

Franciscan Spirit

Autumn
Winter
2021
VOL 34

**"Everywhere and in all places,
at all times and in all seasons,
the brothers and sisters
are to have true
and humble faith."**

— Third Order Franciscan Rule #9

Inside:

Empowering Others
New Leadership Team
& Vision for Future
More FFE, Paving Paths
Events via Zoom
Nativity Display to be
held in Kirkwood
Jubilee photos!



REFLECTIONS FROM *Renita*

Sister Renita Brummer, OSF, is Minister General of the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Dear Friends,

How good it is to be with you. We Sisters have been through many challenges since the last Franciscan Spirit appeared in your actual mailbox. I'm sure you and your family have also.

Life continually emerges around us and within us. Day by day, for better or worse, we are each part of the great unfolding of God's love in the world. This unfolding can be so incremental we hardly notice. Sometimes it is a huge shift which startles us. Sometimes it's hidden in mystery or in painful questions of why.

Over the past year we Sisters have experienced a significant increase in prayer requests. It shouldn't be surprising. We live in a messy, wounded world. We take our vocation to be prayerful women very seriously.

While we know prayer is a great healing power, we also understand the words of Tagore, "You can't cross the sea by merely staring at the water." We must not petition God to answer prayers, if we do not act to answer them. Our vocation calls us to be prayerful and prophetic.

Thank you for inspiring us, for calling us to action, for requesting prayers, for being part of our Franciscan mission.

The cover features our Sister Olivia

who recently retired to Mother of Perpetual Help Residence in St Louis from her longtime ministry in Trinidad, CO. When asked what gives her this big smile that she is known for, she responded, *"I thoroughly love and enjoy people. Being a part of the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help and living a life of service to God, the Church, the Community, family and friends has brought me great joy and fulfillment. As an educator, I had a real passion for teaching children to love Jesus and empowering them to share their gifts and talents with the world. This was one of my greatest joys. I am grateful every day for the life God has given me and his presence in it."*

News from Tau Center Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help



The 19th Ordinary General Chapter of Affairs and Elections was an historic week for us Sisters. We are so grateful for your prayers which helped make this such a Spirit-filled experience. After many months of preparation, discussion, prayer and zooming, we gathered online June 27, the Feast of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, through July 2 to set our course for the future and to elect our Leadership Team. Every Sister in the congregation participated in discerning how our charism and mission was calling to more fully live our Franciscan vocation.

The Chapter theme "Tending the Heart of the World...prayerfully, prophetically, and courageously" challenged us to recognize Christ in both the beauty and pain of our world. Through our time together a vision, a direction emerged for the next five years. You are part of this plan, too, since you support us, pray with us, and believe in us.

Having determined our direction, we turned to our election process. This process involves deep listening and discernment. Who shall we call forth to lead us the next five years? We know that the task of our elected leaders is not to create a plan for us, but to create a space where God's spirit can freely work through all of us.

Sister Renita Brummer (above left) was elected for her second term as Minister General, Sister Rosalie Wisniewski (center) was elected for her second term as Assistant Minister General, and Sister Ellen Horn (right) was elected for her first term as Assistant Minister. The Leadership Team was officially commissioned on Sept 8 with the Senior Sisters at Cardinal Ritter Senior Services in the morning, at Tau Center for St Louis area Sisters

in the evening, and on Sept 9 over Zoom so the out-of-town Sisters could participate.

Sister Ellen returns to St Louis after retiring from teaching middle school science and religion for 32 years, most recently at Our Lady of Unity Catholic School in Kansas City, KS. Originally from St Louis, MO, Sister Ellen is glad to be back in St Louis where she can actively support her baseball Cardinals and hockey Blues.

Sister Julia Marie Bathon was appointed Canonical Minister. She will be included should there be matters requiring canonical consultation. She will continue to serve in her current ministry as Executive Director of Christ in the Wilderness retreat center in Stockton, IL.

Sister Cheryl Kemner completed two terms (plus one extra year due to COVID) as Assistant Minister. She continues part-time at Tau Center working on the database and spearheading the Franciscans For Earth Eco-Series, and Laudato Si' and Fratelli Tutti events.

Sister Regina Marie Strassburger moved on from her position as Secretary General after five years. She will continue ministering at Tau Center as Archivist and Membership of Prayer Director. New to Tau Center, we welcome Sister Stephanie Marie Kondik as Secretary General. Sister Stephanie returns to St Louis following 31 years of service in Education in the Chicago, IL, area.



