



FRANCISCAN CONNECTIONS

The Newsletter of the Associates of the
Hospital Sisters of St. Francis

"Sharing in a Franciscan way of life and a healing Spirit"

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November 2018



New Associates - We welcome five new Associates to our Franciscan family. Pictured are: Front row (left to right): Sister Ann Mathieu, Karen Rehkemper, Sheila Weber, Nancy Davis, Associate Coordinator, David Kerwin, Sister Maureen O'Connor, Provincial Superior, Susie Ferguson, Helen Essenpreis, and Sister Mary Ann Minor. Back row (left to right): Sister Marilyn McCormick and Sister MaryAnn Falbe. ❖

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Associate Office –
By Nancy Davis
- 2 Moment of Reflection . . .
- 3 Sister Annice Retirement . . .
- 4 Musings from Chiara . . .
By Dan Frachey
- 5 Being Franciscan . . .
- 6 Justice and Peace Connection . . .
By Sister Mary Shaw, ASC
- 7 Weekend Retreat and Formal
Commitment of New Associates . . .
- 8 Upcoming Events . . .

Associate Office

By Nancy Davis

Silence

We live in a world full of noise. It is everywhere. I recently pondered, while walking in a peaceful wildlife sanctuary, why anyone would want to wear headphones here. Why would one choose to listen to artificial noise instead of the beautiful sounds of nature? It seems that being silent or seeking out silence has become quite unfashionable these days. Current pop music star Justin Timberlake was quoted as saying: "The most boring thing in the world. Silence," yet many a spiritual master has observed that silence is the key to spiritual growth and maturity. Jesus sought a private place for prayer on multiple occasions. Could it be a generational

Continued on Page 3

A Moment Of Reflection . . .

Richard Rohr's Daily Meditation

The Beloved Community

The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice. —Martin Luther King, Jr.

As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. saw clearly in the last years of his life, we face a real choice between chaos and community—we need a moral revolution. If that was true fifty years ago, then we must be clear today: America needs a moral revival to bring about beloved community. —William J. Barber II



I believe that “moral revival” is a natural outgrowth of realizing how connected we already are: what we do unto others or to the earth, we really do to ourselves. All created beings are included in this one Body of God. Protestant pastor and political leader Rev. Dr. William Barber writes: The main obstacle to beloved community continues to be the fear that people in power have used for generations to divide and conquer God’s children who are, whatever our differences, all in the same boat.

It takes a contemplative, nondual mind to see foundational oneness—that we truly are “in the same boat.” The first philosophical problem of “the one and the many” is overcome in God as Trinity. The Trinity reveals that God is precisely *diversity maintained* (“Father,” “Son,” and “Holy Spirit”) and yet that same *diversity overcome* (God is One by reason of the infinite love shared between the Three). Each of the Three perfectly loves and is perfectly loved. And all is created in imitation of this divine shape of Reality. As of yet, we humans have neither done unity nor diversity very well. We have not solved the essential problem that was already resolved in God. (Please read that until it sinks in!)

The goal of the spiritual journey is to discover and move toward connectedness and relationship on ever new levels, while also honoring diversity. We may begin by making connections with family and friends, with nature and animals, and then grow into deeper connectedness with those outside our immediate circle, especially people of races, religions, economic classes, gender, and sexual orientation that are different from our own. Finally, we can and will experience this full connectedness as union with God. For some it starts the other way around: they experience union with God—and then find it easy to unite with everything else.

Without connectedness and communion, we don’t exist fully as our truest selves. Becoming who we really are is a matter of learning how to become more and more deeply connected. No one can possibly go to heaven alone—or it would not be heaven.

