

Volume 20.2 Summer 2017

NEWS

A Publication of THE SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF PHILADELPHIA

Putting Francis *in the* Forefront

The Catholic Identity at Neumann University

Also in this issue:

- Blessed are the Animals: Canine Partners Offer Assistance and Independence
- People & Places
- Foundation Annual Report

Commitment Statement

We recommit ourselves
to “rebuilding the Church”
by living the passion of the Gospel
in the discerning spirit
of our Franciscan charism and tradition.

We are willing to take the necessary
risks to be a healing, compassionate
presence in our violent world especially
with women, children, and those who
have no voice.

We desire to reflect this commitment
in our dialogue with the entire Church,
in our own governing structures, and
in our relationship with one another
as sister.

Mission Statement

We, the Sisters of St. Francis of
Philadelphia, choose to live the Gospel
in the prophetic spirit of Francis of Assisi
and our Foundress Mother Francis
Bachmann. With Jesus Christ as Brother,
we live as sister with one another, with
the entire human family and with all
creation. Calling ourselves and one
another to continuous conversion of
heart, we commit ourselves to a life of
contemplation, poverty and humility.

As vowed women of the Church, we
respond with diverse gifts in a spirit of
collaboration and of mutual service to
the needs of others, especially the
economically poor, the marginal and
the oppressed. Seeking to participate
in the Spirit's action in the world, we
direct our personal and corporate
resources to the promotion of justice,
peace, and reconciliation.

Filled with trust in the goodness of
God, we move forward.

POINT OF VIEW

We have been richly blessed and gifted by our Franciscan tradition. This tradition views God as “overflowing goodness,” emphasizes the centrality of Christ, and regards all people and creation as inherently good. This spiritual heritage comes to us from the writings of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi and it continues to enliven and challenge us as we address the issues of our contemporary world. Joseph Doino, OFM, and Ilia Delio, OSF, expressed it well when they stated:

“I am convinced that we stand at a moment in history that is one of great retrieval. Can we work together to create a public voice in the Church and world that is a distinctly Franciscan voice? Our mission is to let Francis’ vision take hold of our consciousness so that we may witness to the potential of the human spirit for creating a world of justice and peace, truth and value, love and community.”



**Sister Mary Kathryn
Dougherty, OSF
Congregational Minister**

In this edition of Good News we read about Sister Patricia Hutchison and her ministry as the director of the Neumann Institute for Franciscan Studies at Neumann University. Sister Pat has a passion for passing on the tradition to the university faculty, staff, and students so Franciscan values permeate every program, both academic and spiritual. Her work, along with that of her colleagues, is to articulate the tradition so it is understandable to contemporary women and men and meaningful in their lives. As you read you will see how lives are being transformed and the impact these values are having as students go forth creating a world of justice and peace, truth and value, love and community beyond the university.

Sister Betty Kane is living out this tradition in her new ministry with Canine Partners for Life. Sister Betty volunteers to help train dogs as service or companion dogs for people who struggle with health and physical limitations. The Franciscan call to reverence all people and creation comes together as these canine partners enable people to live more independently and with dignity.

May these summer months provide you a more relaxed time to enjoy the beauty of our created world and the love of friends and family.

Blessings,

Sister Mary Kathryn Dougherty, OSF



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The Neumann Institute for Franciscan Studies, with Sister Patricia Hutchison at the helm, works to ensure that the vision and values of Sts. Francis and Clare permeate the entire Neumann University community through a carefully scaffolded framework of coursework laid on a solid foundation of Scripture, social teaching, and Franciscan tradition.

Written by Deb Litman

Photography by Andrea Cipraini-Mecchi

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Sister Betty Kane knows that dogs can make a real difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities who may be struggling with independence. Working with Canine Partners for Life to assist in preparing the dogs for service gives Sister Betty a real sense of helping others.

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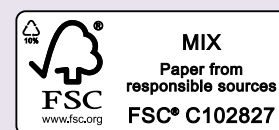
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The purpose of *Good News* is to further the Gospel mission of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia by sharing the good news of the congregation with our friends, family, companions, and sisters. Through this publication, we hope to share the charism of our congregation and invite others to become involved in our mission.


Good News is published three times a year (spring, summer, winter) by the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia. We welcome your feedback and comments; correspondence should be addressed to *Good News* at address above.

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On the cover: Sister Pat Hutchison shares the story of founding of the Sisters of St. Francis with students touring Our Lady of Angels Convent in Aston, Pennsylvania. Sister Pat recently received the Peacemaker Award from the Franciscan Federation for her ability to embody the best of our Franciscan teaching tradition.



Sister Pat Hutchison, campus minister Maria Marx, and members of the Neumann University Mission department introduce first year students to the history and mission of the university and its connection with St. John Neumann and the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia.

Putting Francis *in the*





Sisters Kathy Dougherty, Margaret Oman, Pat Smith, and Pat Hutchison pause outside the NIFS offices to reminisce. Over the years, several Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia have assisted in the ministry of the NIFS.



Members of the Mission Unit—Sister Eileen Valerie Kulacz, Maria Marx, Lee DelleMonache, Sister Linda DeCero, Patrick McKenzie, Sister Marguerite O'Beirne, Father Stephen Thorne, Sister Pat Hutchison, and Megan Camp—ensure that the Catholic Franciscan tradition is pervasive and influences administrators, faculty, staff, and students.

Forefront

The Catholic Identity at Neumann University

✠ “THIS IDENTITY AND THE LEGACY OF THE SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF PHILADELPHIA PROVIDE A DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER TO THE INSTITUTION.”

