

franciscans

CELEBRATE



Sisters of St. Francis ~ Oldenburg, Indiana

Fall 2023 Vol. 53 No. 3



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MOTHERHOUSE

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Pilgrim S. Delouise Menges,OSF
standing in the courtyard at
San Damiano.

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CONTENTS

Features

- 6-13 Pilgrimage to Assisi
- 14-17 Reflecting on Our Pilgrimage to Assisi
- 18-19 Adopt-A-Sis
- 22 Christmas Tours / Holidays Under the Spires
- 23 2023 St. Francis Appeal

In Every Issue

- 3 Letter from the Leadership Team
- 4 Donor Spotlight
- 5 Sister Spotlight
- 20 Oldenburg Franciscan Center
- 21 Resting In God
- 24 We Hold You in Prayer

Letter from the Leadership Team

Dear Friends,

The music from our celebration of the feast of St. Francis is still sounding in my ears as I welcome you to enter into Assisi in this new issue of Celebrate.



Having recently returned from a pilgrimage with faculty and staff from Marian University, S. Mary Beth Gianoli will be your guide. Through stunning photography and her personal experiences, she will share key sacred places that pilgrims visit when they retrace the steps of St. Francis and St. Clare (p. 7). The experience of Assisi cannot be easily captured, so fifteen other Sisters also share a memory of a favorite place or experience that they carry with them from their time in Assisi and nearby areas (p. 14).

You will meet three of our Sisters a bit more personally. S. Mary Schmidlin, an example of a Sister who has worn many hats in varied ministries, is featured in Sister Spotlight (p. 5). S. André Burkhardt, shares a new favorite ministry in her "retirement years." The same Franciscan joy and enthusiasm that she shared as a teacher and a missionary now spills over into the Adopt-a-Sis program with students from Oldenburg Academy (p. 18). S. Ruth Mary Forthofer is featured in The Franciscan Appeal (p. 23). Many of our readers will know her from Marian University or Margaret Mary Hospital in Batesville.

You will also meet Mary and David Allen, generous donors to the Community (p. 4). You just might know the Sisters in the accompanying photos! Join us in celebrating the life of S. Patty Campbell, who recently embraced eternal life with God (p. 5). And don't miss the details of two opportunities to experience the Christmas season with the Sisters and Associates at Oldenburg (p. 22).

S. Barb Leonhard
S. Barb Leonhard, O.S.F.
For the General Council

Who We Are...

"We, the Sisters of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis, Oldenburg, are women of prayer, committed to the Gospel values as lived by St. Francis and Mother Theresa Hackelmeier.

From our life in community we are sent to extend the mission of Jesus through our presence and service.

Enlivened by a spirit of justice, reconciliation and peace, we collaborate with others in responding to the needs of the world."

We fulfill these words by being women of prayer in the ministries we do and the places where we are present. Since Vatican II opened the doors to the many needs of the world, we minister in education, parish ministry, social service, healthcare and social justice.



Sisters of St. Francis
Oldenburg, IN

Meet the Allens...

Two of our faithful donors from Indianapolis are Mary and Dave Allen. Mary was taught by the Sisters of St. Francis in grade school at Little Flower, in high school at Scecina and at Marian College (now University), all in Indianapolis.

Mary recalls: "Scecina Memorial High School was being constructed near my home as I completed grade school at Little Flower, which was staffed by the Sisters of St. Francis. At Scecina, S. Hortense (Fougerousse) implored us to follow the example of Fr. Thomas Scecina, a military chaplain who died at sea with his men. S. Augustine (S. Helen Eckrich), our U.S. Government teacher inspired us to be good citizens. Also, there was S. Laurencia (Listerman) who happily promoted a "Go Get Um" spirit to all. Meanwhile, the guidance staff urged us to study, exercise, pray, and stay safe. The nuns ran a pretty happy ship.

Then at Marian College, also sponsored and staffed by the Franciscan nuns of Oldenburg, S. Mary Carol (Schroeder), PhD, history professor, taught us not only the course material, but to think both critically and outside the box."

Dave was not fortunate enough to have the Franciscans as teachers. He knows the Community through Mary and is grateful for the fine education Mary received at every level. Together they have tried to pass on our Franciscan values to their two daughters and the next generation while giving back to those who helped form their values.

When asked why they choose to support the Sisters of St. Francis financially, Mary stated: "We are thankful to the Sisters of Saint Francis for making the decision to move Marian College from Oldenburg to Indianapolis because there were few options for higher education beyond grade twelve in Indianapolis in those days, much less Catholic education! The Sisters made a very courageous and successful bid on property on Cold Spring Road in the middle of the great depression of the 1930's. Thus began their selfless undertaking to establish Marian College in the capital city. Over the years many have benefited from the growing institution, of which I was one, and it is a way of giving back to the Community."

