


Volume 26.1 Spring/Summer 2023

NEWS

A Publication of  THE SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF PHILADELPHIA

A Space Reborn for the Jewels of Spokane

Also in this issue:

- Pastoral Ministry:
For the Love of Community
- People & Places
- Sharing the Good News

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

*I have come that you may
have life, life in its fullness.*

John 10:10

The individuals featured in this volume of the Good News proclaim by who they are and by what they do, that the message of Jesus lives!

Sister Kathy Ganiel tells of her passion to be present to the people in her parish. Cultivating relationships requires doing what is needed and truly listening to the words and heart of another. The lives of those whom Sister Kathy encounters are enriched through shared sacred moments. From the day to day workings of the parish to the personal attention and care for all, she ministers with compassion and understanding, attentive to what stirs within each person's heart. Sister Kathy witnesses that our Franciscan Charism is alive!



**Sister Theresa Firenze, OSF
Congregational Minister**

The history of Joya in Spokane highlights the determination of the staff to continue the legacy of the Sisters of St. Francis. The tender healing of children occurs in an environment of respect and empowerment—core values that align with our mission. The care of each child also includes sensitivity to the child's family. “No family will ever be turned away for financial reasons,” assures Teresa Conway. The ministry of Joya unearths the jewels which appear in the everyday miracles beheld in each moment—in every muscle strengthened and new task mastered. Recognizing the potential and goodness of each individual offers a fullness of life to God's little ones.

The warm welcome offered to each of God's children, young, old, and in between makes all the difference! Sister Kathy and the Joya staff share that welcome in their ministries. Together they mirror the reverence of Jesus himself—recognizing that each person is created in the image and likeness of God.

The promise, “I have come that you may have life, life in its fullness” (John 10:10) becomes enfleshed when anyone of us embraces the challenge to do what we can to make a difference, great or small, in the life of another. By our actions we demonstrate that life is worth living. Who awaits your tender loving care?

May God Bless You Always and in All Ways!

Theresa Firenze, OSF

A Space Reborn *for the Jewels*

THE NAME JOYA
“NOT ONLY CONVEYS
A SENSE OF JOY,
BUT ‘IN SPANISH
THIS WORD MEANS
GEM OR JEWEL.’”



Toddlers enrolled in Joya's early intervention program work on their fine motor skills as they paint clovers for St. Patrick's Day.

In 1890, it wasn't uncommon to see a destitute child alone on the streets of Spokane, Washington. Spokane was still the Wild West and these children had often lost their parents to disease, horrific accidents, or—in some cases—had simply been abandoned. Father George Mackin, SJ, president of Gonzaga College and pastor of the only

Early Childhood Special Education teacher Rebekah Edvalson shares a book with the children in her group at Joya Child and Family Development Center. In addition to various therapies, socialization is an important part of what happens at Joya. Children learn by seeing what their peers are doing, and this includes some typically developed peers who also visit the center.

of Spokane



local Catholic Church at the time, was repeatedly confronted with the necessity of providing for the children's needs. Familiar with the work of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, he contacted the congregation, and soon a group of determined sisters moved to Washington State to open St. Joseph's Orphanage.

Since that moment, the ground on which St. Joseph's Orphanage stood has been a place of welcome, hope, and care for children and families. The orphanage would later become St. Joseph's Children's Home, then St. Joseph's Family Center (SJFC), a holistic facility offering counseling and spirituality programs.



Speech Language Pathologist Ashley Potter motions to a child as she works on language development during one of Joya's group sessions.

In 2016, after over 125 years of providing love and resources to those in need, and after much prayer and discernment, the sisters decided to sell the complex due to ongoing financial and operating challenges. However, given the history, the thought of the property going to a commercial enterprise did not feel right. Though its location along the Spokane River and in the heart of the university district made it attractive to many buyers, the sisters wanted to ensure that whoever purchased the property would be respectful of its past and carry on part of their legacy.

As it turned out, the perfect candidate was already right in front of them. Joya Child and Family Development, then known as the Spokane Guilds' School and Neuromuscular Center, had been hoping to relocate for years. The nonprofit serving children with developmental disabilities from birth to age three, had been leasing an unoccupied public-school building

continued on page 6

Two-year-old Amber gains independence, learning to walk with the help of a gait trainer. Early intervention can make it possible for children to develop skills such as walking and talking, even when those skills weren't previously thought possible for them.





In 1891 the original St. Joseph's Orphanage was built so that sisters could care for the abandoned and orphaned children of Spokane. To commemorate the history of the land, medals of patron saints were buried when new construction began for Joya. Items were also placed in a time capsule to further preserve the sisters' legacy including a vintage wood stamp block with the design of the old St. Joseph Orphanage; a bronze leaf from the "Tree of Giving" that represents those who made significant donations to the center; and a book mark with the mission of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia.



**“IT’S SUCH A
WONDERFUL
THING TO GET
TO CARRY ON
THE SISTERS’
LEGACY IN
SOME WAY.”**

continued from page 5

from the district for the past 41 years and was looking for property to own and expand.

Joya’s former director, Dick Boysen, had reached out to SJFC director, Sister Pat Millen, OSF, for many years to express interest in the property, but he was always met with the same response: it wasn’t for sale. When the time came in 2017, though, these two entities would turn out to be perfectly-matched.

Gems and Jewels

Joya initially began in 1960 as the Guilds’ School, comprised of a number of Women’s Guilds doing charity work. The women recognized that families with disabled children required assistance and began offering respite care. The school was

a place for parents to drop off their child if they needed to run errands or attend to other needs. Over time, this humble volunteer service evolved. Soon, the women were asking what they could do to help these children develop skills. They hired a physical therapist and a special education teacher long before special education was firmly established in public schools. The organization continued to grow and went on to receive the designation of a Neurodevelopmental Center of Excellence by the Department of Health.

In 2019, after the purchase of the sisters’ land, the Guilds’ School felt the need to rebrand. The word “guild” was confusing, now being more associated with workers’ unions. “Neuromuscular Center” also sounded intimidating, as though the organization only catered to severe medical cases. “One of the words that kept popping up when we were debating our new name was ‘joy,’” said Teresa Conway, Joya’s capital campaign manager. Not only did ‘Joya’



Teresa Conway, Joya capital campaign manager, and Colleen Fuchs, Joya executive director, at the groundbreaking for their new facility in March 2021.

convey a sense of joy, but “in Spanish, this word means gem or jewel. We loved that, the idea that these children are gems and jewels to be discovered and treasured.”

