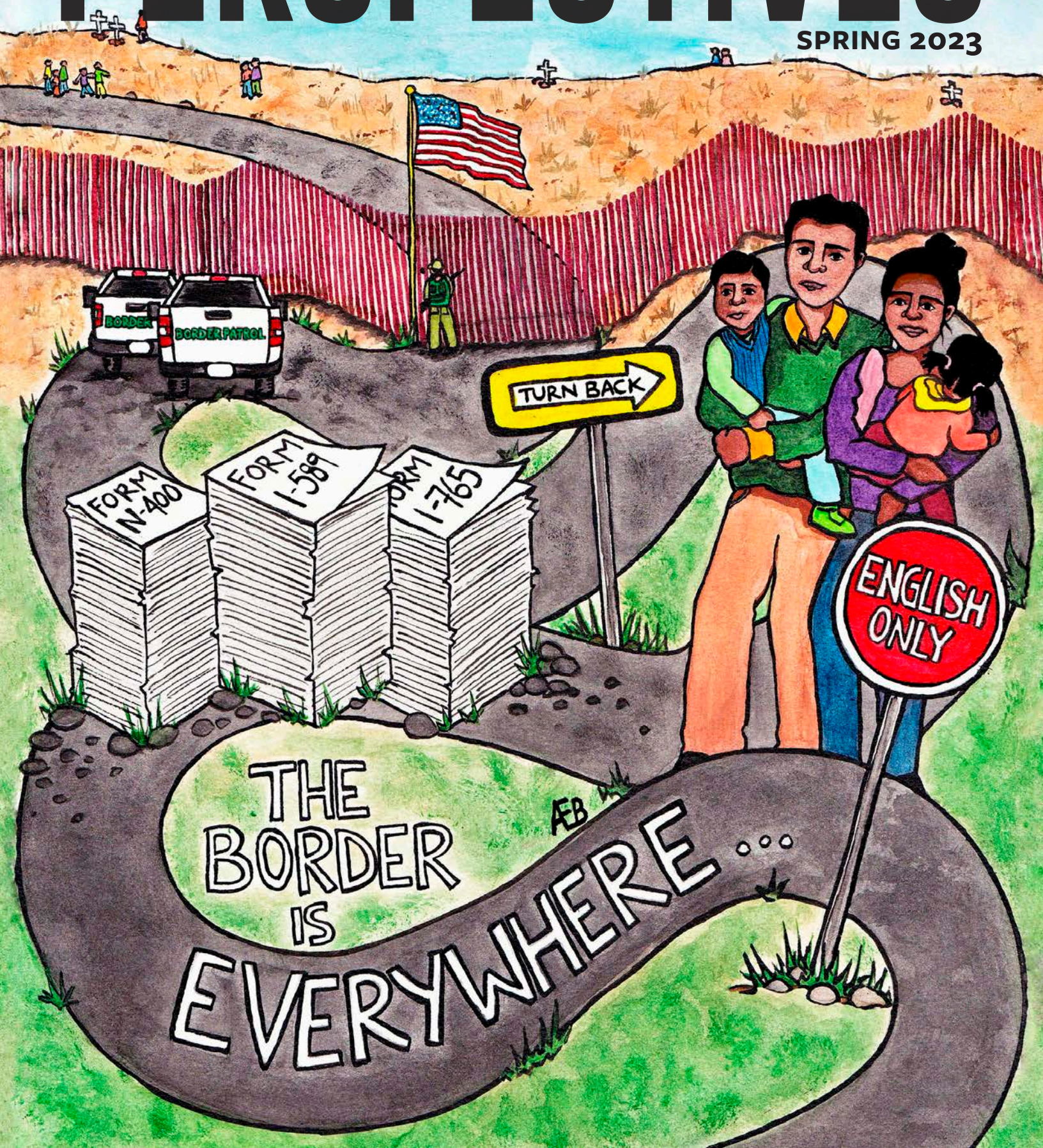


FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF PERPETUAL ADORATION

PERSPECTIVES

SPRING 2023



THE
BORDER
IS
EVERYWHERE ...

FB

FRANCISCAN PERSPECTIVE



FSPA Mission and Vision

We are a community of vowed Franciscan women centered in Eucharist, committed to be loving presence through prayer, witness and service.

We proclaim action in the following areas:

We commit to the seven-year **Laudato Si' Action Platform**, intensifying action for greater social and environmental justice, recognizing that everything is a gift from God and embracing our dependence on creation.

We commit to cultivating a culture of humility, joining others to address the racial injustices of society and Church.

We study our history and our impact at St. Mary's Boarding School in Odanah, Wisconsin (1883 to 1969). We recognize our complicity in historical trauma by engagement in the implementation of unjust policies and doctrines that resulted in the displacement, assimilation and genocide of countless Indigenous communities.

We educate ourselves and others about the deeper significance of immigration injustices — of people fleeing violence, political corruption and environmental devastation in their homes and countries.

We accept Pope Francis' invitation and challenge to join the solidarity economy — the **Economy of Francesco** — a worldwide movement aimed to change the current economic models and craft a more inclusive and just future. Through Seeding a Legacy of Healing, ministry grants and impact investments, we act on the opportunities and our commitment to transform economies for people and planet.

At the FSPA Mission Assembly in June of 2022, we reaffirmed our commitment to the **provocative movements**: building bridges of *relationships* that stretch us to be people of encounter. We stand with all suffering in our Earth Community, freeing ourselves through joyful *gospel living* to be transformed in love and goodness for community and mission. We celebrate authentic *unity in diversity* by challenging our white privilege and working toward equity and inclusion of all.



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Cover: Original watercolor art by Annemarie Erb Barrett. See page 26 to learn more about Annemarie and her expression of "dignity and respect" for all.



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THE BORDER IS EVERYWHERE: COLLABORATING WITH CATHOLIC CHARITIES FOR IMMIGRATION REFORM



It is written in the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration constitutions of Unity in Diversity #40: “True to our Franciscan calling, we commit ourselves to building Christ’s Kingdom of justice and peace.” Our challenge is to see the image of God in others and to construct bridges to meet them, wherever they are.

These faces — hundreds of thousands of women, children and men — are found at the southern border of the United States. They are fleeing humanitarian crisis in their home countries only to be barred from asylum by hundreds of miles of barbed wire and red tape. The FSPA Encuentro@theBorder Team is missioned to honor

the sacredness and dignity of these people, to call for comprehensive immigration reform and to join in the work of others to enact change.

The Encuentro@theBorder Team supports Catholic Charities USA, a network of organizations advocating and acting for immigration reform and a just means of welcoming our neighbors from around the world. In her article, “The Border is Everywhere’ Initiative” (reprinted with permission), Kat Kelley, Catholic Charities of Oregon Director of Strategic Initiatives, provides us with a snapshot of the domestic settlement program in the U.S. for asylum seekers crossing the southern border.

“The Border is Everywhere’ Initiative”

By Kat Kelley, Catholic Charities of Oregon Director of Strategic Initiatives

The humanitarian crisis on the southern U.S. border has garnered national and international attention over the last few years. Images of unaccompanied minors in massive congregate shelters and young families traumatized and weary after crossing multiple international borders, often on foot, have rightly horrified any supporter of human rights the world over.