We thank Mary and Dave Allen and all who partner with us to carry out our mission as women of prayer collaborating with others in responding to the needs of our world.



S. AUGUSTINE, OSF



S. HORTENSE, OSF



S. LAURENCIA, OSF

We are grateful to Mary and Dave and to all of our donors who share in and make possible our mission and ministries.

Sister SPOTLIGHT

S. MARY SCHMIDLIN, OSF



I grew up in Indianapolis, the youngest of a family with six children. My parents were born and raised in Cincinnati, but just before their marriage my father was transferred to Indianapolis.

Because we didn't have relatives in Indianapolis, we didn't do much visiting but had a lot of fun playing cards, putting puzzles together and playing ping pong. Each one of us played a musical instrument and at times we had a real concert.

I went to Little Flower for grade school where many Franciscan Sisters were my teachers. We lived only two blocks from Little Flower so I would spend a lot of time helping out with Legion of Mary projects, fundraisers and other parish happenings. I attended St. Agnes Academy for high school.

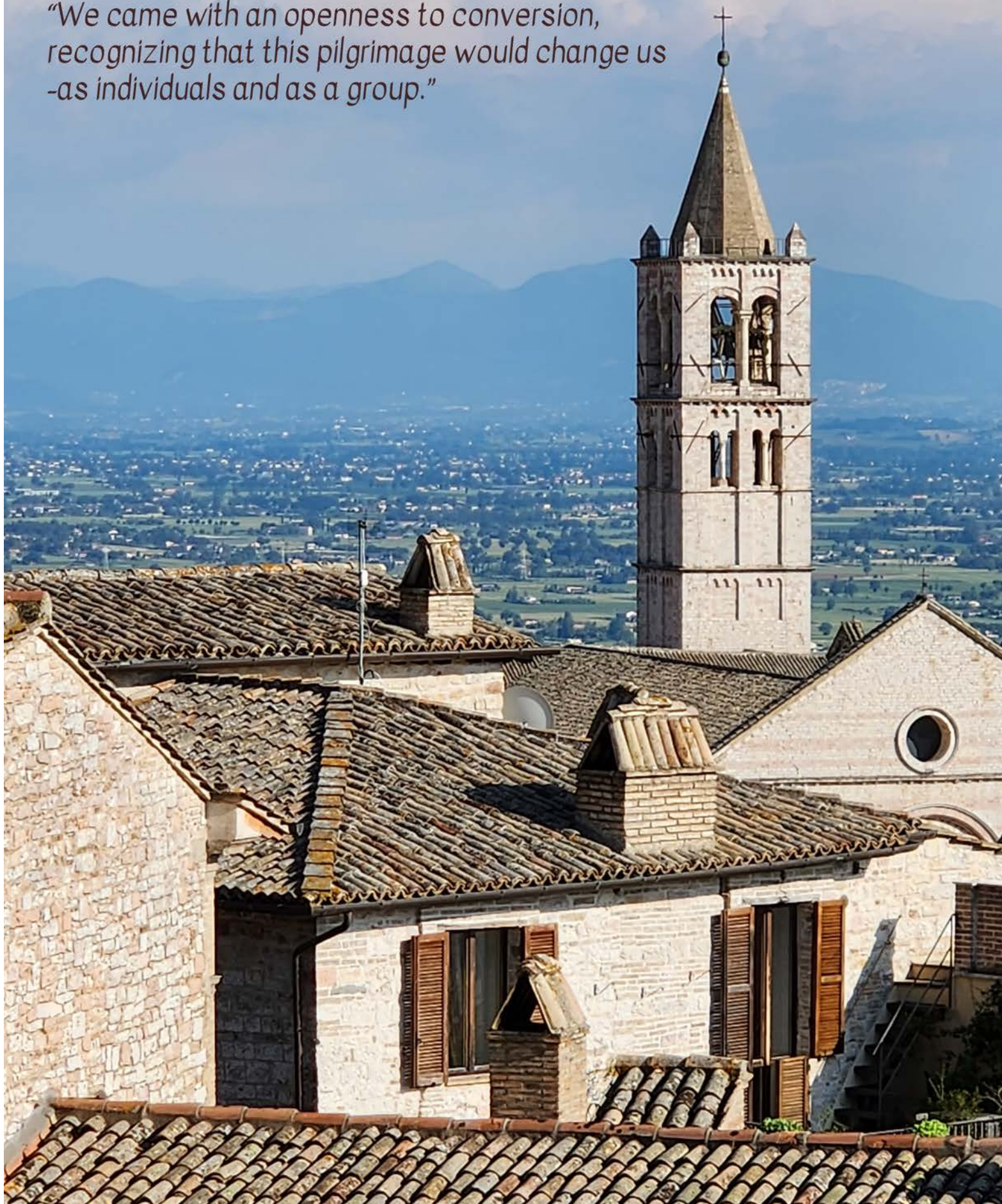
I always wanted to work in the church and serve people. Above all else, I wanted to become a religious Sister. I became familiar with the Sisters of St. Francis as they served my home parish. I also had an aunt within the Franciscan Community that helped lead me to vowed commitment with Oldenburg Franciscans.