Sister Stories: Sharing unexpected resources to empower others

As you know by now, our Sisters work to empower others with hope and joy. Recently we chose to do this by turning our \$600 stimulus checks into Mission. Each Sister chose the recipient of her gift. The donations reflect the diversity of interests and commitments of individual Sisters to groups in need locally and around the world.

Covid patients in Peru, where hospitals were full, were able to refill oxygen tanks thanks to one Sister. Another Sister helped dig a well in Kenya, and others donated toward relief for those affected by disasters in Haiti. Sisters also passed along funds to UNICEF, the Red Cross, Doctors Without Borders, Heifer International, and of course Catholic Relief Services.

Domestically, funds were given to Catholic Mobilizing Network which moves "people of good will to value life over death, to end the use of the death penalty, and to transform the criminal justice system from punitive to restorative..." Several Sisters joined together in support of Annunciation House in El Paso which provides assistance to families arriving at the Southern border seeking asylum and safety from political and environmental violence. (Several of our Sisters also volunteered there.) Many other national organizations benefited including the National Foundation for the Blind, St Jude's Cancer Research Hospital for Children, the Gary Sinise Foundation, the National Park Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, and the Franciscan Connection. Locally, Sisters gave to food pantries in the areas they serve, helped local families pay for extensive medical and mental health bills, supported initiatives to Care for Creation, and showed their commitment to education by providing tuition assistance for college and Catholic K-12 education.

Others donated toward education for seminarians, to pregnancy care centers, and to emergency shelters.

In the St Louis area, Covenant House Missouri received a donation. They "welcome youth who are runaway, trafficked, at-risk, or experiencing homelessness with unconditional love, absolute respect and a place to call home." Gratitude House, a sober living facility for women, was a fund recipient, as was Pianos for People. This group provides "free access to the transformative power of music to those who need it most—children and families with limited resources—by repairing and re-homing pianos and providing free lessons." Across the Mississippi, special programs at Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School, an elementary school serving inner-city children in East St Louis, IL, received a financial boost.

You may wonder why an organization that sends appeal letters with giving envelopes is passing along funds. The answer is basically, because caring for the Common Good is what we are all called to do. What we have isn't really ours—all of Creation is God's—and the blessings are to be shared.

Many have heard that Catholic Sisters take a Vow of Poverty. This means that all individual income goes to the nonprofit Community. Some of our Sisters work as paid professionals, some accept low-paying positions at worthwhile not-for-profit entities or in under-served areas, and still others volunteer for advocacy or religious organizations. Many are no longer able to "work," although they continue to serve humanity in other ways.

The Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, as a whole, has an



established expense budget. Within it are budgets for the living expenses of each individual Sister; costs for health care, retirement and insurances; the administration and upkeep of Tau Center; the ongoing support of various ministries; and on and on. Like all nonprofits, we also budget income—the support we hope to receive from folks like you—people who trust us with their donations, knowing that we will use them for the Common Good. Our supporters have been so good to us throughout the pandemic.

Our individual Sisters are not accustomed to making large monetary donations due to their "Vow of Poverty" and our necessary financial structure as a not-for-profit. The first round of stimulus money went to our retirement fund replacing income our Sisters lost due to COVID and the necessary cancellation of our fundraisers for the safety of all. The second round of these unexpected funds that we did not budget for, provided this awesome opportunity for our individual Sisters to feel the joy of giving financial support. The notes and comments describing the Sisters' satisfaction and the thank yous they have received are wonderful!

We appreciate that so many of you experience this joy by supporting us and our Mission with your financial gifts! We are extremely grateful for your ongoing trust as we live our Mission to spread Gospel hope and joy, and to teach and encourage Care for God's Creation.

The *Franciscan Spirit* is a free, monthly, digital newsletter with print editions twice a year published in Kirkwood, MO, by the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. To be added to the distribution list, email info@fsolph.org or call (314) 965-3700 with your choice of email and/or print mail. Back issues of the printed magazine can be viewed on our website at www.fsolph.org/newsletter.

OUR CHARISM: The Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help strive to be prayerful women of faith, prophetic vision and courage. Discerning God's will within the Church, we dedicate our lives to witnessing the Gospel compassionately and joyfully.