As the days begin to shorten each August and the laid-back mood of summer gives way to the excitement of a new school year, faculty and staff at Neumann University take part in the annual Welcome Back Day on campus. The event includes prayer, speakers, reflection, and discussions that focus on a particular theme for the year. This theme usually focuses on one of the five core values (Reverence, Integrity, Service, Excellence, and Stewardship) that the university has identified as embodying the Catholic Franciscan identity and which are intended to permeate every aspect of campus life.

Organized by the mission office and the Neumann Institute for Franciscan Studies (NIFS) and spearheaded by the Institute's director Sister Patricia Hutchison, the Welcome Back program is one of the many ways the NIFS strives to help the university

community understand, integrate, and embrace the Catholic and Franciscan mission of the university. “We at Neumann have a commitment to what we call ‘the Franciscan point of difference,’” said Sister Pat. “We are a Catholic university in the Franciscan tradition. This identity and the legacy of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia provide a distinctive character to the institution.”

According to Sister Pat, that character stems from the stories about Francis and Clare of Assisi and the Franciscan tradition that flows from those stories. It also grows out of what she describes as a “relational” way of interacting with others—putting relationships ahead of agendas—which is at the core of the Franciscan identity. “Sister Rose Cecilia Case, OSF, the Neumann Institute's first director, set the tone with her very relational way of being and Sister Marguerite O'Beirne,

OSF, vice president for mission and ministry, built on it,” said Sister Pat.

Today, Sister Pat leads the efforts of the Neumann Institute for Franciscan Studies which is funded by the university. In 2000 the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia created an endowment to assist the NIFS and its ongoing efforts to ensure that the vision and values of Francis and Clare permeate the campus community.

Charism in the Classroom

Because curriculum is central to the identity of any university, during her tenure Sister Rose decided that the director of the NIFS would always be part of the core curriculum committee. “This ensures that the Franciscan voice is always at the table,” said Sister Pat. That voice was strong during a three-year review of the core curriculum that took place at Neumann from 2009 to

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► Campus ministers Patrick McKenzie and Maria Marx traveled to the Franciscan Mission Service in Washington, DC, to meet with Amanda Saunders, to finalize a service immersion trip to Bolivia. In June 2017, five Neumann students along with Patrick and Maria joined other college students in the city of Cochabamba and the rural college of Carmen Pampa in the Andes Mountains partnering with the lay missionaries there.



▲ Campus minister Amanda Saunders enjoys being able to help spread the Franciscan charism she gained from Neumann in her position with the Franciscan Mission Service.



“I HAD BEEN IN CATHOLIC SCHOOL MY ENTIRE LIFE BUT THAT FIRST COURSE WAS WHERE I GOT A SENSE OF FRANCIS AS MORE THAN JUST THAT SAINT WHO LIKED ANIMALS.”

– AMANDA SAUNDERS, CAMPUS MINISTER

2012. The task force that recommended revisions to the curriculum at the end of that review took special care to incorporate Catholic and Franciscan traditions and values even more intentionally into coursework. For example, the theology requirement changed from allowing students to take any two theology classes to specifying a particular progression of courses that laid a solid foundation of Scripture, social teaching, and Franciscan tradition. Additionally, the theology and philosophy departments began to integrate Franciscan perspectives more mindfully into other course offerings. “It is a carefully scaffolded framework of coursework,” said Sister Pat.

“As students move through the curriculum, they begin to appreciate and absorb the messages more fully as ideas are repeated and reinforced.”

Amanda Saunders, who graduated from Neumann in May of 2016 with a degree in liberal arts and minors in theology, psychology, and youth ministry, said that she began to get a deeper sense of Franciscan values in her first theology course at Neumann. “I had been in Catholic school my entire life but that first course was where I got a sense of Francis as more than just that saint who liked animals,” said Amanda. From there

she got involved in campus ministry where she says she began to learn “what it meant to be simple, relational, and to meet people where they were.”

Values Within Every Discipline

Franciscan principles are very explicit in theology and philosophy courses but faculty at Neumann are also diligent about ensuring that they are represented throughout the curriculum. “Professors are encouraged to incorporate Franciscan values whenever appropriate,” said Dr. John Kruse, coordinator of undergraduate Theology, Pastoral, and Theological Studies, and a member of the task force that revised the core curriculum.

In business classes, students are asked to look beyond the objective of making a profit to the importance of the ethical dimensions of corporate decisions. In biology they talk about the moral questions raised by issues such as genetically engineered crops and animal cloning. In criminal justice, the dignity of every human life is at the center of any discussion of pun-

ishment. “Faculty members are very conscious that part of their responsibility is to make appropriate connections to Catholic Franciscan values,” said Sister Pat. “People do that in different ways and I am always available with resources to help.”

Dr. Jenelle Abnett, assistant professor in the education department and a member of the NIFS committee, uses real-life experiences as a teaching tool for her students. Pupils in her education classes work with students from Children and Adult Disability and Educational Services (CADES), an organization dedicated to improving the lives of children and adults with intellectual and physical disabilities. Jenelle’s students prepare a series of science activities for students from CADES to explore. The assignment teaches the education majors not only about creating an engaging experience for learners, but also about recognizing the humanity and potential in every person. “After the experience, my students take part in a reflection assignment to look at it from the perspective of Neumann’s five core values,” said Jenelle. “A lot of my stu-

dents never thought they would work with people with disabilities and now they see that as a possibility.”

That kind of “a-ha” experience is something that many Neumann students encounter. The pivotal moment for Amanda Saunders came in her senior year when she began work on the capstone project for her honors program. She and a friend had decided to work on restructuring Neumann University’s Institute for Student Leadership Formation. They chose to base their approach on the social change model of leadership. Amanda focused her portion of the project on the Franciscan charism

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▼ Dr. John Kruse brings scripture and the Franciscan story to life for theology students. He believes that Neumann’s culture has encouraged him to view life through a Franciscan lens.