My early days in ministry were spent teaching in southern Indiana, Roseville, MI, Dayton and Cincinnati, OH. In 1969 I returned to Roseville, MI and coordinated the Religious Education program. In 1976, I began my ministry as a Pastoral Associate in the Archdiocese of Detroit, and continued this ministry for 29 years at four parishes in the Archdiocese ...and loved every minute of it! My last 13 years in active ministry were spent working in a funeral home...never knowing, from one day to the next, exactly what I would be doing. Sometimes I would even drive the hearse or limo!

It is important for me to set aside time for prayer and reading. I enjoy playing cards and play almost every evening. I also spend my free time putting together puzzles and playing lots of Sudoku.



*"We came with an openness to conversion,
recognizing that this pilgrimage would change us
-as individuals and as a group."*



One day, while praying at the church of San Damiano, St. Francis heard Jesus speak to him from the crucifix:

*“Go, rebuild my church
which is falling down.”*

Pilgrimage to Assisi

Photography by 2023 Marian University Pilgrims - Text by S. Mary Beth Gianoli, OSF

I was privileged to travel to Assisi last summer with a group from Marian University. We traveled as pilgrims. We came with open hearts and minds, focusing on being present to the moment and embracing every experience. We came with an openness to conversion, recognizing that this pilgrimage would change us, as individuals and as a group. We came because we wanted to know more about Francis and Clare so that we could walk more closely in their footsteps.

As we approached Assisi, one of our Pilgrimage leaders proclaimed “Welcome Home!”. Despite being tired after hours of travel, I immediately felt energized. I could see the town and the magnificent landscape of the surrounding areas. As we approached, it was impossible not to feel the spirit and legacy of Francis and Clare. We were home!

During our days in Umbria, we spent time at many of the places that were significant to Francis, Clare and their early followers. Every moment was sacred and each site provided a new or deeper insight into the lives and spirituality of Francis and Clare.



Rocca Maggiore

Pilgrimage to Assisi...

We began our pilgrimage by walking through the town of Assisi. We stood in the Piazza Commune where Francis most likely socialized with his friends. We saw where it is believed that Francis was born and the area where Clare lived. We walked the same cobblestones that Francis and Clare traveled. We were warmly welcomed by the residents of Assisi who graciously listened to our attempts to speak Italian. They offered us hospitality and love, knowing that we were on a journey of discovery. Experiencing the ordinary parts of Francis and Clare's lives challenged us to embrace their humanity and reflect on our own.



San Damiano



San Damiano Cross
housed in the Basilica of St. Clare

One day, we walked down the hill to San Damiano. We enjoyed a beautiful hike through the countryside, realizing that this trek would have been much more treacherous in the time of Francis and Clare. San Damiano is important to Franciscans because this was the church that held the icon before which Francis was praying when he heard the call to rebuild the church. This is also where Clare lived with her sisters for over 40 years. It is a simple stone building surrounded by beauty. The original icon we call the San Damiano Cross is now housed in the Basilica of St. Clare. This seems fitting since Clare prayed in front of this cross for over 40 years. There is a replica of this icon/cross in the chapel at San Damiano.



Porziuncola (or Little Church)



We also visited the Basilica of Saint Mary of the Angels (Santa Maria degli Angeli). The Basilica, a very large structure that was built hundreds of years after Francis's death, now houses the Porziuncola* (or Little Church). The tiny Porziuncola is often called the heart of the Franciscan movement. This is where Francis embraced and lived out his vocation. This is also where Clare, on Palm Sunday 1212, was received into the community by Francis and his brothers. Francis also chose to live his last days (and die) at the Porziuncola. Francis and Clare's energy is palpable as you pause, pray and remember our heritage.

(*Porziuncola is the Italian spelling of the English version Portiuncula.)



Basilica of Saint Mary of the Angels
(Santa Maria degli Angeli)

Pilgrimage to Assisi...

Francis struggled to balance contemplation/prayer with preaching and service. He often hiked up Monte Subasio (above the city of Assisi) to spend time in the caves. This area is known as the Eremo delle Carceri. We spent hours at the Carceri walking the hills where Francis and his brothers traveled. We sat near the caves and embraced the beauty of this holy space. The Carceri is about four kilometers from Assisi, and 2,592 feet above sea level, so it is very quiet there. One can proclaim “this is holy ground” and feel the presence of God and our Franciscan ancestors there!



