



SHP - Sisters of St. Francis

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Midwes **T** Chronicle

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What's Happen'in

It seems wherever I (*Donna Kroll*) go, people are asking about the Sisters of St. Francis.

“How are the Sisters?”

“What are they doing?”

Well, to date (July 25, 2019), we have 26 Sisters in our Province that live in various locations:

- 13—Alliance, NE
- 10—Denver, CO
- 1—Omaha, NE
- 1—El Paso, TX
- 1—Las Vegas, NV

There are 123 Associates that live from California to Florida!

So, this newsletter is going to let you know **What's Happen'in** with some of our Sisters and Associates.

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SR. BERNADETTE CLIFFORD

The days before her jubilee celebration, Sr. Bernadette was praying that her stomach wouldn't stick out so much. She was trying to eat veggies a lot and doing some walking as exercise so all things would turn out the way she wanted them to.

She was also having trouble wondering if any of her brothers or sisters were coming to celebrate with her.

The big day was going to be tomorrow (May 4th), and she got some good news. Her sister, Charlotte, was in Alliance, Nebraska, from Texas! Sr. Bernadette was overjoyed! Charlotte helped to calm her down.

Sr. Bernadette bought herself a girdle, and Charlotte helped squeeze her into it. (It was really uncomfortable!)

The two stays in the back of the girdle helped support her painful back. Charlotte and Sr. Bernadette laughed a lot getting her into the girdle! Her black jeans and pretty blues shirt looked alright now.

On Jubilee Day, more relatives arrived to help celebrate her 60th Jubilee! The whole day was great!

Here were five Jubilarians:

- Sr. Rita Neyens, 75 years
- Sr. Genevieve Cuny, 65 years
- Sr. Joan Linenbrink, 65 years
- Sr. Francisca Delgado, 60 years
- Sr. Bernadette Clifford, 60 years.

God can still work wonders along with Jesus, St. Francis, St. Clare, and our dear Mother Magdalen, and us! **A BIG THANKS TO ALL!**

HAPPY JUBILEE!



Sr. Genny, 65 yrs; Sr. Joan, 65 yrs; Sr. Bernadette, 60 yrs;

(Sr. Rita Cammack, Provincial Minister)

Sr. Rita 75 yrs; Sr. Francisca, 60 years



SR. BERNADETTE CLIFFORD'S life passion has been education! Born in Pine Ridge, SD. Bernadette was the oldest of ten children and grew up attending Holy Rosary Mission school. Surrounded by sisters, she found herself considering religious life after being prompted to consider this life choice by one of the sisters. Bernadette entered the Sisters of St. Francis at Marycrest in Denver, Colorado, at 20 years old.

Sr. Bernadette received her education at Regis College, and went on to receive her Nebraska teaching certificate and religious education certification by the Grand Island Diocese. Teaching was a ministry of her heart and she labored to teach young children from Denver to the missions on both the Pine Ridge and Rose Bud reservations in South Dakota, from O'Neill to Alliance, Nebraska, and as far away as Rome, Italy; where she taught at the international school for three years. Sr. Bernadette loved teaching little children, especially first and second grades. When asked what she loved most about this age, she replies "They learn so fast!" Bernadette always has a song in her heart ... and frequently she used singing with the children to teach, motivate, and encourage them.

Sr. Bernadette enjoyed living in Rome! She loves history and there she was surrounded by it. She also relates that she had the privilege of seeing Pope John Paul II - twice!

Life didn't deliver what Bernadette expected ... but far more! She says that she has been able to do a lot of things she never expected or could even imagine - living and teaching in Rome and the opportunity to go to Brazil for an International Chapter of Mats to name a few. She says that she's grateful for the opportunities she's had, for the chance to go to so many different places, and have so many different experiences! She says "I never dreamed what I would witness ... by saying 'Yes.'"

Sr. Bernadette has a love of animals ... and always has! She had a pet dog growing up, but Fluffy and Buffy stole her heart ... and still have a home there! Speaking of home ... of the core of what's important ... Bernadette's spiritual life is quiet ... preferring contemplative prayer above all else. When she talks about God she says "God sent me to this way of life."

Sr. Bernadette is a voracious reader and a well-known patron of the Alliance Public Library! She always has a book that she's in the middle of ... but her favorite author is Karen Kingsbury. Reading a good story, doing a little Sudoku, or trying to beat the current game on the tablet ... it is the little things that occupies Bernadette's time these days ... but the curiosity, the generosity, and the little delights are still part of her full life.

*Happy Jubilee Sr. Bernadette
Congratulations on your 60 years!*



Congratulations to **SR. GENEVIEVE CUNY**, as she celebrated **65 YEARS** as a Sister of St. Francis in Sacred Heart Province! She has been generous with her time and gifts that have made life better for many. Sr. Genny's energy and magnanimous spirit began with her parents and six brothers and sisters at the Cuny Table on the Pine Ridge Reservation, where "the pastures of wilderness overflow, the hills gird themselves with joy, the meadows clothe themselves with flocks, the valleys deck themselves with grain, and they sing and shout with joy!" Ps.65

This spirit of openness, energy, and joy that was captured at the Cuny Table, is her hallmark and where she acquired the nickname Pansy, a beautiful flower that grows easily. With this spirit, and an abundance of curiosity, she moved right along into elementary and secondary education at Holy Rosary Mission School.

During her time in college at Briar Cliff in Sioux City, Iowa, she felt called to be a Sister of St. Francis and went to Denver, Colorado, in September 1951, where her journey began as a Sister of St. Francis, and where she received the name, Sister Genevieve.

As a Sister of St. Francis, she had a productive life as a high school teacher in Nebraska, Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations. She earned a Master's Degree in Religious Studies and a second Master's Degree in Business. Sr. Genny used both well. She developed and implemented catechetical programs for children and adults in the Rapid City Diocese and on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

From 1991-1995, Sr. Genevieve served as Secretary and Treasurer for Sacred Heart Province, and from September 2000 until February 2005 as General Treasurer at the Congregation's headquarters in Rome, Italy. Then it was back to Colorado, where she began the Denver outreach program to Franciscan associates in Sacred Heart Province. What an amazing journey! Yet throughout her ministries, she enjoyed her favorite pastime, taking long walks, where her openness, energy, and joy were refurbished.

When she came to Marian Residence in 2009, she continued her long walks. At times she returned to Marian Residence with a hand full of flowers. When asked where she got the flowers, she would wave toward the neighbor's yard. The nurses told her that she could not go into people's yards and pick flowers. Her response: "But I like flowers"!

End of conversation.

*Thank you, Pansy, Sr. Genevieve, woman of faith,
woman of joy, for being in our lives, for making us laugh!
We Love Sr. Genny!*

Written by Sr. Joan Linenbrink



SR. FRANCESCA DELGADO was born to Francisco Delgado and Carmen Rodriguez in Kansas City, Kansas, on December 1, 1935. She had five brothers and five sisters. She moved to Nebraska and eventually met our sisters at St. Mary's hospital in Scottsbluff, Nebraska. She worked as a nurse's aide and lived at the hospital.