Inherent Goodness can always uphold you if you can trust it. I call that goodness “God,” but you don’t have to use that word at all. God does not care. *It is the trusting that is important.* When we fall into Primal Love, we realize that everything is foundationally okay—and we are a part of that everything! ❖

Associate Office –

Continued from page 1

thing, or it is more about a culture, here in the United States, that seems to be drifting farther and farther away from a spiritual center? The famous spiritual writer, Fr. Thomas Merton said, “Not only does silence give us a chance to understand ourselves better, to get a truer and more balanced perspective on our own lives in relation to the lives of others: silence makes us whole if we let it. Silence helps draw together the scattered and dissipated energies of a fragmented existence.” Could it be fear rather than opportunity that keeps people from seeking silence? Saint Mother Teresa said, “In the silence of the heart God speaks. If you face God in prayer and silence, God will speak to you. Then you will know that you are nothing. It is only when you realize your nothingness, your emptiness, that God can fill you with himself. Souls of prayer are souls of great silence.” So if this culture is one that focuses on power and the quest for recognition, it is then no wonder we don’t want to hear what God has to say according to St. Teresa’s quote. I have heard the expression, “The silence was deafening.” If one has spent time in Eucharistic Adoration or in deep meditation, it is easy to discover that the silence is far from boring or, well, silent. Are we afraid of what we might hear in silence that encourages us to fill our world with constant noise? People often complain that God is silent, but is he really silent or do we not stop long enough to hear what he is trying to say? To become the people God created us to be, we need to seek him out, to find him, and he cannot be found in noise. Frances Bacon once said, “Silence is the sleep that nourishes wisdom”. Will this generation be remembered as being wise? ❖

WE SUPPORT IN PRAYER . . .

- Jim Keys whose son passed away
- Ruth King whose daughter passed away
- Susan Compton whose stepmother passed away
- Mary Handley whose brother passed away
- Mike Sgro who is undergoing medical treatment
- Debbie Waitkus who is undergoing medical treatment
- Paula Minwegen who is undergoing medical treatment.
- Our Hospital Sisters ❖

Sr. Annice Retirement . . .



On Wednesday 9/13/18, the Green Bay Associate Group celebrated the retirement of their friend and leader, Sr. Annice, with a Thanksgiving Prayer service and party. Many stories were shared of her faithful service and love for all whom she has ministered to in her services to HSHS and of her great support of the Associates. Of course, she already had her volunteer badge in place. There is no stopping her. Praise God! ❖

Musings from Chiara

By Dan Frachey

Incarnation



The more I work the Chiara, the more I revel in the Franciscan understanding of *Incarnation*. In a great instance of one person passing on the oral tradition to another, I recall a visit several years ago to St. Francis of Assisi Church with a young person from my church who wanted to see it. Sr. Renita Brummer, OSF, who served as the first Program Director, guided us to the terra cotta nativity set and began to offer us a primer in the Franciscan theology of incarnation that flows from St. Bonaventure and John Dun Scotus.

She said that God sent the Son in a pure act of LOVE who would come among us and take on our human DNA and thus, all that goes with that process. God would enter into our human realm through the emergence of a tiny human being ensconced in poverty. By encountering human life from the ground up, God's loving plan was to take hold of the outstretched hands of a humanity that longed for redemption. As Jesus grew into an adult human, he grasped onto those hands of a slumped humanity even tighter and elevated us to our original stature as graced beings so that we might look eye to eye with the previously unseen God.

Jesus was never some Plan B where an angry God sent the Son to clean up the mess we'd made. LOVE was always destined to inhabit a world created *in love, by love and for love*. To be sure, this love is not the sentimental greeting card variety, rather, it is one that has the shoulders to bear the weight of full immersion into the fray of humanity. With that said, LOVE couldn't help but go the distance, so LOVE's path included the road to Calvary and thus, we have a theology that Richard Rohr refers to as an "alternate (Franciscan) orthodoxy." May LOVE, a.k.a. God, renew this sense of full

stature in us so that we might more fully embody this reality in our own incarnation as children of God. ❖

General Council Elected . . .



The new General Council is (left to right): Sister Lima Arackal, OSF, General Councilor (Indian Province), Sister M. Christa Maria Frie, OSF, General Councilor (German Province), Sister M. Margarete Ulager, OSF, General Superior (German Province), Sister M. Christella Watanabe, OSF, General Vicareess (Japan Province), and Sister M. Rita Edakkootathil, OSF, General Councilor (Indian Province).