Carceri



Basilica di San Francesco
(the Basilica of St. Francis)

Two other important places in the city of Assisi are the Basilicas! At the northwest end of Assisi sits the Basilica di San Francesco (the Basilica of St. Francis). It is an amazing structure that contains the tomb of St. Francis as well as many altars and magnificent works of religious art. One could spend hours looking at and studying the beauty of this place. It strikes me that this structure is probably not what Francis would want. Legend tells us that Francis wanted to be buried in the most despised spot in Assisi. Yet, after his canonization, his remains were brought here. Beckoning visitors from around the globe, the Basilica di San Francesco is seen as a source of grace and new life for people of all backgrounds and cultures.



Basilica di Santa Chiara
(the Basilica of St. Clare)

At the southeast end of Assisi, we find the Basilica di Santa Chiara (the Basilica of St. Clare). This structure, smaller than the Basilica of St. Francis, is built around the remains of the little parish church where Francis received his education. The façade is made of pink and white stone from Subasio. The interior structure is much like that of the Basilica of St. Francis. The (original) San Damiano Cross hangs in a side prayer chapel (The Chapel of the Crucifix). The tavola of St. Clare hangs inside the Basilica, reminding visitors of the important events in her life. The tomb of St. Clare is in the Basilica. This is another magnificent structure that Clare would likely not think fitting for her. Her desire to live voluntary poverty seems a direct contradiction to this huge church. Yet, this building serves as a reminder to us that we are called to continue the unfolding story of the Franciscan tradition. We are reminded that we, too, have a call and must listen to the voice of God.



Pilgrimage to Assisi...

La Verna was another stop on our pilgrimage. This sanctuary, located on Monte Penna, was another place where Francis would go to pray for extended periods of time. La Verna is also the place where Francis received the stigmata. There is a chapel at La Verna, the Chapel of Santa Maria degli Angeli (St. Mary of the Angels), that was built in 1216 by Francis. The Chapel of the Stigmata marks the place where Francis received the wounds of Jesus in his hands, feet and side. The building contains beautiful sculptures created by the della Robbia family as well as many other works of art. Knowing the pivotal moments of Francis's faith journey that occurred here is inspiring and breath-taking. The area surrounding the church and monastery also calls one to prayer and reflection.



La Verna



Greccio

Our final destination near Assisi was Greccio, a town located high on a hill in the province of Rieti. Francis often retreated to Greccio to pray and preach. On one visit there, Francis was overwhelmed with the enormity of God's love that led Jesus to live among us on earth. In a cave in Greccio, Francis recreated the manger and the nativity scene as a way to remind people of the importance of Jesus's Incarnation. What a beautiful place this was ... a wonderful time to remember the miracle of Christmas and the importance of the Incarnation in Franciscan spirituality.

We left the Assisi area tired and blessed, empowered to move forward as carriers of our Franciscan heritage. It's always hard to leave home. However, we knew it was time to return to our daily lives, energized and challenged by the graces of this pilgrimage.

Pace e Bene ~ Peace and all Good!



REFLECTING ON OUR PILGRIMAGE

For members of the Franciscan family, ongoing connections with the saint who has inspired our way of life continue to be strong. We create ways to learn about Francis and to emulate his values as we embrace the path of simplicity and grace, both personally and communally.

Our Oldenburg Franciscan Community has the practice of “gifting” a trip to Assisi each year so that individuals may experience on a real and concrete level the world which Francis knew and the world which he venerated as holy.

Sisters who wish to be gifted with a pilgrimage may submit their names, and on January 6, the anniversary of the Community’s founding, one or two names may be drawn. The lucky winners may anticipate a life-changing encounter with the land, the people, and the very person of Francis who chose poverty as his bride and the Crucified as the Love he celebrated as “My God and my All”.

~S. Delouise Menges, OSF



Memorial at location of St. Clare's death

"My pilgrimage to Assisi had many special times. I spent special time before the tomb of St. Francis and that of Clare, as well as time in the small Portiuncula Chapel in St. Mary of the Angels. These were special prayer times as well as in Greccio and San Damiano. There was a special energy in all these places for me."

~ S. Dianne Kaimann, OSF

"My most prized encounter with holy places in Assisi was our pilgrimage visit to the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels. This massive church was erected to house a most precious artifact of Francis's life: the little chapel known as the Portiuncula. In this tiny church, which is totally dwarfed by the big basilica, Francis first found his vocation, and it was here that he welcomed the first brothers to his order. In that same sacred space, Francis went home to God in 1226. An aura of solemnity and simplicity radiates from the Portiuncula, truly "a little part of heaven" that pilgrims and visitors can feel and treasure."

~ S. Delouise Menges, OSF



Portiuncula



Chapel of the Stigmata, Mt. La Verna

"Perhaps my favorite spot in Assisi is Mt. La Verna. Descending the steps into the heart of the mountain—how could one help but praise God for the beauty of creation?"

~ S. Christa Franzer, OSF



Mt. La Verna

GE TO ASSISI...



