

Footprints



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Published quarterly, Footprints reflects the mission, spirit, and values of the Sisters of St. Francis, Dubuque, Iowa.

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Cover Photo



Photo by Jessi Russo

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Sisters, Friends, and Associates gathered on October 21 to honor the Sister Water Project.

A message from *Leadership*

In June our congregation gathered for a contemplative experience facilitated by Sister Mary Elizabeth Imler, OSF. The focus of this shared time was the four Franciscan values of conversion, contemplation, humility, and poverty. Here are some key insights from her presentation.

We value **CONVERSION**, core value of conforming to the gospel in the person of Jesus. Conversion involves transformation and is a life-long process. “The brothers and sisters want to live this evangelical conversion of life in a spirit of prayer, of poverty, and of humility.” (Article 2 of the Rule and Life of St. Francis)

We value **CONTEMPLATION**, becoming totally absorbed by God as “beloved.” In this absorption we see as God sees. We become a dwelling place for God’s presence. We are able to find God in the stillness and chaos of our lives.

We value **HUMILITY**, being honest and reliable to offer our talents and our compassion in simplicity. We develop the gifts we’ve been given, allowing them to shine in the darkness of human suffering, performing miracles of service in generous human action.

We value **POVERTY**, showing recognition by honoring the individuality of the other and serving them as “sister” or “brother.” We experience everything as gift from God. We find joy in being what we are gifted to be: restoring to people their human dignity through healing, reconciliation, hope and peace.

In this issue of *Footprints*, we read about what these values mean as Franciscans. The question for us is this: What is mine/ours to do?

--Sister Marie Cigrand, OSF

Our Mission

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

Focus 2014 - 2020:

In our personal, communal and public life, we commit to ongoing conversion as we: deepen our relationship with Mother Earth and Sister Water | stand with persons who are poor | make peace and practice nonviolence.

This is who we are; this is what the global community can expect of us.

Leadership Team

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Vice President

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Vice President





Sisters Reflect on Franciscan Values of Conversion, Contemplation, Poverty and Humility

Photo by Sister Phyllis Manternach

Conversion by Sister Ginny Helderfer

Conversion is one of the core Franciscan values to which all are called to live. One description of conversion is to become the best person I can be. Conversion is usually a slow, daily process rather than a once-in-a-life time experience. We probably don't give much thought to the notion of conversion, but in reality we are changing every day. We change jobs, change how we relate to children as they grow up, change our attitudes after certain experiences, change the way we pray after meaningful reflection days, change our understandings after world events, etc.

Change...conversion...is part of our daily lives, whether we are intentional about it or not. Another description of conversion is to gain new insights. Richard Rohr in his book, *SIMPLICITY*, says: "You have to run with your own feet to someplace you haven't been before-to a new place. You have to leave the world where you have everything under control...you have to head into a world where you are poor and powerless. And there you will be converted, despite yourself."

Conversion happens with God's grace and spirit. The challenge is to become aware of how God is present in our days. For me, it takes intentional discipline to reflect each day to see where the grace, the life of God's Spirit is present. My nightly

reflection is to journal the events, people and words of the day that linger in my heart. I believe that the presence of God is usually in the little daily things. Each month as I reread my journal I can recognize where God's love and Spirit called me to a small conversion. Once in a while an outstanding event or person invites me to change, to live life differently. I call these experiences "conversion." Only with reflection do I recognize the people, events, and those small daily experiences which challenged me to be a better person.

Many volunteer service experiences have created space for conversion insights to happen. When I volunteered at the Winnebago Indian Parish in Nebraska, we found ourselves having meaningful conversations as we worked side by side with Native Americans. As volunteers we were invited to participate in several rituals dear to their culture.

I believe that you, as a reader of *Footprints*, also desire to be the best person you are capable of becoming. I invite you to reflect daily on your experiences and name how God is calling you to change in order to be the most kind, loving, gentle person who extends service to others. ■



Photo by Sister Phyllis Manternach

Contemplation

by Sister Pat Doody

Franciscan contemplation brings up many images of Francis and Clare praying: Francis praying before the San Damiano cross; Francis retreating to caves around Assisi, on Mount La Verna, and in the Rieti Valley; Clare's image of Christ as a mirror into which one gazes lovingly.

An obvious dimension of contemplation from these images is the experience of silence. Silence and stillness are difficult to find in this postmodern world filled with over-stimulation of the senses. Yet in order to remain faithful in the world, we are called to move into our caves and gaze into the mirror of the Incarnation.

The practice of Franciscan contemplation is beautifully simple. At the core is the desire to be present to our Trinitarian God so that we can be fully awake to that presence in all of creation and particularly in the Incarnation. Clare has given us

a simple formula for prayer: gaze, consider, contemplate and imitate. *Gazing* leads us to be aware of God. *Considering* focuses attention so that God is at the center of our awareness apart from other distractions. *Contemplation* allows God to pray within us. *Imitation* then comes, not so much as replicating the actions of another (Jesus, Francis or Clare) but in becoming more and more the image of the One we are contemplating as we try to live in right relationship with all.

Roch Neimier said it this way, "Deep contemplative prayer is not so much learning how to contemplate God by some method or practice, as it is becoming aware that it is God who is contemplating us." With Francis and Clare as our guides, may we seek out times of silence and allow contemplation to lead us to ever deepening conversion. ■

Humility

by Sister Dorothy Schwendinger

Living in the truth.

Perhaps this phrase best captures the essence of the virtue of humility as it is understood in the Francis tradition. It began to grow in Francis when he encountered the leper. In that moment, Francis came face to face with himself, his sense of disgust with the other, his horror at suffering, his intense desire to turn away and his temptation to return to his comfortable world. He saw that he was a self that held itself apart, which was protected and blind. He saw how righteous and justified he felt. He was “other” and not the brother.

It was grace alone that enabled Francis to overcome such a false sense-of-himself and to then show mercy to the leper. Francis needed the leper to help him encounter God. In the encounter with the suffering neighbor, Francis was jolted out of his limited self and thrown into an awakening – a profound spiritual insight. Here was a brother. Here was the face of God. Here, indeed, was God’s abundant love made manifest in an utterly new and unexpected event. Francis claimed that this moment was the beginning of his conversion. It changed his life. From then on he began living in the truth.

All of us, like Francis, are captured by experience, acculturated judgements, and beliefs from our youth. We probably embrace beliefs, doctrines, and images of self that are only half- truths and deeply flawed. But life and grace invite us to reflection.