OUR FRANCISCAN MISSION: To be a transforming presence in society through witnessing Gospel values. Faithful to our charism in the mission of the Church, we prophetically respond to the needs of contemporary society. As compassionate women alive in the spirit, we enable and empower others to live the Gospel with hope and joy.

Our Future: Tending the Heart of the World

We Sisters make decisions and live our lives in a spirit of discernment.

To discern means to sift through to the essence. We listen and sift, lean into and away from, and free our spirits of fear, so that we recognize the Holy Spirit's invitation. This is not easy.

Every five years we enter a more formal communal discernment process asking, *"What is it, God, that you are calling us Franciscan Sisters to do and to be for the life of the world at this time?"*

This year-long process engages every member of the community in a commitment to participate in sacred conversations, shared prayer, deep listening and attunement to reality of our world.

For two years we prayed, *"Give us the courage to name and follow the vision you set before us...lead us to walk in the light and energy of that vision."*

At our canonical Chapter of Affairs in July, the Spirit answered that prayer. *TEND THE HEART OF THE WORLD, PRAYERFULLY, PROPHETICALLY, COURAGEOUSLY.*

What a call! Our mission to be a transforming presence and to witness Gospel hope and joy shall take us to the heart of the world. There we shall tend the

broken and the beautiful.

We shall plant seeds of hope empowering people, address environmental injustice, advance reconciliation and peace, and witness to racial justice.

We shall commit to living with a Common Heart, to caring for our Common Home, and to working toward the Common Good of all.

Each Sister committed to *Tending the Heart of the World* when she accepted her personalized card at a special commissioning ritual (see Commissioning event photos on page 6).

We asked Sister Amy and Sister Laura how they see Franciscan Rule #9 (see the cover) working into/alongside the Community's vision (Chapter Directive) for the next 5 years. We are sharing their beautiful responses in the next column.

Yes, the next five years will require us to embrace an emerging vision of religious life and to more boldly live the Gospel of Jesus. What a grace-filled, challenging future is ours.



Sister Amy:

"Each moment encompasses our experiences of yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Each moment in which we find ourselves consists of every person and creature who has blessed us or challenged us. Staying mindful of our relationships with all creation informs the dreams and hopes we have for our time now and for the future."



Sister Laura:

"We Franciscan Sisters are encouraged to freely engage with others in our respective journeys of faith. When we

work alongside our brothers and sisters on projects of mutual concern, we are "better together." Our Franciscan simplicity hopefully rubs off, so we all feel blessed with renewed enthusiasm and commitment for the journey ahead!

Each year, Our Sisters each receive a personalized card outlining their Mission for the next twelve months. As an example, this is Sister Rose Marie's missioning card.

Sister Rose Marie:



*Touch the Wound. Heal the Heart.
Love gratuitously as Jesus did.*

MINISTRY YEAR 2021-2022

Jubilee!

Celebrating 50 Years

Sister Angela Senyszyn, OSF



Sister Angela was born in Brooklyn, NY, earned a BA from Marillac College in St Louis, an MA in History from the Univ of Missouri-St Louis and another in Educational Admin from Saint Louis Univ. She ministered in education and/or music in St Louis, St Joseph and Farmington, MO; in Clyde, OH; Omaha, NE; was Campus Advocate at Cardinal Ritter Senior Services; ministered at Regina Cleri and now is receptionist with Barnes-Jewish Extended Care.

Sister Angela is grateful to her family, friends and her Community for her fulfilled life.

Sister Ann Wiesen, OSF



Sister Ann was born in West Point, NE, earned a BS in Nursing from Marillac College, a Masters in Rehab Administration from Southern Illinois Univ-Carbondale, and a license in Nursing Home Admin from Ohio State Univ. Her ministries have included healthcare administration and/or nursing education in Fort Dodge, IA, in Green Springs, OH, and in Tampa, FL, where she currently serves at Erwin Technical College.

Sister Ann shares "My heart is filled with wonder as I reflect on how much the Lord has done within me."

Sister Ann Francis Monedero, OSF



Sister Ann Francis or Panchis, as she likes to be known, was born in El Paso, TX, and earned a BA from Marillac College, an MS in Education from University of St Louis, and an MA in Theological Studies from Oblate School in San Antonio, TX. She taught in St Louis, West Monroe, LA, in Markham and Chicago Ridge, IL, in Omaha, NE, in Alamogordo, NM, and in El Paso, TX. She also served in campus ministry at the Univ of Texas-El Paso and St Edward's Univ in Austin.