Francesca entered Marycrest from Veteran, Wyoming, on January 12, 1957; she was received on August 15, 1957; she made first vows on August 15, 1960; and made final vows on August 15, 1964.

Francesca received her diploma from Famous Artist's School in Westport, Connecticut, in 1970. Her artistic talent was expressed in many ways. She learned to sew from Sr. Reineldis and her mom taught her many types of needlework including tatting, crocheting, and knitting. In 1973, Francesca received her license in Cosmetology in Alliance, Nebraska. Francesca's beauty parlor was on the third floor of Marycrest at the end of the hall. She was often working at the end of the hall shaping up and styling for others. She was most generous with her talent and time. Besides her service to the community, she served her family very well. Sr. Francesca cared for her Dad, and after his death, she cared for her mom for eleven years. She also reached out to those in need in the community in Moses Lake, Washington.

Francesca had a cockatiel named James which she loved very much. James travelled by car from Moses Lake to Alliance, Nebraska. There was always concern when he grew quiet, but he would answer a whistle proving he was very much alive.

When asked what was most important to her now, Francesca answered: "to live as close to our Lord as possible. I belong to the Lord. I want to stay with the Lord, hang around with Him, and die with the Lord." The advice she gives is: "Stick with the Lord, He is always here, stay with the Lord till the end."

Francesca, we thank you for your gentle and generous spirit, and your faithfulness in following in the footsteps of Christ and St. Francis. Your loving service is an example for all.

*Sr. Francesca,
Congratulations on your 60th Jubilee!*



SR. JOAN LINENBRINK was born Margaret Katherine Linenbrink and was the seventh of thirteen children. Growing up in the Sandhills of Western Nebraska with family, friends, animals, and nature helped to form her strong sense of appreciation and belonging in the world. Her parents, Henry and Margaret Linenbrink, raised their children to give the best they could for the common good of all around them. Margaret (Joan) exemplifies this as she has given much of herself to her family, religious community, and civic communities around her.

Margaret joined the Sisters of St. Francis, Sacred Heart Province, in 1951 and made first vows as Sister Joan in 1954. She then taught for several years in Denver, Colorado, along with Scottsbluff, Alliance, and O'Neill, Nebraska. From 1973-1988 she served as principal of Marycrest High School in Denver, Colorado, and then at St. Agnes Academy in Alliance, Nebraska.

Ever willing to discern doing whatever her Franciscan sisters invite her to do, Sr. Joan has served on several boards and committees over the years, contributing her wisdom and insights for the good of those served. She was elected to serve on the Sisters of St. Francis Provincial Council from 2011-2015. She was also asked to serve as Director of Marian Residence, which she did with compassion from 2007-2016. Since then, Sr. Joan has done all sorts of odd jobs for Marian Residence such as gardening and visiting sisters and staff.

Currently, Sr. Joan volunteers at Northwest Community Action Partnership in Alliance, where she shares her compassion, presence, and levity. While she has been known in bygone years to be a strict yet effective educator, in these later years she is known to be a woman of humor and playfulness. No doubt many of us here today have been the beneficiaries of such gifts of hers!

Sr. Joan continues to love nature, solitude, family and friends, and generally just living and loving. She is a woman of deep faith who is continually blossoming into the fullness of her beloved self among all of God's precious creation.

*Congratulations on this your 65th Jubilee;
and we thank you for your many years of service,
faithfulness and love for all.*



SR. RITA NEYENS was named Mary Helen by her parents when she was born March 7, 1924, in Colome, South Dakota, youngest of four children. She has devoted her entire life since high school to being a Sister of St. Francis and a nurse. This woman of the plains has lived and ministered in Alliance, Scottsbluff, and O'Neill, Nebraska, and at both of the Lakota Missions—Holy Rosary and St. Francis, at the VA Hospital in Hot Springs, and with her sister in Gregory, South Dakota.

In 2016, Sr. Rita decided to come to Marian Residence. She has a great devotion to the Mass, the rosary, and prayer. She enjoys putting puzzles together. Several have been mounted and hung in her room!

It is important for Sr. Rita to do things for people—she sees people's needs and wants to help if she can. Each morning and sometimes throughout the day, she can be found picking up the dishes after a meal, getting water for someone, or whatever. **Sr. Rita sure has a Servant's Heart!**

*Happy 95th Birth Year, Sister Rita,
and Happy 75th Jubilee!*



Sr. JOAN LINENBRINK

Sr. Joan says her life is quite simple----full but not sweaty full. Her ministry is to be a Sister of St. Francis, to live as she promised to live to the best of her ability and to treat others as she would like to be treated. Her active ministry currently is volunteering at Northwest Community Action Partnership three day a week, the days they are open for their clients, but their director works five day each week as she continues to help those in need of help with utilities, gas to get to the doctor, a motel room for the night, etc. They serve the unemployed and under employed. Many of their people are elderly who cannot make ends meet on their Social Security. Needless to say, she receives much more that she gives at NCAP.

Her prayer life is as it is. Sr. Joan has a meeting time with the God of her understanding every morning. She reads what She/He tells her how

to live the day and then checks back in the evening to see how she did, and express gratitude for whatever she was given for the day. She might have a few “God help me” during the day. Oh yes, she participates in the parish liturgies and at Marian Residence, and she has regular daily readings.

This winter, she read some good books: BECOMING MICHELLE OBAMA by Michelle Obama, THE RECKONING by John Grisham and MINDFUL OF RACE by Ruth King-----Great readings!

Her personal life is not too exciting. She doesn't need diversionary tactics to be OK with herself or her life. She enjoys taking care of the outside flowers at Marian Residence and she is a bit antsy about getting on with that. She put a few annuals in her little patches by the apartment, and usually a couple of tomato plants. She also visits the Sisters at Marian Residence regularly and her blood sisters who are in Care Facilities.

On occasion, she took a short trip into the country just to enjoy, absorb the serenity, beauty and faithfulness of Mother Earth. **Life is good.**



SR. MARY JOY PETER

LISTENING TO NEW VOICES

After 44 years of serving as a teacher, principal, administrative assistant, doing workshops, retreats, and spiritual direction, Sr. Mary Joy retired to a life of contentment. Although she stills does spiritual direction and some writing for the Province, there is more time to simply listen to the wonder of the world and contemplate God's immense, creative goodness in all things and people.

As she walks on our Mother Earth, she hears soft weeping beneath her feet. Mother Earth weeps for all the violence done to her precious water and land given for our use and in need of care. Sr. Mary Joy sees the yellow-brown sky above, and hears the dying breaths of many other lives. Listen to the murmuring of the trees, who have borne the brunt of such progress as forests are decimated. She says, "Yes, the trees and all living things do communicate and have something important to say to us, if we only listen. The spirit of all this '**God-life**' is strong. We have to be as strong in preserving all living things on this precious Mother Earth, gift of a creative, loving God. Do we have the courage to make the difficult choices for life, or is it already too late, lost as we are in self-absorption and greed? I have hope, as we all must, that what we have sought to destroy, we can save. It is time to put down the cell phone, turn off the TV, take a walk, and **listen to our Mother.**"



SR. SUE ARTONE-FRICKE

The highlight of Sr. Sue's past six months was celebrating her mother's 90th birthday in February with lots of family and friends in California. Sr. Sue and her two sisters planned the party with their mother over several months. They had a wonderful time together. She looks forward to seeing them all again in July.