To better coordinate and improve the extremely limited services currently provided to asylum seekers in the interior, Catholic Charities USA, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Catholic Legal Immigration Network and Catholic Charities of Oregon have partnered to create and implement a service network unique to the needs and experiences of asylum-seeking families and individuals. The project, named The Border is Everywhere, supports access to wraparound services that promote the healthy integration and wellbeing of our newest neighbors as they start their lives in the United States.

For decades, the Catholic migration services community has been a leader in welcoming the stranger and providing essential support to newly arriving families. Many asylum seekers leaving detention on the border pass through a Catholic Charities humanitarian respite center. At the respite center, they receive food, clothing, showers, basic health care and other fundamental services.

While immediate humanitarian support in respite centers post-release is absolutely essential to the wellbeing of asylum seekers in their first days in their new country, it is imperative that asylum advocates and allies recognize the enormous challenges faced by asylum seekers as they enter their next step in the asylum process in communities around the country.

Contrary to common misperceptions, asylum seekers are not eligible for federally-funded benefits or resources, including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Medicaid or HUD. In addition to being ineligible for federal benefits, they also face enormous barriers to employment — asylum seekers must wait 365 days after filing an asylum application before they can apply for employment authorization.

Of the collaboration between Catholic Charities USA and FSPA, Kat Kelley, Director of Strategic Initiatives in the organization’s Oregon agency shares, “The funding resources provided by FSPA have helped The Border is Everywhere project expand its regional footprint. At its beginning, The Border is Everywhere included four border sites and four interior sites and has expanded to include an additional five interior sites across the country. This has helped to expand service capacity and, to date, The Border is Everywhere has had over 300,000 people pass through respite centers, including over 400 served with comprehensive case management services in the interior.”

Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Fran Ferder, a member of the congregation’s Encuentro@theBorder Team, reflects on the call to support those fleeing from oppression and violence. “Early in 2019, the Leadership Conference of Women Religious called all U.S. sisters to offer volunteer service at our southern border. FSPA had been monitoring conditions there and were appalled at the reports of men, women and children arrested for exercising their international right to seek asylum as they fled the life-threatening effects of climate change, gang violence and governmental deterioration in the home countries they loved. In partnership with Catholic Charities USA, we went to the border, listened to the stories of the migrants who had recently been released from detention centers and offered assistance to those waiting on the Mexico side of the border as well. FSPA is committed to walking with these mothers, fathers, children and individuals.”





Original watercolor art, “The Border is Everywhere,” by Annemarie Erb Barrett

Moreover, while the majority of asylum-granting nations place certain limitations on rights to work for asylum seekers, the United States is the only country that denies both employment authorization and benefits. Without access to employment or benefits — including legitimate options for housing, food or health care — asylum seekers are forced to the margins of our society to live in a state of abject poverty and are often criminalized for simply trying to survive.

These restrictions are not unique today and have impeded the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness of asylum seekers for many decades. For asylum seekers, crossing the border is just the beginning of the barriers they will face in attempting to establish safety and security in the United States. These barriers only increase as they go deeper into the country. For asylum seekers, the border is everywhere.

In response, The Border is Everywhere project supports the Catholic Charities humanitarian respite centers by offering direct referrals to Catholic Charities migration services programs at the destination locale. At the locale, asylum seekers are connected with social workers with specialized skills in the following areas: trauma due to forced migration, systems navigation across heavy barriers and culturally-responsive services.

“THESE BARRIERS ONLY INCREASE AS THEY GO DEEPER INTO THE COUNTRY. FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS, THE BORDER IS EVERYWHERE.”

The social workers partner closely with immigration legal services and other providers to support asylum seekers in addressing and breaking down barriers that impact their ability to comply with immigration court requirements. They also guide asylum seekers throughout the confusing and complex process of establishing asylum.

By better coordinating trauma-informed wraparound services and supports to asylum seekers, The Border is Everywhere and the Catholic migration services community lead by example in responding to the Church’s call to “Welcome the Stranger” and to contribute to the creation of a world that treats all human beings according to their inherent dignity.

To learn more about Catholic Charities USA, visit catholiccharitiesusa.org. ■

MY PERSPECTIVE: A CONVERSATION WITH FRANCISCAN SISTER OF PERPETUAL ADORATION THERESA KELLER



Sister Theresa Keller

“We cannot continue to do what we are doing at the border and expect different results,” shares Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Theresa Keller.

As a member of the FSPA Encuentro@theBorder Team, a collaboration of the congregation

with organizations who are together answering the call to hold sacred the dignity of each person, regardless of origin, Sister Theresa is impassioned to serve. She recently sat down with the following questions about her ministry of immigration reform and offers reflection.

What inspires you to work in social justice?

For more than 30 years, I have served as an educator, primary and urgent care nurse practitioner, grant writer and organizer. Most of my professional life has involved working within the Federally Qualified Health Center system for community or county clinics. The mandate of a FQHC/county clinic is to assure access to medical services for vulnerable populations regardless of legal immigration status or ability to pay. Large pockets of Iowa have migrant workers from other countries. Many migrants have legal work status in the form of work visas. They are essential workers in the meat packing industry, agricultural farming and other factory work. There are also migrants in the United States who move from place to place, including ag-farm workers, but mostly within the construction and transportation fields. While working in primary care for over 40 years, I had the opportunity to serve many of these good people and their families.

My religious community inspired me to work in social justice. From the time of my entrance into the

congregation in 1977, and all of these years later, the women I vow my life with have responded to the call of peace and justice. This ministry is in our bones. I’ve ministered in many international, national and local social justice circles. My skill sets as an adult educator, public health worker and policy advocate, in addition to the relationships I’ve cultivated in the communities I’ve served, fit organically with social justice work. My time at the University of Minnesota’s Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs in Minneapolis in 2007 provided support and helped me to follow a path of community organization. My recent training within the Gamaliel National Network, an organization missioned “to empower ordinary people to effectively participate in political, environmental, social and economic decisions affecting their lives,” reaffirmed my social justice ministry.

“WE CANNOT CONTINUE TO DO WHAT WE ARE DOING AT THE BORDER AND EXPECT DIFFERENT RESULTS.”

What is crucial to immigration reform, to justice for the people you have and continue to serve?

This is such a difficult question on so many political levels: personal, congregational, local and international — the global community at large. Immigration reform has few champions in our political system, so change has to come from the grassroots level. The FSPA Encuentro@theBorder Team has networked with those working at the border, providing legislation education and direction for properly identifying individuals as migrants, asylum seekers or refugees.

As supporters of FSPA’s social justice mission, how can we begin to make an impact on the immigration/migration crisis today?

Educate, educate, educate yourself about the issues facing immigrants in the U.S. and the world. I would

recommend that each person begin by reading the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Catholic social teaching practices about welcoming the stranger and then work with a justice group that is grounded in creating change in the immigration system. Follow news outlets that give more than just a sound bite about the status of legislation that affects the life and death of those seeking refuge here. Review how climate change has impacted immigration, how political systems are coping or not coping and how faith-based organizations are supporting migrants. Follow and support organizations like NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, the Kino Border Initiative and Franciscan Action Network to better understand how to impact necessary changes. Do not sensationalize news bites but be a change agent in your community. Talk to your local, state and national legislators. It does not take much to make a phone call. Provide consistent assistance when called upon, financial or otherwise.

“I AM A FIRM BELIEVER THAT WHAT WE DO TODAY WILL BE LIVED OUT IN THE FUTURE OF TOMORROW.”

