



Franciscan CONNECTIONS

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Celebrating 30+ Years of the Associates

By Jessi Russo

During her reflection at the Mass celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Dubuque Franciscan Associates on September 10, **Lisa Schmidt** admitted she made a mistake.

“We are actually celebrating 31 years of the Franciscan Associate relationship,” she said to those gathered in the Mount St. Francis chapel who responded with laughter.

Whether 30 or 31 years -- the celebration is justified. The program that began in 1985 with 7 associates has grown to 132 associates in 12 states and three countries.

In her reflection, Lisa, who is the Associate Coordinator, spoke about the conversion that took place within the congregation to form the associate program. In 1970 when two former members approached the congregation, the congregation did not believe there was enough interest to begin associate relationships. The subject was tabled for many years afterward, explained Lisa.

“Then in the 1984 Chapter of Affairs the congregation approved the associate relationship and therefore another conversion began: by accepting lay people to journey with this wonderful congregation of women religious and to partner in

service in all parts of the world. You, the sisters, were able to branch out like the younger brother in today’s Gospel reading and try something new in accepting associates to journey with you,” she said.

After Lisa’s reflection, six new Associates were commissioned: **Marianne Cursio, Kelly Freiling, Mary Catherine Harris, Fr. Dan Knepper, Margie Larmon, and Carol Marrone.**

Sister Kathy Knipper, OSF, presented each associate with a Franciscan pin.

“We ask you to wear it as a

reminder of your commitment to grow in the Franciscan spirit and to live a life which witnesses to the values of Francis and Clare,” she said. Each then signed their name to the book of Franciscan Associates and was blessed by the congregation.

“As I reflect on the celebration, the word that comes to me is ‘oneness,’” said new Franciscan Associate Mary Catherine Harris. “Becoming one with Jesus as Christ in the Eucharist; assembling and being led as both religious and lay; erasing boundaries of faith traditions (I am Baptist); receiving and offering the Franciscan blessing of oneness within God; experiencing over all the Spirit and spirits of openness, inclusiveness, graciousness and love.”

(continued inside)



Lisa Schmidt (left) presents Franciscan Associate Kathleen Schiltz with a San Damiano cross in honor of her 25th year of being an associate. Photo by Jessi Russo.

DBQ Franciscans Host Institution Day

By Jessi Russo

“It’s inspiring to see people wanting to be involved and wanting to live our mission and values,” said **Sister Janet May, OSF**, of Institution Day on September 12 at Mount St. Francis.

The event brought together 42 staff and sister board members from Mount St. Francis and organizations affiliated with the Dubuque Franciscans: Alverno Apartments, Dubuque; Stonehill Franciscan Services, Dubuque; Shalom Spirituality Center, Dubuque; and Briar Cliff University, Sioux City, Iowa.

The day, which was titled, “Treasuring Our Franciscan Roots,” was facilitated by **Sister Nancy Schreck, OSF**, who led the group in reflecting on the qualities that make an institution Franciscan and the role that the leaders have in creating an atmosphere where this Franciscan vision is evident in the organization.

“Having staff and sister board members attend from our affiliate organizations allows them to establish relationships,” said **Sister Cathy (Kate) Katoski, OSF**. “They then learn from one another ways to pass on the Franciscan charism and values in their own institutions. We are blessed to have the employees of so many institutions historically affiliated with the Dubuque Franciscans committed to these values.”

For those unfamiliar with Franciscan charisms, Sister Nancy gave a crash course--teaching the group about the history of St. Francis and how the movement began. “I learned the love the Dubuque Franciscan community has for God’s people which motivates their work,” said one respondent on a survey given to attendees.

Those in attendance had the opportunity to dialogue with one another and share in what ways the mission of the sisters was being lived out in



Stonehill Franciscan Services Board Members Sister Lila Hellman (left) and Sister Camilla Hemann with Stonehill Franciscan Services Employees Peggy Stockel, and Susan Feldmann at Institution Day.

their institutions.

“Receiving the gift of leading in an organization affiliated with the Sisters of St. Francis is a humbling experience, one that I carry into the core of my work with high regard and with a great sense of responsibility,” said **Louise Paskey**, Vice President for Student Development at Briar Cliff University. “I am grateful for the vision and insightful planning of the sisters, and their work in being committed to building organizations that are of a high caliber and grounded in the Franciscan tradition. I left the workshop with a renewed sense of the importance for transformational leadership that embodies the values of St. Francis.”

Gretchen Brown, CEO of Stonehill Franciscan Services, agreed with Louise and said that working in an organization affiliated with the Sisters of St. Francis is an honor.

“I feel the privilege of ‘taking the baton’ from the sisters and sharing their core values,” said Gretchen. “To know we are going to sustain it is an incredible privilege.”