Relationships help us see ourselves more truly. We may be tempted, like Francis was, to resist, to turn away, and to protect our secure-self. But a faithful LOVE keeps drawing us to a fuller life, to a new freedom, to a more blessed truth.

A faithful life is one which stays in the struggle. A faithful life receives the neighbor, the leper, the poor one, the enemy, and the one we tend to avoid. A faithful life opens us to conversion, to transformation, to spiritual insight and to change, to truth that is authentic humility.

The way of life that Francis lived is the call we, too, can claim. It will not be a life without pain but it is a life that promises inner joy. It is simply to know the secret to letting LOVE unlock our untapped capacity to love.



Photo by Sister Phyllis Manternach

Poverty

by Sister Rita Goedken

“You are the good, all good, the highest good, Lord God, living and true.” (Praises of God) “Good” was one of St. Francis’s favorite names for God. Because of God’s goodness, we have life, loved ones, intelligence, the world of creation, capacities of all kinds. Out of God’s great goodness came Jesus, in whom and through whom we share the divine life he won for us.

St. Francis reveled in God’s goodness and was keenly aware that, because of our giftedness, nothing truly belongs to us: Everything is gift. Therefore, we cannot truly appropriate things as our own. This concept rings difficult in 21st century United States where we claim as ours alone all that we’ve earned, inherited, or have by luck. A great deal of anxiety, envy, and preoccupation with accumulating more wealth often accompanies this attitude.

Gospel poverty, however, calls us to something greater. Certainly we must work to earn a living and responsibly care for our families. At the same time we’re called to cling less frantically to our possessions. St. Francis even asked that we not cling to anger or to an undue concern for our reputation. This is an attitude of heart that we can pray for: to live in the awareness of God’s Providence and to trust in it even in times of difficulty. We’re invited to the joy of having less, living simply, and sharing abundantly and sacrificially out of the abundance given to us. Like St. Francis, we give alms. ■

FCV Volunteers Reflect on their Service

Beginning in April 2017, 7 Franciscan Common Venture (FCV) teams gave service in Busby, Montana; Waterloo, Iowa; South Bend, Indiana; Morton, Mississippi; Winnebago, Nebraska; and Dubuque. Below are a selection of photos and insights volunteers shared with us about their trips. 2018 Franciscan Common Venture Trips will be announced in January 2018 at www.osfdbq.org/commonventure. ■

Busby, Montana



From L to R: Irene Deppe, Mary Sykora, Pat Strait, and Virginia Ford and worked on 20 different quilting projects, all in different stages. The highlight of the service experience was, "joy and laughter with a group of women, all strangers to me, coming together for a common venture," said Mary.

Waterloo, Iowa



The team in Waterloo spent time in the garden at the Northeast Iowa Food Bank and harvested beans, onions, beets, carrots and several herbs. Team members then washed, packaged and labeled the items for the food pantry--harvesting a total of 29 pounds of food, enough to make 15 meals! Sr. Rosie Vaske (front right) said, "It was great to see how each person was treated with love and respect. I wish to be more loving toward others."

Winnebago, Nebraska



Franciscan Common Venture volunteers in Winnebago, Nebraska, helped with a variety of tasks while waiting for the corn crop to be ready for shucking. Mary Ann Koch (left) and Mary Routh wrote this reflection while giving other types of service in Winnebago:

- As we helped in the school.....we prayed for and with women who TEACH.
- As we mopped up the flooded floor....we prayed for and with women who CLEAN.
- As we visited the site of a four day wake and the cemetery....we prayed for women who MOURN.
- As we saw the Susan La Flesch museum (first native female doctor-Omaha), and a facility for drug, alcohol, elder care....we prayed for and with those who HEAL THE SICK.
- As we helped in the school library....we prayed for the STORYTELLERS AND RECORD KEEPERS.
- As we weeded....we prayed for and with those who PLANT SEEDS, NURTURE, WEED AND BEING BEAUTY.
- As we attended Mass....we prayed for and with those WHO PRAY. ■

Morton, Mississippi



Shirley Olberding (back row left) and Doris Steger (back row right) volunteered in Morton, Mississippi, at Excel, Inc.'s Summer Camp. "As is usually the case on service trips I've taken, I came home more grateful for all I've been blessed with – I received more than I gave," said Doris.

South Bend, Indiana



Franciscan Common Venture team members gave service at St. Margaret's House, a day center for women and children, in South Bend, Indiana. "I loved every minute and hope to do this again--either through FCV or through my own time," said Rose Pohlpeter (left) with Sister Margie Feldner, who ministers in South Bend.

Sister Shirley Fineran Opens Home for Survivors of Human Trafficking

by Dolly A. Butz, *Sioux City Journal*



Sister Shirley Fineran gives a tour of the Lila Mae House. Photo by Justin Wan of the *Sioux City Journal*.

Three years ago, after hearing the story of a woman in her 50s, who had been drugged, raped and forced to service men as a teenager growing up outside of Detroit, Sister Shirley Fineran retired to her prayer room, where she sat and asked God for guidance.

“I felt called to do more than educate,” explained Sister Shirley, a licensed independent social worker and assistant professor of social work at Briar Cliff University in Sioux City, Iowa. “I decided that I was going to develop a house for women who had been trafficked where they could come and live and be safe.”

Sister Shirley founded the nonprofit Siouxland Restoration Center to raise money to make her vision a reality. In April, she took possession of a spacious home on an acreage on the outskirts of Sioux City, which was donated by its previous owners.

The “Lila Mae House” will open next year. Sister Shirley describes it as a “place of healing,” to seven women who have experienced sex trafficking. She said that referrals will come from local nonprofit organizations and that the women will be able to live in the home for two years.

“Most importantly, we’ll hopefully teach them a sense of worth of themselves and independence and to know that there can be life beyond trafficking,” she said.

At a human trafficking conference held on Briar Cliff University’s campus four years ago, Sister Shirley said she was surprised to hear that this form of modern-day slavery was happening not only in countries such as Thailand and India, but also in Midwestern communities in the United States, including small towns in Northwest Iowa.

Human trafficking, which involves forced sex and/or labor, is one of the world’s fastest growing criminal enterprises, netting an estimated \$32 billion annually. According to U.S. Department of Justice statistics, 2,515 incidents of human trafficking were recorded nationwide between January 2008 and June 2010.