What do you envision for the future of the immigration crisis in the U.S.?

I am a firm believer that what we do today will be lived out in the future of tomorrow. Doing the same thing over and over again — trying to fit the jagged pieces of a broken immigration system together — just leaves us with a lot of disjointed fragments. My response to the immigration policy failure in the United States of America as a Catholic sister is similar to the abolition movement. The practice of holding asylum seekers in detention while separating children from their parents needs to be struck down, and many other practices of human rights violations must stop. Joining with other justice groups, talking with legislators, petitioning and acting on the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops language on immigration and promoting immediate action will move to just immigration policy.

We cannot keep doing what we are doing at the border and expect different results. And I hope that, in the near future, what people see when they cross the border into this country reflects the Emma Lazarus sonnet inscribed on a plaque and placed on the inner wall of the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty — “The New Colossus.”

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows worldwide welcome: her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
“Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!” cries she
With silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!” ■

What is immigration? Who are migrants? Who are asylum seekers? Who are refugees?

Before we start conversations about immigration reform with our neighbors or contact our legislators for action, we must begin with the correct context. Sister Theresa offers these definitions provided by NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice.

Immigration is **the process of moving to a new country or region with the intention of staying and living there.** People may choose to immigrate for a variety of reasons, such as employment opportunities, to escape a violent conflict, environmental factors, educational purposes or to reunite with family.



Scan the above QR code for links to all resources.

fspa.org/immigration

Asylum is a **form of protection that allows individuals to remain in the United States instead of being removed (deported) to a country where they fear persecution or harm.** Under U.S. law, people who flee their countries because they fear persecution can apply for asylum and become asylum seekers.

Refugee status is a form of protection that may be granted to people who meet the definition of refugee and **who are of special humanitarian concern to the United States.** Refugees are generally people outside of their country who are unable or unwilling to return home because they fear serious harm.

“Bans, Raids, Walls, Sanctuary: Timeline”
by A. Naomi Paik
naomipaik.com/book/resources/timeline

IF YOU ARE MOVED TO ACTION, CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES:

“What Does Abolition Mean for Immigration Law and Policy?”

by David Bennion
freemigrationproject.org

“Why Does Francis Focus on Migration?”

by Austen Ivereigh
commonwealmagazine.org

EXPLORE

“The Immigrant Justice Movement Should Embrace Abolition”

by Silky Shah
forgeorganizing.org

READ

NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
networklobby.org/issues/immigration

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
usccb.org/migrationpolicy

LEARN

Coulee Region Immigration Task Force
couleeregionitf.com

Franciscan Action Network
franciscanaction.org

Kino Border Initiative
kinoborderinitiative.org

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SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY: THE TZELTAL WOMEN OF ZAPONTIC



Photos courtesy of
Yomol A'tel

Through investments, Xapontic has added shampoo to its product line.

Conceivably so, bridges of relationship that stretch us to be people of encounter are being built out of soap.

It is handcrafted by Xapontic, a producer of artisanal personal care products, owned and operated by a team of Tzeltal women in Chiapas, Mexico. A Tzeltal word meaning “our soap” in English, Xapontic products are made with natural, regional ingredients, including honey and organic coffee — a tradition passed down from generation to generation, “made in harmony with Mother Earth ... to embrace your heart.”

Xapontic is visioned “... to represent a bridge to one of the indigenous cultures of Mexico and the empowerment of women, organized in collective work to build a fairer, more dignified and inclusive economic alternative.” It is a model for social and solidarity economics that exemplifies Franciscan remuneration and the process of responsible investing. And it is supported in part by an impact investment made collaboratively by FSPA in celebration of Catholic faith and values, to benefit people and planet alike.

Created in 2011, the business is part of Yomol A'tel, a nonprofit parent company that provides sustainability and scalability for five cooperatives producing natural

products by more than 360 Tzeltal families in the region, including Xapontic. It is envisioned “to be a movement of people, families, communities and companies of the social and solidarity economy that ... are a sustainable alternative to the current economic and business logistic, generating social inclusion, autonomy, dignity and lequil cuxlejilil [“good living,” in English] to maintain a balance between work, social life and nature.”

Eduardo Hernández, Yomol A'tel Commercial Coordinator, shares that Xapontic was born by “wives of Yomol A'tel producers who also wanted to take part in decision-making processes to improve income for their families.” These women have historically been typecast in the stereotypical gender roles of cooking and raising children. And, “with a lack of programs, mostly in the south of Mexico,” says Eduardo, “women don't receive higher education.” These barriers are often portrayed as a lack of personal capacity for business administration, organization and accounting. Yet “with training in everything from bill of sale to the chemical formulas of soap,” 45 women stepped forward to form Xapontic and proved the old wives' tale wrong. Says Eduardo, “the fear of participation has been overcome.”

From development and production to business administration, Xapontic members take on all tasks.





Two of Xapontic’s purveyors are sharing their goals for business advancement.

“I would like the JunPajal O’tanil member group to grow with more female producers. As we grow, we need the commercialization team to grow, too,” says Maria Morales. And Alba Morales envisions expansion for Xapontic’s product line. “I would like to see how increasing crops through developing more aromatic plants in the fields and producing more products, like essential oils would consequently improve our income.”

Xapontic soaps are made with local and natural ingredients “in harmony with Mother Earth.”

As Xapontic flourished, growing pains — those that every corporation most certainly comes into — were felt. “Xapontic members made the decision to create the first board of directors in 2018. Manuela Rodríguez, the sales director of Xapontic, knew how important it was to provide financial and social-economic information to the investment organizations who support Xapontic,” says Eduardo. Xapontic members also discovered that “establishing an entity that could legally support their work” was essential. With that came the creation of JunPajal O’tanil, which implements cooperative principals for Yomol A’tel businesses, including Xapontic, and provides legal brand certification. This qualification has opened the door for product diversification and the addition of shampoo, cream and textiles based in local embroidery to Xapontic’s offerings.

With investments and growth, challenges like organization, communication and transportation between Xapontic headquarters and the producing communities located throughout the Chilón municipality

of Chiapas were overcome. “Thanks to donations and investments, Xapontic has also celebrated an important milestone — the construction of three laboratories in the soap-producing regions,” shares Eduardo.

So the view of Yomol A’tel and Xapontic continues to broaden, the movement of people, families, communities and companies keeps gaining momentum. “I hope that Xapontic can always convey the message of why it builds a product based on the production and consumption model of social and solidarity economy,” says Eduardo. “In this way, the producing members find a greater sense in promoting and growing their cooperative, and the clients spread the message that alternative consumption is real and possible.”

And, most importantly, social inclusion, autonomy, dignity and lequil cuxlejalil — good living — will be the way of life for to people in the Tzeltal community for generations to come. ■

LIVING ON THE BORDER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN LA CROSSE

By Raymond List, FSPA affiliate

I have the privilege of providing transportation for Jose, a man who immigrated to the United States more than 20 years ago. Jose has been a member of America's workforce throughout this time, primarily in livestock processing, supporting not only himself but the country's economy too. Jose is disabled as the result of a medical condition that, because he did not have access to adequate health care (despite his employment), was left untreated.

