very little English as immigrants from Hispanic countries and many parts of Africa. The people we serve are the children of God; anyone in need of food is given as we are able without restriction.

“I could never say enough to accurately describe Sister Laurie’s impact on MCO. She has a heart of mission and serves humbly, truly the hands and feet of Christ. We are so fortunate



*In the pantry at Metro Catholic Outreach Sister Laurie Sullivan (pictured right), with volunteer Annette Williams, prepares baskets of food for the program’s clients.*

to have her as an ambassador of the Catholic community.”

### Client:

“I receive a monthly food box, but just coming to MCO to pick it up is enriching. I am empowered to do better and not give up. When times are dark, it gives me a light of hope.”

### Sister Laurie Sullivan:

“MCO is a relatively young organization so my ministry continues to evolve as does the agency itself. I manage the pantry, corresponding weekly with the 11 sponsoring parishes and the general public, utilizing Facebook and the MCO website ([www.metrocatholicoutreach.org](http://www.metrocatholicoutreach.org)) to secure food availability for our neighbors in need. I coordinate about 100 volunteers who prepare and distribute over 400 boxes of food each month. Also, in the hopes of assisting them to a better and healthier lifestyle, I organize classes for our clients in budgeting and food preparation. As we provide food and financial assistance we continue to connect on a

deeper level with those whom we have the privilege to serve, becoming more aware of and responding to other needs.

“My supervisor and I are the only staff members yet with volunteers, we have a smooth-running operation and have formed a community that genuinely cares and looks out for one another. I personally have been supported and encouraged in my religious life journey and in turn support them. Together we complement each other’s gifts and talents.

“Our clients challenge me in my life of privilege and call me to live my vow of poverty in a deeper way. I have to say I’ve had many outstanding experiences. Once I was chatting with a woman in line as she waited to receive her box of food. She asked if she could volunteer and as we set a date and time said ‘Thank you! Now I have a reason to get up in the morning.’ She later opened up and shared that, although she had a life-threatening illness, the opportunity to volunteer had given her a purpose to live.

“For me, it was so simple to listen. One never knows how simply listening and offering a hand for another to grasp can make a difference; even in giving another,” says Sister Laurie, “the will to live.” ■

## Faithful Presence: Two FSPA, two hearts in motion, two missions on the map

Every day, FSPA are moved to minister throughout the world. Whenever they are called (in the past—as told here—and in this moment, and in the future), wherever they go, and whomever they serve, they are faithful. They are presence. They are faithful presence to all.

### Margaret Ann Mason, FSPA

Off the south shore of Lake Superior in Wisconsin, Odanah (which, in the language of the Chippewa, means “town”) was built by a stratum of environments and of Native American and Christian heritage. The community is grounded in a depth of deep layers.



*Sister Margaret Ann Mason*

There, the Bad River Lapointe Band of the Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians is its bedrock. Father John Chebul, who built St. Mary Church there in 1868 as part of the Diocese of La Crosse (which, at that time, served the entire west and northwest population of the state), laid the foundation. The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, who established St. Mary’s Indian Mission School in 1883, became the pillars of the teaching ministry that was structurally sound in Odanah for 85 years.

Those theological beams that sustained the Indian mission

proved sturdy. The native Wisconsin people came and the parish prospered and the school flourished and more space—for more pews in the church, desks in the classrooms and beds in the dormitory—was needed. And then, seemingly, called upon through prayer, a reinforcing figure, St. Joseph, provided. A new contract securing government funds was crafted; donations were procured through other parishes; and, a wealthy visitor from Philadelphia, Katherine Drexel, became a bountiful benefactor, purchasing and then gifting the neighboring Presbyterian mission property. Katherine was



*Sister Joan (Mary Damian) Weigel poses with her class at St. Mary’s Indian Mission School in Odanah in 1965.*

granted sainthood by Pope John Paul II in 2000.

But even so, as the mission developed the land threatened. Rivers, the Bad and the White, that washed by Odanah swelled. Forest fires flamed. Tornados and high winds tore. In a few instances however, in the face of geographical adversity, glorious girders gave saving grace. A photograph of Our Lady of Good Counsel, hung in a tree on mission property, seemed to provide a wall in one fire. In the same foliage, during a flood, a picture of the Madonna watched the waters recede. Buildings on the mission went through destruction and reconstruction many times. The community of Odanah has since been rebuilt on higher ground.

In the ministry of education, within the culture and conditions of St. Mary’s Indian Mission School, many FSPA did their best to maintain custom and structure. One such support beam is Margaret Ann Mason, FSPA. Sister Margaret Ann taught students, mostly those in fifth, seventh and eighth grade,

in that area (primarily in Ashland, Wisconsin, in what is now the Diocese of Superior) for 35 years (50 in Catholic education, all told). From 1962 to 1963, she served the Native American children at the mission school. She recently sat down with aged photographs and faded Polaroids and remembered the unique building blocks, some more sturdy than others, that composed St. Mary’s Indian Mission School’s history.