A Worthy Cause

As the Guild School and Joya were evolving over the years, the sisters were running another valuable ministry elsewhere at St. Anne’s Maternity Home. This place had also grown to provide care for special needs babies, aligning the purposes of the two organizations even further.



Colleen’s son, Tommy (below), gets support from occupational therapist Joy Eastgate at Joya’s former location in 2002. Teresa’s son, James (right), learns to explore his world on wheels with support from physical therapist Cheryl Morgan in 2012.



The value of such work can’t be overstated as evidenced by the personal stories of those whose lives have been touched by a child with special needs. “In 2010, my son James got sick with pneumonia at three months of age,” said Teresa. “Up until then everything had seemed typical, but over the weeks he was hospitalized, we determined something was wrong.” James had been born without a corpus callosum—the bundle of nerve fibers that connects the left and right hemispheres of the brain. Teresa brought him to Joya. She’d been told he may never walk or talk, but while James still has developmental delays, he is now able to walk and communicate non-verbally. “He’s off to the races!” she said, reflecting on the range of motion he now enjoys. “He’s doing more than he ever would have had we not learned the power of early intervention.”

Joya’s executive director Colleen Fuchs has a similar story. When earning her degree in special education, she both worked at St. Anne’s Maternity Home and did her student teaching at the Guilds’ School. However, it wasn’t until many years later that she would be back in the Guilds’ School’s orbit. The youngest of her four sons, Tommy, had a stroke when he was born and suffered an unusual and severe

bleed at the top of his brain stem. “I knew right away where I would take him for care if he survived,” she said.

Despite the fact she was told Tommy would never walk, talk, or be able to care for himself in the most basic of ways, he is now a 22-year-old bartender who played football in high school and attends Eastern Washington University. Colleen credits this to the early care he received at the Guilds’ School. When he was in seventh grade, both he and Colleen spoke at one of the Guilds’ School’s fundraisers, later leading to Colleen’s current role.

Perhaps the success of both James and Tommy has not only to do with the care they received, but also with the work the organization did with their families. Joya’s methods demonstrate the same respect for the individual that the Sisters of St. Francis hold so dear. “When we came here, it was the first place where people didn’t say, ‘I’m so sorry,’” said Teresa. People often mean well, yet such statements can diminish the beauty and potential of the child. “Here, we were greeted by people who were excited to see us, who saw James as a beautiful child and said he’s going to play and learn and you’ll be ok,” she explained. “This was our first sense of hope, of we can do this... A

continued on page 8

continued from page 7

big thing for parents is not stopping when you get a diagnosis that sounds dreadful, because it really isn't when you get the right care and help."

Colleen echoed this sentiment. "We're able to greet new parents and say congratulations on your beautiful child. Let's focus on the child's strengths. Yes, there will be needs, and we'll focus on them too, but let's reinforce the child's and family's strengths from the start." Since parents are the ones that will be with the child the most, parental empowerment is key.

Another key factor of Joya's work, which aligns with the mission of the Sisters of St. Francis, is that no family will ever be turned away for financial reasons. Thirty-three percent of Joya's annual budget comes from donations. The funds raised each year go toward covering the cost of care for families who are unable to pay. Even families with insurance often find that their child may not be covered for everything they need. "When that happens," said Teresa, "we don't say 'We're done.' We focus on what's needed for the child to thrive, not on what the family can afford."

Preserving History

Throughout the process of the land sale and construction, Joya kept the sisters involved.

In place of St. Joseph Family Center's four cottages and administration building is one



Every other month, sisters and companions still get to enjoy the new building and property as Joya graciously hosts the sisters' companions meeting. At the first of these gatherings, coinciding with a visit from Congregational Minister Sister Theresa Firenze, Joya provided a BBQ lunch and grand tour of the new facilities.

of the original cottages and a new two-story building designed for ease of access for special needs children.

Sister Patricia Novak, OSF, who lived on the property for a number of years, was touched to be asked if there were specific plants or trees that the sisters wanted preserved. "There was one weeping cherry tree that had special significance," she said. The tree had been planted to culminate a one-day memorial event for families who had suffered loss due to miscarriage. Parents had the opportunity to write the name of their baby and place it in an urn which was buried at the root of the tree. She told Joya that they would want it

preserved, and it was. Sister Patty regularly takes bike rides on the Centennial Trail that runs alongside the property and looks for that tree every time she passes by. On some days, when the ground is covered in snow, you can see footprints leading to and from the tree and a small gift, like a Matchbox car, placed there.

Also preserved is a set of four stone pillars at the entryway from the original orphanage building. The plan is to put a commemorative plaque on these pillars, to acknowledge the sisters. A serenity garden from the sisters' time there also remains on the property. When it fell into disrepair, Noah Hoppe, an alum of Joya's programs,

Sisters Pat Millen and Patricia Novak stand beside Sister Joanne Clavel, who gave a moving speech and offered a prayer at the grand opening of the new Joya facility.



Teresa, James, and Eric Conway attended the grand opening of Joya's new facility on May 20, 2022. Teresa credits Joya for the tremendous progress James has made in his life, noting that James is "super joyful."



One weeping cherry tree on the property was also the site of a memorial for babies that had been lost due to miscarriage. Parents wrote the names of their babies on papers that were placed in an urn and buried at the foot of the tree. Joya will preserve this meaningful place.



Another alumna of the Joya program, Noah Hoppe, restored the sisters' Serenity Garden as part of his Eagle Scout project when it fell into disrepair.



Sister Patricia Novak, pictured outside the new facility, is flanked by the old pillars that were incorporated into the new design space.



restored it as his Eagle Scout project. It includes the original serenity garden sign from St. Joseph's Family Center and a new bench built by Noah.

As the new building was being erected, the sisters were invited to participate in a myriad of ways. Perhaps the most meaningful, though, was the Medallion Drop. When the concrete was poured to lay the new foundation, the medals of four saints were "dropped" by the sisters in that foundation as well: Saint Francis, to honor the sisters; Saint Margaret, patron saint of children with special needs; Saint Nicholas, patron saint of children; and Saint Joseph, patron saint of families and craftsmen.

Sister Joanne Clavel, OSF, was invited to write a prayer for this ceremony. In it, she thanked God for planting the dream of this new building in the hearts of so many and noted that, "This sacred ground will now open its arms and welcome Joya. It will surround children once again and be a place of healing... We ask that the spirit of the Franciscan sisters who ministered here be present and surround this property with peace and calm."

Deep Gratitude

The Spokane Franciscan Companions in Mission group continues to meet once a month on the property, graciously hosted by Joya. In the words of Colleen, "This helps keep the sisters connected to what we

do, knowing that in some way their work continues here. We're still helping children and families, and those children and families would not be here if not for this land."