Since 2007, the National Human Trafficking Hotline, which serves victims and survivors of human trafficking in the United States and the anti-trafficking community, has fielded 926 calls regarding human trafficking in Iowa. According to the hotline, 42 cases of human trafficking have been reported in the state so far this year. The majority of victims involved in those cases are women and girls.

“Because we have used the term ‘prostitute’ when people are selling sex, then people think the women, girls and boys who are available for sex are choosing to do that themselves,” said Sister Shirley. “That’s true in some cases, but in a large part, they are being controlled or forced.”

In 2014, Fineran helped found the Siouxland Coalition Against Human Trafficking, a nonprofit organization working to abolish all forms of human trafficking in the tri-state area through education, advocacy and collaboration. Over the past year, she said she has spoken to more than 2,500 people about human trafficking and created a traveling exhibit to raise awareness of the issue.

Most sex trafficking victims identified in the Sioux City area are not from the area, according to Sister Shirley, who said predators scour social media sites looking for teens who are lonely, being bullied or not getting along

(Continued on the next page)

with their parents. She said kids who have been sexually abused or are in the foster care system are trafficked at a higher rate than their peers.

“Unfortunately, some parents traffic their own kids because either they don't have the money for drugs or they don't have money to maybe feed their family,” she said. “Traffickers also hire young people in high school to recruit for trafficking.”

According to Sister Shirley, once a connection is made, the trafficker begins the grooming process. She said the trafficker makes promises of a better life and may even send gifts to his or her intended victim before setting up a face-to-face meeting.

“When they meet the first time, they will often continue to give them gifts,” she said of the trafficker, who will soon demand payment for his or her generosity. “They’ll say, ‘Well, I've been doing all of this for you, now you have to do something for me.’”

The victim complies, thinking the sex act is a one-time thing, but soon realizes he or she is trapped, according to Sister Shirley, who said a girl or boy who is trafficked from Sioux City today could find herself or himself in Minneapolis by nightfall before being taken farther away to California.

“The person grooms them in the environment where they live and then after they get them hooked, they take them out of their community,” she said. “A lot of Iowa’s small communities are targeted because people are more trustworthy and often they’re looking for

excitement.”

Blindfolded and stripped of all identification, money and means of communication, Sister Shirley said victims, who are often given drugs, don't know where they are or how to get back home. “After a while, the trafficker will convince them that nobody’s looking for them,” she said.

Sister Shirley took a survivor in her 40s, who was trafficked by her boss, on a tour of Lila Mae’s House, which was built in the 1970’s and named after its designer.

She said the woman found the setting peaceful, until she walked down the stairs to look at the stark basement. The woman, who was kept in a basement and called “slave” by her trafficker, began to sweat, according to Sister Shirley.

Two bedrooms on the second level are move-in ready, as is a first-floor suite reserved for the house manager, who is living on the property. Other staff members include an executive director, two case managers, interns and volunteers

“We still need to raise more money to construct five bedrooms and two bathrooms in the lower level,” said Sister Shirley. “But we hold fast to our goal. I trust that God will see us through and we will be able to provide a safe and holistic environment for women,” she said.

■
Sister Shirley said donations for the project can be mailed to: Siouxland Restoration Center P.O. Box 1281, Sioux City, IA 51102. This story first appeared in the Sioux City Journal.

Sr. Mary Day Collaborates on National Award Winning Project

A live storytelling project produced by Siouxland Public Media in Sioux City, and included contributions from Sister Mary Day, received the national 2017 “Local That Works” prize. Local That Works is a collaboration between Current and the Public Media Futures Forums to identify public media stations that have developed innovative and replicable content, engagement, and revenue strategies.

The winning project, “Ode: Stories without Borders,” was an event in November 2016 in Sioux City where local immigrants told their stories and created East African cuisine for all to enjoy.

Members of Siouxland Public Media detailed the project at the Public Radio Super-Regional Conference in September in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Finalists were chosen from 113 entries. “Ode: Stories Without Borders,” represented a collaboration between The Sioux City Art Center and Mary Treglia Community House, featuring “Emerging Women’s Voices,” which is coordinated by Sister Mary.

“Emerging Women’s Voices’ is a weekly mentoring organization that empowers women, improves lives, and provides entrepreneurial opportunities,” said Sister Mary. Three members of “Emerging Voices” told their stories in Sioux City’s winning project.

“The \$5000 award will give us chances to do even more things!” said Sister Mary of the honor. ■



Eena Collwell tells her story live at “Ode: Stories without Borders.” Photo by Ally Karsyn.



Clockwise from left: Steeple Square Board Member Sister Helen Huewe, OSF, Archbishop Michael O. Jackels, Dubuque Mayor Roy D. Buol, and Opening Doors Board Member Sister Mary McCauley, BVM. Contributed photo.

Apartments Named to Honor Dubuque Women Religious

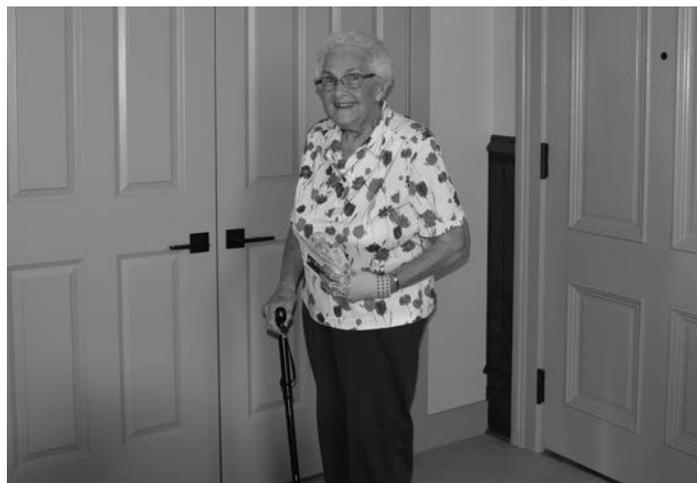
On Thursday, July 27, Steeple Square in Dubuque celebrated the opening and dedication of their Francis Apartments.

The apartments will provide permanent supportive housing for graduates of Maria House, a program that provides transitional housing and support for women learning to be independent, and also market-rate apartments for the general public, which will be managed by Gronen Properties.

The apartments at the site of the former St. Mary's School were named in honor of the women religious in the tri-state area, who are the founders of Opening Doors, a nonprofit organization that operates Maria House and Teresa Shelter for homeless women and children.