“By that time,” says Sister Margaret Ann, of the year she spent there, “language barriers were no longer

*Continued on page 13*



*From left, Sister Tarsilla Mock, Mollie Alges, Sisters Cleopha Lechtenberg and Margaret (Mary Peter) Ann Mason out for a stroll.*



## Our Perspective: Pilgrimage immerses sisters in Franciscan faith

by Amy Taylor, FSPA

In July I was given the gift of going on pilgrimage to Assisi, to participate in a final vow preparation program. All of my fellow pilgrims were religious women and men, all but two were in the process of preparing for final vows. Joining me were Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration Laura Nettles (who has already made final vows), Kristin Peters and Julia Walsh. Jean Moore, FSPA, served as a pilgrimage leader. What a gift it was to share this experience with my peers in community! The pilgrimage to Assisi continues to shape my everyday experiences as my life unfolds as a FSPA.

As we approached Assisi one of our leaders announced, "Welcome home." Gazing on the city was a powerful moment for me. Yes, I was going home to a place I had never been but my soul knew well. I have never before traveled to a city so deeply rooted in me. I remember walking up the hill in utter amazement that I was home—halfway around the world—in a place where I didn't speak the language. My heart did, though, through shared spiritual communication.

In that moment I was forever changed.

Each day as we visited the various sites I became aware of not only Francis' and Clare's connection to the places but also my own. As I sat in caves, climbed mountains and prayed in various churches, the Franciscan spirit grew stronger in my heart. It was as if Francis and Clare were sharing with me the joy they found in following Jesus. I am among the next generation of Franciscans called to continue the work of the Gospel. Our task over 800 years later is a paradox, different yet the same, as we retrace the footsteps of Francis and Clare, looking for the needs of our time. As a community we carry the light of the Franciscan spirit into the future. What that will look like in the time to come is still a mystery, but this experience of pilgrimage reminds me that God always provides what we need when we need it and will provide a way forward.

by Kristin Peters, FSPA

Experiencing the Assisi pilgrimage invited me to consider more deeply my call to live a religious life with FSPA.

As pilgrims we heard the history, theology and spirit of our Franciscan tradition. Our leaders and the religious men and women maintaining the pilgrimage sites communicated with words while the art and frescos communicated without them. The land and the people of Italy held and told the story and spirit in another way. Using all our faculties we reflected upon



*From left, Sisters Laura Nettles, Amy Taylor, Kristin Peters and Julia Walsh during a visit to San Damiano Chapel in Assisi, Italy.*

Photo courtesy of Julia Walsh, FSPA

the significance of our Franciscan heritage.

Upon reflection, I realize that in each location we visited on pilgrimage, Francis and Clare prayed. Through their prayer they came to more clearly reflect Christ's love in their daily lives. In the rebuilding of the church of San Damiano, living side by side with someone who has leprosy, or in the niches carved into the mountains where Francis and his brothers took time for solitude and rest, Christ was present. No matter where they were I believe that they sought and lived as best they could the call to give praise, glory and honor to God at all times and in every circumstance. They became more like the God whom they loved.

The power of God's love was also experienced through connection with others at the pilgrimage sites. I did not speak any Italian before I left but still God spoke and I could understand. In a cave used by Francis, an older man spoke in Italian about the way he is brought to tears by the beauty of this place. A woman at the grotto of Bernard of Quintavalle at the Carceri spoke in Italian of the spirit of the place. She and I became so connected in our sharing. At the height of Mount La Verna, a woman and I communicated in a mixture of Italian and English that we would pray for each other. The spirit of love was so clear. Faithfulness was being lived out in connection with each other and to the land.

Lastly, in many places the image of Francis receiving the stigmata was portrayed. Francis' love for Christ and the deep intimacy into which Christ invited him was revealed by the imprinting upon his body the wounds of the cross. I remain in awe of this love and seek to imitate Francis' and Clare's gestures of love. In the footsteps of those Franciscans who precede me, I say yes to the invitation to love. ■

# Adams County, Wisconsin

## Spirit of Ministry: Faith in Action: neighbors helping neighbors

**S**ince 2005, Faith in Action of Adams County, Wisconsin, has rallied volunteers from various churches and the community to work together to care for their aging and physically or mentally challenged neighbors. When I prepared to move to this area, we were aware that rural Adams County traditionally ranks near the bottom of state measures of economic and physical health, and that isolation, poverty, addictions and mental illness affect the well-being of many residents. FAAC is one of the 31 nonprofit groups in Wisconsin whose start-up was funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to offer interfaith-based, free of charge, community volunteer programs to serve persons who are homebound due to long-term health conditions, especially those who fall through the cracks of government programs. FAAC continues to be supported through donations, fundraisers and especially a FSPA ministry grant for which we are very grateful.

I became involved with FAAC in various capacities, and in the face of so much need I learned the meaning of doing “small things with great love” from our incredible volunteers. We don’t provide medical or financial support, but we encourage our care recipients with an “I’m behind you, you

can do it!” philosophy, promoting as much independence as possible. Our goal is to create a supportive, on-going relationship and friendship between a volunteer and a care recipient.