Usually when June rolls around, we gather for a spirited week of sharing, reminiscing and laughter. We pray, discern, and discuss topics related to our lives and our ministries, and we end this wonderful week with the celebration of Jubilee (the anniversaries of our Sisters' first profession of vows). In 2020 we canceled, and in June 2021, we postponed our Jubilee celebration, hoping and praying for an in-person gathering. Our prayers were answered on October 2 when we rejoiced with our seven 50-Year Jubilarians at a beautiful Celebration of the Eucharist at St Justin the Martyr Parish in Sunset Hills, MO. The Mass celebrated by Jesuit Father Eduardo Fernandez, was followed by a dinner for family and friends at Orlando's. We thank God for the science that made it possible to gather safely, we are grateful to all who joined us to take part in this joyous event, we missed those unable to make it, and we joyfully congratulate our Jubilarians!

Sister started her own business, "Panchis Pottery" creating Franciscan-inspired sculptures and thrown art. She currently coordinates the after-school program at St Gabriel the Archangel in St Louis.

Sister believes that "beauty is a moment in time that must be captured so that the human heart can...cling to the notion that that which is capable of bearing beauty is capable of bringing new life..." (Joan Chittister, OSB)

Sister Annette Kaba, OSF



Sister Annette was born in St Louis, MO, and earned a BA from Marillac College, and a Masters in Religious Studies from Saint Louis Univ. She ministered in education in St Louis, MO; Omaha, NE; Oak Creek, WI; Caseyville, West Frankfort and New Athens, IL; served as pastoral associate in Centralia, IL, and most recently at St Luke/St Teresa in Belleville, IL. Sister has also served on our Leadership Team.

She expresses her gratitude to God and all the wonderful people she has met.

Sister Barbara Siderewicz, OSF



Sister Barbara was born in Omaha, NE, and earned a BA from Marillac College and an MEd from the Univ of Missouri-St Louis. Sister taught and/or was principal at schools in St Louis and St Peters, MO, in Belleville, IL, and in Oak Creek, WI. She also served in Community Leadership, and as Secretary General. She currently works as secretary for the Congregational Leadership Team of the Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet.

"I have been blessed on this journey to have the support and encouragement of so many – my family, Sisters, friends, and those with whom and to whom I have ministered."

Sister Cheryl Kemner, OSF



Sister Cheryl was born in Washington, MO, and earned a BS in Mathematics from the Univ of Missouri and a Masters in Secondary Education from the Univ of Missouri-St Louis. She

taught in schools in St Louis, West Frankfort and Markham, IL, and Monroe, LA, before being elected to the Community Leadership Team. Sister has led the Franciscans For Earth initiatives, and recently completed her maximum of two consecutive 5-year terms in Leadership. She continues at Tau Center part-time managing the database.

Sister is a passionate about Care for Creation, and believes that everyone should read and live by the principles of Pope Francis's *Laudato Si'* and *Fratelli Tutti*.

Sister Marie Angele Sanchez, OSF



Sister Marie Angele was born in Albuquerque, NM, and grew up in El Paso, TX. She earned a BA from Marillac College, and a Masters in Education from the Univ of Missouri-St

Louis. Sister taught in St Louis, in Monroe and Bastrop, LA, in Fairborn, OH, and in El Paso, TX. She served in Vocation and Formation for the Community. She was also program coordinator and is currently a Board Member for Eremos in Austin, TX, and is serving in administrative and service roles with Austin home care agencies.

She shares the thoughts of Christine Valters Paintner from AbbeyOfTheArts.com, "Creativity at heart is about cooperating with the Divine work within us."

Pictures worth...

Commissioning





Our 2021 Jubilarians (l-r) Sisters Ann Francis, Barbara, Marie Angele, Cheryl, Ann, Angela & Annette.



a 1,000 words

Upcoming Events

Joy to the World
Nativity Display in Kirkwood MO

Let every heart prepare Him room!
Dozens of unique sets at Tau Center.

Noon to 6pm on
Thur & Fri, Dec 9 & 10,
10am to 4pm on
Sat & Sun, Dec 11 & 12
Free admission. Masks required.