Another highlight these days is watching the old Marycrest campus being developed into housing, communal gardens, and a Starbucks (yes, for better or worse, Sr. Sue is a big fan!). Currently, a second apartment complex is under construction for people with low income. She enjoys walking around the site, now called Aria Denver, and meeting people who live in the apartments, townhomes, and cohousing.

SR. GLORIA SHUFFER'S

FELINE MINISTRY

He's a young feral cat. A tabby with long strawberry blond hair. And according to the vet, about seven years old. His name is Brother Francis Joseph Nguyen, after Sister Sen Nguyen who gave him up because she travels often and could not care for him. His nickname is Frankie. It took him three weeks to warm up to Sr. Gloria. Frankie hid in one of the extra bedrooms and would come out only after he was sure Sr. Gloria had gone to bed. She never saw him those early days. Sr. Gloria knew he was around because his food disappeared, and the litter box showed signs that it had been used. He was the Phantom Cat Guest!



Three weeks passed, and one day Frankie appeared and acted like Sr. Gloria was his BFF (Best Friend Forever.) He ate his food, used the litter box and rubbed up against her leg. After a couple of weeks of this, the demands began. Cats are anal. They insist on eating at a certain time; playing at a certain time, sleeping long hours at a certain time. However, he had come to the wrong house if he wanted a regular schedule. Sr. Gloria had to explain to him that in this house there was no schedule. He would just have to adapt to her "whenever" schedule. He just stared at her. He was good about it, in the beginning, waiting sometimes two or three hours before he would be fed.

After a year, Sr. Gloria noticed that they had, by golly, a routine. Frankie wakes up around 7:00 am. He wakes Sr. Gloria up by walking on her stomach. She had to get up then, otherwise she would get no peace. They play with his four-foot long green ribbon attached a grabber. (He has other toys but likes his ribbons best. Go figure.) When he gets tired, he wants his coat brushed, followed by breakfast. Then a nap.

Frank's ministry, believe it or not, is taking care of Sr. Gloria! She had total knee replacement last Oc-

tober and every evening he could knead her leg. Sr. Gloria's recovery was hard. Frankie seemed to know she was in pain and needed some loving care. When Sr. Gloria would get upset, he seems to know that too. He will knead her knee and she will stroke his head. It calms her. Sr. Gloria receives many phone calls and if Frankie thinks she had been on it for too long, he will bat at the phone as if to say it was time to hang up! At midnight Frankie goes into her room for his midnight snack. He will sit in the doorway and glare at her until she remembers to feed him. There is nothing worse than a cat glare (or a four-month-old baby girl's glare because you used a cold wipe on her behind while changing her diaper. But that is another story.)

Once Frankie gets his snack, he begins talking. He will leave her room, then returns a bit later walking and talking. Then he leaves again. He will do this several times. About the third week Sr. Gloria caught on. He was tired and wanted to go to bed and she was supposed to go to bed as well. Sr. Gloria is a chronic night owl and she thought cats were too! But not this one. He takes cat naps during the day and at night. They must go to bed by midnight in order to be up by 7:00 am. Frankie learned that if Sr. Gloria was not in bed by 12 or 1 am, Sr. Gloria wouldn't get up till much later.

He is a bright and loving cat person. If only he would learn to clean his litter box!

NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION

CATHOLIC EDITION JOB 12:7-10

- 7 "But ask the animals, and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will tell you;
- 8 ask the plants of the earth,[a] and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you.
- 9 Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this?
- 10 In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being."

SR. LEANDRA SCHALLER

In December, 2018, Sr. Leandra travelled to Newport News, Virginia, to visit her brother Mel, his wife Lynne and their family, along with five grandchildren. What a fun, energizing Christmas that was!



In January, 2019, Sr. Leandra accompanied Sr. Rita Cammack to Chiapas for the yearly US provincials' visit. They gave wonderful presentations on their life together and their ministries. What a joy it is to spend time with our 'sisters' in their beautiful country!

In April, she attended the guided workshop for the possibility of accompanying our sisters as they visit our sacred places in Heythuysen. Sr. Chretienne Nibbelke was their guide and taught them everything they needed to know! Sr. Chretienne's love of Mother Magdalen was evident and she is a very good leader and teacher. It was truly a gift to be with her and the other guides in training.

Sr. Leandra had an eight-day retreat in May. It was based on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. When she entered in 1977, eight-day retreats were the custom in the community and she will always be grateful for this gift.

It's been an interesting and rewarding six months for Sr. Leandra and she is sincerely grateful for the opportunities she experienced.

Her ministries include councilor on the Provincial Council, Province Treasurer, volunteering in the library at St. Francis de Sales inner-city elementary STEM school, and the Spiritual Assistant for St. Francis of the Streets Secular Franciscan Fraternity. All are challenging and rewarding. The Franciscans are a wonderful example of devotion and holiness as they follow Francis with their families and at the workplace. Right now her relaxation includes reading, walking and piano.

SR. ALICIA CUARÓN

Things have been a bit difficult for Sr. Alicia since she had an accident last September, but she is doing much better now. During the last couple of months, she spent time taking care of herself emotionally, spiritually, and physically. She has also returned to serve as an advisor for Centro San Juan Diego to raise monies for the Sr. Alicia Cuaron Education Fund and to assist with the continuation of its mission—that of forming Hispanic Leadership by funding essential educational programs; which help immigrant families become self-sufficient, financially stable, and integrated into mainstream society.

Sr. Alicia celebrated her 80th birthday at Holy Family Parish in June; which was a wonderful event and became one more source of additional funding for the Education Fund! Gracias, Gracias, Gracias!



LCWR

The Leadership Conference of Women Religious was founded in 1956 to assist “its members to collaboratively carry out their service of leadership to further the mission of the Gospel in today’s world.”

“The conference has about 1350 members, who represent nearly 80 percent of the approximately 49,000 women religious in the United States.”

In January of 2018, the governance structure of the National Board changed and 9 women were elected to those board positions, including Sr. Rita Cammack. It has been a delight for Sr. Rita to be able to serve on the National Board, for a number of reasons. First, it is so confirming of this life we lead as religious! The women she served with are from all over the United States, and represent a breadth of communities, large and small, international and those originating here in the United States. The communities represented are also in many different situations – some of them looking at coming to completion and doing the necessary work while being led by the Spirit, while others are growing, receiving vocations and looking at the future with newer, younger members, while sometimes bridging cultures and languages.

The LCWR Board is passionate about assisting leaders in their transitions, fostering leadership development and supporting leaders as our world changes, all the while serving our Church and the world as a moral voice and a witness to justice and peace. They do this in a changing environment. Because of this, one of our current tasks is to assess the Leadership Conference and engage in an emergent planning process – making way for a future that is ever unfolding. Sr. Rita feels privileged to walk through this process which involves some wonderful conversations with not only our sisters, but with other agencies that support religious life, individuals who know and love us, and with those who can challenge us as we move forward. This is a dynamic process, and she is grateful to participate in it! Thank you to a loving God who leads us and walks with us as we support the gift of Religious life.