Volunteering at Centro Latino, a subgroup of Coulee Region Immigration Task Force, missioned to provide "hospitality, support and loving service to Spanish-speaking people" in La Crosse, Wisconsin, is a ministry I serve as an affiliate of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. This work is part of FSPA's mission of justice and peace — holding the sacredness of each person, regardless of origin. Through our collaboration with Centro Latino, Jose has better access to housing, food and, to some extent, health care.

Jose and I go shopping on a weekly basis. By journeying with him to the grocery store, I have been granted the privilege of getting a glimpse of his passage, his story, as a member of our community living and working so far away from his home. I have learned quite a bit about the culture of Jose's parent country and his life working hard as an immigrant in the U.S. His employment history includes several hard-labor jobs, which many Americans do not wish to do, as a means to financial stability. Our discussions help me better understand, to a limited degree, the experience of my own immigrant ancestors just a few generations ago.

We also talk about our hopes and dreams for the future. Jose's biggest wish is to regain his health and return to work, which he has been unable to do for more than five years. Without more comprehensive health care benefits, it is not likely to come true.

Yet each day, Jose manages his health the best he can and makes his life as cheerful as possible.

There is a lot of talk about the situation "at the border" and people wishing to go down "to the border" to provide assistance, which is a good thing to do. However, I would offer that the border is not just a place, but rather a way of living for many people in the United States. Jose lives on the border of social injustice in La Crosse. And there are countless other immigrants — in La Crosse and throughout the U.S. — who live with Jose on the border of insecurity and instability.

**"I WOULD OFFER THAT THE
BORDER IS NOT JUST A PLACE,
BUT RATHER A WAY OF LIVING
FOR MANY PEOPLE IN THE U.S."**

So one does not have to go far to meet people living "on the border" or "on the margins." Jesus often spent time in such areas when he was feeling pressured to leave his own society. His interaction with the Canaanite woman, whose faith so astounded him, occurred when he was removing himself from a conflictual situation (Matthew 15:21-28). His conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well also took place when he was feeling pressured to leave (John 4:1-42). So at times in his life when he was forced "to the border," he found the sincerest expressions of faith by other people who were also living "at the border."

This is what I have experienced with Jose, who continues to hope for a better day while focusing on remaining a healthy, cheerful person. I encourage all readers to take some time to get to know our neighbors who have been forced to live on the margins or emotionally "at the border." This may help transform your life and faith as well. ■

Raymond List, who resides in La Crosse, Wisconsin, has been an affiliate of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration for 10 years. Ray is a member of the FSPA Earth Tenders Companion Community.

BUILDING A THRIVING COMMUNITY



AEB

Original art by Annemarie
Erb Barrett, AEB Art

GOD CALLED, AND THEY ANSWERED ‘YES’



Many gathered at Mary of the Angels Chapel to welcome Sister Philomena, who was accompanied by Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Katie Mitchell.

SISTER PHILOMENA ADAH AND ANNA TAYLOR WELCOMED TO FSPA CONGREGATION

Two women, on their personal journeys through religious life, have answered the call to discern membership with the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. In joyful response, FSPA has welcomed them both to the community: Sister Philomena Adah as a transfer in November 2022 and Anna Taylor as a candidate in January 2023.

Sister Philomena Adah

“The FSPA values of bridging relationships in the community is a revolution of uncommon goodness that synchronizes with my values of peaceful and joyous living with responsiveness and inclusivity in the community,” says Sister Philomena Elizabeth Ene Adah, who was unanimously accepted by the FSPA Leadership Council to discern transfer to the community.

Sister Philomena began her journey to religious life

from Benue State of North Central Nigeria where her parents helped her “to maintain a deep relationship with Christ,” and the “reception of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit during my confirmation was the beginning of my enthusiasm to serve the Lord.” A member of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady Apostles since 1991, Sister Philomena shares that “The Franciscan charism and spirituality connected with a Franciscan cross I was given as a gift three decades ago embodied the reality and desire to come home to meet Jesus in perpetual adoration and to serve through social justice. God began a profound journey with me into the unknown. Although I was not sure where it would lead me, I trusted the process.” In New Orleans in 2021, the chaplain of Xavier University of Louisiana, where she studies educational leadership, introduced Sister Philomena to FSPA and she made her first contact with Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration Julia Walsh and Eileen McKenzie.

It was during that period of Sister Philomena’s life that she was experiencing discernment toward a transfer from her community: “a deeper search and a call beyond my comprehension. Some of my ministries were for alleviating and mitigating the sufferings of those around me. For this reason, the charism of FSPA synchronizes



Sister Amy Taylor, FSPA candidate Anna Taylor and Sister Corrina Thomas celebrate during Anna's welcome ceremony.

with my values — witnesses according to the signs of the times.” Her inspiration also stems “from an inner desire and awareness of some movement towards fulfilling a mission based on the Gospel values of social justice, care for creation and simplicity of lifestyle.”

Then in June of 2022, Sister Philomena traveled to La Crosse, Wisconsin, to attend the FSPA Mission Assembly “A Revolution Through Encuentro: Our Journey Into Oneness,” where she found that “the intermittent space created for unique and inclusive prayer was significant and inspiring to me. There were moments of vulnerability and groups committed to holding the sacred space with deep respect, integrity, love, union and peace. The joyous Gospel values and deep sharing reflected trust.” During her time there, Sister Philomena had an encuentro moment, experiencing “the abundance of beauty and God’s goodness,” and found herself with a yearning to deepen her life of prayer in perpetual adoration.

“My connection to these sisters was enlightening.”

“FSPA is a congregation that promotes values with the capacity to inspire and empower sisters, which reflects and radiates love, peace and holiness. The sense of family fraternity and the initiative of ecospirituality are great witnesses. I view FSPA as a courageous community that promotes values with the capacity to inspire and

empower sisters and collaborate with laity in ministry.”

When asked about her hopes for religious life with FSPA, Sister Philomena shares that “I am a woman of faith and prayer with a desire to have a listening heart and a capacity to appreciate, respect and love each sister as my sister.” She speaks to her experience in chaplaincy: “As a missionary, I participate in Christ’s healing ministry by making the incarnate word dwell amongst people of diverse cultures and religious affiliations, empowering, bringing hope and showing love and empathy to alleviate the pain and suffering of people in various settings around the globe.”

Sister Philomena, now living in La Crosse, is guided by Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Marcia Baumert, FSPA Mission Councilor, and companioned by Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Katie Mitchell. She shares “a beautiful experience” of listening to stories of other sisters who have transferred to the FSPA community. “My connection with these sisters was enlightening.” Their joy, she says, inspired her path to FSPA, and “everyone I talked with affirmed the witnessing spirit of the sisters.

“It is with deep humility that I ask for the sisters’ prayers during this period, and I pray for the grace of final perseverance on this journey to be able to say ‘yes’ to God’s invitation to consecrated life in the FSPA community.”



Anna Taylor

“Whether there are 158 members or 12,” shares Anna Taylor, who the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration welcome as a candidate for the congregation, “that common purpose of sharing life in the quest for God remains.”

To begin her pursuit of God and communal commitment to be a loving presence through prayer, witness and service with the members of FSPA, Anna resides in the congregation’s formation community on the motherhouse campus. Her journey to La Crosse began in Berea, Kentucky, where she grew up and graduated from Berea College with a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish. “Post-graduation, I committed to a year of service and moved to St. Cloud, Minnesota, to participate in the Franciscan Community Volunteers, a former ministry of the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls.” Anna’s service site was Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid, where she assisted Spanish-speaking individuals applying for health insurance programs through the state.