Joy to the World Nativity Display
In person at Tau Center
335 S Kirkwood Rd (behind PNC)
St Louis, MO 63122

Online Events via Zoom:

Please consider joining the Sisters for one or all of our uplifting and educational events via Zoom! Gather a group somewhere with wifi and a big screen, or join us from home on your computer or smartphone! **SIGN UP NOW** using the new, improved "Events" portal on our website, www.fsolph.org, and then watch for a return email containing the Zoom link and mark it/save it in a safe place. Click that link (10-15 minutes early usually works best) to join at the time of the event. Discussions and/or Q&A usually follow. We will try to send email reminders with the link, although we have had challenges with these in the past... We hope to see you on Zoom!

JAN FFE ECO-SERIES SPEAKER

Where is Away?

A behind-the-scenes look at
recycling, composting & landfilling with
Jean Ponzi

Eco-Speaker Jean Ponzi on
Where is Away?
Tue, Jan 11, 7pm Central Time
via Zoom

Join us on Tuesday, Jan 11, at 7pm Central via Zoom, as we welcome Jean Ponzi, Green Resources Manager at the Missouri Botanical Garden in St Louis. *Where does stuff go when you throw it away?* This fascinating behind-the-scenes tour of waste-handling processes covers recycling, community-scale composting and landfilling of the stuff that leaves our homes, schools and businesses everyday. We hope that this education helps us all to make more sustainable choices!

Jean is 26-year veteran of the Garden's EarthWays Center team. "Green Jean" currently applies her sustainability expertise as manager of the St Louis Green Business Challenge, operator of the Garden's Green Resources Info Service, and on the leadership team for the regional initiative BiodiverseCity St Louis. Her enviro-interview show *Earthworms* has logged over 32 years of conversations through KDHX St Louis Independent Media, as her volunteer community service. Jean is in demand as a speaker, writer and media spokesperson, offering local to national audiences both practical options and ecological inspiration.

FEB FFE ECO-SERIES SPEAKER

Stick a Fork in Food Waste

40% of food grown ends up wasted.
Make more sustainable choices with
Maggie McCoy

Eco-Speaker Maggie McCoy on
Stick a Fork in Food Waste
Tue, Feb 8, 7pm Central Time
via Zoom

On Feb 8 at 7pm Central via Zoom, we will welcome Maggie McCoy of the Missouri Botanical Gardens EarthWays Center, to discuss food waste. Did you know that 40% of food grown is wasted — it makes up nearly 22% of what we send to landfills. What are options, from field to fridge, to change this situation? Join us as we discuss the situation with Maggie. As the Education Coordinator at EarthWays Center, she provides programs to K-12 students on the topics of waste

reduction, storm water management, and energy efficiency. She also trains teachers on bringing these same topics into their classrooms. Since reducing wasted food is a passion of Maggie's, she provides classes on reducing waste at home and at work through adult classes and is part of the OneSTL committee that works to address wasted food in the region.

Maggie, who formerly worked at both the St Louis Zoo and the Endangered Wolf Center, has an extensive history in conservation, education, and sustainability. She graduated from Loyola University in Chicago with a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a Masters in Secondary Education. Maggie loves being able to connect people to information and skills that will help them make more sustainable choices.

We plan to have Eco-Speakers from the Sierra Club on Environmental Racism in STL on Tue, March 8, 7pm Central Time via Zoom, and an Eco-Film (to be determined) on April 12. Please watch the events section of our website, and check our Facebook page often for details!

2022 Lenten Discussion Series

The Book of HOPE
by Jane Goodall & Douglas Abrams

Our former Director of Eco-Justice
Maurice Lange
will join the Sisters via Zoom
to discuss this long-awaited book.

The Book of Hope Discussion
with Maurice Lange
Mar 10, Mar 24 & Apr 7, 6:30pm
via Zoom (register by Feb 18)

We welcome Maurice Lange, our Eco-Justice Director from 2009-17, to discuss Dr Jane Goodall's tribute to what fuels her boundless mission to make the world a better place—her reasons for hope. This book is a collaboration with Doug Abrams, author of the bestselling *The Book of Joy*, and comes 60 years after the celebrated scientist and activist began her groundbreaking research of chimpanzees in Gombe, Tanzania.