Sr. Rita Cammack



BY SR. RITA CAMMACK

“A person who thinks only about building walls, wherever they may be, and not building bridges, is not Christian. This is not the gospel.” - Pope Francis

Pope Francis spoke to the Christians but his thought fits in with Bridging Hope’s mission which is to build bridges of relationship to women and children in Viet Nam in order to improve their lives.



Sr. Sen Nguyen’s spring site visits to Vietnam were friendly, warm and successful. Though in some cases Sr. Sen felt stuck and didn’t know what to do, (as in the case when she was engaged with the women who have polio – their declining health is truly such a challenge) but the rest of the visits were incredibly up-lifting. The staff and volunteers are truthfully dedicated in what they do, and without them she surely couldn’t reach those in need. Michael Pham, a Bridging Hope’s friend from Denver, came along. He seemed to be impressed with the many aspects of work Bridging Hope does for the women and children. Sr. Sen hopes he can become a living witness here for Bridging Hope.

And with great joy, Sr. Sen wants to share some good news. After two years of working, the bridge for the people in Tam Trang village in Quảng Bình was finally completed! The Bridge opening ceremony was on April 21, Easter Sunday. It was a joyful occasion, an Alleluia occasion!



The celebration started with the Eucharist as the way of giving thanks, and after that people proceeded to the newly constructed bridge. The temperature was high, not only hot, but hot, hot, hot... 90

plus degrees with severe humidity. But this didn’t prevent the joy of people celebrating the completion of the bridge. Most of the participants were children and youth, and their joyful energy was exuberant even in the consuming heat.

Truly, Bridging Hope wants to extend their love and gratitude to all who have provided them with opportunities to bridge the oceans, reaching out to those who are so underserved.

With Gratitude and Hope,
SR. SEN NGUYEN

*Please join us for an evening
celebrating the friendship, dance, art,
food and cultural of Viet Nam*

DATE: September 28, 2019

TIME: 5:00 p.m - Cocktails, Art
& Auction Items Viewing
6:00 p.m.- Lion Dance, Dinner, Music,
Vietnamese Dance, Auction,
Program Presentation & More

LOCATION: Queen of Vietnamese Martyrs Church
4695 N. Harland St
Wheat Ridge, CO 80333

SR. JEANNINE HERSHISER attends Mass and prays daily. On Monday and Wednesday she attends an exercise program at the University of Nebraska with other men and women under a special program developed for our exercise needs. Her busiest ministry is caring for the needs of her 89-year old mother as well as being her health care advocate, nurse aide and transportation to and from medical appointments and Church etc. When possible, every first Tuesday morning of the month, Sr. Jeannine meets with retired teachers and staff from St. Pius X / St. Leo School for breakfast. In April, she attended the yearly Knights of Columbus Sisters' Appreciation Mass and brunch at St. Cecilia's Cathedral. In October Sister Jeannine and her mother, Ethel (Omaha Associate), drove to O'Neill, Nebraska, to celebrate the Feast of St. Francis with the other O'Neill associates and made home-visits to those who could not attend. It seems these days, there is always much to do and not enough time for Sr. Jeannine. That is why she celebrates and is truly grateful for the gift of time, especially that she has time with her mother. "Blessings in Christ."



Sr. Jeannine Hershiser & Mom, Ethel Hershiser

ETHEL HERSHISER

(OMAHA ASSOCIATE)

Ethel lives in an independent living home at the Heritage in Omaha, Nebraska. Ethel exercises when she can and plays bridge, pitch, and other card games with residents at her facility. She attends the Communion Services on Tuesdays and Sundays provided by EMHC's from a local Catholic Church who minister to the people at the Heritage. Every Wednesday afternoon a Deacon offers bible study which Ethel attends. On Thursday mornings Ethel and other residents pray the Rosary together. Birthday parties are a monthly event for the residents. Sometimes on the weekends Ethel goes to her sons, David's and Dan's homes for meals and for family time together. Ethel has been recovering her strength since her hospitalization after Mother's Day with her daughter, Sr. Jeannine's loving care and many prayers. Ethel is one of our Franciscan Associates and will be 90 years young/old this year!

SR. MABEL MENG

2019 - 1929 = 93!

"The numbers say so!" Someone asked Sr. Mabel what it feels like to be 93? Well: "I am still me. I cannot do all I once could do, but I am grateful that I can do what I can. Life is good! Sr. Mabel still enjoys many, many people and things. With Magdalen she says, "God is good; so very, very good!"

Sr. Mabel's ministry is prayer and presence. She has a group of sisters in active ministry whose names she lifts to God daily; along with another group of people she refers to as her "love ones"; and then there are relatives, friends, people whose names have somehow been given to her to remember in prayer.

Sr. Mabel reads, crochets, plays solitaire, exercises ... there are always good things to be enjoyed! Oh, AND Pinochle on Tuesday afternoons with three friends! She sends birthday, wedding, anniversary cards to relatives and friends. AND the house 'thank you' and Christmas cards is a task she does, too! "Enough!"



SR. MAUREEN MURPHY

The 2019 J.P. and Sophie (Kaup) Murphy sibling reunion was held on Easter week of May 2019. Nine of the ten living siblings of this Irish and German, Stuart, Nebraska, pioneer family attended. Their Stuart roots are 200 years old this year. There were 12 children born on the family farm five miles south of Stuart. Two sisters died at ages of 2 and 37 years. Their youngest brother who lives in NYC was unable to join them due to the death of his 13-year old daughter and the needs of his wife and three children.



The Murphy clan numbers 327 at this date. Pictured above are Sr. Maureen's eight siblings seated in the music room of the Sisters House in Stuart. (formerly Sisters of St. Francis from Milwaukee) Most of them took music lessons from Sr. Jotha, OSF, one of the Sisters of St. Francis from Milwaukee. Forty-three young women from Stuart joined that order, five joined our Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity in Denver, and five young men were priests in the Omaha Archdiocese.

The Murphy and Kaup families were, and continue, to be strong pioneers establishing, supporting farms and ranches, homes, the Church schools, and towns in and around Stuart for two centuries, through drought, grasshoppers, depression, fires and blizzards, and with our Irish eyes still smiling.

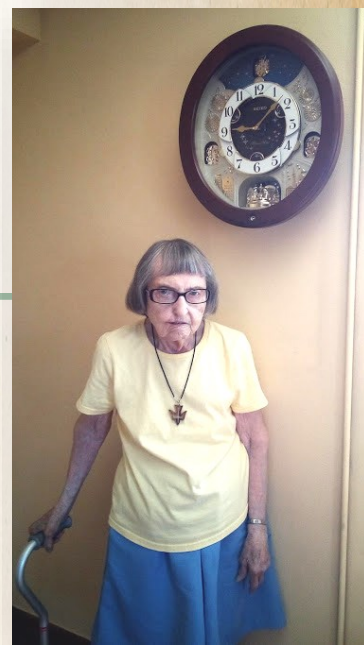
SR. RITA NEYENS

This year Sr. Rita celebrated 75 years of her profession with a beautiful day with family and friends, a day one doesn't forget!

