

INTERCOM

NEWSLETTER OF THE SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS, CLINTON, IOWA NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2017
843 13th Avenue North, Clinton, Iowa 52732 • (563) 242-7611 • www.clintonfranciscans.com

*We affirm our charism of ongoing conversion and rededicate ourselves
to our mission of living and promoting active nonviolence and peacemaking.*

- 2016 Chapter Commitment Statement

Farewell to Sojourner Nancy Roberts

Sojourner Nancy Roberts passed away October 30.

Nancy and her husband, Richard (Dick), became Sojourners on July 25, 2014. Their Sojourner Companions, Sisters Teresa Kunkel and Joan Theiss, remember her fondly, stating, "As a participant, Nancy was always willing to share her insights in discussions . . . in her quiet way, she was sensitive to all the members in group settings and made sure all felt included."

Nancy was a 1953 graduate of Clinton High School. She married Dick November 7, 1959.

She was a homemaker and worked for McGladrey, Hansen and Dunn during the tax season.

Nancy was a member of Prince of Peace Parish and Pax Christi, served on the committee which formulated the design of Prince of Peace Church, and was a team leader at Teens Encounter Christ (TEC). She became a group leader of Christian Family Movement (CFM) in the early 1960s.

She and Dick co-founded the Freedom Singers youth group and were involved with Marriage Encounter (ME), having served as president couple of



Nancy Roberts
Contributed photo

the Davenport board.

Nancy was a member of the Democratic Party, serving as a delegate to many county conventions and the district and

state convention in 2008.

Nancy also was an assistant Brownie Troop leader, a Girl Scout Troop leader, and a Cub Scout den mother.

She dearly loved her four children, their spouses, and her seven grandchildren.

She enjoyed spending time traveling with her husband, including many places abroad and 49 of the 50 states. She also loved to dance and was an avid water skier.

"Nancy actively supported and helped with Peace Soup events each Lent, and was always anxious to learn and deepen her spiritual life by attending retreats, community days, and Advent and Lenten Vespers at The Canticle," said Sister Joan.

Nancy was the first Sojourner to pass away since the group's inception in 2003.

Hate Has No Home Campaign Continues

Follow-Up Meetings Held

The "Hate Has No Home Here" campaign, a project of the Sisters of St. Francis Franciscan Peace Center in Clinton, continues with follow up meetings held November 10 and December 15 at The Canticle, and another planned for January 23 at LaFeria Family Restaurant in Clinton.

A group of nearly 15 people met November 10 to discuss the next step involved in encouraging a just and inclusive community and a safe place where everyone is valued and welcome.

"Why is this important to you? Why did you come today?" asked Lori Freudenberg, Community Outreach Director for the Franciscan Peace Center.

Deacon Ray Hilgendorf replied, "I'm astonished that we got to a point in our society where we need to put signs in our yards telling us not to hate each other." Others expressed a desire to have conversations with people of differing views, shared personal feelings of being alienated by others, and the lack of tolerance for differing views in the United States in the past year.

Following a discussion on some of the root causes of hate,

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*"If we had no hate in Clinton,
what would that look like?"*

- Lori Freudenberg, Community Outreach Director,
Franciscan Peace Center



Lori Freudenberg, Community Outreach Director for the Franciscan Peace Center, (standing) leads a discussion at the Hate Has No Home Here campaign's follow-up meeting held November 10 at The Canticle.

Hate Has No Home Campaign Continues in Clinton

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Freudenberg asked, "If we had no hate in Clinton what would that look like?" Brainstorming was held on ways to include people in the meetings who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized.

The group met December 15 with a goal in mind — to ensure that Clinton is seen as a welcoming community. This will be especially important if a proposal passes to house an international education academy for students

from China at the former Ashford University, with students taking classes at Clinton High School.

The group's next meeting will be Tuesday, January 23, at La Feria Mexican Restaurant in Clinton. Click [HERE](#) or call 563-242-7611 for more details.