The needs are many. We provide transportation to medical appointments—and the volunteer driver often provides emotional support for those facing medical challenges alone. Volunteers offer services such as friendly visits, respite care and grocery shopping. A core tenet of FAAC is keeping those we help connected to the community through activities that maintain their self-worth. We also provide telephone support, small home repairs, yard work, light house-keeping, emergency food or medication delivery, rides to the food pantry and monthly delivery via mobile pantry.

The program director facilitates our mission by recruiting and training volunteers, assessing and interviewing care recipients, arranging services and coordinating with other support agencies and systems. The director often acts as an advocate, helping people to get the support they need when they can’t understand the process. Most of our care recipients are low-income, a few are homeless, and whether they self-refer or are referred to us, we also make sure they are connected with the food pantry, energy assistance and the mental health drop-in center. We work closely with county agencies and



*A friendly visit from this volunteer relieves loneliness and isolation.* Photos courtesy of Gail Schultz and FAAC



*Faith in Action takes on a strong community presence and here, a Care participant enjoys a ride on the organization’s float in his first ever 4th of July parade.*

they frequently refer their clients to us because they know FAAC can help in ways they can’t.

Faith in Action is exactly what its name implies. We are about ministering to the least of these, without judgment, without compensation. In partnership with our coalition churches and our volunteers, we try to live the Gospel in the way that Francis did. It isn’t easy; it’s often stressful, frustrating and heartbreaking. But we follow the call. It is impossible not to take action when faced with so much loneliness and struggle. And it is impossible to stop once you’ve heard someone say, “I didn’t want to live before you helped me.” This is what motivates Faith in Action of Adams County—the desire to love, to console, to hope and to give. ■



*Gail Schultz is part of the Lakeside Canticles, a FSPA affiliate companion community. She affiliated with FSPA in 2014 and ministers as a spiritual director in Friendship, Wisconsin. She works with those who seek spiritual growth, especially in rural communities.*



# Development Update

*Hope and faith abound! Last year hundreds of beautiful gifts were mailed to the FSPA Development Office. We are so grateful to our many benefactors and friends; it is because of your generosity we can continue to do so much. You share our vision; you make it possible. Thank you!*



*Four school gardens and two farm camps in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, are supported with a ministry grant and your generosity. We thank you, donors.*

Photo courtesy of Clint Twedt-Ball



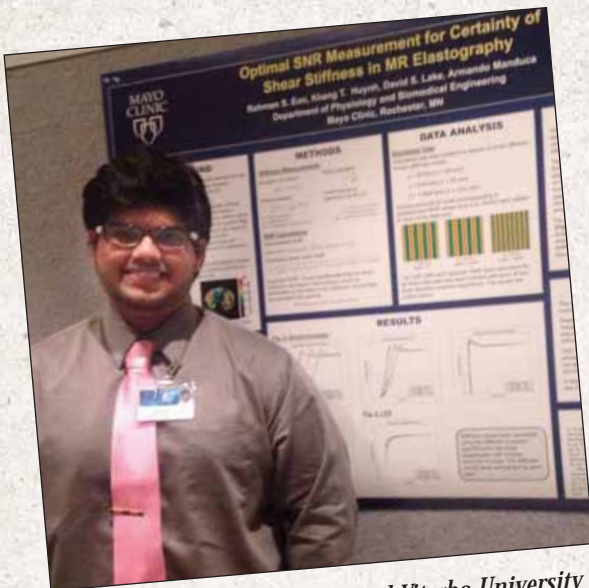
*Retired Senior Volunteer Driver Program: volunteer drivers offered 6,009 rides to elderly and disabled La Crosse area residents. We thank you, donors.*

Photo courtesy of Amanda Tischer Buros, RSVP



*Warm wishes poured in from 140 families in Cruz Obispo, Mexico, who now have running water and a cistern (seen here in construction) for storage in their village. We thank you, donors.*

Photo courtesy of Sergio Castro



*Eon Rehman is a FSPA-supported Viterbo University (La Crosse, Wisconsin) international student pursuing a science degree with the desire to become a biomedical engineer and cure diseases. We thank you, donors.*

Photo courtesy of Eon Rehman



*Eighty-seven percent of the Apache families on the San Carlos Apache Reservation in Arizona are below the poverty level yet receive tuition support and uniforms. We thank you, donors.*

Photo courtesy of St. Charles School





## Circle of Perpetual Friends

The Circle of Perpetual Friends honors our partners who value the FSPA mission and ministries and their continuance into the future. Perpetual Friends are those who remember FSPA in their wills and estate plans. We are grateful for these special benefactors. To learn more, visit [www.fspa.org](http://www.fspa.org) and select Donate and Ways to Give.