Anna also joined the Catholic Church, a decision influenced by the transformation and deepening faith she experienced during her time with FCV. “I didn’t know much about the Catholic Church growing up in a heavily Protestant town. But living with sisters from the Little Falls community and attending the local Newman Center during my FCV years, I saw the breadth and depth of the Catholic faith, and I wanted to be a part of it, too.” Anna stayed in Minnesota after her time with FCV ended and was hired by Legal Aid.

But Anna didn’t stray far from Franciscanism. She continued to live with the Little Falls Franciscans on and off over the years. She found herself “happy being with others who valued having God as a priority in their lives and who could communally appreciate the liturgical calendar more deeply than I could on my own.” Within this deepening, Anna also discovered a yearning for religious life.

The discernment process didn’t come easy. “I had been actively discerning religious life since I became Catholic, but was frequently distracted by the workload at my job and other commitments.” Finally, in late fall of 2021, Anna took a leap of faith. “I quit my job and went on

an adventure with God.” Over the course of a year, she visited several Benedictine Monasteries, living and volunteering for a few months at each. She also visited FSPA in La Crosse for an extended Come & See, an experience that included an icon retreat, adoration with the sisters and participating in the 2022 FSPA Mission Assembly.

“... FULLY BECOMING WHO GOD CALLS THEM TO BE.”

It was then that Anna had an “aha moment.” She recalls Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Julia Walsh, the community’s minister of discerners, “mentioning several times in past conversations that ‘FSPA supports its members in fully becoming who God calls them to be.’” Given the chance to meet many sisters personally, Anna “started to taste what that felt like.

“I felt supported in setting boundaries by so many of the sisters. I didn’t feel like I had to spend energy to protect my energy, but rather I was free to honor my needs by taking some quiet time or having clarifying conversations. When I feel supported by respect and open communication and people who can hold an atmosphere of respectful play, my energy is free to allow me to be me; to be creative, caring and present.”

Now in the candidacy phase of the congregation, Anna is continuing to develop personal spirituality; learning FSPA history, traditions, Franciscan spirituality and values; and working within and experiencing community life. She is excited to embrace the FSPA commitments to Relationships, Gospel Living and Unity in Diversity. “My years living with the witness of religious sisters of other communities and working with undocumented individuals at Legal Aid has taught me to value these FSPA priorities. When we remember how freely Christ embraced minority to be with us, both as a baby and in plain ordinary bread in the Eucharist, we really don’t have an excuse to dismiss those on the margins. And it can be overwhelmingly hard work, but with community to support each other, I believe it is possible.

“With FSPA I feel a firm, communal foundation and have found many life-giving people that will allow me to be life-giving to others.” ■

IN MEMORIAM: REJOICE, YOU WHO ARE ALIVE IN CHRIST

Sister Evelyn Schlosser

Jan. 12, 1934 – Oct. 7, 2022



Sister Evelyn Schlosser, 88, died Oct. 7, 2022, at Villa St. Joseph in La Crosse, Wisconsin. She was the seventh of eight children born to Harold and Eva (Hamses) Schlosser in Yakima, Washington. She described her family as rich “when it comes to happiness

and love.” She began school at St. Joseph’s Academy in Yakima and completed her elementary education at St. Aloysius School after her family moved to Spokane, Washington. She attended Marycliff High School there, taking clerical courses.

She worked for five years with The Spokesman-Review, advancing to assistant bookkeeper. She then moved to Boise, Idaho, and became a bookkeeper for a construction company. During that time, her roommate responded to a call to religious life. This gave Sister Evelyn time to think if God might be calling her. She was living a good life, but felt an attraction to something else. On June 9, 1958, God did give her a call. After initially applying to the Maryknoll Sisters, she visited St. Rose Convent in La Crosse to visit her sibling, Sister Jean (Carmelita), and subsequently met Sister Joan Cramer. Mother Joan invited her to join FSPA. Sister Evelyn entered in the fall of 1958. She was received into the novitiate in 1959 and given the name Sister Mary Leo (later returned to her baptismal name). On Aug. 12, 1961, she professed first vows.

Possessing excellent office skills, she was tapped for clerical work at Viterbo College in La Crosse, Wisconsin, from 1962 to 1966. During that time, she took additional bookkeeping courses at Indiana University. In 1966, Sister Evelyn became a bookkeeper at St. Mary’s Hospital in Sparta, Wisconsin, until 1973, when she became a bookkeeper at St. Anthony Hospital in Carroll, Iowa. Viterbo called her back in 1974. From there Sister Evelyn ministered in the office at Marycliff High School from 1977 to 1979 before being appointed regional treasurer

for the FSPA Western Region until 1989. Sister Evelyn also served as a part-time tax accountant for a local Spokane firm. In 1989 she was called to serve as FSPA assistant treasurer in La Crosse. Another transition occurred in her life in 2000 when she moved to volunteer in the finance office and kitchen at St. Rose Convent. In 2016 Sister Evelyn officially retired to a ministry of prayer and hospitality in La Crosse.

Community members, family and friends remember Sister Evelyn as a lively, generous person. She had a quick wit and always had a “come back” for everything. She thrived on helping people and especially loved her adoration hours. Her nieces and nephews were a delight to her. Her passion for animals was evident to everyone, with her constantly feeding the birds, rabbits and squirrels around the motherhouse.

Sister Margaret Schmolke

Nov. 26, 1925 – Oct. 19, 2022



Sister Margaret Schmolke, 96, died Oct. 19, 2022, at Villa St. Joseph in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Born in Buckman, Minnesota, Sister Margaret was the seventh of 12 children of John and Pauline (Beka) Schmolke. She attended St. Michael’s School in Buckman,

Minnesota, where the Benedictines of St. Joseph, taught. After eighth grade, Sister Margaret remained home, helping her mother who was ill at the time. Sister Margaret and her sister, Helen, then enrolled at St. Francis High School in Little Falls, Minnesota, where the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls staffed the school.

Sister Margaret worked at the hospital in Little Falls on weekends and during the summer. She liked the work and desired to become a nurse. By her junior year, she had decided to enter religious life. Her older brother, Father Joel, OFM, and her sibling, Sister Thomasine, OSF, were great influences in her choice. To the surprise of her family, she chose FSPA, being drawn to the ministry of perpetual adoration. Sister Margaret was received into the novitiate on Aug. 12, 1946, and given the name Sister

Mary Joel. Later she returned to her baptismal name. She professed first vows on Aug. 12, 1948.

Sister Margaret served as a primary teacher for 27 years in schools in Iowa (Carroll's St. Joseph and Roselle) and Wisconsin (Greenwood, Marathon, Dodgeville, Halder, La Crosse, Odanah, Big River and Menomonie). After leaving the classroom in 1976, she joined the staff at FSPA's Northern Province House in Arbor Vitae, Wisconsin, with responsibility for food service and maintenance. From 1981 to 2002, Sister Margaret served as a religious education teacher, tutor and parish visitor at St. Mary's in Hurley, Wisconsin. Before retiring to St. Rose Convent in La Crosse in 2006, Sister Margaret also volunteered at Immaculate Conception School in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. In 2018 she moved to the Villa St. Joseph.