Clinton Franciscans join others with sign-on letters

The Clinton Franciscans have joined with other organizations and religious leaders on the following issues:

Sisters of St. Francis, Clinton, Iowa

- Interfaith Letter opposing the Trump Mass Deportation Act, H.R. 2431.
- Letter supporting passage of Restricting First Use of Nuclear Weapons Act of 2017.

Sister Jan Cebula signed as President

- Catholic Sisters' letter opposing the tax reform bill.
- Iowa Faith Leaders letter to Senators Ernst and Grassley urging passage of the DREAM Act.
- Interfaith Letter to Congress to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from drilling.
- Catholic leaders' letter to President Trump and members of Congress to uphold the Paris agreement on climate change.
- Catholic leaders' letter to President Trump and members of Congress to protect the agreement with Iran and apply similar diplomatic skills in dealing with North Korea.

Our Prayers Are Requested For the Repose of souls of:

Sojourner Nancy Roberts, who passed away on October 29, 2017.

Chuck Brinkman, husband of Associate Barbara Brinkman, who passed away on October 31, 2017.

Russell Linton, brother of Associate Lodi Pippen, who passed away on November 2, 2017.

Roger Welty, son of Associate Jane Welty, who passed away on November 3, 2017.

Al Romine, nephew of Sister Annamarie Marcalus, who passed away on November 4, 2017.

Bernie Cromien, brother-in-law of Sister Eileen Golby, who passed away on November 28, 2017.

William B. Rourke, brother of Sister Judy McKenna, who passed away on December 2, 2017.

Joey Dietz, great-nephew of Sister Marjorie Wisor, who passed away on December 18, 2017.

Shirley Herrmann, cousin of Sister Jackie Herrmann, who passed away on December 26, 2017.

Sharon Kunkel, niece of Sister Teresa Kunkel, who passed away on December 29, 2017.

We affirm our charism of ongoing conversion and rededicate ourselves . . .

Sisters, Peace Center, Others Voice Concerns at Public Meetings

Traveling office hours with Iowa Senator Joni Ernst's Regional Director

Sisters Joan Theiss, Marcella Marie Narlock, and Hilary Mullany, along with Sister Nancy Miller, Director of Franciscan Spirituality for the Franciscan Peace Center, attended "traveling office hours," November 14, to meet with Andrew Spyrow, Regional Director for Iowa Senator Joni Ernst.

Sister Joan asked Spyrow to encourage Senator Ernst to co-sponsor the immigration bill, DREAM Act of 2017 S.1615 (Development, Relief, and Education, for Alien Minors). She shared a young immigrant's story hoping to invoke compassion and to encourage the senator to meet with other "dreamers" to hear their stories.

Sister Nancy, who has traveled to Honduras, El Salvador, and Mexico, added that the horrific conditions under which people are leaving their homelands calls for benevolence on the part of the United States government.

Sister Nancy then turned Spyrow's attention to the issue of human trafficking and spoke about the Anti-Human Trafficking Committee in Clinton, which is comprised of over 30 members from a broad spectrum of the community, such as local law enforcement; the Clinton County attorney; volunteers from civic, faith-based, and educational communities; health care providers; Clinton Community College; Braking Traffick, and others. Sister Nancy also requested that Senator Ernst bring to the Senate floor S.1862 Trafficking Victims Protection Criteria for Reauthorization Act of 2017, a bill to amend the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 which modifies and determines whether countries are meeting the minimum standards for the elimination of human



Penny Vacek, Regional Director for Senator Charles Grassley (far left), listens to concerns of (from left) Sisters Teresa Kunkel and Joan Theiss; Lori Freudenberg, Community Outreach Director for the Franciscan Peace Center; Associate Lanie Lass and Sister Marjorie Wisor at a public forum in December.

trafficking. In addition to passing the legislation, the group asked that funding to implement the bills also be authorized.