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### FSPA Development Office Accountability Report July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014

#### Source of Funds:

General Contributions	\$422,339	69%
Bequests/Planned Gifts	101,446	16%
Memorial Fund	11,480	2%
Support from Congregation	77,575	13%

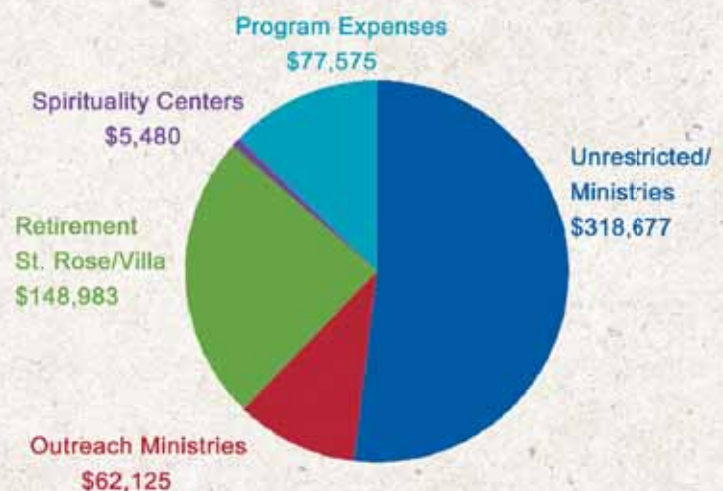
**Total Revenue**                      **\$612,840**                      **100%**

#### Use of Funds:

Unrestricted/Support of Ministries	\$318,677	52%
Outreach Ministries	62,125	10%
Retirement/St. Rose/Villa St. Joseph	148,983	24%
Spirituality Centers	5,480	1%
Program Expenses	77,575	13%

**Total Expenses**                      **\$612,840**                      **100%**

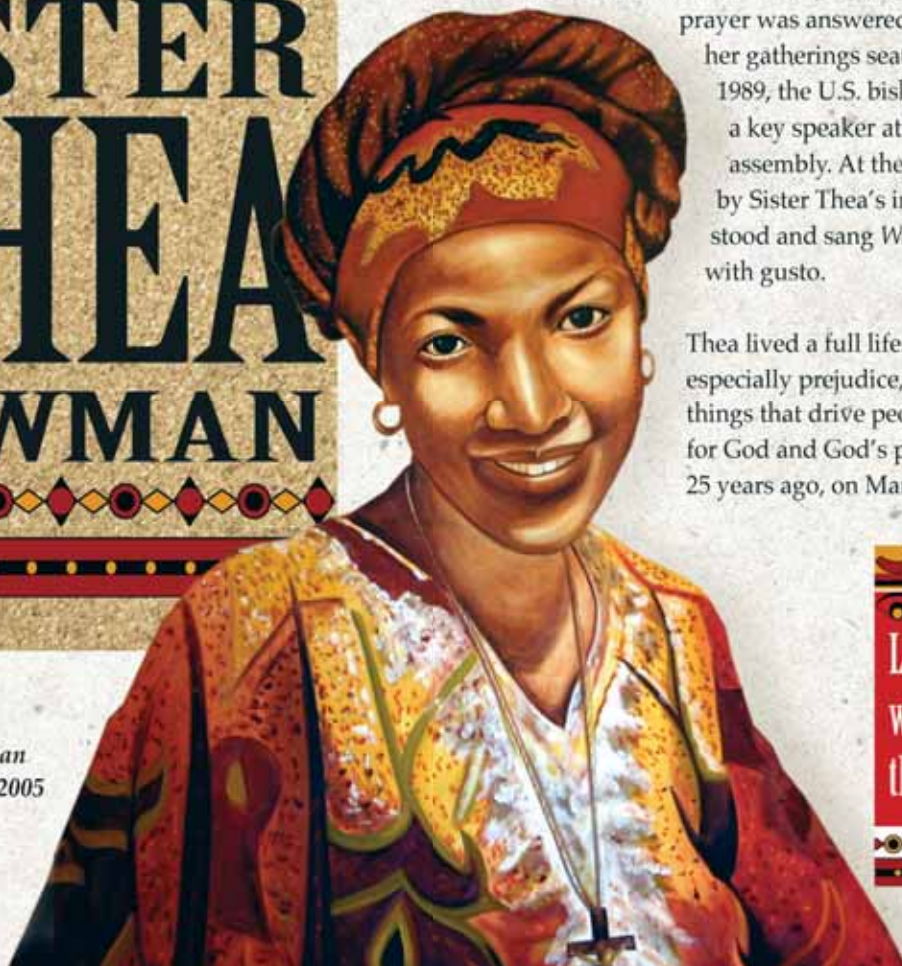
### Fiscal Year 2014 Use of Funds





CELEBRATION  
OF LIFE  
SISTER  
THEA  
BOWMAN

Painting of  
Sister Thea Bowman  
by Tony Bryant • 2005



*Born December 29, 1937, in Yazoo City, Mississippi, Thea was reared as a Methodist until age nine when she asked her parents if she could become a Catholic. In 1953, she joined the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration.*

Gifted with a brilliant mind, beautiful voice and a dynamic personality, Sister Thea shared the message of God's love through a teaching career. After 16 years of teaching at the elementary, secondary and university level, the bishop of Jackson, Mississippi, invited her to become the consultant for intercultural awareness. In that role, she gave presentations across the country; lively gatherings that combined singing, gospel preaching, prayer and storytelling. Her programs were directed to break down racial and cultural barriers. She encouraged people to communicate with one another so that they could understand other cultures and races.