"It's such a wonderful thing to get to carry on the sisters' legacy in some way," Teresa agreed. "We will always hold them close to our hearts and in the work we do here. We'll be forever grateful that they sold

us this land." In turn, the congregation is delighted that Joya continues its mission of being a welcoming presence, providing care for children and walking with families into a future filled with hope. It has truly been a meshing of the mission of the Sisters of St Francis of Philadelphia and Joya of Spokane. ■

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

HOW YOU CAN HELP...

- **Donate to Joya.** In addition to operating as a nonprofit, Joya will never turn anyone away due to financial reasons. As a result, the majority of the budget they raise each year goes toward covering the cost of care for families. To learn more about Joya and make a donation, visit joya.org.
- **Spread the word.** When children are born with developmental delays, families often aren't aware of all the resources available. Be sure to share information on Joya and similar organizations in your area with those who need it.
- **Show respect.** While they mean well, many people's go-to reaction when they hear about a child born with challenges is to say, "I'm sorry." However, this can negate the value of the child. Instead, focus not on the child's limits, but on their possibilities, and celebrate that a beautiful child has come into the world.
- **Seek out opportunities to volunteer with special needs kids.** You yourself may volunteer, or if you have a developmentally typical child, you can also consider having them join in at events at organizations like Joya. This way, special needs children can learn by seeing them in action, and your own child will better understand and accept developmental differences.
- **Think about how you can perpetuate the sisters' legacy in your own life.** Whether it's by commemorating good work they've done or continuing that good work yourself, how can their legacy show up in your day-to-day?

► Staff and students of St. Dominic's Vacation Bible School present Sister Jean O'Connor with a token of their appreciation.



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.



Our new U.S. Citizen, Sister Cathy Ndambiri

FLORIDA

After 25 years ministering to the people at St. Dominic Parish in Panama City, Florida, **Sister Jean O'Connor** moved north to Aston, Pennsylvania. Sister Jean's ministry at St. Dominic encompassed many aspects of parish life, including the Young Disciples and catechesis programs, sacramental preparation and the RCIA program, the Vacation Bible School program, community outreach, and fundraising. The parish celebrated Sister Jean's 25 years at St. Dominic's with a children's aloha Mass and celebration on Sunday, August 14, and an adults only bon voyage party on Sunday, August 21. Sister Jean said, "Being with the children, their families, and our dedicated catechists has been the highlight."

team celebrated Sister Cathy's new citizenship with a dinner on January 19. Sister Immaculee Burke prepared the prayers and Sister Barbara Harold decorated the dining room in patriotic red, white, and blue. The kitchen staff prepared a spaghetti dinner, Sister Cathy's favorite, and everyone enjoyed ice cream cake for dessert.



PENNSYLVANIA

Jubilee USA Network—of which the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia are founding members—is an alliance of more than 75 U.S. organizations and 750 faith communities working with 50 global partners. (www.jubileeusa.org). In Fall 2022, Jubilee USA Network invited everyone to participate in a project to **break the chains** of global poverty, debt, and economic injustice. Sisters and companions were invited and participated to make paper chains symbolizing the chains of debt and poverty felt by people around the world. Sister Catharine O'Donnell collected the chains and sent them to Jubilee USA Network in Washington, D.C. On October 15, Jubilee delivered the chains to the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in Washington, D.C.



UNITED STATES

On December 21, 2022, **Sister Cathy Ndambiri**, a Sister of Mary Immaculate from Kenya, became an American citizen. Sister Cathy is currently a nursing student at Neumann University and lives at Our Lady of Angels Convent as a guest of the Sisters of St. Francis. Residents of Our Lady of Angels and the leadership

► Sister Nora Nash protests for the right to clean water.



WASHINGTON, D.C.

Sister Marie Lucey was featured in the September 2022 edition of the *St. Anthony Messenger* magazine for her tireless pursuit of justice for all. From her first assignment as a sister, teaching school in the South, Sister Marie became aware of systemic racism. “I became aware of structural racism and realized that action to help change systems was needed. My lifelong passion for social justice was born,” Sister Marie said. The article also recounts Sister Marie’s work with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious as their director of mission and advocacy and her work with Franciscan Action Network, first as director of advocacy and later as associate director.



Sister Maria Orlandini and Sister Marie Lucey rally in support of DACA.



PENNSYLVANIA

Sister Nora Nash was recently featured in an impact story on Reinvestment Fund’s website (www.reinvestment.com). The article detailed Sister Nora’s work as the director of Corporate Social Responsibility and her recent retirement from this position. In the article, author Meghan Maguire notes, “With Sister Nora at the helm of Corporate Social Responsibility, the congregation has made waves as being one of the most unlikely, yet highly effective, corporate activist groups. But what is less known, is that their longstanding involvement with community development financial institutions (CDFIs), like the Reinvestment Fund, was part of their humble start to using investment as a means to achieve social justice.”



NEW JERSEY

A Union Catholic High School senior is on her way to Yale thanks in part to **Sister Donna Jo Repetti**. An article posted on the school’s website (www.unioncatholic.org) notes, Casey Arias received a rare QuestBridge National College Match Scholarship to attend Yale University. Sister Donna Jo, Casey’s school counselor, said that Casey worked very hard to achieve this scholarship and is very deserving. Casey credits Sister Donna Jo with helping her stay on track with the many required documents and with offering support throughout the process.



PENNSYLVANIA

On November 30, the Chester Community Coalition held an appreciation dinner for the advisory board and staff in Chester, Pennsylvania. **Sister Jean Rupertus** was honored for her founding efforts in establishing the coalition and for her service to the community of Chester. The coalition began in 2018 when Sister Jean, Fran Stier, and volunteers applied for a three-year anti-violence grant from Catholic Health Initiatives. The mission of the Chester Community Coalition is “to heal the psychological and emotional impact of homicides and reduce trauma-related violence in the City of Chester.” Learn more: www.chestercommunitycoalition.org.

Sister Jean Rupertus speaks at the CCC appreciation dinner.



► Sister Kathy Ganiel is energized by her interactions with her congregation. Here, she greets children as they enter the Lenten program session. This program, attended by both parents and students, included prayer, singing, and of course, fostering community.

▼ Sister Kathy jokes with two catechist teachers, sisters Lluleidy and Aveleiri Rufino. It is volunteer catechist teachers like Lluleidy and Aveleiri that make it possible for Sister Kathy to offer and organize the religious education program.



► Sister Kathy welcomes and talks to one of the smallest members of the congregation, lighting up his day.