Maria House Executive Director Michelle Brown said the apartments were a four year dream in the making.

"It will really complete our continuum of housing services for homeless women and children in our community. We start with emergency at Teresa Shelter and extended stay, and then we have transitional at Maria House and now we will have permanent housing." ■



Sister Josephine Schmitz climbed the stairs to the third floor to see how the classroom at St. Mary's, where she taught for many years, was converted into an apartment. Photo by Sister Carol Hoverman.

Volunteers Reflect on SWP Trip to Honduras

by Jessi Russo



Mary Jean Patterson, Sister Carol Hawkins, Tyla Cole, Sister Pat Farrell, Sheri Hosek, Catherine Clark, Patrick Kedley, Jane Heiar, and Sister Mary Beth Goldsmith. Photo by Dave Heiar.

With Hurricane Irma slamming the coast of Florida the same day as the Dubuque Franciscans' Sister Water Project service trip volunteers were traveling to Honduras, volunteer Jane Heiar began to get nervous.

"I told my husband, 'put the wills on the counter top and tell the kids we love them,'" she recalled while laughing.

Jane, along with her husband Dave Heiar, of Dubuque, were part of a seven-person team that traveled to Honduras September 9-17 and dodged Irma to work alongside Dubuque Franciscan Sisters Pat Farrell, Mary Beth Goldsmith, and Carol Hawkins, who minister in the country. The trip was to help make potable water accessible to people in the rural village of Mejocote in Honduras as part of the Sister Water Project. The Dubuque Franciscans initiated the Sister Water Project in 2006 as a way to address the lack of potable water in Honduras and Tanzania, areas where sisters from the congregation ministered.

"The water source the villagers have access to for the project is high in the mountains and they are working to connect it with 19 miles of pipes into their homes," explained volunteer Sheri Hosek, who is a member of the Sister Water Project committee. There is no machinery or heavy equipment assisting them in this task, which they hope to finish by June 2018, said Sheri.

"It's mind boggling to me the work they're doing manually," said Dave. "Each pipe weighs 500 lbs. It takes 40 men to twist and turn one pipe into another."

And when the pipes need to be bent, they use human power to do that, too, said Dave.

Each Sunday, 50-100 men travel from the community to the work site where they stay for the week as they install pipes and haul sand to make cement pillars that elevate the pipes off the ground. It's back-breaking work but the volunteers were awed by the villagers' dedication to the job.

"It was amazing to see the work and commitment of the villages to have water," said volunteer Mary Jean Patterson of Madison, Wisconsin. "When asked 'why do you do this?' they answer, 'so our grandchildren will know we brought water to the village.' It's very humbling and it speaks volumes to the importance of water to see them working so hard."

"All I have to do is turn on a faucet and what they're doing to try to get water for their families is a superhero task," said Jane.

The project, which is being funded by the villagers with a contribution from the Sister Water Project, covers a lot of ground, but the Hondurans are extremely mindful of the natural landscape.

“They were so careful not to disturb a coffee bean plant—they would hold back the plant just so they could put in the pipe,” said Jane. “They just have such an appreciation for the very simple things in nature. It was so incredible and so amazing to watch.”

Tyla Cole of Davenport was also impressed by the Hondurans, so much so that after being part of the 2016 Sister Water Project service trip, she signed up to return. She said that helping serve others strengthens her faith.

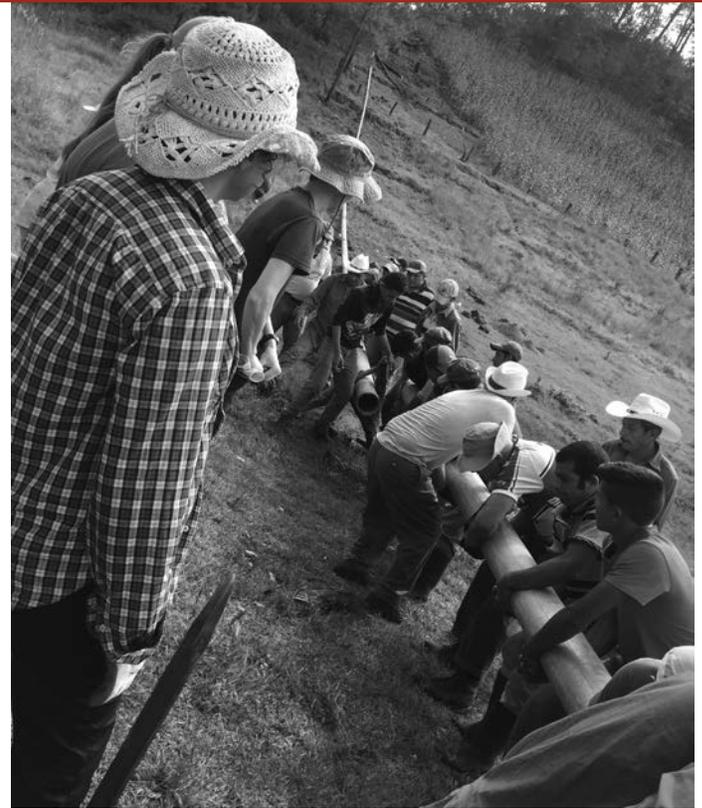
“I love Honduras. I love the people,” reflected Tyla. “This trip reinforced my relationship with God and my understanding of my calling. These trips have inspired me to love more, give more, live simpler and surrender my life to God.”

Tyla, like most of the volunteers, did not have the language skills to communicate with the Hondurans as they worked alongside one another, but she noticed it didn’t stop them from forming connections.

“Breaking down any sort of cultural or linguistic barrier that remained between us, many of the men would put their hands on the volunteers’ shoulders, smile and look at us and say, ‘amigo’ [friend],” noted Tyla.

Though the volunteers may not have been able to connect verbally, Dave hoped that just being in their company said what words could not.

“I can’t help but wonder if we helped or hindered their process but I do know we gave them



SWP Volunteers work with Hondurans to help connect pipes to a source high in the mountains. Photo by Mary Jean Patterson.

moral support,” said Dave. “We traveled there and took our time to be with them by their side and you could feel the appreciation that they had for our presence there.”

“I will never look at water the same way and never take it for granted,” he added. ■



Sister Pat Farrell (center) works with Moises, the project’s manager, on the plans for the water project while volunteer Catherine Clark looks on. Photo by Mary Jean Patterson.