▼ Director of campus ministry Patrick McKenzie shares a reflective moment with Michael Messina and Josh Yearwood. Students like Michael and Josh choose to participate in service immersion and retreat experiences.



◀ Sisters Pat Hutchison and Mary Ann McCarthy work closely together on a daily basis to help faculty and staff members embrace and share the Franciscan tradition



Neumann's library circulation coordinator, Tara Convery, and cataloger, Jerry Swiacki, create an Earth Day display to encourage students to be responsible stewards of creation.



Dr. Gail Corso, Mary Wissert, Dr. Tammy Feil, June Cahill and daughter Megan Camp, Dr. Sandra Weiss, Tom Geddes and wife Janet prepare for an Assisi Pilgrimage.



On April 23, 2017, eight Neumann University students were received into full communion with the Catholic Church. Members of the mission unit gathered with students and sponsors for dinner at Our Lady of Angels Convent. Pictured left to right: Maria Marx, Andrea Delacruz, Sister Marguerite O'Beirne, Ashley Girard, Jessica Donovan, Rebecca Cruice, Jaclyn Hahn, Matt Zendejas, Zachary Lazzaro, Brandon Provenzano, and Father Thorne.

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and immersed herself into how to apply that to daily life. With Sister Pat as her mentor and guide, she began an assignment that would change her world view. "I started researching for the project but right away I realized that this was something I wanted to take with me for the rest of my life," said Amanda. "I shifted my mindset to being a Franciscan-minded person on my own outside of the university."

Learning Outside the Lecture Hall

Indeed, learning about Franciscan principles outside the classroom is strongly encouraged. The NIFS sponsors lectures by Franciscan scholars; full and half days of reflection related to the mission theme for the year; artistic, musical, and literary presentations featuring guest speakers; Ministry House teas; an interactive Lunch and Learn Series; lectures featuring Neumann University presenters; and book discussions on Franciscan topics.

Although all of these opportunities are optional, attendance at the events is outstanding. "The faculty is hungry to learn about Franciscan traditions," said John. "We get faculty from all departments. They don't have to be there but they come because they want to. When I tell faculty from other places about the level of buy-in to mission we have at Neumann, they can't believe it."

"People are enticed to come to programs for their own nourishment as well as for their



After her pilgrimage to Assisi, Kristen Bilotta developed a presentation on the power of God to act in her life. Both personnel and students are encouraged to share their experience with the campus community.



Sister Mary Beth Ingham, CSJ, pictured with Sister Pat, spent a semester as a visiting scholar at Neumann in 2009. During that semester several faculty and staff members participated in a study of her book, *Rejoicing in the Works of the Lord: Beauty in the Franciscan Tradition*.

work," said Sister Pat. This is true, not just for the Catholic members of the Neumann community but across the board.

"The Neumann Institute integrates Franciscan values in a way that is welcoming to all members of our community," said Jenelle. "Even students and faculty who are not Catholic can live them and feel connected to them as good values in life."

The endowment from the Sisters of St. Francis not only has allowed the NIFS to bring quality programming to Neumann University. It also has provided funding for faculty, students, and staff to attend regional and national conferences and retreats. One example is the Association of Franciscan Colleges and Universities (AFCU) Symposium that is held biennially at one of the organization's member schools. Faculty, students, and staff members who attend the AFCU Symposium come back inspired with new ideas about integrating Franciscan intellectual traditions and heritage into their work on campus. Jenelle returned from the 2016 AFCU

▼ In solidarity with the sisters' corporate stand, Criminal Justice professor Joseph Gosseaux integrates discussions related to immigration into the senior capstone seminar. Students read and discussed the book *Undocumented* by Dan-el Padilla Peralta. Dr. Peralta shared his story at Neumann in April 2017. Sister Pat Hutchison, Joseph Gosseaux, Dr. Peralta, Kristen Acosta, and Dr. Leanne Owen take a moment to pose for a photo.



◀ Sister Mary Ann McCarthy, Neumann graduate Mary Ann Whalen, and NIFS staff visit Padua Academy in Wilmington, Delaware, to share the Franciscan story and the meaning of pilgrimage. Together with Padua's campus minister Vanessa Vavala, Mary Ann Whalen developed a course on Sts. Francis of Assisi and Francis de Sales culminating in a pilgrimage to Annecy, France, and Assisi, Italy.

► After experiencing a retreat on the Catholic Franciscan tradition offered by the NIFS, Professor Jim Kain asked Sister Pat to develop a similar experience for students in his humanities seminar. Held at our Lady of Angels Convent, for the past six years, the retreat has become a deeply appreciated time for quiet and reflection prior to graduation.



to launch the first education retreat for Neumann students during the 2017-2018 academic year.

Seeing Through A Franciscan Lens

Wherever the education and motivation comes from—whether it be the classroom, an on-campus enrichment opportunity, or a national symposium—Sister Pat's ultimate goal is to get members of the Neumann community to make Catholic Franciscan values a part of the way they live. "My own world-view has been shaped by being part of the culture at Neumann," said John Kruse. "Because of it, I tend to look at all aspects of life through a Franciscan lens. It gives me a deeper sensitivity to those pushed to the margins, affects my attitudes toward consumerism, and influences the manner with which I relate to the environment."