Sister Marcella Marie praised Senator Ernst for her support of S. Res.377, the Backpage.com Civil Contempt Resolution and S.178 The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. Sister Marcella Marie then encouraged the senator to co-sponsor S.1693, the Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act of 2017 (SESTA), a bill that amends the Communications Act of 1934, ensuring it does not protect sex traffickers who solicit online.

Also present at the discussion was Jane Naughton, a member of the Anti-Human Trafficking Committee's advocacy subcommittee.

Traveling office hours with Senator Charles Grassley's Regional Director

Lori Freudenberg, Community Outreach Director for the Franciscan Peace Center, and Sister Nancy met with Penny Vacek, Regional Director for Senator Grassley, in December.

Also representing the Sisters of St. Francis were Sisters Marjorie Wisor, Teresa Kunkel, and Joan Theiss, along with Associate Lanie Lass.

The Sisters thanked Senator Grassley for supporting bills regarding human trafficking, and Sisters Joan and Teresa spoke about the DREAM Act, asking Vacek to encourage the senator to support it.

Arica Arensdorf, who struggles with student loan debt and its effect on her financially, asked that the tax deduction for student loan interest be continued.

Margi Bengtson, a member of the board for Clinton's Getting Ahead Program, spoke about people who live in poverty and how lack of health insurance affects their quality of life.

Lass spoke about trafficking and the bills that Senator Grassley sponsored and asked him to sponsor others as well.

"It is so important that our elected officials hear from us," said Freudenberg. "Attending these office hours in your community is one more way to connect with those who represent us."

Call the United States Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121 to be connected directly with the your Senator's office.

... to our mission of living and promoting active nonviolence and peacemaking.

Updates on Corporate Stands

Human Trafficking

"We, the Sisters of St. Francis of Clinton, Iowa, Associates, and Sojourners, oppose all forms of human trafficking which violate basic human rights and exploit vulnerable people, and we will put forth our efforts to end this heinous practice." 2015

Members of the Sisters of St. Francis Anti-Trafficking Committee's education subcommittee invited 17 local agencies to a meeting to discuss a new protocol for assisting human trafficking victims in Clinton.



acc.af.ml

"We are working to institute a formal protocol for people in Clinton to follow should they have a suspicion of a human trafficking victim or even a confirmed human trafficking victim," said Lori Freudenberg, Community Outreach Director for the Franciscan Peace Center, who led the mid-November meeting.

Senator Rita Hart (Iowa District 49), Representative Mary Wolfe (Iowa District 98), and Norlin Mommsen (Iowa District 97) were in attendance, as well as representatives from 13 of the 17 agencies invited to the meeting. The Clinton Police Department, Clinton Community School District, and the county attorney were among those who filled out questionnaires about what gaps need to be filled in order to facilitate assisting victims of human trafficking. Once information from all questionnaires is compiled, the group plans to create a flow chart to determine if a person is a victim, how to get a victim to safety, who to call for help, and how a suspicion of crime should be reported.

Sister Shirley Fineran of Sioux City, Iowa, spoke to the group via video conference at the December meeting to give information about her mission to establish a safe house there for women who have been involved with human trafficking.

The Anti-Trafficking Committee meets monthly at The Canticule.

Trucking Company Produces Video

Amhof Trucking, Inc., of Eldridge, Iowa, has produced a video featuring Freudenberg speaking about human trafficking and what those in the trucking industry can do to help eliminate it.

Click **HERE** to view the video.

Death Penalty

"The Sisters of St. Francis, Clinton, Iowa, Associates, and Sojourners oppose the death penalty and call for its abolition." 2003

Submitted by Laura Anderson

The death penalty may be seeing a decline in the number of executions being carried out.