Community members, family and friends remember Sister Margaret as a fun-loving person with exceptional graciousness. She was always ready to enter into conversation and had great stories to share. She kept up on the news of the world and the Church. She was very fond of Pope Francis and talked often about his vision and teaching. She was especially taken by his focus on care for creation; just last year she noted that she had reread and meditated on Francis's encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, several times. She loved her family and especially enjoyed visiting with them.

Sister Rita Marie Bechel
March 6, 1925 – Nov. 2, 2022



Sister Rita Marie Bechel, 97, died Nov. 2, 2022, at Villa St. Joseph in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Sister Rita Marie was born the eighth of 14 children to Mathias and Emma (Dettling) Bechel on a farm near Plum City, Wisconsin. Early in life, she had the desire to become a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration like her older sister, Sister Leone. On Aug. 15, 1939, after graduating from eighth grade, she fulfilled that desire. Sister Rita Marie was received into the novitiate on Aug. 12, 1943, and given the name Sister Rita Marie. She professed first vows on Aug. 12, 1945, and final vows on Aug. 5, 1951.

She was an elementary school teacher for the majority of her active religious life, teaching grades one through four.

She completed her bachelor's degree at Viterbo College in La Crosse, Wisconsin, with a major in education and a minor in music. She also attended the Theological Institute at St. Norbert's College in De Pere, Wisconsin. From 1947 to 1962, she taught in Calmar, Mallard, St. Lucas and Balltown in Iowa and in La Crosse. She taught at Holy Family School in Ashland, Wisconsin, from 1962 to 1966, then at St. Henry School in Eau Galle, Wisconsin, from 1966 to 1969. Her teaching ministry continued at St. Paul School in Mosinee, Wisconsin, from 1969 to 1977, and at St. John the Baptist School in Plum City from 1977 to 1982. After serving for one year in food service at St. Rose Convent in La Crosse, Sister Rita Marie moved to Villa St. Joseph where she assisted in many community service roles such as receptionist, sacristan and organist and lived out her final days of retirement.

Community members, family and friends remember Sister Rita Marie as a naturally curious person who read a variety of books. She developed her creative talents by crocheting, embroidering, cross stitching, creweling and recycling greeting cards. She enjoyed the Viterbo University's Bright Star Theatre and La Crosse Symphony performances. Until 2010 Sister Rita Marie had neither taken medication nor been hospitalized. She attributed her good health to the daily walks/runs to the hermitages located on the Villa property. Playing cards and setting jigsaw puzzles also gave her great pleasure. Her family was very important to her. She could name everyone in her family down to the third and fourth generations.

Sister Michon Desmond, FSPA
Aug. 28, 1933 – Nov. 3, 2022



Sister Michon Desmond, 89, died Nov. 3, 2022, at St. Rose Convent in La Crosse, Wisconsin. She was born to John W. and Vera (Duffy) Desmond in Winona, Minnesota, the eldest of six children. Her father's work, as assistant sales manager for Auto-lite, led the family to move to La Crosse shortly after her birth. There she attended St. James School and Aquinas High School, both staffed by FSPA. After high school graduation, she felt a call to join the FSPA, ultimately entering St. Rose Convent in the fall of 1951. On Aug. 12, 1954, she professed first vows.

For almost 30 years, she ministered in junior and senior high schools as a teacher and principal in Wisconsin, Washington, Guam and Montana. She earned a bachelor's degree in history with minors in English and sociology from Viterbo College in La Crosse and a master's degree from St. Louis University in American history and Asian studies. In 1977 she received a Fulbright scholarship. After a year's internship in the student development department at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Sister Michon was appointed Viterbo College Dean of Students in La Crosse. She was instrumental in expanding student life programming as the college was rapidly growing its enrollment of lay students.

In 1989 she was elected assistant of FSPA's Eastern Region in Arbor Vitae, Wisconsin; four years later, she was elected regional leader. After a year's sabbatical at the Tau Center in Winona, Minnesota, in 1998, Sister Michon moved to St. Rose Convent in La Crosse where she served as assistant administrator for the sisters. In 2007 she moved to Villa St. Joseph, La Crosse, ministering as a volunteer to the community until 2019. At that time, she retired to St. Rose Convent where her ministry was that of prayer and hospitality.

Community members, family and friends remember Sister Michon for her loving presence. She was always ready to share something with whomever she met, including candy from the bag constantly over her arm. She was also a great entertainer, knowing how to make her audience laugh. She often talked about her wonderful five years in Guam, where she would say she learned more from her high school students than she probably taught them.

Sister Rita Jansen, FSPA
Aug. 12, 1928 – Nov. 17, 2022



Sister Rita Jansen, 94, died Nov. 17, 2022, at Villa St. Joseph in La Crosse, Wisconsin. She was born in Early, Iowa, to Elizabeth (Faber) and Leo Jansen. When she was five, her family moved to another farm between Early and Schaller, Iowa. There she and her two brothers and three sisters grew up, helping with chores when they were not attending Sac County School. Sister Rita attended her freshman year at Sacred Heart School,

then transferred to Early Consolidated School for the rest of her high school years.

After high school, as two of her brothers were serving in the military, she helped on the farm. Her family moved to a farm near Storm Lake, Iowa, in 1947. Sister Rita then worked at Henry Field Store in Storm Lake as a salesperson and typist until 1952. The day after her 21st birthday she was in a serious car accident. This led her to think about what she would do with the rest of her life. She had been taught by sisters for two years, but in her earlier years was not attracted to their communities. She then visited St. Rose Convent in June of 1952 and immediately filled out the application. Sister Rita entered FSPA in September 1952. When she became a novice on Aug. 12, 1953, she was given the name Sister Leocadia. She later went back to her baptismal name. She professed first vows on Aug. 12, 1955.

With a bachelor's degree in education from La Crosse's Viterbo College and a master's degree from Clark College in reading, Sister Rita was well-prepared for 39 years in the field of education. She taught primary grades in Wisconsin (Auburndale, Big River, Halder), Idaho (Blackfoot) and Iowa (Muscatine, Harper, Halbur, St. Lucas, Spencer, Bellevue, Mt. Carmel). While at Mt. Carmel, Sister Rita began thinking about ministering in a different environment. In 1986 she began teaching primary grades in Monroe, Louisiana. Two years later she moved to Camden, Mississippi, where she taught for six years. In 1994 she moved to Mobile, Alabama, and ministered as a teacher's aide and resource teacher for eight years before retiring to St. Rose in 2002. She then moved to Villa St. Joseph in La Crosse in 2012.

Community members, family and friends remember Sister Rita as always having a smile on her face and a kind word for everyone. Her personality radiated compassion. Every place she taught she loved her "little children," especially teaching them to read. As a loyal companion to many, her interests focused on what was happening in other people's lives, both family and community members.

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Sister Patricia Tekippe

March 22, 1944 – Dec. 25, 2022



Sister Patricia Tekippe, 78, died Dec. 25, 2022. She was born in Decorah, Iowa, to Paul and Seraphina (Timp) Tekippe. She was the eldest of six children. Growing up on the family farm, she enjoyed helping her mother with her five younger brothers. From her mother, she learned the importance of family as well as the artistry and necessities of cooking, cleaning, sewing and gardening. Her father taught her the importance of community involvement and environmental stewardship. Sister Patricia loved school; she excelled in her studies and was active in 4-H. After graduating from the eighth grade, Sister Patricia felt a deep call to become a sister and contacted FSPA. Upon entering FSPA, she shared a religious vocation with an aunt and uncle who were both Benedictines. She completed high school at St. Mary's Academy in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin.