After graduating, Amanda spent a year as a volunteer with Franciscan Mission Service in Washington, DC, as a programs associate. She says that she is very mindful of living out her Franciscan values in her work and her everyday life. "I am very conscious of being a good steward of resources, of being present for people and meeting them where they are," said Amanda. "Those seeds were planted at Neumann and they just keep growing." Sister Pat thinks this is true with a majority of the Neumann community. "I have no doubt that the Franciscan charism will continue to thrive," Sister Pat said. "Particularly through the efforts of our dedicated faculty, staff, and students." ■

For more information or comments on this article, contact goodnews@osfphila.org.

▲ Students Nick Koller, Edward Hild, and Jose Rodriguez talk with Sister Pat during the pre-presentation lunch with Dr. Peralta.



Symposium so energized that she wanted more. Intrigued by a retreat for education department students that she had learned about at the symposium, she mentioned the opportunity to Sister Pat. "Sister Pat immediately asked whether I wanted to go and found a way to fund the experience," said Jenelle. "That is how Sister Pat is. She's a doer. If she thinks something is important, she'll make sure she finds a way to make it happen. Her commitment to Franciscan charism is inspiring." Jenelle, along with Dr. Tammy Feil, is planning

HOW YOU CAN HELP...

- Make a donation in the name of Neumann University to help sponsor faculty, staff, and student participation in the Assisi Pilgrimage.
- Encourage college age students to grow their spirituality. Help them to find ways to live more simply and relationally with minimal dependence on material things and maximal interdependence with others.
- Attend a lecture, conference, or retreat. Taking time to reflect or to learn something new can be powerfully energizing and inspiring.
- Look for connections between the teachings of Saints Francis and Clare and the situations you encounter every day. Ask yourself who in today's society is pushed to the margins and look for ways to embrace those on the edges of society. Be conscious of being a good steward of resources.

PEOPLE & PLACES



Sister Mary Kathryn Dougherty joined the Mirendas for liturgy.

PENNSYLVANIA

On March 23, **Dr. Rosalie Mirenda** and her husband, Tony Mirenda, joined the sisters at Our Lady of Angels Convent for an afternoon liturgy and dinner in recognition of Dr. Mirenda's upcoming retirement from Neumann University. Also present were members of Neumann's board, former and present faculty members, sisters who were former students of Dr. Mirenda, and members of former congregational leadership teams. During the liturgy Sister Mary Kathryn Dougherty announced that, in honor of Dr. Mirenda, the congregation would be making a donation to Neumann University's Forward with Faith Fund, a fund established by the Mirendas. We were pleased to share this evening with the Mirendas and are grateful for Dr. Mirenda's 44 years of service to the Neumann community.

Who are the 'Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia'?

Through this section we hope to share a glimpse of our congregation and the individuals who make real its mission.



DELAWARE

Sister Grace Andrew Jeffery was among a group of catechists being honored for their years of service in the Diocese of Wilmington. During the ceremony, John Collins, a national speaker for W.H. Sadlier Publishers, commended the catechists. "It's not all about facts and memorizing," he explained. "It's about getting to the heart and then the action of living our faith." For Sister Grace Andrew, that "getting to the heart" and the "action of living faith" is what has made her 35 years as a catechist so successful!

MARYLAND

Everyone at Immaculate Conception School in Towson, Maryland, knows the significance of the Gold Apple—an award given annually "to an individual who shows a strong dedication and commitment to the school." **Sister Dolora Taylor** is the most recent recipient of the award. An article published by the *Baltimore Sun* and carried by several of their local affiliates gives credence to Sister Dolora's worthiness as a recipient. And the Golden Apple is not the only recognition she received this year. In January a refurbished pew from the parish church was dedicated to Sister Dolora in recognition of her 20 years of service. The pew (now a bench) has a place of honor in the school's main hallway. Principal Madeline Meaney described Sister Dolora as the school's "heart and history"—a fitting acknowledgement in light of her 20 years of service as the school's administrative assistant.



(L-R) Bishop Robert Guglielmone, Srs. Noreen Buttimer, Deanna Bartolomei, Marilyn Sands, Colette Gerry, Ruth Bernadette O'Connor, Rev. Dennis B. Willey



SOUTH CAROLINA

Sisters Deanna Bartolomei and Noreen Buttimer were at the center of a celebration that acknowledged the 119 years that our sisters have ministered in the Diocese of Charleston. Bishop Robert Guglielmone, knowing that both Deanna and Noreen would be moving on from the diocese, held a reception in the Diocesan Pastoral Center in recognition of those

119 years. Sisters Marie Colette Gerry and Ruth Bernadette O'Connor represented the congregation at the celebration and Sister Marilyn Sands, who had served in the diocese some years ago, was also present for the occasion. In addition to Sister Deanna and Noreen's years of service (42 and 38 respectively), many of our sisters ministered in the Diocese of Charleston in education, parish ministry, and various areas of social services.



MARYLAND

Sister Corda Marie Bergbauer was once again invited to the Catholic High School of Baltimore to address the newly inducted members of the English honor society that was named in her honor. After congratulating the newly inducted members, she pointed out that the motto of the society is "Duty goes with honor," reminding the students of their responsibility as members. She also stressed the importance of the liberal arts, stating that they are vital in today's world because they develop intellectual capacities such as reason and judgment for life as opposed to other skills.



Sister Corda Marie Bergbauer (center), Scott Derosien (left), and Dr. Barbara Nazelrod (far right) join the newly inducted members of the Sister Corda Marie Bergbauer English Honor Society at the Catholic High School of Baltimore.