In 1984, Sister Thea was diagnosed with breast cancer. In January 1988, cancer spread to her bones. She prayed "to live until I die." Her prayer was answered, and she continued her gatherings seated in a wheelchair. In 1989, the U.S. bishops invited her to be a key speaker at their semi-annual assembly. At the end of the meeting, by Sister Thea's invitation, the bishops stood and sang *We Shall Overcome* with gusto.

Thea lived a full life. She fought evil, especially prejudice, suspicion, hatred and things that drive people apart. She fought for God and God's people until her death, 25 years ago, on March 30, 1990.

Learn more at  
[www.fspa.org/  
theabowman](http://www.fspa.org/theabowman)



## Celebrate Sister Thea on the 25th Anniversary of her homegoing



March 15-30, 2015

### **Celebrating Thea: the art exhibit**

Hosted by the Franciscan Spirituality Center, La Crosse, Wisconsin, this exhibit will feature Thea artwork by a variety of artists, including Brother Mickey McGrath. Open gallery hours are posted at [www.fspa.org/theabowman](http://www.fspa.org/theabowman) or call 608-791-5295. Private group tours available by appointment.



March 28-30, 2015

### **Come and See**

This program is designed for women, ages 21 to 45, who are considering the call to live a Franciscan lifestyle. This Come and See will not only allow participants to become better acquainted with our community, but will include full participation in the weekend's events honoring Sister Thea Bowman. Women discerning religious life may register at [membership@fspa.org](mailto:membership@fspa.org) or by calling 888-683-3772.



March 29, 2015

### **Friends of Thea: Sharing the Joy**

Join panelists Rev. Maurice Nutt, C.Ss.R., Brother Mickey McGrath, OSFS, Marla Lang, FSPA, and Mary Lou Jennings as they share Thea's joy and lasting legacy. This event is hosted by the Franciscan Spirituality Center, La Crosse, Wisconsin, and registration details will be available in January. To request to receive an email when registration opens, email [fscenter@fspa.org](mailto:fscenter@fspa.org) or call 608-791-5295. Or, watch [www.fspa.org/theabowman](http://www.fspa.org/theabowman) for details.

*Join Us!*



# In Memoriam

## Rejoice, you who are alive in Christ

### **Sister Mary Avila Wittig** **May 16, 1918-April 26, 2014**

Sister Mary Avila was born in Durand, Wisconsin. She ministered as a teacher for 42 years in schools in Iowa, Mississippi and Wisconsin, including eight years at St. James and St. John's, La Crosse, seven years as principal at Holy Rosary, Lima, and six years each at St. Mary's Ridge and Festina, Iowa. She worked for social services from 1985 to 1992, caring for children at Casa de Esperanza in Houston, Texas.



### **Sister Elissa Kamaka** **March 5, 1932-June 12, 2014**

Sister Elissa, a native of Honolulu, Hawaii, taught in elementary schools in Arizona, Hawaii and Wisconsin for 17 years before being named chair of the education department at Silver Lake College, Manitowoc, Wisconsin. She served as assistant director of research and assistant to the president at the College of Notre Dame, Baltimore. Sister Elissa then became the first director of graduate education at Viterbo College. She served the FSPA community as Eastern Region secretary before working at El Santuario de Chimayo in New Mexico. From 1991 to 1995, Sister Elissa served as director of religious education at St. Leo Parish,



West Salem, and pastoral associate at St. Mary's, Bangor, Wisconsin. She returned to Viterbo where she served in the adult education program.

### **Sister Beatrice (Vitalis) Merkes** **June 20, 1920-June 18, 2014**

Born in Rozellville, Wisconsin, Sister Beatrice served as an elementary teacher for 28 years in Iowa and Wisconsin. She ministered at Newman High School, Wausau, Wisconsin, as teacher and school counselor. Five years later, Sister Beatrice was on staff at a support house. She moved to Okmulgee, Oklahoma, where she was engaged in parish ministry from 1979 to 1983. Following a year working with refugee resettlement in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Sister Beatrice served as director of adult education in parishes in Marshall, Minnesota, and Sioux City, Iowa, for several years.



### **Sister Dolorice Schier** **Jan. 1, 1913-Aug. 7, 2014**

A native of West Point, Iowa, Sister Dolorice ministered in the field of education. She served 18 years as a teacher in schools in Iowa, Idaho and Wisconsin. From 1950 to 1982, Sister Dolorice ministered at St. Michael's Home as a teacher, a group mother, and finally as the central service coordinator. Before retiring to St. Rose Convent in 1995, she was assistant audiovisual librarian at Viterbo College and served as sacristan at the campus church from 1982 to 1996.