San Damiano

"My special memory was kneeling and sitting before the cross of San Damiano and contemplating Francis's words "Repair (rebuild) my church". The church at St. Anne, New Castle was destroyed by fire and so I prayed for those words of St. Francis to become alive in the lives of all the parishioners as they began the building of their new church and a deepening of their spiritual lives."

~ S. Shirley Gerth, OSF



San Damiano Cross

"Chapel of the Nativity in Greccio located in a cave profoundly deepened my incarnational spirituality that influenced my theology teaching at XLI and prayer. Anointing of hands at San Damiano dormitory eventually called me to the healing ministry and led to new courses at XLI and offering workshops and retreats. St. Clare guided all my sessions on healing."

~ S. Rosie Miller, OSF



Greccio

"A memorable event on my trip to Assisi for my silver jubilee was Mass in the crypt of the Basilica of St. Francis. It was a mixed tour group but they knew I was a Franciscan so they let me do the reading at Mass."

~ S. Charity Kraeszig, OSF



Nativity in Greccio

"I had the privilege of making a pilgrimage to Assisi in 1997, the year after the earthquake there. There were several churches that were not open to us because of needed repairs, including the Portiuncula. While that was disappointing, the gift in this timing was that there were fewer and smaller groups there. I felt so incredibly blessed to be able to go back to certain spots and have time there alone. One of the most touching places for me was San Damiano, the first home of Clare and her Sisters. We went there as a group, but since it was the last place we were visiting that day and no other group was following us, Ramona and I stayed behind and prayed silently in the dormitory for quite a while. The simplicity and physical closeness of Clare and her Sisters in that one room was practically tangible. I could picture Clare caring for the Sisters when they were ill, including her own mother, Ortolana; and later, Clare being cared for by the Sisters as she approached death. Ramona and I had the habit of reflecting together each night of the pilgrimage about who came to mind when we were in each place. As we walked back from San Damiano, we shared who we had prayed for while we were there. She instinctively prayed for our Sisters who were ill; while I found myself naming each one of our Sisters who were nurses, caregivers, or pastoral care givers at Oldenburg and other health care facilities. I still recall that space when I am sitting with a Sister who is very sick or dying."

~ S. Barb Leonhard, OSF



Cave where St. Francis prayed on Mt. La Verna

GRECCIO AND FONTE COLUMBO

CAVES - SIMPLE, CHILDLIKE
HUMAN, STARK
STRAIGHT UP THE CLIFF.
HOW FRANCIS LOVED
THESE MOUNTAIN PLACES,
CLINGING TO ROCKS
PERCHED IN THE AIR.

CHAPEL - SWEEP, WORN
ADORNED WITH FRESH FLOWERS
WARM, VIBRANT WINDOWS
AND RICH WOOD.

GOD EMPTIES SELF...
HOW POOR AM I?

~ S. Mary Ann Stoffregen, OSF

"A favorite spot during my Assisi Pilgrimage was to pray in the Greccio area. It is just another "little Bethlehem".... a place where Jesus is "reborn". Christmas comes every day in Greccio. Christ is reborn. "

~ S. Lorraine Geis, OSF

"For me, two special times were the trip to Greccio and a special blessing in the dormitory of St. Clare at San Damiano. Although it was late September, we sang Christmas carols on the bus. It was quite a climb. The little grotto was so simple, and we could picture the candlelight procession of people that special night so long ago. It was very moving. At the dormitory of St. Clare, home of the Poor Ladies, Joanne Schatzlein, OSF (one of our guides for the pilgrimage) led the prayer service. She invited each of us to offer prayers for special needs and she blessed each of us individually. People from other tours who spoke other languages didn't know exactly what was going on, but were moved to tears nevertheless."

~ S. Mary Lynne Calkins, OSF

"My trip to Assisi was awesome. When I arrived in Rome my suitcase was nowhere to be found. It took three days before it arrived. When the suitcase arrived I realized how little I really needed. Later, approaching the tomb of St. Clare, tears ran down the sides of my face as I realized the gift that I received. Each day gifts of love and grace were experienced"

~ S. Ruth Eggering, OSF

"I took with me a really good leather back pack thinking it would serve me well. Early on during our time in Assisi, the major leather strap broke making it impossible to use. I ventured forth down one of the narrow cobblestone streets and found an actual cobbler who fixed it free of charge! And if memory serves me correctly, he fixed it while I waited. I couldn't believe it. And the back pack is still like new!"

~ S. Jackie McCracken, OSF

"My Franciscan Pilgrimage Experience occurred in October 2003. Upon our group's arrival in Assisi as we were walking toward Casa Papa Giovanni where we would be staying, I recognized two Associates of our Community coming toward us, Shirley Doll and Carolyn Hoagland. What a warm welcome to Assisi! The two had been to England on business and stopped in Assisi for three days. How providential to begin our visit among familiar friends!"