She wanted a chiming clock for the chapel for some time and her wish came true with the monetary gifts she received from her Jubilee!

She is grateful to the Lord that she is in a good place and able to make decisions. Everyone is so good to all those at Marian Residence (ten sisters), their retirement home.

At 95 years of age, 'she thinks' this will be her last Jubilee.



“THE FIRE INSIDE OF ME BURNING TO HELP THE POOR ...



“THAT’S WHY I DID IT!”

BY SR. HANNA AMANTE

Most of all, Sr. Hanna Amante would like to acknowledge the inner voice that has guided her in her life ... providing her with inspiration, strength, and humility at the most appropriate times.

Sr. Hanna was blessed to have wonderful parents whose support and faith never waned. Her parents had the deepest desire to teach her to eat healthy and live healthier.

A long path of study, experimentation, prayer, and faith has brought her to the point where she is today.

Throughout the years, Sr. Hanna has always been extremely interested in the connection between nutrition and physical health. She also grew up in a society that used organic food and traditional herbal remedies for healing. She believed that anyone can heal himself/herself using the pure, unprocessed nutrition from the earth.

After many years of service, self-education, observation, and meditation, Sr. Hanna realized she was called to formally learn about nutrition and health so she could better serve the needs of her community.

Her goal is to serve as an educator of nutrition and a resource to all members in her community, especially those new to our country. She is

called to empower her community to alleviate their suffering through education in proper nutrition and healthy habits.

The overwhelming majority of families in poverty struggle with weight, stress, and disease. Immigrants new to our community also deal with these issues as they have little resources and struggle to adjust to a different culture of food. Many new immigrants, refugees, and socially disadvantaged families do not understand the importance of nutrition for the prevention of diseases. They are bombarded with unhealthy, cheap food choices that slowly degrade their health. Sr. Hanna feels called to work to help them to understand the food, body, and mind connection so that they have the tools to fight preventable diseases.

Sr. Hanna’s overall goal is to encourage, support, and recommend to her clients to eat healthy food, take natural supplements, and change their stressful lifestyle. These will aid them in achieving their health and lifestyle goals. As a holistic nutritionist, she can educate people on taking control of their health and subsequently experience a holistic life.

Benefits of Good Nutrition: Good nutrition provides more energy and makes us happier when we eat well; it also keeps our bodies in the best possible condition. The benefits of good nutrition include developing and maintaining physical strength as well as preventing diseases. Healthy diet contains a balanced nutrition needed for cell growth, cell regeneration, and the maintenance of healthy organs and tissues.

All these nutrition benefits represent a great deal of things to Sr. Hanna, including courage, commitment, and dedication to go to Nutrition school. She enrolled at the Nutrition Therapy

Institute in Denver, Colorado. This school teaches Holistic Nutrition which is her deepest desire because Holistic nutrition focuses on a natural approach to a healthy diet and considers the individual, including all aspects of his/her lifestyle, a healthy diet eating. This natural approach incorporates emotional, spiritual, and physical health to create a state of well-being for optimum healthy.

Sr. Hanna learned food is the key to the transformation of life before anything can be eaten by a human. It must already have been transformed by life. It begins with the bare rocks of this earth, the water of the sea, and the air of the atmosphere out of this our bodies are made and from the transformation of all this—the finer energies of our experience are produced.

Cultivating your awareness of the intangible qualities of foods can help you reconnect with your body's inner wisdom, yielding increased sensitivity to daily food choices while bringing joy into relating to food.

The experience of not eating in responses to bodily signals can be explored on three levels:

Physical. When the body is hungry, certain physiologic mechanisms move into action and create sensations of hunger. Frequently eating without these signals including chronic dieting burdens the body, creating a state of confusion and perpetuating a separation between mind and body.

Cognitive: Understanding and recognizing how the body works is an important part of feeling safe empowered. Without this basic knowledge many of the body's internal signals, including hunger, can be easily misread. The result can be frightening and disorganizing.

Relational: A client's relationship to food, eating, hunger, and satiation expresses and contains many of the relational issues that need to be resolved when attempting to move past eating problems. Therefore, learning how to feed oneself in response to the body's signals, and to tolerate feeling without resorting to eating, helps to heal emotional wounds. She learned how to help clients naturally to prevent disease and get better from suffering of their disease by eating healthy diet and changing their lifestyles.

It took her three years to become a Nutrition Therapist without any break. She studied very hard and got her Master's Degree in Nutrition and graduated on June 14, 2016. She specialized in hormone imbalance, diabetes, thyroid disorder, weight control.

After she graduated, she started her own part-time business at home because she wanted to continue working with homeless, children, and with their parents. Now she teaches children to eat healthy nutrition and she provides one-on-one consultations with parents. She also gives group presentation on different topics, such as cooking workshops. This includes teaching the group how to shop healthy with a tight budget, how to cook simple meals in a short time, and how to manage stress with simple exercise, yoga, meditation, and more.

Sr. Hanna feels skilled in helping her clients heal and make life improvements. This approach also helps her clients to make good decisions instead of paying money to see her. Currently, Sr. Hanna has more clients than ever before and she is making money to pay her own expenses. She feels confident in the way she can minister and help her community. Sr. Hanna believes she can do more help in the future, if its God's will.

SR. KAREN MCCRORY, has lived a religious life for 41 years. When she joined the order she was 27 years old. It took 5-7 years in the novitiate with Sr. Theresa Archambault as her novice director in St. Louis, Missouri. She moved to Denver, Colorado, and joined St. Mary Magdalene Parish. Then she moved to Queen of Peace while she studied for massage school in Aurora. Sr. Karen spent 10 years in Minot, ND, working at St. Joseph Hospital where she was a chaplain.

She went back to Denver and passed her board for a certified therapist. She worked for five years in Denver, and then to Alliance, Nebraska, for five more years giving massages.

She also spent four years in Tanzania, Africa working with our Dutch sisters and Theresia Sisters. They worked with the poor African people teaching them sewing and cooking. They lived in Rukoca, working in the garden carrying water.

She returned to Minot, North Dakota, for Clinical Pastoral Education working with Father Paul Becker, who headed the pastoral care department. Marilyn Mattson (Associate) was the secretary in pastoral care. Sr. Karen enjoyed the twenty years in Minot working in St. Joseph Hospital. She gave talks to all the new employees.

When Sr. Karen moved back to Alliance, she did part-time massages and pastoral ministry for Holy Rosary Parish making visits to the hospital and nursing home, along with delivering communion to all shut-ins in their homes. Also, she packed valentine boxes for student seniors on their first year at the universities.

Sr. Karen has lived in Alliance for 15 years. She retired two years ago after there was a fire and melted all her equipment in her massage room. Now she is baking for the Post Playhouse with food and desserts for the players. She practices recycling for all the plastics, tins, bottles, cardboard, and paper into bins. She makes communion runs on the first Friday of the month. Sr. Karen continues to drive and attends community meetings in Denver. This summer Srs. Karen and Jane Schneider hosted the Totus Team (traveling college students who teach vacation bible school) for a week.

Sr. Karen is 73 years young!