### **Sister Jocelyn Snyder, FSPA** **April 8, 1920-Sept. 12, 2014**

Sister Jocelyn was born on her grandfather's farm near Breda, Iowa. She served as a homemaker in convent homes in La Crosse, Athens, Marathon, Ashland and Prairie du Chien in Wisconsin and St. Lucas, Muscatine and Bellevue in Iowa for 17 years. She was in charge of the bakery at St. Rose Convent from 1956 to 1964, after which she went back on mission and ministered as homemaker. She returned to the St. Rose bakery from 1970 until 1995.



## Affiliate Deaths

### **Barbara Jane Kotasek** **Jan. 26, 1944-May 31, 2014**

Barbara Jane Kotasek, of Bloomington, Minnesota, became a covenant affiliate in 2007, with Sister Sarah Hennessey as her sponsor. She was a member of the Kindred Spirits companion community.



Barb is survived by her husband, Dick, two sons and two grandchildren.

FSPA website  
Read the complete obituaries at  
[www.fspa.org](http://www.fspa.org)  
Select obituaries under News/Events

## Faithful presence

continued from page 5

a problem. Students were gifted with artistic and musical abilities. We were working with good people: families, the school board and pastors; right down to the school bus drivers—Clarence Cloud and Carl Maday. All who were involved really wanted the best for the students.” When St. Mary’s Indian Mission School closed, it consolidated with Holy Family School and later with Saint Agnes and Our Lady of the Lake Catholic School in Ashland.

“For over 125 years, many Franciscan sisters and priests have brought an ideal of moral and academic standards to the area. The impact on the lives of the people and children is inestimable, as they inspired them to commitment of leading lives of peace,” says Sister Margaret Ann, “true to the Gospel.”

### Mary Boniface Kriener, FSPA

She grew up among “beautiful” breadths of corn fields, and ministered amid “beautiful” expanses of mountains. Two topographies atypical to each other yet she enjoyed them both, “having been taught well by my parents to appreciate all nature,” just the same.



*Sister Mary Boniface Kriener*

denominations yet she, Mary Boniface Kriener, FSPA, was a presence for the people, just the same.

After Vatican II, when sisters were given the option to transfer, she and Mechtilde Curti, FSPA, chose to stay in Idaho Falls (which she did for 10 years beyond her tenure at the hospital, serving as a Catholic minister there as well as a



*From left, Sisters Mary (Monica) Yehle, Mechtilde Curti, Mary Boniface Kriener, Betty (Theolinda) Hebert and Maris Kerwin*

women of Mormon faith are considered to belong to a sisterhood and referred to as sisters, I chose to wear my veil for a time beyond Vatican II to set myself apart as a woman vowed in the Catholic faith, as a Catholic sister.”

At the home she shared with Sister Mechtilde, “Mormon missionaries would often come to call with hopes of converting us. We’d politely affirm our commitment to Catholicism. They did not understand our vows to God and wanted to ‘marry us by proxy’ so we could go to heaven.”

Any imbalance shifted with the tide when the United States commissioned the Naval Reactors Facility just northwest of the city. The influx of people so highly educated in the field of atomic energy “changed the flavor of the community,” she recalls.

Yet in Idaho Falls, dissimilarity had nary a negative effect on Sister Mary Boniface: “It was no different than living in any other diverse community.” In fact, she says, she was “enlightened ... enriched ... broadened” and, with few prejudices, accepted as she was. It stands to reason: “All people are sad when they’re sad, happy when they’re happy. All are human. All,” she says, “are children of a loving God.” ■

volunteer at her parish). Sister Mary Boniface and all staff members cared for the health needs of people of all faiths in the predominantly Mormon community “with equality, graciously, with courtesy.”

She also recalls some curious cultural diversity. “While visiting socially with the Mormon people, we were often asked to which ‘ward’ we belonged—the equivalent of asking which parish we attended. And because



*This 1974 photo shows Sister Grace (Justille) McDonald with a plaque thanking FSPA for founding Sacred Heart Hospital in Idaho Falls.*



# Addenda

## FSPA files sustainable shareholder proposal

As a result of shareholder engagement, including FSPA as lead filer, Panera Bread Company's new food policy includes its commitment to reduce the environmental and social impacts of its palm oil sourcing.

Together with shareholders and members of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, FSPA commend the company for developing a comprehensive food policy which includes a specific commitment to reduce the environmental and social impacts of sourcing palm oil and its derivatives. Panera is among the first restaurant chain to make this commitment.

The food policy outlines three areas of focus: clean ingredients, transparent menu, and positive impact, stating that they believe their customers deserve to know not only what is in their food, but also where it comes from and how companies are impacting the food system.

Sue Ernster, FSPA, said, "As a community of Catholic women religious we are concerned about the least of our brothers and sisters and the integrity of creation. When it is not sourced sustainably, palm oil is known to have devastating impacts, including deforestation and forced child labor. We are gratified to see that through our engagement, management is formally recognizing the importance of sourcing sustainable palm oil."