~ S. Rose Marie Weckenmann, OSF



Pope Francis with children

"Going to the Square was the one of the most exciting parts of the pilgrimage, God answering the desire of my heart, was seeing Pope Francis. In the picture above, you see an African American little girl in his Mobile and children of different ethnic backgrounds. That stole my heart, because to me Pope Francis was making a statement that said all children of the world are children of God. Where so many times Black People are made to feel less than or unimportant, Pope Francis was saying to the world how he feels as what God wants in this world. Oh! that made my whole trip! ...and it hadn't even gotten started yet. He blessed all the articles we were holding in our hands. That made me happy because we had just come from Eucharist and going through the Basilica."

~ S. Jannette Marie Pruitt, OSF



S. Jannette at Vatican Square, Rome

"After completing my studies in Special Ed/Religious Ed. I was hired to organize a six-country study tour in Europe. Included was a brief stop in Assisi enroute to Rome. With only an overnight stay, I knew I wanted to spend time before the San Damiano crucifix. Early that morning as I prayed with the words Francis had heard, "Go and rebuild my Church..." I was aware of the barriers of many Cincinnati churches such as steps unmanageable for many in wheel chairs or with limited mobility. It wasn't long afterward, as I began my ministry in Cincinnati, that I realized the "re-building" had more to do with changing hearts and long-held attitudes before structural change could ever take place!

Our Sister Eymard, recently retired, called to tell me she would be praying for me as I started this new ministry. Without my asking, she told me she was already working on a parish survey to determine the presence of this needed ministry in each of the 225 parishes in the archdiocese. Structural accessibility was included! She planted the seeds for a more inclusive church in the process, and our ministry blossomed!"

~ S. Ann VonderMeulen, OSF



Assisi at dusk

"S. Carol Ann Mause and I took our trip together in 1985. We arrived in Assisi on October 3rd. We got up the next morning, October 4th, and all of the people were dressed as they were at the time of St. Francis. The archbishop was leading a procession to the church. We joined the procession and entered the church.

The priest started the Mass, he would pray and everyone would answer in their own language. I said to Carol Ann, "This is what heaven is like, this is how we should be, everybody together, like the time the Apostles were together and everyone was talking in their own language". This moved me, it felt as if I had witnessed a miracle. Tears were running down my cheeks.

Here we tear things down and change things, not there. Everything was so profound and sacred. I don't usually win things, but I sure hit a home run when I was chosen to go on the trip to Assisi."

~ S. André Burkhardt, OSF

"SHE WAS MY 'ADOPT-A-SIS"

As told to Beverly Wilson by S. André Burkhardt, OSF

Making the decision to take over the Adopt-a-Sis program was one of the best decisions of my life. I was an educator, worked in pastoral care, presented workshops, spent time in Africa, worked with the Navajos... just so many experiences. When I retired and came home to the Motherhouse, all those experiences came to an end. It didn't take long for me to realize I was going to love working with the Sisters and students that were participating in this program.

Whenever the students come for our visits, I always feel like I'm young again. There's something in them...they have a lot to give. We've been doing this for years and it's like they awaken something in us that has been dormant for a long time.

Every month I give them something motivational, we celebrate birthdays, I write prayers for them. We still say those prayers. During one of our recent visits, I had a group of young men that were currently juniors. When it came time to go, one boy asked why we couldn't visit more frequently, all of the other boys chimed in with 'yes' in agreement. That meant a lot to me. The sharing that they do, the joking they do, it just pulls so much out of you that you had forgotten for so long. They have so much to share, so much to give.



S. Mary Ann and OA students



S. Jannette and OA students



Sisters blessing the students



OA President Annette Hunger
with S. André

S', I STILL REMEMBER HER."

~ quote from OA Student

One day as I was sitting in the lounge, I noticed a young lady come in. She was probably in her early twenties. She signed in to see one of the Sisters. I decided to go talk to her and learned that she was on her way to see her past Adopt-a Sis Sister. After speaking with her, I remembered her and knew immediately which Sister she was on her way to see.

When she went up to see 'her Sister', she came back about a half hour later and had this big smile on her face. I asked her how things went. She replied that 'her Sister' didn't know her anymore, but it had been meal time and she was able to help feed her.

After she left, I learned from another Sister that she has been coming every week after graduating from OA to see 'her Sister'. I also learned that during her time at OA, she would take 'her Sister' out for drives or to treat her to dinner on a weekly basis.



S. André and her 2023 Adopt-A-Sis students

The students used to know us for the habits we wore. Since we no longer wear habits, they are getting to know us for who we are, not what we wear. Our Sisters are so talented and gifted and have had so many experiences. The students often ask me, "What did you do?"

In addition to our ministries, the students love to know what Sisters did when we were high school students, and sometimes they are surprised to know that we were not much different than them!

ADOPT-A-SIS was started in 2003. It was the creation of five Oldenburg Academy students: Molly Widloff, Catherine Sitterding, Claire Ruberg, Elizabeth Schrimpf and Nikki Witmer.