Pastoral Ministry: For the Love of

Imagine a job that can only be described as a “kaleidoscope”: an ever-shifting, endlessly evolving array of experiences, challenges, and joys. This is how Sister Kathy Ganiel, OSF, feels about her ministry as a pastoral associate for Our Lady of Mercy (OLM) in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. “It’s like looking through a kaleidoscope,” she said. “You never quite know what you’re going to see or do that day.” When asked what

a pastoral associate does, Sister Kathy replied, “Whatever needs to be done that no one else is doing.” It’s a role that can vary wildly from day to day, and Sister Kathy wouldn’t have it any other way. Her tasks range from providing music at Mass, to religious education, to planning retreats, to ministering to refugees, and everything in between.

Sister Kathy thrives on wearing so many different hats. She loves the feeling

that every day holds something a little different.

Spiritual Beginnings

Sister Kathy felt a strong call to religious life early in life. When discerning which order to join, the response she got from Sister Linda Bowen, OSF, was indicative of exactly what would set the Sisters of St. Francis apart. While other orders simply offered



“SO MUCH OF MY
WORK IS JUST ABOUT
LISTENING, ABOUT
BEING PRESENT.”

While this new model of ministry didn’t last long—eventually, the parish did find a pastor—Sister Kathy stood the test of time. Over twenty years later, she is still an integral part of the parish community.

Creating Community

Ironically, doing this work in North Carolina meant leaving her sisters in Pennsylvania behind, and with them, the very community life that first drew Sister Kathy to the congregation. When asked whether it’s a challenge to live alone, so far from her sisters, Sister Kathy joked that she is intentionally “involved in many, many committees so that I always have a reason to come north.” She also remarked, “Thank God for technology and Zoom,” which offers a chance to connect regularly with her sisters virtually.

“We have a Secular Franciscan fraternity here as well, the Fraternity of St. Clare,” she said. “They’re my touchstone, helping me keep my feet and soul grounded.” Sister Kathy serves as a spiritual assistant to the fraternity’s 20 or so members.

Sister Geri Rogers, a Sister of St. Joseph, is currently working at OLM as the school’s principal. “We often collaborate in our respective ministries,” Sister Kathy said, “but we also support each other as ‘sisters’ by making time to share meals together and to celebrate each other’s birthdays.”

Embracing Diversity

One of the first things Sister Kathy mentions about her parish community is its diversity; she refers to it as a “mini United Nations.” The parish consists of members from Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, the Philippines, and Vietnam, among others.

continued on page 14

Community

to send literature, Sister Linda also said, “The best way to get to know us is to come spend time with us.” “That struck hard,” Sister Kathy said. It helped her feel the sense of community that embodies the Sisters of St. Francis.

She entered the congregation in 1976 and professed vows in 1979, beginning her ministry in education and teaching at various schools. However, prior to her entrance, she had helped out with

her local parish and taught CCD, so pastoral ministry held a special place in her heart.

When a Franciscan friar, Jude DeAngelo, OFM, invited her to take part in the development of a new model for pastoral ministry where a team would unite to serve in place of a pastor, Sister Kathy felt called to accept. After a period of discernment, she found herself moving to North Carolina, to her current parish.

HOW YOU CAN HELP...

- **Donate to support refugees.** Either through Our Lady of Mercy in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, or through another organization, these funds help to bring people out of life-or-death situations and to acclimate them to new surroundings.
- **Foster community.** Wherever you go, think about how you can foster community with those around you. Even when not with your immediate family, you can develop a sense of community by being helpful, respectful, and kind to those you interact with.
- **Embrace diversity.** Instead of shying away from diversity, embrace it, and look to learn about other languages and cultures as a means to connect.

continued from page 13

When she first moved to North Carolina, Sister Kathy was aware that she'd be working with a diverse population; in particular, a large Spanish-speaking population. With this in mind, she spent time at a cultural center in Texas prior to her move. "It was an immersion experience, speaking pretty much only Spanish," she recalled. As Sister Kathy has found to be the case with so many undertakings, learning another language offered insights into the miracles that surround us every day. For instance, "when a woman gives birth, the Spanish expression *"dar a luz"* doesn't translate as 'to give birth,' but instead, 'to give light.'"

Spiritual Refuge

Recognizing and uniting groups from many varied backgrounds includes Sister Kathy's work with Karenni refugees



Sister Kathy is greeted by some of her biggest fans during a gathering to make Easter arts and crafts. She has been an integral part of Our Lady of Mercy's community for over 20 years.

from Burma. In a struggle that began in 1984 and continues to this day, Burmese people have been placed in camps so as to weaken any political resistance they might pose to their government. Refugees cope not only with the loss of home but, in some instances, the murder of family members. Those involved with OLM initially fled Burma for refuge in Thailand.

While the Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem provided for many of the refugees' physical needs, including transportation to the United States, Sister Kathy's mission is about spiritual and emotional wellbeing. She helps the Karenni transition into American life while also dealing with the personal ramifications they've experienced. Not only is there depression and trauma within the community, but there is also daily fear about the continuing turmoil in Burma. OLM holds Masses in Burmese for the refugees and—with a donation from her congregation—purchased hymnals for them in their native language.

The bond that has formed between Sister Kathy and the Karenni is reflected in times of joy with gestures that transcend the language barrier. For instance, the Karenni went Christmas caroling at Sister Kathy's house and also presented her with traditional Karenni clothing to wear on Christmas Day as part of their celebration. It is a relationship that is equally reflected



Sister Kathy checks in on an RICA program—a Spanish-speaking version of the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. This important ministry makes it possible for adults to become Catholics and continue to grow in their spiritual life.

in and strengthened in times of hardship. Unfortunately, the Karenni recently suffered two deaths in their community: a drowning and a suicide. In both cases, the deceased were very young. Sister Kathy's presence and assistance were all the more vital because family members had no idea how to proceed with a funeral in America.

Offering Solace

Although it's a difficult task, Sister Kathy feels particularly blessed to serve those who are grieving. When someone passes away, she meets with the family and walks them through the process of preparing for a funeral. "So much of my work is just about listening, about being present," she said.

When the body of a man who had gone missing on the Appalachian Trail five

years prior was discovered, his mother struggled to find closure. Sister Kathy, while not a counselor, simply talks with people in those situations and asks them to share stories about their loved ones. In the midst of their grief, she helps them to center themselves and find peace.

“A few weeks ago, in church, a man whose wife had died six months earlier asked, ‘Can I just sit with you?’” she shared. “At some point during the Mass, he said, ‘I just miss Helen so much. I just miss my wife.’ He was crying, but was comforted...It was touching that he was so in love with his wife and needed to share that message.”