PENNSYLVANIA

Our sisters had a long history at **St. Mary Parish** in York, Pennsylvania. In 1869 they began teaching the children of German immigrants. In 1926 the parish completed a new convent for the sisters—a residence where they lived until the last sisters left the parish in 1998. The building was first used by Catholic Charities and was later purchased by the pastor, Father Jonathan Sawicki. The former convent recently became home to St. Mary's Thrift Shop. Donations—whether in the form of materials, time, talent, and money—helped to blend the convent façade into areas where

clients can browse and purchase needed clothing and supplies. Some of the customers are referred by Access-York, a domestic violence service which provides help to people dealing with domestic abuse. The former convent is still alive with the spirit of those early sisters at St. Mary's—a spirit which embraced the early German immigrant children, looked to the needs of the current Spanish-speaking community, and now provides living and much needed help to victims of abuse.



IRELAND

Sister Carmel Earls and her coworkers at Beacon of Light in Dublin continue to find ways to meet the needs of their clients. In 2016 they initiated the Breakthrough Programme in response to the high suicide rates of young males, 18-25 years old, in West Dublin. The program works on a one-to-one basis and uses psychotherapy, psycho-education, physical education, and nutrition advice to address mild/moderate mental health issues. Going into its second phase, the programme is currently funded by the Coca-Cola Thank You Fund and further investors are being sought from both public and private sectors.



(L-R) Eoghan Murphy, minister of state for financial services; Adrian Dolan, Beacon of Light; Matthew Seguin, general manager of Coca Cola; Geoffrey McCarthy, manager of Beacon of Light and leader of the Breakthrough Project; Carl Connor, coach and physical training coordinator of Breakthrough; Eoghan MacDermott, broadcaster of Coca Cola.

Radar, a golden retriever who was trained at Canine Partners for Life (CPL), enjoys some love and attention from CPL graduate support coordinator Caitlin Case.

Blessed *are the* Animals

*Canine Partners
Offer Assistance
and Independence*

“THESE DOGS MAKE PEOPLE’S
LIVES SAFER AND MORE
INDEPENDENT.”



April Childers says she feels lucky to have her Canine Partners service dog, Dale, to help and support her. As a wife and mother of three, April keeps Dale busy with the tasks of daily life during the day. In the evenings, April and her family can often be found relaxing at home—Dale playing animatedly with the children like any family dog. But just let April drop a pen and Dale springs into action, returning the item to April and making certain she has what she needs before settling in to play again. “Dale will do anything to take care of me and make me happy,” said April.

A wife and mother of three, April Childers gets around primarily in a motorized wheelchair these days. Living with multiple sclerosis and Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome means that her mobility is limited. Walking has become increasingly difficult for her and grasping objects can be a challenge. In addition, a disorder of her autonomic nervous system known as dysautonomia causes her to faint. Fortunately April has a capable and devoted aide named Dale who assists her with the many tasks of everyday life. Dale turns lights on and off for April as she enters and exits rooms. He assists with laundry—unloading the dryer, bringing the laundry basket to the bedroom, and passing clothing items to April so she can place them in drawers. Outside of the home, Dale accompanies April wherever she goes, giving her wallet to cashiers so she can pay and carrying groceries to the car.

Unlike many aides, however, Dale does not go home at the end of a shift and he does not take holidays off. A six-year old Labrador retriever and specially trained service dog, Dale is with April all day, every day, even sleeping at the foot of her bed so as to be ready to help at a moment's notice. Dale has been with April since 2013 when he was matched with her through Canine

Partners for Life (CPL), an organization based in Cochranville, Pennsylvania, that trains service dogs to work with people with physical, developmental, and cognitive disabilities.

When April first got Dale, one of her biggest challenges was walking. Dale helped with that by serving as her own personal walker, the two of them utilizing a harness so that Dale could support her. As April's condition progressed, Dale adjusted to her needs, employing a variety of the many skills he had learned through Canine Partners. As April's manual dexterity eroded, Dale was able to come to her aid more and more, picking up items she dropped and filling in as her abilities declined.



Sister Betty Kane visits the CPL kennel where dogs go after spending their first year working on basic obedience and socialization in their puppy homes. Visitors like Sister Betty play a crucial role during this second year, ensuring that the dogs continue to receive the attention, affection, and exercise they need.

“Honestly, Dale was more prepared for all of it than I was,” said April. “He adapted really well.”

Volunteers Who Make It Possible

Dale's skills are the result of a rigorous training program that transforms dogs from playful puppies to highly skilled, working companions. It takes two years to get the dogs ready for the 24-hour-a-day job that they will do. During that time, hosts of people—from volunteers to professional trainers—are involved in the process.

Sister Elizabeth (Betty) Kane, a Sister of St. Francis of Philadelphia, is one of those people. A few years ago, Sister Betty heard about Canine Partners and knew immediately that she wanted to get involved. “I love dogs and this was a perfect way for me to incorporate that love into being part of a ministry for people who need assistance,” said Sister Betty. “As Franciscans we have the example of Francis who was able to preach to birds, communicate with crickets, and tame the Wolf of Gubbio. Francis saw all of creation as a gift from God and God gives special gifts to individual creatures—

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Radar works with volunteer Jessica Banks on body awareness training and agility moves. In addition to her time spent directly with the dogs, Jessica interviews applicants to match them with a canine partner.



like dogs who can sense when a seizure is going to happen.”

With between 120 and 130 dogs in the training program at any given time, it takes a village to make Canine Partners work. “We couldn’t do what we do without volunteers like Sister Betty,” said Darlene Sullivan, founder and executive director of Canine Partners. “We have more than 500 volunteers who help us raise, train, walk, cuddle, bathe the dogs, etc. The list goes on and on.”

Sister Betty has volunteered in many capacities with Canine Partners. Her initial role was as a one-year “puppy home” for Murray who is now a service dog. “It was my job to give Murray a home for the first year of his life and to teach him the basics—house training, how to walk on a leash, and basic commands like ‘sit, stand, walk, and heel,’” said Sister Betty.