Sister Patricia was received into the novitiate in 1963 and given the name Sister Mary Owen. She later went back to her baptismal name. She professed her first vows on Aug. 12, 1965. Sister Patricia began her ministry as an elementary school teacher in Spokane, Washington (St. Ann, St. Augustine and St. Xavier Schools). She also taught in Blackfoot, Idaho, and St. Paul, Iowa. She received a bachelor of science in education with a minor in biology from Viterbo College in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

After 13 years as a classroom teacher, Sister Patricia took courses at the Center for Pastoral Ministry in Kansas City and then moved into parish ministry in Davenport, Iowa, Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Kansas City, Missouri. After earning a graduate degree in communications and journalism from the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Sister Patricia served as secretary of the FSPA's Central Region in Hiawatha, Iowa, for six years. Her long-held desire to work with under-resourced communities then led to a position as a reading specialist in Maplewood, Minnesota, and resource manager in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She served as a program assistant at Cabrini House in Minneapolis for 14 years. In 2003 Sister Patricia joined the FSPA Membership Team where she provided a listening ear to women discerning their future vocation. After

suffering a mild stroke in 2014, she moved to St. Rose Convent in La Crosse.

Community members, family and friends remember Sister Patricia as someone with a heart for under-resourced communities. She was quick to recognize the goodness in others and reinforce it. Her work in Minneapolis was evidence of her compassionate and helpful nature. At her golden jubilee in 2015, Sister Patricia noted that she had walked with more than 200 young women in her membership ministry. Because of her keen eye, one could also count on Sister Patricia to know the latest on political issues and to encourage prayer and political action.

Sister Lydia Wendl

Jan. 11, 1922 – Jan. 27, 2023



Sister Lydia Wendl, 101, died Jan. 27, 2023, at St. Rose Convent in La Crosse, Wisconsin. She was born to John and Mary (Danzer) Wendl in Willey, Iowa. At her baptism, she was named after her paternal aunt, Lydia Wendl. Whenever anyone suggested that she would end up at the convent, she objected. She wanted to do things differently! At age six, Sister Lydia went to school with her two older sisters.

After completing eighth grade, Sister Lydia wanted to attend high school. None of her other siblings had done so, but her parents allowed her to attend St. Angela's Academy in Carroll, Iowa. She boarded with the sisters where it was customary to make a retreat between the two semesters. During this time, the call to religious life was reawakened in her. Louise, her sister, spoke often about going to the convent and finally decided on the Benedictines in Missouri. How surprised and disappointed was Sister Lydia when Louise (Sister Joan Marie) entered FSPA. Eventually, Sister Lydia outgrew her "do things differently" attitude and two years later joined FSPA, too. Sister Lydia was received into the novitiate on Aug. 12, 1940, and was given her own name, Sister Lydia. She professed vows on Aug. 12, 1942, and made her final profession on Aug. 9, 1948.

Sister Lydia earned a bachelor's degree from Viterbo College in La Crosse, in education with double minors

in philosophy and history. She taught primary and intermediate grades in parochial schools in Iowa (Milford, Coon Rapids, Richmond, Festina, West Point, Bellevue, Guttenberg, Willey, Dedham, Calmar, Mt. Carmel and West Bend), Washington (Spokane) and Wisconsin (Eau Galle and Halder) for 42 years. From 1984 to 1989, she ministered to older adults in Las Vegas and was instrumental in developing pastoral care outreach at Sunrise Hospital there. Sister Lydia then served as pastoral care minister at St. Anne's Parish, also in Las Vegas, until she retired to St. Rose in 2001. For six years, she was the St. Rose chapel tour guide coordinator. In 2013 she moved to Villa St. Joseph in La Crosse and returned to reside at St. Rose in 2022.

Community members, family and friends will remember the long and rich life of Sister Lydia; for her deep love of God and her faith, her loyal dedication to her work with children and older adults and her positive approach to life. Throughout her multiple ministries, she had a "can do" attitude. One of her favorite quotes was "God does not ask us to be successful, but to be faithful."

Sister Dorothy Ann Kunding

Oct. 8, 1947 – Feb. 8, 2023



Sister Dorothy Ann Kunding, 81, died Feb. 8, 2023, at Hospice Ministries in Ridgeland, Mississippi, where she had been chaplain for many years. She was born in Auburndale, Wisconsin, to Joseph and Martha (Bayerl) Kunding. She grew up on the family farm with her two brothers and three sisters, getting into — to use her words — "all the mischief we could imagine."

During the seventh grade at St. Mary's School in Auburndale, Sister Dorothy began hearing a faint call to religious life. She ignored it despite the persistent nature of the call. Upon her graduation from the eighth grade, she announced to her parents that she would like to go to the convent. By August 1955, Sister Dorothy was beginning high school at St. Rose Convent in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Sister Dorothy was received into the novitiate on Aug. 12, 1959, and was given the name Sister Dorothy Ann. She professed first vows on Aug. 12, 1961.

She earned a Bachelor of Arts in History with a minor in

English from Viterbo College in La Crosse and a Master of Science in Education from Xavier University in Cincinnati. The first 26 years of her ministry were spent as a middle grade and junior high teacher. She taught in Wisconsin at Platteville (1962 to 65), Blessed Sacrament School in La Crosse (1966 to 70 and 1977 to 79) and Dodgeville (1973 to 77), also serving as principal. In 1979 Sister Dorothy Ann moved to Holy Child Jesus School in Canton, Mississippi, where she taught junior high for 10 years. During her time in Canton, Sister Dorothy Ann became a companion to Sister Thea Bowman, an FSPA who gained prominence as a teacher, musician and civil rights activist in the African American community. She traveled across the country with Sister Thea until Sister Thea eventually succumbed to cancer in 1990. After Sister Thea's death, Sister Dorothy Ann remained in Canton, serving as a volunteer hospice worker and ministering to people with HIV/AIDS. In 1993 she moved to Jackson, Mississippi, where she served as chaplain and hospice worker, providing care for people with HIV/AIDS at Grace House in Ridgeland.

Community members, family and friends remember Sister Dorothy Ann for her delightful smile, sense of humor and positive attitude toward life as well as the great care she provided to Sister Thea in life and legacy after her death. Perhaps her most memorable ministry is her loving care for those suffering from HIV/AIDS. Often she would spend days in the home of someone dying of HIV/AIDS or care for them in her home if needed. She was very appreciative of FSPA for enabling her to minister to those often forgotten or ignored by society. She lived simply, joyfully and with great love and care for everyone.

Affiliate Dorothy Maule

Sept. 26, 1938 – Dec. 28, 2022



Dorothy Marie Maule, age 84, passed away Dec. 28, 2022, surrounded by her husband John and family. She was preceded in death by her parents, Ronald and Elizabeth Mulheron, her brothers, Ronald Jr., James and Jerome, as well as niece Holly and nephews Shaun, Paul Anthony and Curtis Michael. Dorothy is survived by her husband of 63 years, John, and children

Anne Maule Miller (Lee Miller), Mary Sather, Cindy Robey (Chris Andrews), Annette Bouvin (Erik Bouvin) and Chris Maule as well as 12 grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and the Miller family.