The Adopt-A-Sis mentoring program gives students the opportunity to visit with the Sisters, share stories, experience community, and also a time for the Sisters to share their vast experiences and lessons in life.

On this 20th anniversary of Adopt-A-Sis, we wish to express our gratitude for the positive impact it has had on the lives of many Sisters and students over the years.



Oldenburg Franciscan Center

Retreat ☺ Renew † Rejoice! ♥



OCTOBER 28: THE BODY, MIND, & SPIRIT: WHOLENESS & HOLINESS

9:30am-11:30am ~ \$30/ \$45 for CEU's Presented by: Lorie Hacker, DNP

Join Faith Community Nurse, Lorie Hacker, as she explores the practical application of wholeness through the lens of health, wellness, and the integration of faith. There will be time for reflection and sharing our journeys toward integration in a spiritual retreat setting. Please join us as we journey toward healing and wholeness!



NOVEMBER 4: OSTEOPATHY AS AN EXPRESSION OF FRANCISCAN VALUES IN BODY, MIND & SPIRIT

9:30am-11:30am ~ \$30/ \$45 for CEU's Presented by: David Eland

The founder of Osteopathy had a profound belief in the Divine that found expression through his own suffering in the loss of children and the suffering of those he served. Over the century of Osteopathy's existence, the interplay between body, mind and spirit has been an important theme. The role of touch has been explored through all three elements. Sensing is a deeper level and can be explored through the interplay between Osteopathic and Franciscan values!



DECEMBER 9: HOW IS GOD BEING BORN IN YOU THIS CHRISTMAS?

9:30am-11:30am ~ \$30/ \$45 for CEU's Presented by: Bill Tonnis

The Creative Energy of the Universe is incarnating in you! Each of us is part of the Divine. Chaplain, singer/songwriter, author, and former radio news anchor Bill Tonnis will share with us his original songs and life experiences as well as reflect on scripture and quotes from theologians such as Ilia Delio, Cynthia Bourgeault, Elaine Prevallet, Thomas Merton, and Meister Eckhart. Come join us in Advent!



CONVERSATIONS ON ALL THINGS JUNGIAN: CARING FOR THE SOUL (11/3, 12/8)

4:00pm-5:00pm ~ \$15/ \$25 for CEU's Presented by: S. Olga Wittekind, PhD & Claire Sherman, PhD
Join Jungian Analyst and Clinical Psychologists, S. Olga Wittekind, PhD & Claire Sherman, PhD, as they discuss Jungian topics in our new Friday Jungian Series, "Caring for the Soul." They have put together a wonderful collection of Jungian topics to explore, such as: wholeness & spirituality, archetypes, relationships, dream interpretation, fairy tales & myths, active imagination, masculine psychology, midlife issues & all things Jungian!



COFFEE TALKS: "FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE GREAT MYSTICS OF THE PAST & PRESENT"

Join us in the Convent Chapel at 9:30 am for Liturgy

10:45 am-noon ~ Freewill Donation

11/5: Alan Alda Presented by: Bruce Garrison and Mary Waskewich

12/10: Emily Dickenson Presented by: S. Maggie Rahe

Website: www.oldenburgfranciscancenter.org E-mail: center@oldenburgosf.com Phone: 812.933.6437



A Ministry of the Sisters of Saint Francis ~ Oldenburg, IN



Resting in God...



S. PATTY CAMPBELL, OSF
12-24-1926 ~ 09-04-2023

Patty was born to Harry and Edith Campbell in Dayton, Ohio as the eighth of 15 children. Officially she was named Patricia Ann. There was always fun to be had with her siblings; creating games, singing and putting on plays. In grade school, her teachers were Sisters of the Precious Blood, in Salem Heights, Ohio. Patty and three of her sisters attended Immaculate Conception Academy (Oldenburg Academy). There she was referred to as S. Therese Ann's sister.

There have been many different chapters in Patty's life and she valued each one. Initially, she was an elementary teacher and over the next 30 years continued to teach, eventually becoming a high school social studies teacher.

Patty was led into a poustinia lifestyle as described by Catherine Doherty. She learned to blend the contemplative lifestyle of solitude with the active ministry of service. She put this lifestyle into practice at the Motherhouse as she spent four days a week as a nurse's assistant and three days in solitude. When the community began a House of Prayer, Patty was a core member for three years. Two gifts that she came to value deeply were listening and the prayerful understanding and use of Scripture.

The concept of poustinia stayed with her, as she recognized the true meaning of poustinia was having an open door to those in need of service. And so, she moved into pastoral work. She saw herself in service to the laity in Ohio, Oklahoma and Indiana. She organized renewal programs, Bible study groups, visited shut-ins, and was a volunteer hospital chaplain. She encouraged lay ministers in leadership.