Sister Betty has served as a “temporary puppy home” as well, giving relief for puppy home volunteers who go on vacation or need a break for illness or family emergencies. She has also provided a home for three companion dogs in training—Orion,

Charlee, and Harley. Companion dogs begin the service dog program and train accordingly but for one reason or another are not suitable as service dogs. That reason might be something like an overbite that makes it difficult for them to pick up certain items or even an intractable habit of chasing squirrels. Although not usually providing physical assistance, the job of the home companion dog is very special as well, bringing comfort, encouragement, and joy to their human partners—often children with autism.

Additionally Sister Betty has volunteered at the CPL kennel where dogs move as they advance from their puppy homes to their second year of training. Thousands of volunteer hours are required during this stage to ensure that dogs get the

Jessica trains Radar on how to “go pay.” Teaching the dog to get up on the counter properly is an important first step.

human interaction, enrichment activities, and exercise they need to be happy and well socialized. Sister Betty excels in this area as well. She comes often to the kennel to cuddle, walk, and play with the dogs. “She has an incredible mothering, nurturing personality that makes the dogs feel loved,” said Darlene. Sister Betty looks at this ministry as a way to be in relationship with God in a different way. “There is a certain amount of joy and freedom in working with dogs,” Sister Betty adds. “There is no pretense. By not trying to be anything other than itself, the dog praises God. This is a lesson for all human kind—praise God by just being who we are.”

Sister Betty greets Murray in the “cuddle room.” Murray was Betty’s first puppy. He is now in phase two of the service dog training. “Murray was a handful in his first year,” said Sister Betty, “but he is going to change someone’s life.”





Darlene Sullivan, founder and executive director of CPL, spends time with Cal who cheerfully demonstrates some of the tasks that he is trained to perform during a typical day such as retrieving towels from the dryer or bringing his companion a drink. For Darlene, founding and operating CPL is a dream come true. "I had the desire to work with working dogs from the time I was in 6th grade," said Darlene. "That was always my career aim."



Some of the more common tasks dogs must master are very complex. Retrieving a bottle of water, for example, involves opening the refrigerator, getting a bottle, and bringing it to the companion without puncturing it.

Dogs Who Change Lives

During their second year of training, CPL dogs hone and expand the obedience skills that their puppy homes have begun, increase the intensity of the environments in which they are expected to work, and learn the particular skills needed to meet the needs of their human partners. "The dogs can learn things that are specific to their clients," said Darlene, "right down to knowing that if their human asks for their Nikes, they don't want their Reeboks."

In addition to helping to perform physical tasks, some of CPL's dogs have the ability to alert their human partners to impending seizures, changes in blood pressure, or drops in blood sugar level. This is true of April's dog, Dale. As a cardiac alert dog, he is able to warn April in advance about upcoming bouts of syncope that may cause her to faint, allowing her to take measures to avoid the episode or to get to a safe place before the event occurs. "These dogs make people's lives safer and more independent," said Darlene. "People who are disabled can become fearful. When that happens their lives can become very small."

Sister Betty has seen firsthand the hope and excitement that come from overcoming the barriers to a fuller, more independent life for people with disabilities. "I have been present when dogs are matched with their people and it is such a lovely thing to witness," said Sister Betty. "The people talk about their hopes for the future with their dogs. It is marvelous to

see their joy and gratitude. These dogs make a real difference."

For some clients a goal can be as simple but as significant as being able to regain the dignity of using the bathroom alone. For others it is the ability to get to places where a walker can't maneuver or the confidence to stay home without a friend or family member present, knowing that if they fall, their dog will bring them the phone to call for help. "Dale helps me with a lot of things I wouldn't be able to do by myself," said April. "He also is a source of support to my family. My husband is not as afraid to leave me alone as he was before Dale came along."

Darlene also stressed the importance of independence. "Physical tasks are part of it but helping to make people independent is the bigger picture," she explained. "The emotional and psychological benefits are equal to the physical ones in a lot of cases."

For Sister Betty, knowing that the dogs she loves, nurtures, and cares for will go on to love, nurture and care for the people with whom they are paired makes her canine ministry a truly Franciscan labor of love. She says, "Of course, I adore being with these wonderful animals but the real gift is that these dogs are providing quality of life to people in need of assistance, encouragement, and comfort." ■

For more information or comments on this article, contact goodnews@osfphila.org.

HOW YOU CAN HELP...

- Consider serving as a puppy home for an organization that trains service dogs. Remember that taking on this kind of responsibility is a significant, full-time commitment. Those volunteering to serve as a puppy home commit to house-breaking, crate training, vet visits, reinforcing good manners, teaching basic obedience commands, and socializing the puppy in public locations every day.
- Learn proper service dog etiquette. Service dogs who are out with their people are working. It is important not to distract the dog with petting, treats, or other disruptions.
- Help out at your local animal shelter. Most shelters have a large group of volunteers who help with feeding, exercising, grooming, and interacting with animals. Those interested in a less hands-on approach might consider helping with fundraising efforts, paperwork, or phones.
- Work together with your pet to have him or her trained as a therapy dog. Though not qualified as assistance or service dogs, therapy dogs can make a big impact by providing affection and comfort to people in hospitals, retirement homes, nursing homes, and hospices.

SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

Everyone has within a piece of good news.

— Anne Frank (adapted)

See more good news at www.osfphila.org

Sisters of St. Francis Foundation 2016 Annual Report

Dear Friends,

Peace and all good!

We do not exist for ourselves alone, and it is only when we are fully convinced of this fact that we begin to love ourselves properly and thus also love others.