Kaleidoscope Range

In addition to the kaleidoscopic range of responsibilities that fall to a pastoral associate, it's clear that a central part of Sister Kathy's role is to bring peace and growth to her community. One endeavor that has given Sister Kathy growth is music, which has been part of her life since she taught herself to play guitar as a teenager. “Music is the language of the soul,” she said.

“Many times in my life, when I felt most close to God, it was through music.” This is a gift she shares by singing and playing at some parish liturgies and weekly school

Masses. She also encourages children in the parish to grow in

► Sister Kathy with members of the Fraternity of Saint Clare. She serves as spiritual assistant to this local Franciscan Secular fraternity. It is one of the touchstones that keeps her connected to Franciscan life.



confidence and faith by sharing their own musical gifts at services.

Whatever she may give to her community, though, her emphasis is on how much they give back. She stresses that it's all about the people in her parish. When she asks for help, people step up, making it possible for her to manage her many responsibilities.

To give just one example, Sister Kathy's work in faith formation and the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) wouldn't be possible without the team of 106 catechists that have volunteered to help her provide these services to all 480 students that are currently enrolled.

“It's life-giving for me because the people are such life-givers,” she said. As she



▲ Sister Kathy's gift is connecting with the people in her parish, both in times of joy and in times of sorrow. She feels blessed to be able to be “present” for others.

describes her parish, her love clearly shines through. Community was what first drew her to the Sisters of St. Francis, and despite being apart from her sisters, community is what she has found. It's what fuels her purpose each day. Even without knowing what each day will hold, one thing is certain: just as light shines through a kaleidoscope, creating beauty, Sister Kathy's love for this community will continue to light the way. ■

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

Sister Kathy also provides more in-depth services to those who need them. This may include things like assisting with complicated paperwork, particularly when English as a second language would make it difficult for people to complete the work on their own.



Improving Young Lives, Strengthening Communities

“THE SUPPORT OF THE PETER McVERRY TRUST HAS ENSURED THAT THE EDUCATION OF MANY VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE CAN CONTINUE FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.” —SISTER CARMEL EARLS

Much has changed since we wrote about the Carline project in the spring 1998 *Good News*, but the center remains focused on its founding vision for its students—on non-judgmental support, empowerment, and autonomy and on dignity, respect, and equality. Dublin’s Peter McVerry Trust Carline Learning Centre educates young people, ages 13 to 17, who have been excluded from mainstream education because of educational, emotional, social, or behavioral challenges.

Carline was founded in 1992 by Sister Carmel Earls, OSF, and Derek Shortall as a parish project to counter negative behavior by youth from Dublin’s North Clondalkin area. The project began with five young people, ages 17 to 21, and two

rented sheds on a small plot of land. Sister Patricia Kidd, OSF, joined the team in 1993. From the beginning, Carline has sought to address second-generation unemployment and provide young people with a stable learning environment in spite of serious obstacles such as drug abuse or involvement in crime.

Skills for Life

One early project goal included directing the attention of young people away from the streets, especially from “joyriding” in stolen cars, and encouraging a positive respect for cars. The students were instructed in automotive mechanics while working on a classic Triumph Spitfire they helped to purchase through fundraising.

The project quickly expanded. Volunteers set up gardens, and soon the young people were assisting with the preparation of their meals using home-grown vegetables. Carpentry skills, pottery, and other arts were added, and the students took pride in creating useful, attractive items. With time, the activities further expanded to include educational skills such as reading and arithmetic, and Carline purchased additional space.

Carline’s holistic environment fostered interest from the larger community. As the first year concluded with great success for all five students, referrals for placing younger children poured in. Eight vulnerable students from local schools came twice a week for intensive instruction in social skills and learning techniques.



One of the first projects for youth at Carline allowed for an automotive class with hands-on training. Another early program offered at Carline was that of gardening.





▲ Sister Carmel Earls with CEO Pat Doyle and others from the Peter McVerry Trust—established in 1983 by Father Peter McVerry, SJ. ► (Photos, top to bottom) In the new facility, the students have the opportunity to use updated computer lab, gym, and classrooms.

Expanding Programs and Facilities

When it became obvious that a growing number of local teenagers were dropping out of school, it was agreed that expanded, structured services were required. Carline applied for a government grant that was approved on December 25, 1995. The staff grew, and soon six acres of land were acquired from the South

Dublin County Council. With substantial financial assistance from the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia and other generous donors, a 5,000-square-foot building was erected so that now, alongside classrooms and offices, the center boasts gym facilities, a woodworking shop, an art room, a canteen, a computer lab, and comfortable break rooms. By 1997, 20 students, ages 13 to 17, were participating. Mary Robinson, then president of Ireland, formally opened the new Carline Learning Centre that September.

When requests began coming in from social workers and the court system to place young people involved in substance abuse, a second Carline building was constructed, opening in 2000. Staff participated in workshops on helping troubled youth and developed individualized social and skill-building plans.

Carline's Strong Future

By 2018, despite its recognized success, the Carline Learning Centre was struggling from a lack of government funding. Sister Carmel Earls and Derek Shortall met with Patrick Doyle, CEO of the Peter McVerry Trust, to inform him of the centre's dilemma and receive advice. The Peter McVerry



Trust—established in 1983 by Father Peter McVerry, SJ—is an Irish charity committed to reducing homelessness and the harm caused by substance misuse and social disadvantage. Patrick Doyle expressed the trust's willingness to help. In June 2019, the Carline Learning Centre was transferred to the trust, with Carline's manager and staff staying in their positions.

The learning center remains a safe and inclusive environment where, regardless of circumstance, students can pursue education on their terms and at their pace, often later moving on to further education or training. The Peter McVerry Trust Carline Learning Centre will continue to benefit students—and, in turn, their families and communities—for generations. ■

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

HOW YOU CAN HELP...

- You can support the work of the Peter McVerry Trust and the Carline Learning Centre by donating through their website, www.pmvtrust.ie/donate, or by calling +353 1 823 0776.
- Consider volunteering in a literacy or tutoring program or in an afterschool activity for at-risk young people in your area.

SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

Everyone has within a piece of good news.