“It’s such a gift to witness the charism everyday,” shared **Leanne Golinvaux**, who is the CFO of the Dubuque Franciscan Sisters. “I’m fortunate to be part of spreading the Gospel beyond these convent walls.” ■

(Celebrating 30+ Years of Associates continued)

After the new associates were commissioned, **Jean Basinger, Susan Green, and Kathleen Schiltz**, were recognized for their 25 years as Franciscan Associates and each received a San Damiano cross.

“There are so many good things about Susan,” said her bonding sister, **Sister Rita Green, OSF**. “She is intelligent, spiritual, gentle, compassionate. She’s always interested in what you’re doing.”

Sister Virginia Jennings, OSF, bonding sister for Jean Basinger and Kathleen Schiltz, echoed those sentiments.

“Jean Basinger and her late husband, **Bill**, (who was also an associate) have devoted their lives to the poor, marginalized and our most vulnerable brothers and sisters. Their lives have been a lived expression of the Franciscan charism in all the ways they have been about the work of peace and justice in our world. Jean continues to be very involved in prison ministry, especially in the area of restorative justice.

Kathleen Schiltz, who is a native of Bancroft, Iowa, was taught by Dubuque Franciscan Sisters and so the seeds of the Franciscan charism were planted early in her life. She continues to flourish in the many ways as she cares for God’s poor and vulnerable.”



From left to right: Lisa Schmidt, Jo Myers-Walker, Sheri Hosek, Sister Judy Sinnwell, Nancy Knipper, and Sister Kathy Knipper receive the check of the funds the Franciscan Associates donated to the Sister Water Project. Contributed photo.

After Mass, associates and sisters gathered for a special meal in the Francis House dining room where the associates presented a check to the Sister Water Committee.

“I was deeply touched by the generous gift from the associates,” said Sister Kathy Knipper. “The contribution to the Sister Water Project embodies the Franciscan value of standing with people in need and caring for Mother Earth.” ■

Donating from your IRA – a tax-saving way to help your favorite charities *by Sister Cathy Katoski, OSF*

After periodic years in which benefactors could make donations from their IRA, last year Congress made permanent the opportunity to make a donation of up to \$100,000 from an IRA to qualified charitable organizations. If you are 70½ years old or older, you can take advantage of this simple way to benefit charities and receive tax benefits in return.

Why should you consider making a gift in this fashion?

- Your gift will be put to use today, allowing you to experience the joy of your generosity.
- You will pay no income tax on the gift(s) as you do on other distributions from your IRA. The transfer generates neither taxable income nor a tax deduction, so you benefit even if you do not itemize your deductions.
- This can be a wonderful win-win for people who would rather gift to charity than pay taxes. Experts estimate that heirs receive less than 25% of most IRA assets that pass through estates. Making charities beneficiaries

of your IRA after your death is thus also a very smart thing to do if you have such charitable intent.

If you have not yet taken your required minimum distribution for this year, your IRA charitable gift can satisfy all or part of that requirement. If you have taken your required distribution, you can anticipate donating part of your IRA distribution next year. The funds must be transferred directly from your IRA administrator to the charity.

Direct rollovers to a qualified charity can be made only from an IRA. Under certain circumstances, however, you may be able to roll assets from a pension, profit sharing, 401(k) or 403(b) plan into an IRA and then make the transfer from the IRA to charity. To determine if a rollover to an IRA is available for your plan, speak with your plan administrator. It is always wise to consult with your tax professionals if you are contemplating a major charitable gift. ■



Wishing you a holiday season full of deep hope and simple joys!

**Sisters of St. Francis
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Mission Statement of the Dubuque Franciscans

Rooted in the Gospel and in the spirit of Francis and Clare, the Sisters of St. Francis live in right relationship with all creation.



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Three Dubuque Franciscans Receive 2016 Governor's Award

Sisters Mary Clare O'Toole, OSF, Carol Hemesath, OSF, and Marian Klostermann, OSF received a 2016 Governor's Volunteer Award from Governor Terry E. Branstad during a special recognition ceremony held in June in Cedar Falls, Iowa.

Sisters Mary Clare, Carol, and Marian were acknowledged for over five years of service to the Jail and Prison Ministry program of Catholic Charities in Dubuque.

"I am pleased to honor those who have given



Sister Mary Clare O'Toole, Carol Hemesath, Jerry Weydert, Governor Terry E. Branstad, and Lieutenant Governor Kim Reynolds. Not pictured: Sister Marian Klostermann. Contributed photo.

the precious gift of their time to meet essential needs across Iowa," stated Governor Terry E. Branstad. "The commitment of these volunteers—and all volunteers—helps Iowa consistently remain in the top 10 states in the nation for its volunteerism rate." "The dedication

of the people selected for these awards often

encourages others to become involved in service, and I am delighted to recognize them for their amazing contributions," said Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds. ■