Sisters with the 8th grade students from Mater Dei School who visited Mount St. Francis the weekend of November 3-5. Photos by Mary Fischer.

8th Graders Spend Weekend with Dubuque Franciscans as part of “FAST” by Jessi Russo

While looking at her smartphone, one Mater Dei School student had one question about her weekend at Mount St. Francis: “Is there Wi-Fi at the convent?”

Nine 8th grade girls from Mater Dei spent November 3-5 in Dubuque with the Sisters of St. Francis as part of Franciscan Awareness and Service Together (FAST) weekend. FAST included a number of activities that helped introduce the students to the lives and missions of the Dubuque Franciscan Sisters.

Because the students had not seen or visited a Motherhouse before, Principal of Mater Dei Schools Mary Fischer believed it was an important trip to make across the state to learn about women religious.

“We told the girls before leaving for Dubuque that they would experience a weekend of total acceptance from the sisters at Mount St. Francis,” she said. “This is just one of the many reasons why I believe spending a weekend with the sisters is important for our girls. Our students learn to appreciate the many lessons of Saints Francis and Clare such as creation and living a life in service to others,” added Mary.

While in the car on the way to the convent in Dubuque, Iowa, Mater Dei School 8th grade teacher Becky Wolf said the girls had many questions about the lives of the sisters. “Where do the sisters live?” and “What do they do?” said Becky of the questions she heard in the van while driving.

Some of the activities over the weekend focused on “care of creation,” which is an important value of the Dubuque Franciscans, and introduced the students to the sisters’ ministries of beekeeping and preserving their prairie land. The students also learned the stories of the sisters’ vocations, and when they heard the “call” to enter religious life.

“The enthusiasm and willingness of the sisters to speak directly to the girls about their own call to religious life just



8th grader Anna Fenton visits with Sister Madonna Lang at Clare House. “The conversation one--or more--of those young women needed to respond to God’s call in their lives,” said Becky.

For 8th grader Lily Graham, the FAST weekend was a positive experience.

“The sisters were all very nice, and loved their life. They care a lot about each other and the world around them,” she said.

Her classmate Ireland Uhl also enjoyed the weekend and said the sisters she met made the 5- hour trip from Sioux City worthwhile.

“The best part was getting to know the sisters and seeing what they do every day,” she said.

And when the weekend was over, the conversation on the way back to Sioux City was much different than two days earlier.

“I heard comments like, ‘I want to learn more about bees like Sister Karla!’ and ‘I love Sister Ruth and how she asked us who we would bring to our table,’ and ‘I didn’t know sisters could be so fun!’” said Becky.

“When I hear comments like those, I know that their lives have been touched by some pretty amazing women.” ■

Donating Stock -- An Easy but Unusual Gift!

by Sister Cathy Katoski, OSF

Cash gifts are easy! And much appreciated by the Sisters of St. Francis. But a donation of marketable (publicly traded) securities to the Sisters of St. Francis is not a difficult task either. I'm actually often amazed at donations of \$500 or \$1,000 that are written by check and could have been made by use of a stock gift.

Why give stock? There is a great tax advantage for the donor. Even after the great decline in stocks in the years after 2008, many securities have now again greatly appreciated in value. Let's say, for example, that you bought stock in a company at \$15.00 a share. You find that the value has now increased to \$75.00 per share. If you sell this stock, you will pay tax on the \$60.00 of appreciation for each share sold.

Making a stock gift to a charity will enable you to avoid paying capital gains taxes on the gain on the original investment. On top of that savings, you will receive a tax deduction for the total amount of your charitable gift. So a stock

gift is a double win for you, the donor.

As a qualified charitable organization, the Sisters of St. Francis will sell the stock you gift them and avoid any tax on the appreciation.

Your stock gift will be valued at the midpoint market price on the date that a signed stock transfer is postmarked (if mailed) or on the date the stock is transferred to an account of the Sisters (if the transfer happens through a broker).

Year-end is a popular time for making a stock gift, though they can be done anytime. Review your stock portfolio and select those stocks that have appreciated the most and have been held for more than a year.

How easy is it? Contact your CPA and/or investment advisor with your directions. Give us a call so we can provide you with a name of a firm we use to receive your gift. We will then also be alerted that your gift is coming.

May you know special blessings during this holy and holiday season! ■

DBQ Franciscans Create "Canticle of Creation Center"

The Dubuque Franciscan Sisters have created a new pilot endeavor called the "Canticle of Creation Center" to share the Franciscan legacy of striving to live in right relationship with all creation.

The Canticle of Creation Center (CoCC): An Earth Sanctuary of Solitude and Study is a place for all ages. Some of our offerings will include: workshops, speakers, presentations, lectures, storytelling, day camps for youth, mindfulness practices, prairie walks, mini science lab experiences, practicum for college environmental science students, and seasonal rituals/activities to connect people to Earth's rhythms.

The mission of the center is to honor the Franciscan heritage by helping others to deepen their awareness and appreciation of the natural beauty of Earth.

Some of the upcoming offerings of the CoCC to all be held in the Auditorium at Mount St. Francis are:

- December 21, 2017 – Winter Solstice Ritual; 10:30 a.m.
- January 13, 2018 – Stories of Creation with Sister Meg Gemar; 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
- January 20, 2018 – Native American Ten Commandments – Part 1; 5-part series led by Duane Short; 8:30 a.m.– 11:30 a.m.
- February 10, 2018 – Native American Ten Commandments – Part 2; 5-part series led by Duane Short; 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

For more information on the CoCC, contact Sister Michelle Balek or Lisa Schmidt by phone at (563) 583-9786 or by email at balekm@osfdbq.org or schmidt1@osfdbq.org. Visit the CoCC's webpage at www.osfdbq.org/canticleofcreation. ■



Franciscan Associate Jo Myers-Walker created this art of Sts. Francis and Clare for the Canticle of Creation Center. Photo by Lisa Schmidt.

In Remembrance

Sister Ivan Goedken January 5, 1918 - August 19, 2017



Vernice Goedken was one of nine children born to Frank and Ida (Domeyer) Goedken in Petersburg,

Iowa. The Goedkens lived on a 260 acre farm near Bear Creek. Her older brothers would give her boat rides on the creek in a motor boat, and she loved looking ahead to see the bridge spanning the creek.