## FSPA vocations: sisters profess first vows, one renews commitment

The celebration of first vows for Michelle Frazier, FSPA, and Laurie Sullivan, FSPA, was held May 31 in Mary of the Angels Chapel in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Then FSPA President Linda Mershon congratulated the two sharing this: "Sisters Michelle and Laurie, you have each made your special place in the FSPA community and now you only have to live further into that place. As you do that in the years to come, may God be your beacon, your support and your constant companion."

Sister Laurie serves Metro Catholic Outreach, an organization that provides food and financial assistance, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Sister Michelle is currently earning her teaching certificate from Viterbo University in La Crosse.

Amy Taylor, FSPA, renewed her vows on June 4. Sister Linda



*Michelle Frazier, FSPA*



*Laurie Sullivan, FSPA*

Mershon compassionately welcomed Sister Amy during the ceremony, stating, "You've become very dear to us in these past years of your incorporation. We're proud and happy to continue to walk with you as you prepare for final vows." Sister Amy serves as retreat coordinator for the Franciscan Spirituality Center in La Crosse.



*Amy Taylor, FSPA*

## New affiliates welcomed during summer live-in event

Vicki Lopez-Kaley, a pastoral minister and religious director, was welcomed into affiliation during a ceremony held in June. Vicki says, "I've felt drawn to the values of Francis since I was very young." She was taught by FSPA in the religious studies program (for which she earned a bachelor's degree) at the College of St. Teresa in Winona, Minnesota. Presently, Vicki works in pastoral ministry and religious education at both St. John and St. Stanislaus parishes in Winona.

Gloria Ann Meyer was also welcomed during that ceremony. A resident of Beloit, Wisconsin, Gloria Ann's call to FSPA affiliation also gives meaning to her life once filled with "a real void ... that only Jesus can fill." Now, she says, "I want to serve Jesus through service to others and by providing witness to the Gospel." She also feels a connection to Franciscan values and perpetual adoration. Now, in Gloria Ann's time as a FSPA affiliate, in reflection of the feeling of joy and peace she receives in her own heart, she wants to give "that feeling to others."



*Vicki Lopez-Kaley*

Photo by Lucy Ann Meyer, FSPA



*Gloria Ann Meyer*

Photo by Marci Madary

## 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, Wisconsin. Evening Prayer for Peace with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and the blessing of time will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 31, at 6 p.m. ■

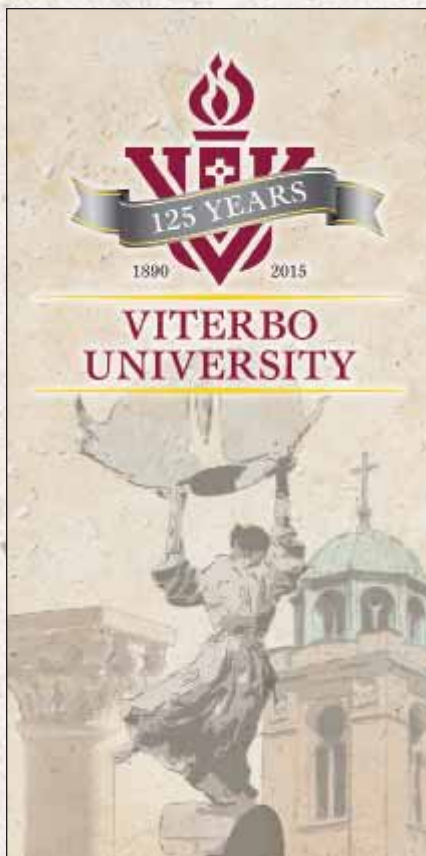
## Viterbo University celebrates 125 years of educational excellence

Viterbo University will celebrate its 125th anniversary with special events throughout the 2014-15 academic year, including a major service project effort for students and employees. The celebration officially kicked off on Aug. 19 when faculty, staff, FSPA and friends gathered for a blessing ceremony and tours of the newly renovated San Damiano Chapel.

In a major initiative for the celebration of the 125th anniversary, service project hours performed by students, employees and alumni will be logged with the goal of getting as close to 125,000 hours as possible.

Viterbo University was founded in 1890 by the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. Through the course of its history, Viterbo has graduated more than 20,000 students.

Visit [www.viterbo.edu/125](http://www.viterbo.edu/125) for a complete schedule of events, a Viterbo historical timeline, a trivia quiz and memories posted by alumni and others. ■



*Photos from top: May crowning and graduation at Viterbo in the 1950s; Sister Karen Lueck speaks at the opening of the remodeled San Damiano Chapel; banner celebrating Viterbo's 125th anniversary; at the hug-a-nun booth at the Viterbo Back to School Bash, a student gets a hug from Sister Esther Leis.*



# Furthering your spirituality

## Marywood Franciscan Spirituality Center, Arbor Vitae, Wisconsin

During *End of the Year Sharing*, Dec. 27 to 29, movies and conversations will be our focus. We'll share our Spiritual Cinema collection and more cherished movies. We will also make time for cross country skiing and other outdoor adventure. This retreat is coordinated by Marla Lang, FSPA. For more information or to register, contact Marywood at 705-385-3750 or visit [www.marywoodsc.org](http://www.marywoodsc.org).