On the morning of September 14, 2018, the General Chapter, held at the Chiara Center, selected Sister M. Margarete Ulager as their 11th General Superior in the presence of The Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki, Bishop, Diocese of Springfield in Illinois. In St. Francis of Assisi Church with the Bishop, the delegates and many Sisters and St. Francis Convent employees, Sister M. Margarete took the oath of office and accepted the Seal and Key of the Hospital Sisters of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis. Her acceptance was followed by the Sisters pledging their personal and communal support to bring Christ's Healing Presence into the World.

On the afternoon of September 14, the delegates returned to the Chapter Hall to continue with the election process. After prayerful reflection, four Sisters were elected and asked by Sister M. Margarete Ulager, General Superior, if they were willing to serve the international Community and to assume a role on the General Council. ❖

Being Franciscan . . .

RoseMary Salzman

(Green Bay)

Year of Commitment – 2016



I am a Franciscan Associate. I'm so proud to acknowledge this! What does this mean to me? It lifts me up, gives me strength, keeps me humble and gives me pride in myself. To follow the lives of St. Francis and St. Clare encourages me to pray for others and be there for those around me who are in need.

For the past years I have been helpful and strong for two of my sisters. Betty Ann is two years younger than me and Rita is one year older than me. Both of the gals have been afflicted with Alzheimer's. It's so hard to watch the decline of these beautiful ladies. I ask myself, "why them and not me?" Only God knows. I know in my heart the Lord has given me these ladies for a purpose. Being a Franciscan Associate has made this so very clear to me. This past Mother's Day, Betty Ann was delivered to her Heavenly home. How I rejoiced!

I was widowed 2 1/2 years ago. With the strength from my Associate sisters, dear friends and family, I have found courage that I never knew I had. It has taught me that it's ok to ask for help, and to share my life in new and even stronger ways. I have reached out to my sisters and others who are in need of help both physically and emotionally. I do this with an open heart, with much love for them. This has become my mission. I hold myself up and I pray to our Lord every day as I continue to care for my own well-being so I can be there where ever and whenever I am called. I am a retired Pastoral Associate. I'm a member of our Parish Council and several other social committees which are active during different

Continued on Page 6

Joan Eggers

(Effingham)

Year of Commitment – 2017



My name is Joan Eggers from Effingham and I made my commitment on Sept. 24, 2017. Karla Huddlestun is my sponsor and advocate for my soul. Even though Karla is no longer able to meet monthly with the Effingham group, she still makes herself easily accessible. I enjoy following her inspiring posts on Facebook which often depict church involvement in today's society, church history, or church teaching. She is a true Christ bearer.

Following her example, I too am a literal Christ bearer by taking Christ's body to the homebound and those in nursing homes. In my attempt to live the Franciscan spirit, I hope to recognize God's presence in every one of these persons. By acknowledging that all were created in love, called to be loved, and called to emit love, the value in everyone's existence becomes apparent. We need to use this awareness to cooperate with the journey God has set before us. That is where my Franciscan family plays its biggest role. Through prayer we can meet the challenge of putting away our cares and anxieties and seek a quiet peace. "Every moment is pregnant with the presence of God." If we can remember this, we would know we always have a safe haven. I find this easily in participating in a weekly Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament at St. Anthony's Memorial Hospital chapel. St. Francis would recognize God's grandeur in nature as well.

Among several hobbies, reading lends an opportunity to grow spiritually as well as intellectually. My joyful focus these days is raising my 11 year old grandson Connor to be a holy young man grounded in Catholic faith and tradition. I pray my influence on him creates a heightened prayer life and evangelical nature. It is in this vein I hope to make a difference since becoming Franciscan. ❖

Justice and Peace Connection

By Sister Mary Shaw, ASC

Finding in the Temple: *Luke 2: 41*



Many of us recall this beautiful passage of how Mary and Joseph went to Jerusalem for feast of Passover. The parents and others continued their journey for a day and realized the child Jesus was not with them. Anxious, filled with sorrow and upset, the parents went back to Jerusalem in search of Jesus and found him in the temple. Now, fast forward to summer of 2018 and thousands of children ripped from the arms of their parents no less than at the border of U.S.A. We listened in sorrow as we heard children wail and parents cry.