— Anne Frank (adapted)

See more good news at www.osfphila.org

Students Move to Glen Riddle Hall

On Thursday, September 8, in the Bachmann Auditorium, Neumann University held a blessing of the newly named Glen Riddle Hall. The event was attended by many sisters, Neumann faculty, and students. Sisters Kathy Dougherty, vice president for mission and ministry, and Linda DeCero, director of pastoral ministry, said a few words about the collaboration between the Sisters of St. Francis and Neumann University and welcomed the students to their new living quarters. The blessing ceremony was followed by a tour of the dorm, which is



Dr. Chris Domes, president of Neumann University, gives sisters and students a tour of Glen Riddle Hall.

located in the former Franciscan Spiritual Center. Thirty-seven students moved into Our Lady of Angels Convent this fall and have become the first contingent of Neumann undergraduates to call the historic building their campus home. Glen Riddle Hall's name was chosen because of the connection to the first sisters who settled at the motherhouse. In the early 1900s these sisters were known as the "Glen Riddle Franciscans" by their neighbors. The location where the sisters laid the cornerstone for their motherhouse, Our Lady of Angels Convent, is historically known as La Verna Heights, Glen Riddle, Pennsylvania. The name Glen Riddle Hall reflects both the history of the sisters and the significance of the physical site of the building. News of the students' move into Our Lady of Angels has caused quite a media storm. On November 9, 2022, Melissa Korn wrote a story for the *Wall Street Journal* about the college students moving into a convent. Korn wrote, "sisters and students are now

getting in the habit of meeting up for nature walks, trading travel tips, planning knitting lessons, extending occasional dinner invitations, and marveling at the lives one another leads." The story was soon picked up by local news stations WGN, Fox29 News, and 6 ABC. The story was also featured in the *Washington Post* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

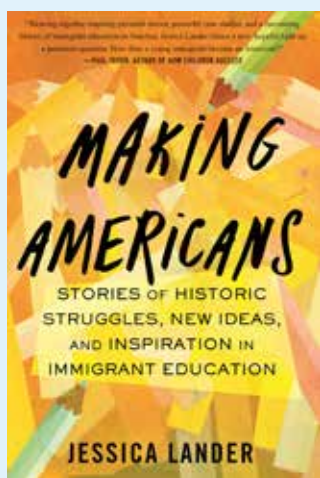
TCHS Best Private High School

The Catholic High School of Baltimore has been voted "Best Private High School for Girls" in a Reader's Choice contest by *Baltimore Style* magazine. Dr. Barbara Nazelrod—President of TCHS and member of the Class of 1968—said, "this honor is a reflection of the hard work and support of the entire Catholic High community, including students, and their families, our outstanding faculty and staff, our loyal alumnae, our generous donors, our Board of Trustees, and the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia." Dr. Nazelrod also shared that she hopes that this honor "will demonstrate to others, including prospective students, how special and wonderful this school is as we continue to joyfully and effectively live out our mission of educating young women to be strong, empowered, courageous, joyful witnesses to the Gospel and agents of change for the good of our community and our world."



A new sign in front of Catholic High's campus highlights Baltimore Style "Best Private High School for Girls" award.

Making Americans Book Featuring Sister Francis Georgia Vicente



The book *Making Americans: Stories of Historic Struggles, New Ideas, and Inspiration in Immigrant Education* takes the reader on a powerful and urgent journey—told through captivating stories of the past, the present, and the

personal—to understand what it takes for immigrant students to become Americans. The writer, Jessica Lander, in her search to uncover the history of courageous individuals behind landmark movements that transformed how schools teach immigrant-origin students, was intrigued by the story of Sister Francis Georgia Vicente and sought research from Sister Helen Jacobson to include in her book. In her “thank you” note to Sister Helen, Jessica explains, “... I’m so excited to finally be able to share this book with you and with others. I think the stories in the book are deeply engaging and powerful, and that the lessons and ideas are important. ... thank you again for teaching me about Sister Francis Georgia’s advocacy and letting me share that story in *Making Americans*.” The chapter on Sister Francis Georgia begins on page 285 of the book and talks about the “outspoken bilingual nun and daughter of Spanish immigrants” who taught for a time in Puerto Rico and elsewhere and who made a difference by advocating for children who were being excluded from an education due to their origin and lack of documentation.



In Memoriam

Sister Jacinta Marie Brazil
March 21, 2023

Sister Joan Cooper
(formerly Sister St. Catherine)
March 18, 2023

Sister Elizabeth Ellen Kane
(formerly Sister Paul Anthony)
March 17, 2023

Sister Anne Bernadette Mancini
(formerly Sister Marie Francelle)
February 9, 2023

Sister Nancy Crossen
(formerly Sister Mark Francis)
February 7, 2023

Sister Alice Klein
(formerly Sister Margaretta Marie)
January 30, 2023

Sister Elizabeth Mary Murphy
(formerly Sister Reparata)
January 10, 2023

Sister Joan Dreisbach
(formerly Sister Henry Kathryn)
January 2, 2023

Sister Anthony Eileen Reidy
January 1, 2023

Sister Agnes Bonner
(formerly Sister Catherine Michael)
December 13, 2022

Sister Anne Conrad Koerner
November 30, 2022

Sister Alphonsus Moran
November 29, 2022

Sister Helen Mary Reynolds
November 7, 2022

Sister Mary Dominic Piscotta
November 6, 2022

Sister Dorothy Elizabeth Real
(formerly Sister Marie Patricia)
October 19, 2022

Sister Helen Ann Gaidos
(formerly Sister John Andre)
October 8, 2022

Sister St. Joseph Brennon
October 8, 2022

Sister Anita Cattafesta
(formerly Sister St. Rita)
October 6, 2022

Sister Susan Kathleen Dentz
(formerly Sister Marie Mercedes)
September 22, 2022

Sister Mary Louise Heinle
(formerly Sister Kathleen Joseph)
September 5, 2022

Sister Bridget McNamara
(formerly Sister Daniel Helene)
August 19, 2022

Focus

► During her novitiate, Colleen volunteered at the AIDS Babies Home. Even in her ministry life as a Sister of St. Francis, Colleen was very drawn to children and motherhood.



COLLEEN COLLINS

Colleen Collins first met the Sisters of St. Francis as a student at the Catholic High School of Baltimore. Inspired by the sisters' kindness and presence, Colleen decided to become a sister. She began attending "Come and See" weekends and eventually moved to Philadelphia to start her candidacy. She took her first vows in 1996 and final vows in 2001. "Leaving religious life was the hardest choice I have ever had to make," Colleen said. "I had been fostering a little boy for three years while with the sisters. When it became clear that the child could not be reunited with his mother, Catholic Social Services asked me to adopt him. I couldn't adopt and be a sister. I didn't want to leave the community, but I also could not abandon that little boy." Colleen went on to adopt the boy as well as three more children. "Being their mother has been a tremendous challenge and the most rewarding experience of my life," said Colleen.