SR. JANE SCHNEIDER

“I told Sr. Mabel I didn’t know what to write (for this MWC) because I don’t do anything. Her immediate answer was ‘you do many things for the Marian Residence Sisters, a Eucharistic minister at Holy Rosary Church, a speaker for RCIA, and convener for the Associates.’”

Ok, here are some of the things I do at Marian Residence:

On Mondays of each month at Marian Residence, Associates and parishioners of Holy Rosary Church, and Sr. Jane take turns as Communion Prayer Ministers.

On weekdays, parishioners of Holy Rosary Catholic Church attend Mass at Marian Residence. The parishioners and Associates help wherever they are needed. (“I don’t know what I would without them!”) These are people who attend regularly. They visit and enjoy each other ... they are a community!

The Associates meet in the big chapel once a month. Sr. Jane is the the main convener; the Associates are conveners as well. Sr. Jane asks for suggestions from them of what should be presented. At this time, they have a short prayer service and read several paragraphs from Laudato Si’ by Pope Francis and discuss what they read.

During the Christmas Season, she asked Jen and Tony Schmid, parishioners, to set up the nativity scene in the big chapel. Several sisters stated the nativity set came from the St. Joseph Hospital in Alliance, Nebraska. The hospital was built by the Sisters in the early 1900’s.

Tony offered to set up the nativity scene in the adoration chapel, too. Sr. Jane had planned to do it but accepted his offer. She was told this nativity set was a gift from a European Province. (As you can tell, they did a wonderful job on both of nativity scenes.) Jen and Tony wouldn’t let Sr. Jane help ... so she just watched them work. (Sr. Jane’s back had been acting up. It was and still is difficult for her to stand in place for any length of time.)

In May, Sr. Jane guided Associate, Janet Castle and parishioner, Jen Schmidt, where to place the crosses by the headstones of the 138 Sisters in Alliance Calvary Cemetery.



SR. SARAH MANCHESTER

SPRING IS SPROUTING ... RUNNING ... HEATING INTO SUMMER

With the end of the intermittent snow storms and increasing rain showers replacing them, it has been time to get seeds and plants in the ground at Sr. Sarah's home. The plants show new growth each day (except for the one little miniature petunia that a fluffy, handful-sized baby bunny mowed down to ground level in three days). Things are blossoming, promising good things to come.

Sr. Sarah's June was a month of running to and from meetings—some informative, some with spiritual directees in Denver and Nebraska, some province related, some to visit with residents of the nursing home, some by ZOOM conference, sand and face-to-face (preferable). The meeting trend continues as summer heats up.

Blossoms have changed to jalapeno peppers, zucchini, yellow squash, green tomatoes, and fragrant herbs (basil, rosemary, lavender, dill, chives, thyme) that greet her each morning when they receive their morning drink. Of course, the weeds are her most robust crop, but then there is always something to do.



MARIA GENTILE

(DENVER ASSOCIATE)

Maria has been busy during the past month preparing for her mother's arrival in Denver for the summer; as well as writing nine lectures which she gave at an Osteopathic course in California in June. She had a great trip to the Sea of Cortez in February with its multitude of birds and ocean life ... snorkeling with sea lions, watching blue and gray whales swim with their calves and enjoying the antics of the pelicans, frigate birds and blue footed boobies. This year, she was also blessed to be invited as a facilitator at the Center for Contemplative Outreach helping to teach their Heartfulness and their Death and Dying, Life and Living classes. She is looking forward to a trip to Tahiti in August and planning for her mission trip to Chiapas in November.

That's all folks!



GLADYS WEEKS (MINOT ASSOCIATE)

God's Summer Blessings:

Rising in see the glorious sunrise,
morning prayers while sitting in the sun,
then pondering His words with
a cup of fresh brewed coffee.

Trips to the lake to meet family,
especially enjoy evening time around the campfire
with conversation and treats.

Unexpected visit of friend or friends
to share a pot of coffee.

Aroma of new mowed lawn,
blooming plants and fresh rain.

Flavors of rhubarb, watermelon,
lemonade and fresh produce.

Children's vices, music playing,
birds signing and a distant train whistle

"Spur of the moment" picnic with friends.

What beauty God created in His
summer world
so many daily blessings we receive.


Summer
Blessings

NORA JACQUEZ (DENVER ASSOCIATE)

Nora organized a film series on Palestine at Park Hill Library and attended the US Campaign for Palestinian Rights conference in Minneapolis. Along with Mary Simon, she formed a monthly study group on Racism at Loyola Parish in Denver. They read, listen to pod casts, YouTubes, and discuss this crucial issue. Having just returned from Europe, she realized this issue seems global. Nora delivers meals to shut-ins weekly for Project Angel Heart in Denver. She visits her sister often, who is in a nursing home in Denver. Nora finished her four-year term on the Board of Trustees at Fort Lewis College in Durango. She belongs to a book club where they read only women writers in English translation. In the coming months she hopes to work more on immigration issues, particularly affecting the children separated from their parents and to work as a Hospice volunteer.

Nora does yoga and meditation everyday except Sundays (her day off); however, she got a bit off schedule during her recent travels in Europe. She is amazed with how much maintenance is required to keep an aging body in motion! She keeps going ... grateful that she can and hopeful that she can continue. In Europe, Nora saw elders in great shape. In San Sebastian, Spain, she met an elderly couple on a walk. He was 98 and she was 95. He was Francisco and she was Francisca. They had been married so long they didn't even remember how many years - 'over seventy,' they said. But they couldn't remember the year. They made Nora's day! ☺

**MORE FROM NORA****HONORING SHP'S 80TH JUBILEE**

During Sacred Heart Province's 80 Jubilee Celebration in June, Nora expressed her feelings to the Sisters ... and that is always more difficult than words! She has been an associate for five years and stated "it has been a privilege." She explained in a few words below: :

"In a recent Just Faith Workshop, the founder of Just Faith stated there are two strains of Catholicism today. There is a strain based on workshop, piety, and ritual. There is another strain based on discipleship."

"I believe you (sisters) Franciscans have been able to blend the two strains well. You know that prayer and the sacraments do not exist in a vacuum. You know that their purpose is to make us better disciples of Jesus. Your discipleship has gone far and wide for 80 years. You have earned the right to celebrate! What I offer now are some flowers and copper pot from Mexico that's at least 80 years old!





TERI NELSON (MINOT ASSOCIATE)

Teri and her husband have ravaged their way thru the first few years of retirement together, they are finally calming down. They are learning to love and respect each other, especially in their greatest weaknesses, because that is the road test of love. First and foremost is their dedication to the rosary and the divine chaplet. One of the blessings of retirement is that they have time to devote to these prayers together, and certainly it has helped to cement their bond. Teri has pulled her husband out of his comfort zone from the prairies of North Dakota, to live in Key West, Florida. And, she is doing it again shortly, by moving up to the beach in Hollywood, Florida.

Teri's job at Delta Vacations afforded her the blessing of flight benefits, so they can come and go with just an available seat. They love our friends and family, and are looking forward to their new venture on the beach. They will continue keeping all in prayer and being open to the Holy Spirit moving in their lives.

PS: They think they are moving closer to a new group of Franciscans?