— Thomas Merton

Your goodness to the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia has been a blessing to many and brings to life the words of Thomas Merton in the way you have cared for others through your support of the sisters. Your generosity has touched the lives of our retired sisters, the children in Chester, those who are homeless in our area, and countless others. We are grateful for your support of us which, in turn, allows ALL of us to help those most in need—those who are materially poor and marginalized, especially women and children. In your kindness you have brought to life the Gospel message and allowed those most in need to know of God's love for them!

We hope our 2016 Annual Report will bring you joy in seeing the impact of your goodness on the works of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia.

With gratitude and prayers,

Sr. Deborah Krist, OSF

Sister Deborah Krist, OSF

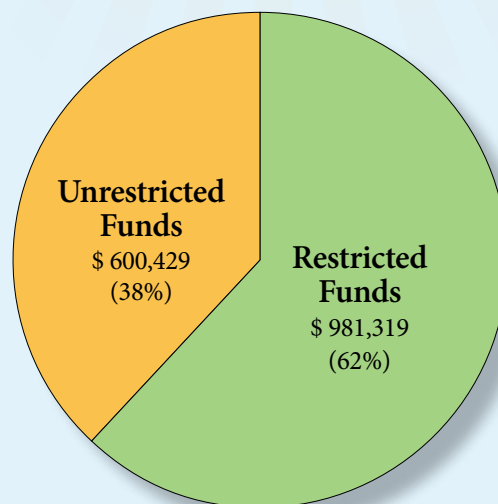
Director of Mission Advancement



Total Donations: \$ 1,581,748

Restricted: \$ 981,319 (62%)

Unrestricted: \$ 600,429 (38%)

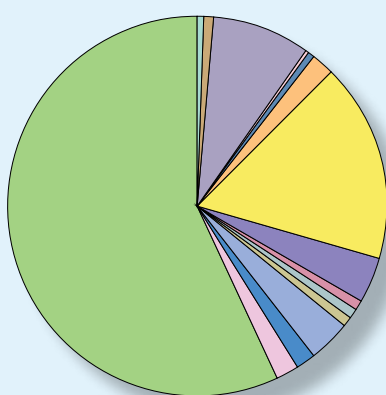


Sources of Donations: Raffle, Golf Tournament, Franciscan Night, Holiday Craft Fair, Direct Mail Appeals, Good News, E-News, Memorial Gifts, Memorial Cards, Grants, Recurring Gifts, Website/ Social Media Donations, Estates and Inheritances, and Capital Campaign Pledges.

The Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia assume operational costs of the foundation.

Distribution of Unrestricted Funds: \$ 590,000*

Unrestricted funds were designated by congregational leadership to assist various ministries—for example helping trafficked women find shelter at Dawn's Place, fostering social justice initiatives at Franciscan Action Network, and assisting sisters working with those who are poor in various U.S. ministries.



* \$600,429 received in current year.
\$ 10,429 received in FY 2016 will be distributed in the future.

- Red Hill Farm Hoop House: \$ 3,500 (0.6%)
- St. Francis House: \$ 5,000 (0.8%)
- Ministry Fund: \$ 50,000 (8.6%)
- Ministry of Caring: \$ 2,000 (0.3%)
- Family Counseling Center of St. Paul's: \$ 3,500 (0.6%)
- Franciscan Action Network: \$ 10,000 (1.7%)
- Neumann University Capital Campaign: \$ 100,000 (17%)
- Anna's Place: \$ 23,000 (3.9%)
- Asylee Women Enterprise: \$ 5,000 (0.8%)
- Sisters' Foreign Ministries: \$ 6,500 (1.1%)
- Dawn's Place: \$ 5,000 (0.8%)
- Franciscan Spiritual Center - Aston: \$ 20,000 (3.4%)
- Catholic Relief Services to Syrian Refugees: \$ 10,000 (1.7%)
- Sisters' U.S. Ministries: \$ 11,500 (1.9%)
- SOSF Retirement: \$ 335,000 (53.8%)



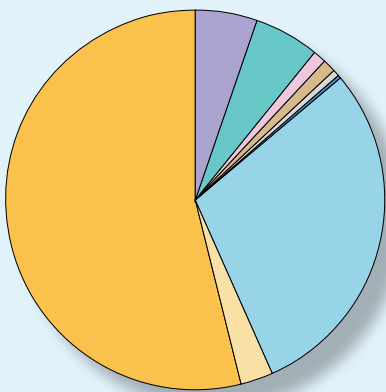
In Memoriam

Sister Theresa Kane
February 3, 2017

Sister Marie Joseph Kerr
February 7, 2017

Sister Joyce Ann Helfrich
(formerly Sister John Christine)
April 9, 2017

Distribution of Restricted Funds: \$ 981,319



- OSF Volunteers: \$ 52,780 (5.4%)
- OLA Elevators: \$ 53,966 (5.5%)
- Education: \$ 11,897 (1.2%)
- Foreign Ministries: \$ 9,922 (1.0%)
- Memorial Garden: \$ 6,400 (0.7%)
- Parish & Spiritual Ministries: \$ 2,100 (0.2%)
- Assisi House Capital: \$ 290,509 (29.6%)
- Shelter & Social Ministries: \$ 25,213 (2.6%)
- SOSF Retirement: \$ 528,532 (53.9%)

Distribution of Restricted Categories:

OSF Volunteers: Franciscan Volunteers: No Risk, No Gain; **OLA Elevators:** Education: Drexel Neumann Academy; **Foreign Ministries:** Africa, Haiti, Ecuador; **Memorial Garden:** trees, benches, bricks; **Parish and Spiritual Ministries:** Franciscan Spiritual Center, OLA Chapel; **Assisi House Capital:** roof, speaker system, renovations; **Shelter and Social Ministries:** Anna's Place, Aquinas Center, Dawn's Place, farm ministries, Hispanic Ministries of Delaware County, Red Hill Farm, Clare of Assisi House, East Bay Sanctuary, Transitions, St Mary's Franciscan Shelter; **SOSF Retirement:** Assisi House, St. Ann Convent

Therefore, every dollar that our donors give is used solely for the ministries and retirement.