It gives us cause to pause and ask of ourselves and our country, what has happened to our moral compass? Pope Francis reminds us in *Laudato Si'*, that the "human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together." There is a call here, to strengthen the conviction that we are one single human family. Often you hear, me say that the litmus test of our faith is found in Matthew 25. It challenges me daily to ask what have I done for Christ, what am I doing for Christ and what ought I to do for Christ? A simple daily practice is to ponder this passage of scripture and ask yourself, how am I today standing with and for unaccompanied children and vulnerable people seeking protection and shelter? We have a moral obligation to ensure that unaccompanied children receive proper care and are not separated from their families, but that they have an opportunity to seek protection and safety. We cannot fix the world but we can mend the part of the world

that is within our reach. Clarissa Pinkola Estes says, "one of the most calming and powerful actions you can do to intervene in a stormy world is to stand up and show your soul."

Have I the courage to take a stand and not hide my light? Besides prayer, am I able to contact my lawmakers and express support for these vulnerable families? Perhaps go to the Justice for Immigrants website and sign one of their Action Alerts. Faith without good works is dead and justice is simply what love looks like in public. Let us be the moral compass for the families and the country. Much has been given and much will be expected of each of us. ❖

IN LOVING MEMORY . . .

SISTER MARIE CHANG

BORN: 01/21/1924

FIRST PROFESSION: 10/04/1948

DIED: 08/21/2018

ASSOCIATE KATHLEEN KOCHMAN

(SPRINGFIELD)

BORN: 09/29/1943

COMMITMENT: 2011

DIED: 08/29/2018

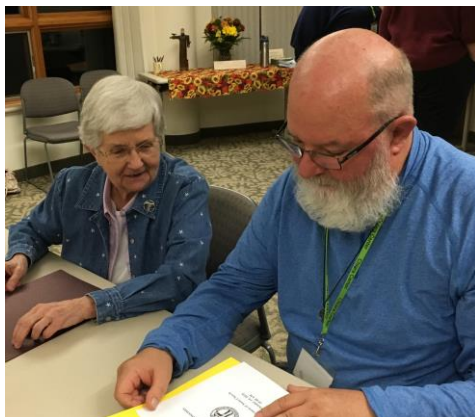
**May they share with Jesus the joy
and peace of heaven . . .**

RoseMary Salzman

Continued from page 5

months of the year at St. Magdalene Mary church in Waupaca. I'm in a very active and lively Bible group with women from all denominations and attend a Grief Support Group weekly. All of these things make me aware of how important it is to reach out to other people, and to keep myself strong and healthy. ❖

Weekend Retreat and Formal Commitment of New Associates October 12 – 14, 2018 . . .





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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Upcoming Events at Chiara Center . . .

Beneath Scandals, Beyond Policies: Men & Women at Work Together - November 1 - A one-day seminar that seeks to answer the question: "How can men and women honor the fullness of their contributions with mutual respect and value at work?" Presented by licensed counselors Bill & Lori McKenzie

Companions on the Journey - November 5, December 3 and January 7 - Share lunch with others and hear spiritual presentations by Fr. Richard Chiola, Norma Roberts & Sr. Anita Cleary, OP

Food and Faith Dinner Series - November 8 - "Joy! A Spirituality of Community Theater" featuring local director Craig Williams

Food and Faith Dinner Series - January 24, 2019 - "Joy! A Spirituality of Laughter" featuring magician and comedian Richard Landry

Death Café - November 13 and December 11 - Where people eat cake, drink tea and have open and honest conversations about death. (Google Death Café to see what we mean.)

AH Day of Quiet - December 15, 2018 and January 14, 2019

Enneagram Retreat with Jessie Vicha February 1-3, 2019 - This offers an understanding and utilization of the Enneagram as a means of realizing how each person tends toward key spiritual themes or tendencies, similar to the Myers Briggs Personality tool. While promoted as an on-going means of formation for spiritual directors, this event will be open for all.

To register for any of the Chiara-sponsored events, visit the Events section of our website www.chiaracenter.org or call us at 217-523-0901. 10% discount for Associates.

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