The former member, Secular Franciscan, and companion, was appointed director of the Franciscan Companions in Mission in October 2021, succeeding Patricia St Clair in the role. She also recently accepted the position as communication assistant where she helps to write and edit articles for both *Community News* and *Good News*, takes minutes, proofs and edits congregational material, and posts to the internal and external websites.

As director of the Franciscan Companions in Mission, Colleen is responsible for the oversight and administration of the companion relationship. Collaborating with the charism department, coordinators of faith groups, and the advisory council, Colleen's job also includes planning events such as annual retreats that help companions participate in the life of the congregation and offer opportunities for ongoing formation. She recently started a Friday evening prayer group, as well as a virtual companions' faith group—designed to include companions who live in geographical areas in which the congregation doesn't have a companion group. When asked about Colleen's role as director of the Franciscan Companions in Mission, Patricia St. Clair said, "Colleen is the perfect person for this role because of her relationships and history with the sisters, her integrity, and her commitment to the charism of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia."

► Colleen made her profession as a Secular Franciscan surrounded by many of the Sisters of St. Francis who have accompanied her on her journey over the years.



▲ Colleen celebrates Christmas with her mother, sister, children—Jhyree, Christian, Kyree, and Kamaya.

"HAVING KNOWN COLLEEN SINCE 1993, IT HAS BEEN A JOY FOR ME TO MAINTAIN A RELATIONSHIP THAT HAS ENRICHED MY LIFE THROUGH HER MANY YEARS AS A SISTER OF ST. FRANCIS AND AS A MOTHER. I AM HAPPY TO CALL HER NOT ONLY A COWORKER, BUT A FRIEND."

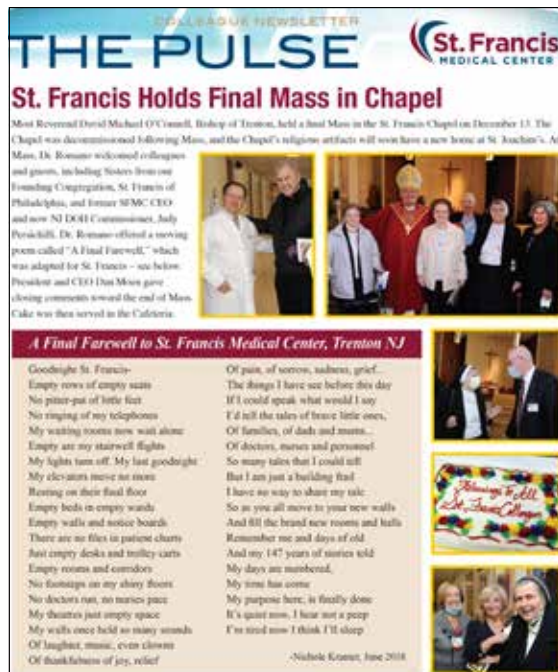
— SISTER CATHARINE O'DONNELL

St. Francis Medical Center Closing

On Tuesday, December 20, St. Francis Medical Center in Trenton, New Jersey, closed its doors and was acquired by Capital Health. According to a recent article in the *Trentonian*, "On Dec. 21, St. Francis will no longer operate as an acute-care hospital. It will remain in the location for a Satellite Emergency Department and related services, the Medical Clinic, the CARES program, and as a home for the School of Nursing and School of Radiologic Technology. St. Francis will be renamed Capital Health-East Trenton."

Several Sisters of St. Francis attended the final Mass held at the hospital chapel on December 13. In the last communication sent by the hospital, *The Pulse*, President/CEO Dan Moen said:

"Part of the fabric of what makes St. Francis the special place that it is includes our longevity and our Catholic identity. It is with pride that we think of our long history beginning with the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia's arrival in the 1870s. Here we are today, almost 150 years later. It is the sisters that I think about as we plan to forge ahead. Originally, it is said that the sisters were going to build a school here in Trenton but realized a hospital is what residents needed most. The sisters adapted, and that's what we must do now. These past years have brought financial and operational declines to St. Francis that are unsustainable. We are now doing what we must for residents to have what they need: continued high-quality, comprehensive health care services."



The cover of the *Pulse* newsletter shows photos of our sisters attending the final Mass as well as a farewell poem.

CELEBRATING

Jubilee

AS SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF
PHILADELPHIA

Congratulations to the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia celebrating milestones in their religious life! Join with us in congratulating them on many years of service to the people of God as Sisters of St. Francis.

70 years
Professed 1953

DIAMOND JUBILARIANS

SISTER MARIETTA CULHANE
SISTER MARIE PATRICE FEENEY
SISTER EILEEN HENNESSY
SISTER LEONORA JULIANI
SISTER ANNE MANCINI (DECEASED)
SISTER ANN MCFADDEN
SISTER MARIE MICHELLE MICHEL
SISTER NUALA KATHLEEN SWAN
SISTER MARY AGNES WALSH

50 years
Professed 1973

GOLDEN JUBILARIAN

SISTER MARY DAWSON SMITH

Recognize a name? Would you like to reconnect or send a congratulatory note? Send communications to Florence Smith; 609 S. Convent Road; Aston, PA 19014; communications@osfphila.org

New Director of Transitions



Sarah Lickfold

Transitions, our cosponsored ministry and a nonprofit working to end poverty and homelessness for women and children in Spokane, has named Sarah Lickfold as its next executive director, effective February 2023. She replaces Edie Rice-Sauer who has served in this role since 2012. "Transitions' Board of Directors is thrilled to have Sarah Lickfold as its next executive director. Sarah brings strong leadership, relationship building, and an incredible passion for our vision and mission to end poverty and homelessness for women and children in Spokane," said Heather Brandt, Transitions' board chair. Transitions' development director since 2018, Sarah builds on a career serving in education, banking, nonprofit, and social services, including two years in Peru as a Peace Corps Community Economic development volunteer. Born and raised in Eastern Washington, Sarah has a Master of Public Administration (MPA) from EWU and is passionate about moving forward the work toward a more just society for underserved and marginalized populations in her community.

Donor Spotlight

► The Smith children on the day Sister Pat entered the congregation. (L-R) With Sr. Pat is Chris, Ray, and Julie.



▼ Even though it's about a 250-mile round trip journey to Aston for the family, they always give generously of their time and talents.

THE SMITH FAMILY

The Smith's relationship with the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia dates back nearly 70 years. The family lived near the sisters' convent on Frankford Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland, and their four children attended St. Anthony of Padua School. In the days before the sisters drove, they would frequently ask the Smiths to chauffeur them around, as well as to help out with other odd jobs around the convent. The children often accompanied them.