Vernice attended grade school at St. Peter and Paul School in Petersburg where she was taught by the Franciscan sisters. Later she attended Immaculate Conception

Academy in Dubuque because her brother was studying for the priesthood at Loras College, and her parents could bring both of them to Dubuque. It was at IC that she decided to become a sister, but she credits her vocation to her father's six sisters who had preceded her.

She entered Mount St. Francis on January 25, 1937, and was received on August 12 that same year, and given the name Sister Mary Ivan.

After profession in 1942, Sister Ivan taught in many elementary schools as well as Columbus High School, Immaculate Conception Academy, Aquin High School, and Beckman High School. Her education included the areas of English, speech, library science, and counseling. She also served at the

Archbishop's Residence and Mary of the Angels before going to Kuemper High School where she spent 15 years in charge of the Listening Center, making tapes, filmstrips, and audio-visual equipment available to teachers and students. Sister Ivan was widely known for her smile and her helpfulness.

While teaching at Carroll, Iowa, Sister was a member of the Carroll Writers' Club. In their publication she published poems in 1982 and 1987 as well as poems in publications of the Lyrical Iowa Poetry Association.

She is survived by her brother Fred; nieces, nephews, and her Franciscan sisters with whom she shared over 80 years of her life. ■

Sister Mary Robertine Smith July 1, 1925 - September 4, 2017



Veronica Smith, the ninth child and first daughter of the 18 children of John and Mabel Scott Smith, was born on a farm

near Sumner, Iowa, on July 1, 1925. At baptism she was given the name Veronica Elouise.

Veronica attended country school through eighth grade. From the time she knew what a sister was, she wanted to be one. After eighth grade, she helped on the farm for two years. Then on August 25, 1941, at the age of 16, she joined the Dubuque Franciscans. At her reception on August 12, 1942, she was given the name Sister Mary Robertine. Sister wrote in her autobiography, "I know I was young, but I have never been sorry for my choice."

During her novitiate years, Sister

was sent to Immaculate Conception Academy for high school. After profession on August 10, 1944, she was missioned to Briar Cliff College to help not only in the kitchen but in the garden and laundry as well.

Seven years later, she was sent to Xavier Hospital where there was no garden, but in her words, "Long days – usually 4:00 a.m. to 10 p.m. No days off. I walked in my sleep much of the time." Life at Sacred Heart Hospital in LeMars was a bit easier because she got more sleep.

Holy Ghost Convent was her first experience outside of institutional work, but it was a large convent with 21 sisters. When Immaculate Conception Convent became the retirement center for sisters, she again cooked for very large numbers, but she had help from the retired sisters with washing dishes and peeling vegetables. Sister wanted to experience life on a smaller mission, so she was sent to Ossian, where she

describes her work as "playing house."

After working at Bishop Lane Retreat House in Rockford, Illinois, and Holy Family Hall, she applied for and obtained the position of "salad maker" at Mount St. Francis. This was something she always thought she would like, and she enjoyed doing it until her retirement. Sister moved to Holy Family Hall in 2010 and in September of 2011 moved to Clare House.

Sister Mary Robertine worked long and hard, was an excellent cook, and will be long remembered for her salads and her "Smith soup."

Sister is survived by her sister, Sister Maureen Smith. Also surviving are sisters-in-law Alice, Jean, Rita, Shayla (Smith) Milbrandt, nieces, nephews, and her Franciscan sisters with whom she shared over 75 years of her life. ■

In Remembrance

Sister Joan Losey November 10, 1929 - September 7, 2017



Twins Joan and Jane were welcomed to the family on November 10, 1929, by Lester and Mary (Barnoske)

Losey in Teeds Grove, Iowa. The family grew in numbers with John, Maurice, Catherine, and Geraldine. It was in 1939 that the family moved to Worthington where all the children could attend a Catholic School and their father would have a job with the Milwaukee Railroad.

It was while Joan attended St. Paul's School that she became interested in religious life and decided that after her grade and high school education was complete, she would enter the community.

Joan entered the Dubuque

Franciscans on August 25, 1948, and in the following year on August 12, 1949, she was received into the community and given the name Sister Mary Paul. It wasn't long after pursuing college studies that she realized that, more likely than not, teaching was not what she aspired to do. After consultation with the Postulant Mistress, it was decided that she would pursue nursing studies. According to Joan, this was the second happiest decision she ever made.

In 1954 Joan began nurse's training at St. Francis Hospital in LaCrosse, Wisconsin. This was the year of final vows and the beginning of an exciting part of her life. The three wonderful years of the nurse aide experience gave her the courage to continue through the strenuous training. Joan was assigned to Xavier Hospital as a Head Nurse on 4th

Floor, then to St. Mary's Hospital in Emporia, Kansas, moving on to Cortez, Colorado; Clinton, Iowa; Omaha, Nebraska, then back to Dubuque, finding herself as the Director of Nursing Services at Holy Family Hall. While at Holy Family Hall someone asked her how she got this job, Joan's reply was, "They needed a comedian, and I qualified."

Joan has said, "As I look back on it now, it seems that a great deal of my life has been spent transferring, substituting for others, and constantly adjusting to a new place or a new position. In my own mind I like to sum up my life by saying, 'I've just been on the go for God.'"

Sister is survived by her brother Maurice; brother-in-law Jack Spoden; nieces, nephews, and her Franciscan sisters with whom she shared over 68 years of her life. ■

Sister Mary Ann Helle November 3, 1937 - September 18, 2017



Mary Ann Helle was born to George and Sedella (Kramer) Helle on a farm outside Dyersville, Iowa

on November 3, 1937. Her mother died when she was young, and her father married Joan Jaeger. Mary Ann, the third oldest, was blessed with many sisters and brothers: Pearl, George, Norma, LeRoy, Paul, Frank, Marlene, Janet, Ruth, Bob, LuAnn, Joanie, Doris, Kathleen, and Henry.

Mary Ann attended a country school for the first grade and part of second grade, and then Xavier Grade and High School in Dyersville. After completing her education, she worked in a department store for a

year before she entered the community on August 25, 1956. On August 12, 1957, she was received into the Sisters of St. Francis and given the name Sister Mary Vincent de Paul.

Sister Mary Ann began her teaching/administration ministry in Granville, Iowa and then moved on to Remsen, Iowa; Hazel Crest, Illinois; Melrose Park, Illinois; Sioux City, Iowa; concluding in Humboldt, Iowa. As a teacher or administrator, it was her goal to call teachers and students to "discipleship." She is quoted as saying: "Truly, the staff and the student body are called to discipleship. We have the opportunity and challenge to grow and follow Jesus as He said in Mt. 28:19-20, 'Go and make disciples of all nations... Teach them to carry out everything I have commanded you. And know that I am always with you, until the end of the world.'"