► In addition to his close relationships with our sisters, Dr. Much also treasures his family connections. He is especially proud of his three sons—Mark who is a lawyer, Barry who is in construction, and Mandell who is a psychologist. It's easy to see the gratitude in his eyes when he speaks of them.



Focus

DR. MANDELL MUCH, D.O.

"DR. MUCH REALLY LISTENS.

WHEN WE GO OUT TO OTHER DOCTORS, THEY TELL US HOW FORTUNATE WE ARE. HIS REPUTATION AS A PHYSICIAN IS EXCELLENT."

– SISTER MARY ANN MULGREW

Over 50 years ago, a young physician walked up Red Hill Road and rang the doorbell of Our Lady of Angels Convent. A graduate of the College of Osteopathic Medicine at Des Moines University, his residency was complete and he was ready to open his own practice. Encouraged by his wife and mother, he wanted to offer his services to the sisters. When the door opened, he asked to see the sister in charge. It was in that moment that a unique, mutual, and supportive relationship began with Dr. Mandell Much and the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia—one ring of a doorbell chiming for over 50 years.

Initially Dr. Much cared for the sisters residing at the motherhouse. Because his wife worked at Our Lady of Angels College—now Neumann University—he soon joined her doing student physicals and working with the nursing program. Working with the sisters and the Neumann community, he was drawn into a deeper understanding and commitment to the mission. "I try to support the sisters in any way I can," he shared. "I respect their concern for the poor and I admire the education and professionalism they bring to all they do." When Assisi House, the retirement convent for the sisters, opened in Aston in 1976, Dr. Much became the medical director overseeing a continuum of care from family practice to geriatrics. Sister Jane LaManna considers him "an exceptional diagnostician." Sister Marie Cecilia Irwin added, "He has a beautiful understanding not only of his gifts, but also of the healing power of prayer." Sister Regina Lanahan sees him living the mission fully in his compassionate care of the dying.

Originally from Aldan, Pennsylvania, Dr. Much's life—except when he resided in his favorite place—the Maryland shore—has been spent in Delaware County. His Jewish father, Jacob, and his Catholic mother, Elizabeth, enriched his life with both traditions. With his father a dentist and his mother a nurse, his healing ministry came naturally.

However, above all, as he reflects on his life, his heart tightly encircles his three sons, nine grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

◀ Sister Angela Patrice Power came to know Dr. Much well when he became medical director and she was the administrator of Assisi House. He not only appreciated working with her but was enthralled by her Irish heritage. Together they brought a compassionate, caring model of care to Assisi House.



▲ Sister Theodore Klingseisen was one of the first sisters that Dr. Much came to know. Their conversations have a broad range from very deep to humorous, insightful, and up-to-date on the latest sport's scores.



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- ☐ Companion Program ☐ Franciscan Spiritual Centers (select one): ☐ Aston, PA ☐ Milwaukie, OR ☐ Young Franciscans
- ☐ Community Supported Agriculture: ☐ Sisters of St. Francis Foundation ☐ Vocations ☐ Franciscan Volunteer Program
- Red Hill Farm, Aston PA



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Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia



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SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS FOUNDATION



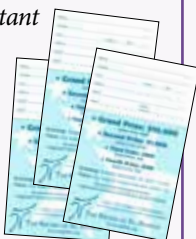
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17th Annual Raffle

Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia

Consider asking family members, friends, and coworkers to support this important fundraiser. Your donation will help the sisters provide for their elderly members and enable them to continue their ministries.



\$10/book of six tickets;
or \$2/each ticket

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Third Prize: \$500

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Seller's Prize: \$50

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Sisters Offer Statement of Support

The Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia have had a corporate stand on immigration since 2009. In light of recent events both in the U.S. and in our world, the Justice and Peace Committee developed a Statement of Support for our immigrant and refugee brothers and sisters, urging our sisters to contact congress persons encouraging them to respond in a compassionate and humane way in regard to detention and deportation of individuals. The statement can be found on our website, www.osfphila.org, under the "News and Media" section. The Corporate Stand can be found in the justice and peace section of the site.

► Visit www.osfphila.org/recent-news

*The Sisters of St. Francis
23rd Annual Golf Tournament
Monday, October 2, 2017
Penn Oaks Golf Club • West Chester, Pennsylvania*

For more information, contact Terri Gamble at (610) 558-6143 or tgamble@osfphila.org.

Get into the Swing!

Time for Tea — A Delicious Way to Say Thanks

The sisters at our motherhouse in Aston held their annual tea party—complete with homemade baked goods—as a “Thank You” to our employees. Staff and students from Neumann University helped with the serving.



Jerome Burton, a member of the food service staff at Our Lady of Angels Convent, gets a chance to switch roles and be served at the annual tea party. Sr. Eileen Valerie Kulacz, a member of the Neumann University staff, is happy to be of service.

Sister Rose Cecilia Case was the first director of the Neumann Institute for Franciscan Studies and was a major influence in putting relationships ahead of agendas and making sure the Catholic Franciscan identity was shared in all aspects of campus life. Read more about the Neumann Institute on page 4. Here Sister Rose Cecilia is spreading her love of the Franciscan charism by giving a guided reflective tour to some youngsters during a St. Francis Day Celebration in 1998.