After Pat, the eldest, entered the community, her parents and siblings continued to support the congregation and their college. Julie, her sister, widowed with two small boys, found support in the sisters she came to know. She saw the joy they expressed in their ministries and became a donor. Julie appreciates that when she donates, her contribution directly helps the sisters and those they serve. She said, "The return from giving is priceless; knowing that I've made the world, in some small way, a better place for others."

About 10 years ago Julie, her brothers, and their wives—Ray and Barbara and Chris and Marie—began attending the annual craft fair and later, Franciscan Night. They began to contribute their handiwork to the fundraisers. Ray has provided about 100 hand-made reindeer. Barb, a gifted baker, has donated dozens of delicious pound cakes. In addition, together they also supply beautiful hand-made, hand-painted birdhouses. Marie creates a plethora of innovative crafts, developing new ideas annually to accompany tried-and-true favorites! Chris assists by boxing and carrying goods for transport. They believe that helping to give smiles and joy to others is always worthwhile. Their son, Christopher, came on board last year making wooden crafts for the craft fair. In addition, the three families have generously contributed to foundation annual appeals.

The entire family readily agrees, that knowing so many of the sisters, through Sister Pat and the fundraising events, makes them feel like family. They recognize that they've been abundantly blessed and love sharing their blessings with others. Ray said, "This involvement also helps keep us out of trouble!" Sister Pat is grateful for and proud of her family's generosity to the congregation.

"THE GENEROSITY OF SPIRIT AND GIFT OF TIME SHOWN OVER THE YEARS BY THE SMITH FAMILY HAS BEEN SUCH A WITNESS OF THEIR LOVE OF SISTER PAT AND THE SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF PHILADELPHIA. WE ARE SO BLESSED BY THEIR PRESENCE IN OUR LIVES."

— SISTER DEBORAH KRIST, OSF

► Marie and Chris; Ray, Julie, and Barb attend Franciscan Night. In addition to attending, Barb and Marie also create lovely baskets for the raffle.



LET'S HEAR FROM YOU!

- ☐ Please add my name to the mailing list for *Good News*. (This is a secure list to which no other mail will be sent unless you request to receive information.)
☐ I am receiving duplicate copies of *Good News*. Enclosed is the address label that contains the mailing address to be removed from your mailing list. (Mail card and address label in envelope.)
☐ Please remove my name from the mailing list; I no longer wish to receive *Good News*.
☐ Please add my email to your e-list so I can receive my copy electronically. In addition, please remove my address from your hard copy list.
☐ Please send a copy of *Good News* to the following individual:

Name _____ E-Mail Address _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Select areas of interest to receive information about the congregation.

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



Join Our E-News Mailing List!

Visit www.osfphila.org to sign up. It only takes a minute to enter your email address to receive prayerful, entertaining, and informative e-news from the Sisters of St. Francis twice per month.



All the World's Women
 Share a single life
 Seeking around the world
 Caring for the needs of every
 Healing them
 Choosing them
 Their voices singing from
 into a world
 Teaching the small and the great

Join us!



Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia



SrsOfStFrancisPhila



sistersofstfrancis

Link directly to our pages
 from our website homepage:
www.osfphila.org

SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS FOUNDATION

The Sisters of St. Francis
 Foundation engages
 others in providing
 financial support to
 further the mission of the
 Sisters of St. Francis of
 Philadelphia. The legacy
 of caring for those who are
 poor and marginalized, of
 giving to those with diverse
 needs, and of faithfulness
 in caring for our elder
 sisters will flourish
 through your
 commitment and
 generosity.



Support our Mission!



I would like to support:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The sisters' elder care | <input type="checkbox"/> Assisi House capital needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greatest need | <input type="checkbox"/> Education efforts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red Hill Farm | <input type="checkbox"/> Other ministries |

NAME _____

E-MAIL _____

PHONE NUMBER: ☐ HOME _____

☐ CELL _____

Please mail your donations to: Sisters of St. Francis Foundation, 609 S. Convent Road, Aston, PA 19014.
 You can also make your donations online by visiting our website: www.osfphila.org/donate-now/.
 For more information contact: Sister Deborah Krist, (610) 558-7713, OSFF@osfphila.org.

Please tear out this page and mail completed to: GOOD NEWS, Communications Office, Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia,
 609 S. Convent Road, Aston, PA 19014-1207 ■ Visit us online at www.osfphila.org or call us at (610) 558-7726

The Sisters of St. Francis
of Philadelphia
609 S. Convent Road
Aston, PA 19014-1207
Change Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ROYERSFORD, PA
PERMIT NO. 539



Visit our website at www.osphila.org



Jack and Elisa Sargent (Founders), Cathy McGowan, SSJ (Executive Director), and Maggie Gannon, OSF (Development Officer)

ACCESS Community Center in Chester, Pennsylvania

With the ribbon cutting on October 13, 2022, ACCESS Community Center opened its doors to the people of Chester. The center was founded by Jack and Elisa Sargent. Sister Cathy McGowan, a Sister of St. Joseph, and Sister Maggie Gannon, a Sister of St. Francis, currently minister there. During the month of January, over 350 guests were provided food, (hot meals,

breakfast, and groceries) as well as clothing and toiletries. Coming soon, nursing services will be provided on Monday afternoons through a partnership with nearby Widener University. ACCESS has showers and laundry facilities available to guests, as well as afternoon activities such as movie day, T'ai Chi Chih, and computer services. Learn more: www.accesschester.org.

Viewing of *The Letter: A Message for Our Earth*

On January 18, 2023, Franciscan Action Network hosted a virtual viewing party of *The Letter: A Message for our Earth*. Franciscan charism carriers from around the country, including a number of our sisters and companions, joined together to watch this 2022 documentary about the journey of frontline leaders to discuss the encyclical letter *Laudato Si'* with Pope Francis.

After viewing the film, those gathered went into virtual



breakout rooms to discuss the film. As Franciscans, we are called to care for God's wondrous creation. Our Holy Father Pope Francis invites all people of good will to hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. You can watch *The Letter* on YouTube or go to <https://www.theletterfilm.org/screenings/> to learn how to host a screening in your community.



▲ Thanks to the dedication and hard work of Father George Mackin and Mother Agnes Bucher, St. Joseph's Orphanage was founded in 1890. As the times and the needs of the community changed, the orphanage became a family center. In 2017, when the need to close the center and sell the property arose, the sisters found a way to keep the legacy of caring for children alive by selling the property to Joya. Read how Joya continues to care for the gems of Spokane on page 4.