Some of the many activities she enjoyed were praying, reading, creative arts, crafts, and sewing. One of the most significant events in her life was a trip to Assisi, Italy given to her as a gift from parishioners of Sacred Heart in Sioux City. In 2005, Mary Ann moved to Mount St. Francis to begin a new undertaking as the Coordinator of the Sewing Room. She retired in 2010 and moved to Clare House in 2015.

Sister is survived by her sisters Pearl (Harold) Kelchen, Norma Kelchen, Marlene (Ambrose) Koopmann, Janet Schwendinger, Ruth (Larry) Griffin, LuAnn (Bob) Cigrand, Joanie (Tom) Tauke, and Doris (Clair) Riesberg; brothers George (Connie), LeRoy (Margie), Paul (Stella), Frank (Joann), and Bob (Camie Pedersen); nieces, nephews, and her Franciscan sisters with whom she shared over 60 years of her life. ■

In Remembrance

Sister Susann Rogers June 25, 1923 - October 9, 2017



Twins girls Lorraine and Elaine were born on June 25, 1923, to George and Susan (Hosch) Rogers at the farm home in

Monticello, Iowa.

Elaine attended elementary school at the rural school in Monticello and high school at St. Mary's in Cascade. After high school, she took Normal Training class at the University of Dubuque and taught in the rural schools for three years which she enjoyed very

much.

A vocation was in the back of Elaine's mind, set in motion by the example of her parents and the sisters she knew. Unknown to her, her sister, Grace, who was teaching away from home at the time, was searching her vocation. In the end, they both entered the Sisters of St. Francis on August 25, 1944. The following year on August 12, 1945 she was received into the community and given the name Sister Mary Susann. Her sister Grace was given the name Sister Mary Keith.

Sister Susann's ministries in Iowa were at St. Francis Xavier, Dyersville; Sacred Heart, Dubuque; St. Martin, Odebolt; St. Boniface, Ionia; St.

Francis, Rockwell City; Immaculate Conception, Cherokee; St. Thomas Aquinas, Webster City; House Mother and Superior of St. Mary's Orphan Home in Dubuque and St. Anthony's Home in Sioux City, and as a staff member at St. Cloud, Minnesota. Sister also served the community as Superior of Mount St. Francis, Regional Coordinator, and was on staff at Holy Family Hall. In 2011 Sister Susann moved to Clare House.

Sister is survived by her brother-in-law Edwin Kleitsch; nieces, nephews, and her Franciscan sisters with whom she shared over 72 years of her life. ■

Sister Emiliana Meissen October 28, 1923 - November 13, 2017



Marie Katherine Meissen was born October 28, 1923 on a farm outside of Lawler, Iowa.

She was the first-born of Joseph Leo and Elizabeth (Hormisch) Meissen.

Marie began her education in 1929 in a little country school near Lawler, Iowa, but after a few months, the family had to move to North Washington, Iowa. Marie then attended Immaculate Conception School. It was there that she had her first encounter with Franciscan Sisters, other than her aunt, Sister

Joel Hormisch and great aunts, Sisters Diomira and Regina Gebel. During her third year in school, the family moved back to Lawler. There, Marie was taught by the Presentation Sisters from third grade until eighth grade. She knew she wanted to become a Franciscan, but the Presentations wanted her to enter their community. Having aunts in the Franciscan community, she would often ask them questions about religious life whenever they were home for a visit. She liked their answers and decided to become a Franciscan.

On August 25, 1941, at the age of 17, Marie entered Mount St. Francis. It was a year later, on August 12, 1942, that Marie received the name Sister Mary Emiliana at her reception

into the community.

Sister Emiliana began her life as a homemaker in 1944 at Sacred Heart in Dubuque, Iowa.

Her years of ministry in Iowa were at St. Edward in Waterloo; St. Mary in Cascade; and Immaculate Conception Academy, Immaculate Conception Convent, and Stonehill Care Center, all in Dubuque; and in Illinois at Corpus Christi. Sister Emiliana retired to Mount St. Francis in 1997 where she kept busy making quilts for the poor, which was her favorite pastime. In 2014 Sister moved to Clare House.

Sister is survived by nieces, nephews, and her Franciscan sisters with whom she shared over 75 years of her life. ■

Rest in Peace

Robert Donner
Brother-in-law of Sister Edna Ginder

Connie Zaugg
Sister of Sister Renae Hohensee

Dr. James J. Kivlahan
Brother of Sister Mary Kivlahan

David Lambert
Brother of Sister Eleanor Lambert

Laura Kramer
Mother of Sister Dorothy Kramer

Gene Hefel
Brother-in-law of Sister Alice Errthum

Don Hrubes
Brother of Sister Jan Hrubes

Jenny Imoehl
Sister of Sister Norma Jean Holthaus

Jim Staudt
Brother of Sister Mary Arnold Staudt

Urban Pasker
Brother-in-law of Sister Rita Goedken and uncle of Sister Kathy Knipper

Fred Neiers
Brother-in-law of Sisters Clara and Denise Streng

Sister Helen Huewe Featured in “I’m A Dubuquer” Campaign



Sister Helen Huewe. Contributed photo.

Sister Helen Huewe was featured in a local campaign titled, “I’m a Dubuquer.” The campaign featured black-and-white portraits of fellow Dubuquers from all different walks of life, ages, occupations, and backgrounds, with the hopes of inviting conversations about the community to broaden the collective understanding of all of our neighbors. Read Sister Helen’s story at <http://imadubuquer.com/stories/sister-helen/>. ■

6 Countries Represented at Mount St. Francis



Front row left to right: Sisters Hoa Phying, LHC, Nhiem Nhuyen, LHC, Veronica Bagenstos, OSF, Thuan Phan, LCH, and Dien Vu, LCH; back row left to right: Sisters Reyna Badillo, OSF, Anne Sedgwick, OSF, Erika Calderon, OSF, and Mary Adenubi, FHM.