The state of Texas has been responsible for over a third of all



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executions in the United States since the death penalty was legalized in 1976. Harris County in Texas has been referred to as the "death penalty capital of the world" with 126 executions. The good news is that in 2017 Harris County has not carried out a single execution. In fact, the number of executions has been trending downward across the United States, but it's particularly

noticeable in Texas and Harris County. The remarkable statistic reflects a shift the nation is seeing as a whole. **NBS News.Com**

The Death Penalty Corporate Stand Group continues to pray for prisoners on death row and encourages everyone to take the National Catholic Pledge to End the Death Penalty by clicking **HERE**.

Nuclear Disarmament

"We, the Sisters of St. Francis of Clinton, Iowa, Associates, and Sojourners, oppose the continued maintenance, research, development, and threatened use of the United States arsenal of nuclear weapons. We call on our government to fulfill our commitments to nuclear disarmament as agreed to in the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1970 and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty of 1996." 2005

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2017. ICAN, located in 100 countries, is a coalition of non-government organizations that advocated for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, passed at the July meeting of the



United Nations. ICAN is based on a partnership model, meaning

organizations that agree with their goals and don't use or advocate violence may partner with them.

"It is a great honor . . . in recognition of our role in achieving the **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons**. This historic agreement, adopted on 7 July with

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Worthy of Note

Sister Jan Cebula elected to LCWR National Board

Sister Jan Cebula, President of the Sisters of St. Francis, Clinton, Iowa, was recently elected to the newly-formed LCWR (Leadership Conference of Women Religious) National Board. As the numbers of members change in individual communities, the circumstances in the conference are also affected. This year LCWR decided to reorganize and reduce the number of board members from 15 to 9. This was the first time the board members were elected.

Voters were given qualifications for board members, including the following criteria: she is an elected leader in her own congregation; she values the contemplative process; she possesses good communication skills with experience in collaboration, dialogue, and not-for-profit board responsibilities; she works toward compromise; she thinks conceptually and sees the big picture; she attends to details; she turns feedback into workable goals; and she will be able to provide stability as the process of



revising the governance structure advances.

"Jan will be an excellent LCWR board member as the organization is restructuring for the future," said Sister Marilyn Huegerich, Vice President of the Sisters of St. Francis, Clinton, Iowa. "She thinks about the big picture; and, within the contemplative stance, she constantly asks, 'what is emerging?'" she continued.

The LCWR is an association of the leaders of congregations of Catholic women religious in the United States. The conference has about 1,350 members, who represent nearly 80 percent of the approximately 48,500 women religious in the United States. -LCWR.org

MLK Award to go to Peace Center's Lori Freudenberg

Lori Freudenberg, Community Outreach Director for the Franciscan Peace Center, will receive the Peace and Justice Award given by Clinton's Martin Luther King Committee during the annual MLK celebration January 14.

Each year the award goes to an individual or an organization whose work in the community honors Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy of nonviolence, equality, justice, and peace.

Freudenberg was nominated by Sister Kathleen Holland and Jennifer Graf.



Lori Freudenberg

Former recipients of the award include Dina White, the Sisters of St. Francis, Associates Sallyann McCarthy and Lauren Ashley Smith, Leslie McCreery, Tiffany Harris, Vinson Jetter, LaMetta Wynn, YWCA Clinton Youth Department, Mardell Mommsen, former Clinton Police Chief Brian Guy, and Tom Otto and Pam Rehr-Otto.

Nuclear Disarmament

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the backing of 122 nations, offers a powerful, much-needed alternative to a world in which threats of mass destruction are allowed to prevail and, indeed, are escalating," said a statement on the ICAN website.

The treaty opened for signature September 20 and will remain open indefinitely. Once 50 nations have ratified or acceded to it, it will enter into force.

The United States did not participate in the negotiation of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. It has said that it intends never to join the

"... the threat of their use as well as their very possession is to be firmly condemned."

- Pope Francis, talk on nuclear weapons November 10

treaty, and voted against the UN General Assembly resolution in 2016 that established the mandate for nations to negotiate the treaty. The United States also has failed to fulfill its legally binding disarmament obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. www.icanw.org.