AGNES BRANDT (MINOT ASSOCIATE)

Agnes' winter and spring has been kind of a sad time. Her 64-year old nephew in Manteca, California, passed away in mid-January of stomach cancer. His memorial service and burial were held on January 31, and fortunately Agnes was able to attend while also visiting her 51-year old nephew in Lodi, California, who was struggling with Pancreatic Cancer. He succumbed to the disease on May 10, with his memorial service took place on May 28th and his burial on June 3rd.

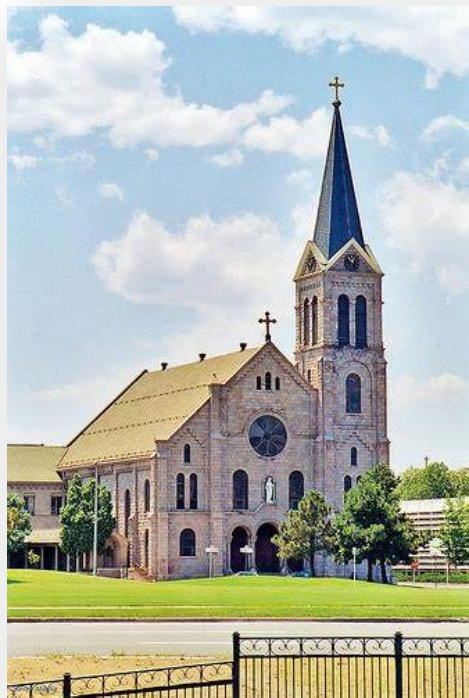
United Airlines is getting to know Agnes with her frequent trips back and forth from Minot to Sacramento. She returned to Minot on June 4th, and hopes her next trip is under more pleasant circumstances.

"Everyone, please have a happy summer."



HISTORY OF ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY CATHOLIC CHURCH, DENVER, CO

Sr. Maureen Murphy came across this article and she thought it would be of interest to the sisters, since nearly all the novices spent time there after the completion of the Novitiate.



ST. ELIZABETH (1878) By Dr. Thomas Noel

The lovely stone landmark crowning the Auraria Campus on the west bank of Cherry Creek has a vivid history, including ethnic rivalry, railroad circuit-riding Franciscan friars and Franciscan nuns who panhandled on Larimer Street ... as well as a bizarre murder. The Germans (the largest foreign born group in nineteenth-century) in Colorado petitioned Bishop Machebeuf for their own priest in the 1870s. Their prayers were answered in 1878, when the bishop established Denver's second parish, St. Elizabeth's. This new parish served Auraria and Southwest Denver, while St. Mary's continued to serve the northeast half of the Mile High City.

"I have a Prussian exile priest to whom I have given the care of the Germans of Denver," Bishop Machebeuf reported in 1879, "and I have applied to the Franciscans for two priests to establish a house of their order and a parish here." John Wagner, the "Prussian exile," raised money among the Germans to buy two lots at the corner of 11th and Curtis Streets and began constructing a 30' x 100' foot brick church. Frederick Bender was transferred from Colorado Springs to complete St. Elizabeth Church, where he began saying Sunday Masses in September 1879.

in 1887, the Franciscans responded to Bishop Machebeuf's appeals and sent Francis Koch, OFM (Order of Friars Minor), and Venatius Eder, OFM, to found a Franciscan House at St. Elizabeth's. These and subsequent Franciscans came to Denver from the Patterson, New Jersey, Monastery of the Franciscan Fathers of St. Elizabeth of Thuringia. With the Franciscans caring for the German-speaking parishioners, Bishop Machebeuf assigned Father Patrick Carr to establish another parish ... St. Leo the Great for English-speaking Catholics. John Kernan Mullen, a poor Irish immigrant on

his way to becoming a millionaire flour miller, helped his fellow Irish at St Elizabeth's to complete St. Leo the Great Church at 10th Street and West Colfax Avenue in 1889. Despite the division of the Auraria parish, both churches flourished as Germans, Irish, and other Catholics streamed into the booming Queen City. Father Koch built a \$20,000 two-story brick school (1890) and \$18,000 rectory (1891). As the German national church for the entire city, St. Elizabeth's became so overcrowded that the old building was torn down to construct a new one in 1898. This \$69,000 Romanesque church, designed by Father Adrian, OSF, was built of rusticated rhyolite (lava stone) from Castle Rock quarries. It measured 132' x 69' with a single spire soaring 162 feet high.

The stately clock and bell tower enhanced Father Koch's reputation as a fundraiser whose exploits became the talk of the diocese. Tills Franciscan asked Philip Zang, (who owned what was then the largest brewery in the Rockies) to help build the new church. Zang, a German Congregationalist, balked until Father Koch promised him that the biggest bell would be named St. Philip for him. Furthermore, the Franciscan promised the beer maker, the bells would advertise Zang's beer and embarrass the nearby Tivoli Brewery: They would be cast not to sound "Clang! Clang!" but "Zang! Zang!"

Father Koch's shabby brown habit embarrassed some parishioners. They showered him with clothing but would next encounter him in his tattered old garments. "I met a poor fellow suffering from the cold," Father Koch would explain. "What else could I do?"

One day this brown-robed Franciscan walked up Arapahoe Street to Denver's finest department store ... the old Daniels & Fisher Stores Company, and began begging. After customers, clerks, and management became distressed, Father Koch told them softly, "Just give me \$250 and I won't come back." As Father Declan Madden, OFM, wrote in his centennial history of St. Elizabeth's, "They did and he didn't" The Franciscan sisters who opened St. Elizabeth Grade School in September 1890, and St. Rose Residence for Women next door, also refined their vow of poverty into artful begging. Daily, they patrolled the bakeries, taverns, and shops of Larimer Street, collecting funds and nourishment for themselves and the poor of the city.



Father Madden, who was pastor at St. Elizabeth's until the Franciscans turned the parish over to the Capuchins, continued the tradition. Every day at 11:00 am he would orchestrate a bologna sandwich breadline behind the church. He also raised money for his "Senior Roadrunners," as he called the elderly the he took on bus tours around Colorado.

Thanks to the polished pleas of the Franciscans and the generosity of Colorado's German Catholics, St. Elizabeth's became the first church in the diocese to retire its debt in keeping with church policy; this enabled St. Elizabeth's to be consecrated on June 8, 1902, with Bishop Matz presiding.

In 1908, Bishop Matz had to reconsecrate the church because its pastor, Leo Heinrichs, OFM, was murdered while saying the 6:00 am Sunday Mass on February 23. Giuseppe Alia, an alleged anarchist, spat out the host at the communion rail and fired a bullet into the priest, who died while trying to return the sacred particles to the ciborium. Colorado Catholics proposed that the martyred priest, who had been noted for his piety and spiritual leadership, be canonized. The lengthy, complex procedure for canonization was begun but never finished, to the disappointment of many who promoted a widespread devotion to the memory of Father Leo.

At the request of Bishop Matz, the Franciscans at St. Elizabeth's staffed missions in priestless towns of eastern Colorado. Franciscan friars spent one-month stints on the high plains, devoting a day to each small town for Mass and the sacraments.