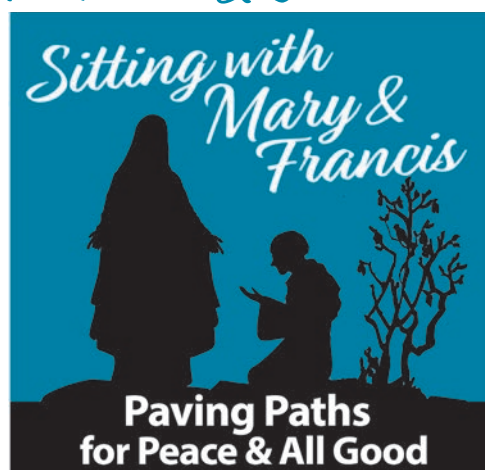
"The Book of Hope serves as an extraordinary exploration of our very nature as human beings and offers a compelling path forward

to create hope in our own lives and in the world,” according to publishers Celadon Books. “Through both Jane’s observation and the latest scientific research, readers will experience the resilience of nature to recover from the harm we have inflicted and the resilience of the human spirit in the face of loss and devastation.”

Told through stories from a remarkable career and fascinating research, *The Book of Hope* touches on vital questions including: How do we stay hopeful when everything seems hopeless? How do we cultivate hope in our children?

Register at www.fsolph.org/events no later than Feb 17. Discussion questions will be emailed Feb 18. The book may be purchased from Barnes and Noble, Amazon, and other on-line book sellers.

In-Person & Online



Paving Paths: Sitting With Mary & Francis w/ Sisters Renita & Connie
Tue, Mar 15, 6:30pm at Tau Center
Wed, Mar 16, 6:30pm by Zoom

Our Paving Paths series returns — in person if possible, and via Zoom no matter what! Join Sister Renita, Sister Connie, and friends as they present another evening sharing lessons from the life of St Francis of Assisi, that are as pertinent here today as they were in 12th century Italy!

We learn much when we sit with those we love. Register on our website at www.fsolph.org/events today for the evening of your choice to join us as we sit with Mary and Francis. Experience their presence and learn how their journey is also our journey. Be sure to include your information so we can contact you in case COVID restrictions change. Those who register for the Zoom session will receive a link to join, and we hope to send all registrants a reminder the day before.

FOUNDATION DAY ROSES

Mark your calendar for Foundation Day
Rose Remembrance
Sat, May 28, 10am Central Time
Resurrection Cemetery, St Louis

We loved gathering to honor our deceased Sisters and hope to do it again. Plan to join us! To order a rose for your special Sister, email srconnie@fsolph.org or call Tau Center to be added to the postcard mailing list.



A Love Letter to the Sisters

A Franciscan Reflection by Jack Zimmerman in Thanksgiving for 120 Years of Faith

Until a few short years ago, I had never heard the names Solana, Ernestine and Hilaria. The foundresses courageously followed God’s call to form the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help 120 years ago, planting seeds that have blossomed in faithful prayer, care for Creation, and loving, compassionate presence with others right up to the present day. What a huge part they’ve played in my life’s “movie” and maybe yours, too. Their prophetic vision and its empowering manifestations have enabled this Catholic convert from New Jersey to grow in hope and joy, to have experiences and opportunities, friendships and support that I otherwise would never have had. I can’t imagine who I’d be without the influence and spirit of those three women, handed down to me through the Sisters of today.

Do you know what has impressed me the most about these Franciscan Sisters over the years? It’s their unwavering commitment to conversion of heart. No matter the situation, need or dilemma, they continually return to The Source for their strength and guidance. Many religious orders cultivate a contemplative stance, but what is so inspiring to me—what has changed me—is their gentleness and the respect they show for the movement of the Spirit, each other and themselves in the process. They go about doing good with a degree of patience, conviction and integrity that is rare in this fast-paced, trend-conscious and often hypocritical world. What a valuable example for those of us who find it hard to slow down long enough amid all the busyness and distractions to hear what God might be trying to say.

In my opinion, one of the take-home messages of a relationship with the Sisters is this: You don’t know how choosing to turn your will over to God may impact the world. Just your simple presence or one act of fidelity to God might make all the difference in someone else’s life or the life of a person you will never meet. Solana, Ernestine and Hilaria could not have guessed in their wildest dreams all the people they would touch, including me, through their legacy of love.

Thanks, my beloved Sisters, and keep the faith. You’ll be changing lives for decades to come.



“You shall know them by their fruits. Every good tree brings forth good fruit.”

— MT 7: 16a & 17

Help us further our Gospel Mission:

1. Contact us with your latest contact info. We are working to update our mailing list with emails and phone #s.

2. Change to Amazon Smile. Update your regular Amazon account and designate the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help as your beneficiary. Each time you shop, Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase price to the Sisters.