Pope Francis has indicated that possession of nuclear weapons as a deterrent is no longer acceptable. "The existence of nuclear weapons creates a false sense of security that holds international relations hostage and stifles peaceful coexistence . . . the threat of their use as well as their very possession is to be firmly condemned," the pope told participants at a conference on nuclear disarmament hosted by the Vatican in November.

For years, popes and Catholic leaders had said the policy of nuclear deterrence could be morally acceptable as long as real work was underway on a complete ban of the weapons. *Catholic Herald*.

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Advent A season of hope and expectation

‘Longing for Peace’ — An Advent Day of Reflection

“Longing for Peace,” an Advent Day of Reflection, was held at The Canticle December 2 for a group of 30 people.

The day focused on cultivating a spirit of peace within and spreading Christ’s light that dwells within each person.

As Pope Francis said in his message for World Day of Peace 2017, “All of us want

peace. Many people build it day by day through small gestures and acts; many of them are suffering, yet patiently persevere in their efforts to be peacemakers . . . Nothing is impossible if we turn to God in prayer. Everyone can be an artisan of peace.”

Sister Nancy Miller, Director of Franciscan Spirituality at the Franciscan Peace Center and

facilitator of the day, remarked, “It was an energizing environment that cultivated a spirit of peace within and among us. Participants left feeling compelled to share that peace as they returned to their homes and workplaces.”

A Lenten Day of Reflection will be held Saturday, February 17, 2018.

Advent Vespers — ‘In the Light of Hope’

Using Pope Francis’ Advent booklet, *In the Light of Hope*, as a guide, Advent Vespers were held December 3, 10, and 17.

Rob Engleson, Sister Marjorie Wisor, and Marilou Finn gave the reflections.

Engleson referenced John 1:5 “the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” He spoke of his personal experiences at the time his son was born, relating his story in

a series of highs and lows that he compared to lightness and darkness. He shared he was able to work through the hard times with faith.

When Sister Marjorie was a child, she tried to understand the Incarnation by thinking what it would be like if she became a dog like the one she loved. “The enormity of the truth I was trying to understand was that in God’s all-powerful love God did just that. God loved us human beings

so much that God did become one of us in Jesus.”

Finn talked about the great sources of light around her presently — friends, family, Bible study partners, and the Sisters of St. Francis — and in the past — her late husband Mike — and how all those people give her strength. She quoted Philippians 4:13 “I have the strength for everything through him who empowers me.”



Rob Engleson



Sister
Marjorie Wisor



Marilou Finn

*“All men and women of good will are bound by the task of pursuing peace . . .
Peace is a good which overcomes every barrier,
because it belongs to all of humanity!”*

Angelus in St. Peter’s Square, September 1, 2013

We affirm our charism of ongoing conversion and rededicate ourselves . . .

Christmas Celebrations

Sisters Honor Employees

The Sisters of St. Francis honored their 22 employees with a Christmas party in December.

Following dinner Sister Michael Marie Burns told the story of St. Francis of Assisi and the first live nativity in a cave in Greccio, Italy, in 1223.

The Sisters commended each department with words of praise and gratitude. The evening rounded out with a song when the Sisters sang their own rendition of *Jingle Bells*, titled *Employees*.



Sister Michael Marie Burns

Associates Throw a Christmas Party for Sisters and Sojourners



Iowa Associates Sharon Gilbert (left) and Lydia Halbach (right) enjoy the Christmas party with Sister Kathy Sadler (middle).

Clinton Region Associates invited local Sisters and Sojourners to a Christmas party held December 17 at The Canticle.

Members of the Clinton High School Chamber Orchestra provided Christmas music for the group.

In lieu of a gift exchange, the Associates brought baby items to donate to the Associate Benevolent Society in Clinton.

Annual Creche Open House

Over sixty people visited The Canticle on December 17 during the Creche Open House. Over 40 nativity sets from different parts of the world were featured.