She gave much time to her parish, St. Bridget's, serving many years on the liturgy committee, in the resurrection choir, as a parish nurse and elementary religious education coordinator. She was one of the first lay affiliates with the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in La Crosse, Wisconsin, celebrating her 34th anniversary in 2022. Dorothy was well-respected for her kindness, hospitality, generosity, understanding and ministering to others. She had a deep awareness of and call to help those less fortunate, passing this gift to her children and grandchildren. Dorothy had a special way of spreading faith and grace that attracted people to her. She will be loved and missed by many.

Affiliate Michele "Mickey" Collins

April 21, 1935 – Jan. 21, 2023



Michele "Mickey" Taliel Shelton Collins was born on April 21, 1935, in Denver, Colorado. She was diagnosed with liver cancer at the start of May, 2022, and was given eight to 12 months to live. Mickey died peacefully Jan. 21, 2023, in La Crosse, Wisconsin; exactly three months before her 88th birthday.

Her father, Beverly "Bob" Noteman Shelton (1906 to 1972), and mother, Alberta Marie Collins (1913 to 2015), both Denver, Colorado, natives, divorced when Mickey was a toddler. Mickey lived with her mother and stepfather, John Julian McEniry (1903 to 1992), who served the Navy during WWII. She enjoyed fishing, riding horses, target shooting and skiing and said the feeling of the sunshine in winter in the mountains made her feel close to heaven.

Mickey worked as a telephone operator in Phoenix, Arizona, a telephone operator and clerk with security clearance for the United States Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization under President Eisenhower and a cartographer for the Office of Land Management in Denver.

In the 1960s, Mickey married Carl "Stan" Conrad, Jr. (1929

to 1966), a United States Air Force war veteran with whom, before he died suddenly, she had a son. Mickey later moved to Northern Wisconsin where she had two daughters.

She opened a natural goods and antique store, Grandma's Shop, in Blair, Wisconsin, before moving to Galesville, Wisconsin. There she worked at Marynook, a Society of Mary ecumenical retreat center, converted to Catholicism and became a lay member of the order.

Mickey earned a bachelor's degree in psychology and ministry from Viterbo University and a master's degree in counseling, with a social service licensure, from Winona State University in Minnesota. In 1993 Mickey moved to La Crosse where she lived for the rest of her life. She was The Salvation Army Homeless Lodge manager and served as a hospital and nursing home chaplain. From 1997 to 2020, Mickey worked full time at the Mayo Clinic Health System-Franciscan Healthcare La Crosse Hospital as a psychiatric chaplain and became an FSPA affiliate.

Mickey co-founded the Place of Grace Catholic Worker House, living and volunteering there for about 10 years. She was nicknamed "Mother Love." She also created and printed a Catholic Worker newspaper with a few of her colleagues.

Later Mickey served in jail ministry as part of a Circles of Support group. In her short retirement (2020), Mickey deeply enjoyed the presence and support of her Buddhist Sangha meditation and mindfulness group. Most of all, Mickey delighted in having a house, a garden and feeding and watching the birds and squirrels.

Not long before her death, Mickey often expressed deep gratitude for the loving hospice care she received from the staff at Mayo La Crosse, a sentiment her family shares. Mickey is remembered as a woman of strength, youthful appearance and unique spirit. Her great compassion, sense of adventure, love of her children, generosity and willingness to grow and learn were persevering. Mickey is loved and remembered always.

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PERSPECTIVES COVER IMAGE TRULY REFLECTS “THE BORDER IS EVERYWHERE”



Annemarie Erb Barrett

Watercolor artist, Annemarie Erb Barrett, created the image on the cover of this issue of Perspectives — “The Border is Everywhere.” She also created the image on page 16, titled “Building a Thriving Community.” About “The Border is Everywhere,” Annemarie says “The piece seeks to illustrate the proverbial ‘long road’ that migrants and asylum seekers traverse on their journey of crossing the border into the United States.

“Upon crossing the physical U.S. border, as illustrated in the image, migrants and asylum seekers are often met with even more bureaucratic red tape within the U.S. in the form of legal paperwork, restrictions on work authorizations and limited housing options as well as systemic and personal discrimination, language barriers and the constant threat of detention and deportation, to name only some of the challenges they face.”

Annemarie grew up in Minnesota and now lives in Bolivia, South America, where she first moved to live and serve as a Franciscan lay missionary in 2013. “One of the most important lessons I learned while serving as a Franciscan lay missionary,” Annemarie explains, “was to prioritize daily the work of shifting my perspective to center the express needs of those most marginalized among us. As an artist, I continue to incorporate that lesson into my work today.”

“In this piece,” she continues, “my intention was to illustrate with dignity and respect, informed by the work of FSPA’s Encuentro@theBorder Team, the journey of migrants and asylum seekers. The intention is to invite that shift in perspective, away from the volatile, polarizing and often dehumanizing political debate surrounding immigration policy in the U.S. to focus instead on the human impact of the seemingly-endless obstacles that exist for migrants and asylum seekers who are in urgent need of stability, care and support.”

Today Annemarie lives as a dual citizen of the U.S. and Bolivia with her Bolivian partner, Javier, and their daughter, Suri, in a rural area of the country. In addition to her work as an artist, selling prints of her original art online under the name AEB Art (aebart.com), Annemarie contributes regularly to Messy Jesus Business at messyjesusbusiness.com. ■



FSPA AFFILIATE'S PERUVIAN OPTICAL MISSION HONORED



Father Woodrow Pace presents Cindy Sjolander, FSPA affiliate, with the Monsignor Anthony P. Wagener and Father Joseph Walijewski Mission Award.

For her medical mission of optometry care at Casa Hogar Juan Pablo II in Lurin, Peru, Cindy Sjolander, FSPA affiliate, is the recipient of the Monsignor Anthony P. Wagener and Father Joseph Walijewski Mission Award. Casa Hogar is a faith and family-oriented home for children ages 5 to 17, founded in 1986 by now Servant of God Father Joseph of Wisconsin's Diocese of La Crosse, where optical health care professionals volunteer to serve the children through the provisions of eye exams and glasses and treatment for conditions that include cataracts and glaucoma. Without eyewear many of the children would be considered blind.

"I am very humbled and honored to receive this award," says Cindy, who began oversight of the optical missions in 2011. "The work I do to organize the mission is an act of love, and I cherish the memories of working with Father Joe beginning in 2001 when the medical and optical missions started and all the years since his passing in 2006."

SISTER FRAN BROWNING'S INVESTMENT IN LITERACY

"WE WERE ABLE TO UPDATE OLD BOOKS AND ALSO PURCHASE MANY NEW, FUN BOOKS FOR OUR LIBRARY!"

Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Fran Browning recently donated \$2,000 to the school library of Queen of the Apostles Parish in Tomah, Wisconsin. She is pictured here with second grade students of the school. "With the beautiful donation from Sister Fran," says Queen of the Apostles Principal Deb Pfab, "we were able to update old books and also purchase many new, fun books for our library!"





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Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Thea Bowman's motto "Let me live until I die!" came to life during the musical featuring Vallimar Jansen. The production was co-hosted by FSPA and Viterbo University on March 30, the anniversary of Sister Thea's death. The event, held in La Crosse, Wisconsin, was part of Viterbo University's annual Sister Thea Bowman Week. The cast and musicians brought Sister Thea's biography, "Thea's Song," to the stage with incredible passion. Learn more about Vallimar Jansen at vallimar.com.

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