In 1983, the Capuchins, another order of Franciscans took over the parish duties. In later years, the parish became a mission of Holy Ghost parish with the Vincentian priests as caretakers. In 2003, the parish of St. Elizabeth of Hungary became a Catholic community composed of both Roman and Byzantine Rites under the authority of the Ordinary of the Archdiocese of Denver. This unique dimension of this parish is that it embraces two different liturgical traditions and communities within its one parish family: Roman and Russian Byzantine. It is one of the few places in the country, and even in the world, where the Christian West and the Christian East can encounter and enrich one another in an ongoing way within the bonds of communion.

In 2016, St. Elizabeth became a mission church of Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception with Fr. Ron Cattany, Pastor. Fr. Frank and the Russian Byzantine Catholic Community relocated to Regis University in Denver.

NUNS ON THE CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELD

IN A TIME OF ANTI-CATHOLICISM, THEY SOMEHOW BECAME A UNIFYING FORCE.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, BY NIC ROWAN, APRIL 25, 2019

During the 1863 Chattanooga campaign, nuns from the Sisters of Charity tended to wounded soldiers in a Nashville, Tennessee, field hospital. As they prepared to move on to another site, the men cried out in protest. Nuns on the battlefield had become a great comfort to the dying, and the soldiers passed around a petition urging them to stay.

As it circulated, one sick soldier delivered a speech praising the nuns, according to Pvt. William H. Nelson of the 19th Illinois Infantry. “I want to sign that paper. I would sign it 50 times, if asked,” the wounded soldier said. “For the sisters have been to me as my mother since I have been here and, I believe, had I been here before, I would have been well long ago. But if the sisters leave, I know I shall die.” More than 230 men signed the petition, and the nuns stayed.

Some 700 religious sisters ministered Civil War battlefields, offering respite from the horrors of combat. Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton’s Sisters of Charity were the largest group, with more than 300 sisters ministering to Union and Confederate troops alongside Catholic priests and Protestant ministers.

Shortly after the war, Catholic historian David Power Conyngham compiled testimonies, letters, and newspaper clippings about the veteran Catholic chaplains and religious sisters. After his death, Conyngham’s manuscript was forgotten in the University of Notre Dame’s archives. Now it is being published as “Soldiers of the Cross.”

It’s telling that the sisters left little in testimony about themselves. What we know comes almost exclusively from the men they helped, and the book’s collection of primary documents shows soldiers offering high praise to the sisters. It’s unusual, considering the prevalent anti-Catholicism of antebellum America. But their service to American men of all faiths was living proof that these Catholics did not only take orders from the pope in Rome.

“I am not of your Church, and have always been taught to believe it to be nothing but evil,” an imprisoned Union soldier wrote to the Sisters of Mercy’s mother superior in an 1864 letter. “However, actions speak louder than words, and I am free to admit, that if Christianity does exist on the earth, it has some of its closest followers among the Ladies of your Order.”

Confederates shared similar sentiments. Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard commended the “indefatigable” and “unremitting” service of the religious sisters who administered to his troops throughout the war. “Even Protestant commanding officers were always happy to

avail themselves, in our hospitals, of the self-sacrificing, untiring and generous assistance of the 'sisters' who were so kind and devoted to the poor, helpless, sick, and wounded soldiers placed under their care, that these heroes of many hard fought battles, looked upon them as their own sisters or mothers," he wrote.

The response was similar among the North's leadership. Conyngham includes letters from Union Gens. George B. McClellan, George Meade and Philip Sheridan, all thanking the sisters for their intercession. Gen. Ambrose Burnside offered the highest praise, saying that his words could never describe the gratitude his men felt for the sisters' deeds. "Of the Sisters of Mercy there is little need for me to speak," he wrote. "Their good deeds are written in the grateful hearts of thousands of our soldiers, to whom they were ministering angels."

Officers wrote personal commendations of the sisters. John E. Michener, a Union soldier captured in the summer of 1864, in a letter thanked the Sisters of Mercy at the Confederate hospital in Charleston, S.C., for bravely administering to men dying of yellow fever—even when Confederate officers were "too much alarmed to even furnish water for the sick and dying." He added, "I know full well, that but for your untiring devotion to our helpless and unfortunate officers and soldiers, thousands today would have been sleeping the sleep that knows no waking."

In one typical episode at a Kentucky hospital served by the Sisters of the Holy Cross, a Protestant chaplain witnessed a nun serve the sick without rest from daybreak until well past sunset. "It is as mystery to me, how those sisters can stand at their post without ever giving up," he told a friend. Then, turning to the sister, he asked, "How do you account for it?" The nun only smiled at him and gestured to the rosary on her hip.



Our Women and the War," a wood engraving of women helping the Union Army, 1862. PHOTO: GRANGER

PATTIE RAMER, MR SECRETARY

“To “serve” instead of “work” is a great privilege and something I look forward to each day. After many years in high stress positions, it is a gift from God to be able to finish my working career as Administrative Assistant in a loving and spiritual home.”

Pattie states she has received the gifts of prayer, encouragement, wisdom, friendship, enlightenment, contemplation and tears from her little family at Marian Residence. “God must certainly love me!” Each Sister has blessed her beyond what she felt she deserved, helping her to achieve a spirit of deep love and awareness of God’s presence. “I am richly blessed to be invited into their home!”

Sr. Kathryn has been her mentor in finishing and printing her book “Abiding In His Love”, an important item on her bucket list. She loves blowing kisses over the dining room table to Sr. Genevieve and seeing her smile and wink. Pattie receives words of wisdom often from Sr. Mabel and reflection from Sr. Joan. She enjoy the teasing and laughter from Sr. Bernadette, the memories of times past from Srs. Maureen and Rita and her daily “good morning, lunch is ready” from Sr. Paula. Sr. Regina, a woman of few words, keeps her to the point. Sr. Francesca is always a good listener, and Sr. Jane helps level a racing heart. So many blessings, “my soul is anointed and my basket overflows. I am blessed with goodness and mercy. **God is good.**”



Srs. Bernadette, Rita N, Mabel, Genny, Maureen, Kathryn, Regina, Francisca

Ditto!
says DONNA

DONNA KROLL, PROVINCIAL SECRETARY

Donna, too, feels blessed to be a part of the Sisters of St. Francis! People ask her if she ‘still loves her job?’ (Because she is always boasting about the sisters and the creativity she is allowed to express within her assignments!) **“YES, I LOVE WHERE I WORK (or serve).”** Donna tells everyone, **“I work with a wonderful group of smart business women ... with a heart!”** ♥ **“ALL ARE WELCOME (poor, any religion, nationality, any choice or situation, no judgement, etc.)** One man replied, **“Of course, they are FRANCISCAN!”** 😊

Donna has been a part of the Sisters for over six years as the Province Secretary. Donna is proud to be the ‘little’ sister!

At one time, Donna was not taking all of her vacation time ... until her grandson, Lucas, was born! (a baby changes everything!) Now, she can never get enough of this precious little guy, along with seeing two of her daughters who live out of state. Her third daughter goes to a nearby college and has the pressure of being mom’s and dad’s only child most days! Donna and her husband, Mike, are bonding more since the house is getting emptier. Empty nesting does have some advantages!

Kyle, Erin, Lucas, Donna & Mike,
Lauren, Morgan, Justin