Lisa Gerwulf, St. Paul's Lutheran Bell Choir Director, played Christmas songs using 27 hand bells and 4 tone chimes in the chapel. Audrey Owen, who taught Gerwulf to play piano and the hand bells, accompanied her on the piano.



Iowa Associate Deb Jacobsen and her granddaughter view the creches at the open house.

Sisters, Students Make Ornaments

Prince of Peace fifth-grade students and their teacher, Alli Schultz, invited their Sisters of St. Francis pen pals to join them in making cinnamon Christmas ornaments.

Sisters Marjorie Wisor, Deborah Schneider, Marilyn Huegerich, Paschal Hocum, and Theresa Judge helped mix and roll out the dough, then cut shapes with cookie cutters.

"It was fun making the ornaments," said Sister



Sister Marilyn Huegerich makes Christmas ornaments with her Prince of Peace fifth-grade pen pal.

Deborah Schneider. "I enjoyed the interaction with the fifth-graders. It was a great opportunity to get to know our pen pals," she added.

Sister Marjorie agreed, "It was great fun bonding with my pen pal, while making the cinnamon ornaments," she said. "My compliments to the teacher who coordinated the project so very well."

Christmas Greeting Video

Several Sisters helped the Communication and the Development Departments create a Christmas greeting video for Facebook.

Click [HERE](#) to view the video.

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Plarn Mats to Be Used at Head Start

Clinton Head Start, a federally funded organization that provides early childhood education to low-income children, will receive small mats made by the plarning group at The Canticle. The group has also made mats for children at Stay N Play Childcare, a daycare used by a number of people transitioning from homelessness.

Associate Francie Hill, who co-leads the plarning group, said, "When the boys and girls are told they need to spend some time in their own space," said Francie, "they will be given a 24" x 24" knitted or crocheted mat to sit on."

The mats are made from used

plastic grocery bags. Strips of the bags are crocheted or knitted into mats.

While the first and primary use of the mats was dispensing them at Share Our Sandwiches to protect people sleeping outside from the cold or wet ground, earlier this year members of the Clinton Police Department asked for mats to offer to people they may meet on the streets. The officers hope to use the opportunity to spark a discussion about resources in the community.

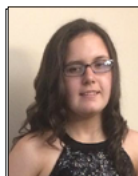
The plarn group meets weekly at The Canticle to make mats.

The Canticle welcomes new employees

The Canticle welcomes new part-time employees Ellen Bentley, Jasmine Johnson, and Shai Lemke. Ellen, a nurse, started working at The Canticle in September; Jasmine, a dishwasher, began in November, and Shai, a cook, began in December.



Ellen Bentley



Jasmine Johnson



Shai Lemke

World Day of Peace is January 1

Pope Francis' message for the celebration of the 2018 World Day of Peace is titled *Migrants and Refugees: Men and Women in Search of Peace*.

"In a spirit of compassion, let us embrace all those fleeing from war and hunger, or forced by discrimination, persecution, poverty and environmental degradation to leave their homelands," said Pope Francis.

Click [HERE](#) to read the document.

HAPPY
New Year

from the Sisters
of St. Francis

REJOICE
IN THE LORD
ALWAYS;
AGAIN, I SAY REJOICE

PHI: 4-4

Image courtesy of Pixabay



"Trinity" (1425) by Andrei Rublev
(Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

Day of Communion

December 31, 2017

"In the icon of the Trinity, the Holy One is in the form of Three — eating and drinking, in infinite hospitality and utter enjoyment between themselves. If we take the depiction of God in The Trinity seriously, we have to say, 'In the beginning was the Relationship.'"

- Richard Rohr

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- 2016 Chapter Commitment Statement

"Modesty is a virtue that is essential for anyone who wants to be like Jesus, who is meek and humble of heart."

- December 29 Tweet by Pope Francis @ Pontifex