This fall there were sisters from six countries living at Mount St. Francis Center: 1. Vietnam, 2. Nigeria, 3. Honduras, 4. Mexico, 5. England, and 6. the United States! Living with the Dubuque Franciscans for either formation or English language studies are Sisters from the Lovers of the Holy Cross and Franciscan Handmaids of the Most Pure Heart of Mary congregations! We are honored to share our lives with these women and learn about their cultures. ■

17 New Franciscan Associates Commissioned



Front row left to right: Jake Rosenmeyer, Lauren Heiderscheid, and Gretchen Brown. Back row left to right: Julie Brumm, Amy Mensen, Barb Brumm, Jeannine Kosman, Fran Mancl, Darla Ewald, Paula Lange, and Carol Mullenbach. Not pictured: Kristin Beusse, Lisa Crawford, Carlene Hillard, Brian Leckrone, Helen May, and Peggy Stockel.

gotten. I was encouraged to do my own soul searching on my ability to accept all and the true definition of unconditional love, no matter what. I have reflected on my own leadership style and now often think how Francis may have handled different situations. I hold very dear to my heart how I also learned more about the Sisters of St. Francis, their mission and getting to know the sisters more personally who facilitated our group. They were amazing!” ■

On Saturday, October 21, the Dubuque Franciscans commissioned 17 new Associates. “God’s called your name and you are responding,” said Sister Mary Lechtenberg at the Mass.

New Associate Gretchen Brown was part of the Franciscan Way of Life process with members from the Dubuque Franciscan Charism Team. It was a process she enjoyed so much she decided to continue on to become a Dubuque Franciscan Associate.

“The Franciscan Way of Life affected me at several levels,” wrote Gretchen. “It was wonderful to learn about Francis and Clare—not just their backgrounds but their incredible strength, focus and intent of helping others. They never wavered no matter how difficult things may have

Sister Water Project Celebrates 10 Years of Completed Projects

Fred and Rita Koster (left) of St. Clare of Assisi Parish in Monroe, Wisconsin, share their support as well as the support of their parish for the Sister Water Project at a celebration on Saturday, October 21 while Sister Water Project Committee Members Sisters Kathy Knipper and Judy Sinnwell look on.



“Yes we’ll gather at the river, the beautiful, beautiful river,” sang Dubuque Franciscan Sisters, Associates, and friends who gathered at the American Trust Rivers Edge Plaza Pavilion on the banks of the Mississippi on Saturday, October 21, to celebrate the Sister Water Project’s (SWP) 10 years of completed projects.

The celebration highlighted the generosity of donors as well as shared stories about how the SWP has impacted the lives of the beneficiaries.

The theme of the event was, “From Lemonade Stand to Generous Hands,” which was derived in part from a letter the SWP received in 2015 from Matt and Sandi Warthan of Maquoketa, Iowa, and was read aloud at the celebration: “Please find enclosed a donation for the Sister Water Project. This donation is money raised this summer from our 6-year-old, Dylan, and, MJ, who is 8-years-old. Dylan and MJ sold drinks at their lemonade stand twice in August and we are thrilled to say they raised \$96.41 for the Sister Water Project. Dylan repeatedly told us this summer, ‘I would like to sell drinks with my brother and all the money raised would go to fund water so those in need could drink in another country.’”

Sentiments of gratitude were also expressed from Tanzania from our partners Safe Water for Life and Dignity (SWLD).

“Congratulations on your 10 year anniversary,” wrote James Nyangas of SWLD and read aloud by SWP Committee Member Brian Gilligan. “The provision of clean and safe water has been very instrumental towards improving people’s livelihoods and poverty reduction. There is a sharp decline of water-borne diseases among households who received water projects from the SWP. There is also a tremendous economic progress due to good health and availability of clean water.”

Since 2007 the Sister Water Project has completed a total of 167 water projects in Tanzania and 20 water systems in Honduras. Today there are 225,000 villagers in Honduras and Tanzania who have access to a Sister Water Project well, simtank, or water system. Since its inception, the Sister Water Project has raised more than \$1,000,000.

On November 28, the Dubuque Franciscans released a new video detailing the history and mission of the Sister Water Project. It is available to watch online at www.osfdbq.org/sisterwaterproject. ■



The celebration at the Mississippi River.

Footprints



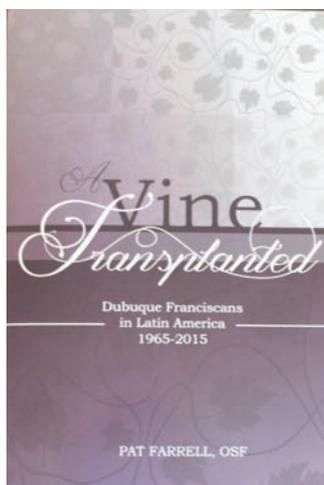
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Sister Pat Farrell Pens Book Detailing DBQ Franciscans' History in Latin America

Sister Pat Farrell has written a book that details the Dubuque Franciscans' history in Latin America.



For more than 50 years, the Dubuque Franciscans have lived and worked in Latin America. As a congregation the Dubuque Franciscans have been shaped and enriched by those experiences. "A Vine Transplanted" is a mixture of memoir and recent historical narrative detailing how the sisters who served there have been irreversibly transformed by the peoples with whom they shared life in Chile, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico.

The 50 year time frame of the book (1965-2015) spans a period of massive and tumultuous change in church, society, and religious life. "The challenges have been manifold. The courage, commitment, faith, and ingenuity of the sisters who served there have been equally as varied and abundant," said Sister Pat.

The book is \$15 and is available for purchase at Shalom Spirituality Center and also Amazon.com at this link: <http://a.co/448I8mg>. ■

Calendar of Events

JANUARY 13

Stories of Creation with Sister Meg Gemar, 9 a.m., Canticle of Creation Center, Mount St. Francis, 3390 Windsor Ave., Dubuque. Offering: \$10.

JANUARY 20

Native American Ten Commandments – Part 1; 5-part series led by Duane Short; 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Canticle of Creation Center, Mount St. Francis, 3390 Windsor Ave., Dubuque. Offering: \$15 per session or \$50 if registering for all sessions.

FEBRUARY 16

Concert with David Haas, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Shalom Spirituality Center, 1001 Davis St., Dubuque. Enjoy a concert with David Haas in Shalom's chapel. Haas is highly regarded as one of the most prolific composers in liturgical music today. \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door.

FEBRUARY 20

Native American Ten Commandments – Part 2; 5-part series led by Duane Short; 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Canticle of Creation Center, Mount St. Francis Center, 3390 Windsor Ave., Dubuque. Offering: \$15 per session or \$50 if registering for all sessions.