## Franciscan Spirituality Center, La Crosse, Wisconsin

Our daily lives are often characterized by busyness, distractions and priorities that have become out of balance. The *Path of Simply Being* is an invitation to clear away the obstacles and distractions that interfere with living fully from

our true and authentic self; a self that is connected to and is an expression of the Divine. Presented by Tom Roberts, a Buddhist, therapist and teacher of compassion and meditation, this retreat will draw on the teachings and practices from various traditions to explore the practices of contemplation, mindfulness and compassion in daily life. Please join us, from Jan. 23 to 25, 2015. Register online at [www.FSCenter.org](http://www.FSCenter.org) or call 608-791-5295.

## Prairie Woods Franciscan Spirituality Center, Hiawatha, Iowa

Find mind/body/spirit wellness in two retreats offered Nov. 21 to 23. Michelle Watters offers *Yoga Retreat* in which physical poses can lead to letting go of self-judgment, setting intentions and attuning to God within. Dennis, Sheila and Matt Linn lead *Already Home*:

*Living in the Healing Light of the Near-Death Experience Retreat* to expose you to the light and love of near-death experiences for spiritual and emotional growth. More information is available at [www.Prairiewoods.org](http://www.Prairiewoods.org) or 319-395-6700.

## The Christine Center, Willard, Wisconsin

Come greet the New Year with *Silence, Soul and Centered Grace*, Dec. 27 to Jan. 1, with Gabriele Uhlein, OSE, Ph.D. Join the Christine Center's contemplative schedule. A morning session with Sister Gabriele for deepening spiritual practice grounds each day with an optional conversation circle each evening. Spiritual Direction available. For more information or to register call 715-267-7507 or visit [www.christinecenter.org](http://www.christinecenter.org). ■

Encounter people of courage, faith and hope. Learn of their dreams and challenges. Join us for the opportunity to deepen your own solidarity with our southern neighbors.

### 2015 Program Schedule

*El Salvador:*

Jan. 2-12 and Aug. 1-11

*Venezuela:* February 16-26

*Guatemala:*

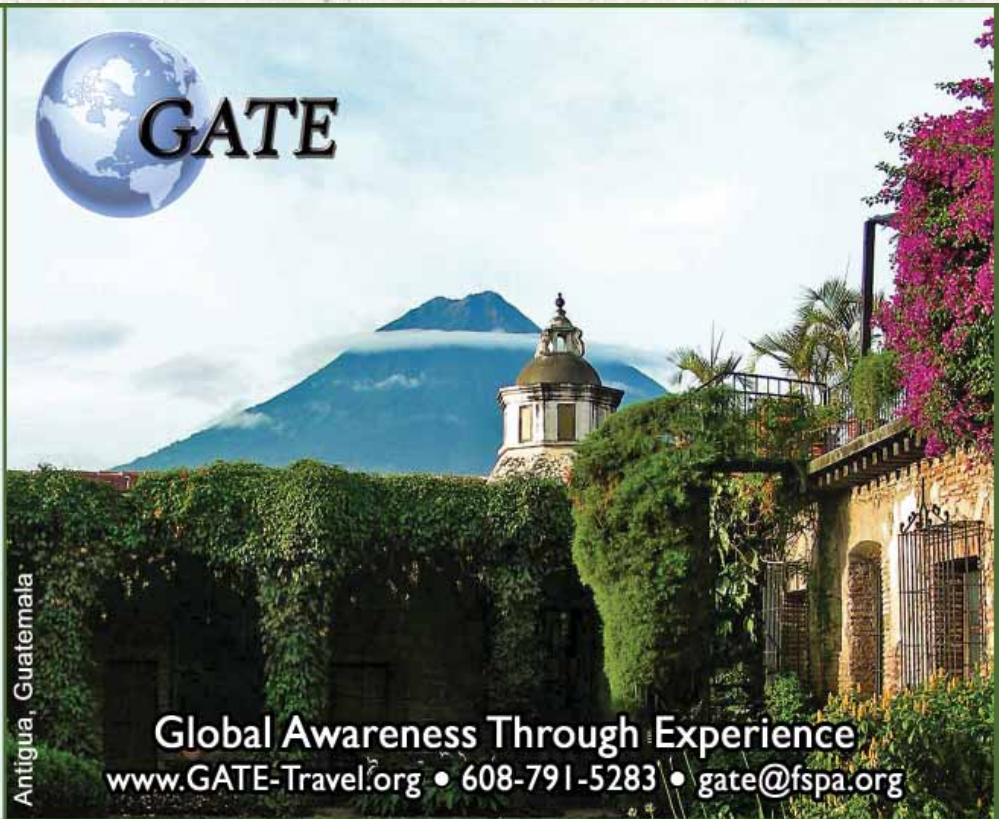
Mar. 25-April 4 and July 7-17

*Peru:* April 27-May 7

*Mexico & Chiapas:* May 27-June 6

*Mexico City & Countryside:*

June 8-18



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