3. In lieu of funeral flowers, send a Perpetual Membership of Prayer. Members share in the graces of a monthly Eucharist Celebration, and in the daily prayers and good works of each of our Sisters. For this \$25 donation, a family member will receive a beautiful gold presentation booklet with a personalized certificate inside.

4. Use our Annual Membership of Prayer program in place of special occasion cards. For a suggested donation of just \$5, your loved one will be added to our Sisters' prayer list for one year, plus they will be sent the acknowledgment card of your choice.

5. Leave a Legacy — remember the Sisters in your will. Directly name the *Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Kirkwood, MO*, in your will, and let us know. To thank you, you will automatically be added to our Perpetual prayer list.

6. Donate Stock for a possible tax break. Gifting securities or annuities to the Franciscan Sisters may provide tax advantages over donating cash. Ask your financial planner.

7. Give "In Honor," or "In Memory" of a loved one or "In Celebration" of a special event. Need a gift for someone who has everything? Celebrate their birthday or anniversary, promotion or retirement, by donating to the Sisters in their name. Want to memorialize a loved one in a special way? Let us know and we can send the acknowledgment to family members and include them in prayer. You may even be able to deduct the gift from your taxes. (Consult your financial advisor.)

For more information, contact Sister Connie at (314) 965-3700, x109, or srconnie@fsolph.org.

For joining us in our Mission and trusting us with your prayers, we say...



EXPLORING
INTERSECTIONS
CATHOLIC SISTERS
ON RACISM, MIGRATION AND CLIMATE

Join the conversation! We will be discussing *Affordable Housing* Dec 8; *Education Justice* Jan 12; *Equitable Access to Healthcare* Feb 9; and will wrap up this award-winning series on March 9 with *Navigating the Road Ahead*.

Each session is held as a free, public, Zoom webinar and streamed on YouTube at 3pm. For those who want to watch or listen to past episodes, the recordings are available on YouTube and as a podcast. For links or to register for upcoming sessions, go to www.exploringintersections.org

Prayer for Our Earth

from *Laudato Si'*

All-powerful God,
you are present in the whole
universe and in the smallest of your
creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness
all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power
of your love, that we may protect
life and beauty.

Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters,
harming no one...

Teach us to discover the worth
of each thing,
to be filled with awe and
contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly
united to every creature,
as we journey toward
your infinite light.

Until we meet again...

The joy of finally celebrating a Memorial Mass for our five Sisters who died during the time of COVID safety restrictions was evident in the singing, smiles and hugs, the unity, the gratitude. We virtually welcomed all their family members and friends at the small gathering held October 19, 2021. Sharing Eucharist is sharing our lives. Our Common Heart was full as we heard the Good Shepherd speak, "Sister Philip, Sister Erlinda, Sister Kathryn Ann, Sister Charlotte, Sister Victoria."

Obituaries for Sisters Philip Patin, Erlinda Gurule and Kathryn Ann Geringer were posted in earlier print editions, but are available at www.fsolph.org. Memorial gifts may be made to help the Community provide for the health care needs of Sisters. Call (314) 965-3700 for info or to share a story of how our dear Sisters helped to influence your life.

Sister Charlotte Struckhoff, OSF 1939–2021



Sing to the Lord a New Song! Our dear Sister (Joan) Charlotte Struckhoff left this world peacefully on Wednesday, June 9, 2021 and a private burial service was held on June 17 at

Resurrection Cemetery in St Louis, MO. She was born July 23, 1939 to Bede and Agnes Struckhoff in the beautiful rolling hills of Augusta, Missouri, and was shaped by her large family and a love of God. In her early years she knew she wanted to be a Franciscan Sister of Our Lady of Perpetual Help...and so it came to be.

Sister Charlotte soon discovered her love of teaching and a great capacity for music. She was an accomplished organist, pianist, and ukulele player. No matter where she served, she found a way to share the gifts God gave her, especially the gift of music. Organist, piano teacher, parish coordinator of Liturgy and Music, choir director, Spanish music ministry, composer – her love of praising the Lord through song spilled over into the lives all those around her. She composed multiple pieces of music, including a beautiful song entitled "Renueve La Tierra Madre" (Renew Mother Earth) which was published by World Library Publications in 1993.