Patty came to know the reality of living not only as a holy person but also a whole person. She took on wholistic life practices becoming a certified massage therapist and an accredited teacher of T'ai Chi Chin. She gave retreats and did spiritual direction. She believed in spiritual direction for the spiritual director, therapy with a good counselor for the health of the mind, exercise in moderation, and hobbies. Journaling and art as well as gardening, cooking, sewing and crafts rounded out her life.

Memorialize A Sister

Sending a Memorial donation in memory of one of our late Sisters is not only a thoughtful gesture, it also helps our Sisters continue their ministry serving God.

Donations may be directed in several ways...

RETIREMENT FUND

To help care for Sisters over 70 years of age

LITTLE PORTION FUND

To assist with the Sisters' mission activities

SPIRITUALITY CENTERS

To support the Oldenburg Franciscan Center and the Nia Kumba Center in MO

ASSOCIATE RELATIONSHIP

To support the Associate Relationship Program of the Sisters

HISTORICAL BUILDING FUND

To assist with utilities, maintenance and repairs of our historic Motherhouse

UNRESTRICTED

To help the Sisters where funds are needed most

To Show Your Support:

Mail the enclosed envelope
(PO Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036)

Donate online:
OldenburgFranciscans.org

OUR SISTERS AND ASSOCIATES
will join with the Village of Oldenburg during

HOLIDAYS UNDER THE SPIRES

The Sisters will once again open the doors of the convent
so guests may shop at our Gift Store and Christmas Cookie Walk.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2ND
from 9:00 am - 2:00 pm
at the Motherhouse in Oldenburg

THE SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS WILL HOST THEIR

MOTHERHOUSE CHRISTMAS TOURS

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27TH
from 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
Refreshments will be served
Chimes will be played in Chapel
Trees of all sorts to be seen

SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS
OldenburgFranciscans.org

HOLIDAYS UNDER THE SPIRES
HolidaysUndertheSpires.com





"I met S. Ruth Mary when she began volunteering in the Oldenburg Academy Advancement Office. Her work ethic, her genuine caring and her thoughtful nature are qualities I have always admired in her over the years. She is not only a friend, but a great ambassador for OA and the Sisters."

~ Debbie Lamping, Advancement Specialist,
Oldenburg Academy

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI astounded and inspired the Church and society by taking the Gospel of Jesus literally and modeling his life on all that Jesus said and did. He did this joyfully, humbly, respectfully and prayerfully.

We, as a Community, are women of prayer, committed to the spirit and values of St. Francis. Today we continue to extend the mission of Jesus through our prayer, presence and service.

Our retired Sisters serve our Church and our world in many marvelous ways. They live joyfully, humbly, respectfully and prayerfully after the example of our patron, St. Francis, whose feast we celebrate on October 4th.

We share with you Sister Ruth Mary Forthofer's (formerly Sister Lydia) story. At the age of 90, she shares the Gospel message with all those she encounters.

"S. Ruth Mary or 'SR' to those of us who worked with her in the Marian College (University) Office of Admissions, shares the Franciscan spirit with everyone she encounters. Her joyful, faith-filled, positive outlook, even when she is experiencing a challenge, is truly inspiring. Those of us whose lives she touched through her ministries are indeed blessed."

~ Denise Feser,
Chair, Marian University Board of Trustees

S. RUTH MARY was born in Batesville, IN, and grew up living across the street from our Sisters, who taught her at St. Louis Grade School. She attended Oldenburg Academy (ICA), where she was influenced by our Sisters. Their dedication and example inspired her to join the Community in 1951. S. Ruth Mary enjoyed many ministries. One of her favorite ministries was the Admissions Office of Marian College (University). While there she developed strong and close friendships with her co-workers, which she maintains to this day. She also treasures her 19 years of volunteer service at Margaret Mary Health in Batesville. Throughout her hospital ministry, she supported friends and neighbors with her presence and prayers.

Our Sisters live a life committed to prayer and service by following in the footsteps of St. Francis.

***We invite you to partner with us
by making a financial contribution in
support of our retired Sisters who impact
our world tremendously through their
prayer, presence and service.***

As we celebrate the Feast of St. Francis, we hold you, your family and your loved ones in our prayers.

May God bless you abundantly.
Peace be with YOU,

Sister Maureen Irvin, OSF

Sister Maureen Irvin, OSF
Director of Development
812.933.6554



2023 ST. FRANCIS APPEAL



SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS
PO BOX 100
OLDENBURG, IN 47036

We hold you in prayer...

Oh, my God,
how beautiful is this season of Autumn
with its many colors blended
and food gathered
for the winter months ahead.
Thank you for your tender care
of all your creatures,
both great and small.
How wonderfully you created each of us
to balance our world
with both care-takers
and recipients of that care.
Stir up within us the firm resolution
to honor and protect
the home you created for us.
May we continue to celebrate
and give thanks!
Amen

S. Janet Born, OSF