Sister Charlotte became deeply involved in the Charismatic Renewal of the Church. She served in this ministry in the Archdiocese of St Louis for 11 years. She presented at numerous conferences, wrote many articles, and personally counseled hundreds of people. She was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Her gentle but firm spirit, her smile from within, her willingness to serve, her gift of music, her deep love for her family — all served God the Father, her fellow Sisters, and everyone she met. Her life was truly a new Song to the Lord.

Sister Victoria Munoz, OSF 1941–2021



Our dear Sister Victoria took flight and went home to the Lord on Sunday, July 4, 2021. She had waited a long time for this homecoming, often asking what was taking the Lord so long.

Then in a flash of light on Independence Day, she was set free. She was buried July 9 at Resurrection Cemetery in St Louis.

Sister Victoria, born to Gregorio and Maria Munoz on February 3, 1941 in Anthony, New Mexico, was baptized Guadalupe. She was the youngest of 15 children. She was lovingly called Lupe. She maintained a life-long love of her dear Madre Guadalupe.

Her gifts of compassion and strength made her an excellent nurse. She served in skilled care settings her whole religious life. She was often assigned the "difficult" patients because of her wonderful sense of humor and deep care. Never deterred by attitude, complexity of care, time of day, she always wore a smile, had an encouraging word, and shared a healing touch. She was loved by residents, family and staff. In community, she was always engaged and full of joy. Her love for all things Hispanic taught many of us about good fun, good music, good food.

Multiple sclerosis was her companion for more than 30 years. She never complained. As a resident at Mother of Perpetual Help Assisted Living and at Mary Queen and Mother Skilled Care, she collected and recycled cans, cared for the adopted kittens, reigned as Queen of Bingo, and called each staff person by name. She spent the last several months of life in hospice care, and offered all her suffering for the intentions of our General Chapter meetings. Those meetings ended July 2; she left us two days later. We shall miss her spirit, her spunk, and her love. We know she is dancing with Jesus.

Sister Gale Bednarek, OSF

1943–2021



On October 27, 2021, Sister Gale Bednarek, our resident Scripture scholar, left us for the fullness of God's light and love. Sister Gale was baptized Lucille Michaeline, the name given by

her parents Victoria and Lucian Bednarek, at St. Joseph's Church in Chicago Heights, IL. She entered the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help on July 6, 1961 and pronounced her final vows in 1967. Sister Gale lived our Franciscan mission by serving as a teacher, a director of religious education, a faith formation minister, and a receptionist.

Sister was a true woman of gratitude and her positive attitude was apparent in her writing about her days as a postulant in the Aspirature, "There I had the wonderful opportunity of learning how to live with other people, and of getting to realize the necessity of a good education. My family plays a very important part in my life. I shall always be indebted to my parents not only for material things, but also for all the help and encouragement they have given me."

Sister Gale loved her Community and sincerely lived her life as a Franciscan in simplicity and faith. She knew God's Word and loved God's Word and lived God's Word. Her greatest delight was in helping others discover their faith. When you engaged in conversation with Sister Gale, her beautiful blue eyes were intently focused on you as she listened — it was obvious that she cared deeply and was interested in what you had to say. She knew and trusted in the transformative process and evoked it in others. Her generous, affirming, joyful spirit was experienced by all who knew her. No word of hers was ever wasted on triviality. She would be surprised to know that her wisdom and spirit were like the grain of wheat that produced a rich harvest in many lives.

The Mass of Resurrection was celebrated on November 2, 2021 at 5pm in the Lally Room at Cardinal Ritter Senior Services. Due to COVID, the Mass was private. Her final resting place is in the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help section of Resurrection Cemetery in St. Louis, MO.

Tau Center
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Joy to the World!

*You are invited to join us for our
Annual Nativity Display at Tau Center*

Thur, Dec 9 & Fri, Dec 10 – Noon to 6pm

Sat, Dec 11 & Sun, Dec 12 – 10am to 4pm



Franciscan Sisters
of Our Lady
of Perpetual Help

*Let every heart,
prepare Him room*

Unique nativity sets from several collectors will be
on display at the Tau Center in Kirkwood!

Admission is free. Masks are required. Children
under 12 must be accompanied by a responsible
adult. Use main door. Accessible parking/entrance
on Southwest corner—call (314) 965-3700 from lot
to enter. Groups over 10, please schedule viewing.