



# Franciscan CONNECTIONS

Spring 2020

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## DBQ Franciscans Elect New Leadership Team

The Sisters of St. Francis elected a new Leadership Team for the next six years during the community's Chapter of Elections, which met December 27-31, 2019 at Shalom Spirituality Center in Dubuque.

Elected to leadership for the congregation are: Sister Kathy Knipper, president; and

Sisters Patricia (Pat) Clemen, Maureen Leach, and Brenda Whetstone, vice presidents.

**Sister Kathy Knipper** has served as vice president for the Sisters of St. Francis Leadership Team since 2014. Her previous ministries include Associate Professor of Education at Briar Cliff University, Director of Curriculum for the Diocese of Sioux City and teacher in elementary schools in Holy Cross, Iowa; Waterloo, Iowa; and Dubuque. Sister Kathy graduated from Clarke University, Dubuque, has a master's degree from the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota, and a doctoral degree from the University of South Dakota, Vermillion.

**Sister Pat Clemen** currently serves as Catholic Charities' Coordinator for Parish Health Ministry in Jackson, Mississippi, and volunteers at Excel Learning Center in Morton, Mississippi, teaching CPR. She has lived in Mississippi since 1978 and previously served in Jackson as the Quality Improvement Director at Sta-Home Health and Hospice and DRE/RCIA Director at the Cathedral Parish. Her nursing experience includes coronary care supervisor, health facility surveyor, and school health consultant. She received her bachelor of science in nursing at Marycrest College, Davenport,



From left to right: Sisters Maureen Leach, Kathy Knipper, Brenda Whetstone, and Pat Clemen.

Iowa, and master's degree in theological studies at Springhill College, Mobile, Alabama.

**Sister Maureen Leach** is a Spanish/English interpreter with international experience. Additionally, she works as a licensed massage therapist specializing in hospice care in San Antonio, Texas. She has more than 35 years of ministry

experience in Texas: as a social service worker with the National Farm Worker Ministry, a teacher trainer/adult education instructor, and an education coordinator at Visitation House Transitional Housing. Previously she served in church ministry in rural Guatemala and as Activities Director at Stonehill Franciscan Services in Dubuque. She edited a book of essays on healing from trauma and co-authored a book on the Psalms. Her bachelor's degree in Spanish is from the University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls.

**Sister Brenda Whetstone** is a nurse at Lackey Convalescent Home in Forest, Mississippi, and volunteers at EXCEL, Inc. in Morton, Mississippi. She previously served in pastoral care in Gracias, Lempira, Honduras, and in Dubuque as a nurse at Stonehill Franciscan Services, and Holy Family Hall, at Mount St. Francis Center. Sister Brenda received a bachelor's degree in theology from Briar Cliff University in Sioux City, Iowa. Following graduation, she served in the United States Army where she received her licensed practical nurse training from St. Philip's College in San Antonio.

Installation of the new leadership team will take place on May 31 at Mount St. Francis Center. ■

## New Novice Received in Honduras

**O**n Friday, December 13, in Gracias, Lempira, Honduras, the Sisters of St. Francis of Dubuque received **Katy Meylin Orellana Deras**, of El Salvador, as a novice to the congregation.

During the ceremony Sister Pat Farrell, who has directed the formation process in Honduras, expressed the support of the entire community to the new novice. “We are called to fruitful love, to service, to love in action. We have seen that in you, Katy. We recognize the many gifts that you have and the ways you have placed them at the service of those around you. We give you a big welcome and ask that you continue to love and serve in this congregation, walking with us,” said Sister Pat.

“We are all inspired by the faith and trust that Sister Katy has placed in our congregation and in God who calls her forward into community and ministry,” said Sister Kate.

Sister Katy will continue to share community life and participate in ministry with Dubuque Franciscan Sisters. ■



*Katy Meylin Orellana Deras signs the reception book while Sister Kate Katoski looks on. Contributed photo.*

## Work Begins on Solar Panels at Mount St. Francis Center



*Work begins on the future site of the solar panels that will power Clare House at Mount St. Francis Center.*

**T**he Dubuque Franciscans are installing more than 2,600 solar panels to power Clare House at Mount St. Francis Center.

“In 1988, we converted about 80 acres of our property to prairie, and in May of 2019, 55 of these acres and 13 acres of woods were put into a conservation easement,” said **Sister Marie Cigrand**. “The installation of solar panels on our property is our next endeavor in doing our part to preserve our planet for future generations.”

Each panel will generate 375 watts of electricity, for a grand total of 990,000 watts, the ground-mounted solar system would reduce Clare House’s energy usage by 80%.

“This will provide some energy independence and cost control as energy costs will continue to rise,” said Sisters of St. Francis Maintenance Director Paul Hayes. “We want to be more environmentally friendly and lessen our reliance on fossil fuels.”

Clare House operates on a geothermal system. Alliant Energy will be able to “bank” excess energy the panels generate during summer months and let us use it again during colder months, said Paul.

The project is slated to be completed in June. ■

# 2019 Statement of Accountability

Dear Friends,

What is listed below is our report of donations for 2019, both how you our donors designated your donations, and how the Leadership Team of the Sisters of St. Francis then assigned your generosity.

“Gratitude” is the foundation of all we do to stay in touch with you. We are most grateful for your support of our life and ministry. We promise you a remembrance in our prayers.

*Sister Cathy (Kate) Katoski, OSF  
For the Sisters of St. Francis of Dubuque, IA*

## DONOR DESIGNATION OF GIFT INCOME

For the needs of retired sisters	\$ 116,006.60
For ministry among poor people	\$ 6,372.00
For wherever our need is greatest	\$ 202,348.68
Birdies for Charity	\$ 18,692.02
Estate Gifts	\$ 314,317.92
Sister Water Project	\$ 230,166.76
	<u>\$ 887,903.38</u>

## HOW YOUR GIFTS WERE DISTRIBUTED

*By the Leadership Team of the Sisters of St. Francis of Dubuque*

Ministry Fund	\$ 6,372.00
Operations	\$ 394,617.87
Birdies purchases	\$ 18,692.02
Sister Water Projects	\$ 230,166.76
Investments for Capital Projects	\$ 238,054.73
	<u>\$ 887,903.38</u>



Over the last 15 years, many of you have received a card in memory of your lost family member, or celebrating a birthday or anniversary from the Sister of St. Francis signed by Sister Helen Huewe, OSF. Sister Helen died January 11, 2020, after a short illness with a rare form of pneumonia. We are most grateful for her years of service in our Development Office and for all she did in the City of Dubuque to spearhead and fund raise for numerous charitable organizations. ■

## Wish To Be Removed from our mailing list?

Email us at [katoskic@osfdbq.org](mailto:katoskic@osfdbq.org).

Is the recipient deceased or no longer at this address? Please write such on this newsletter and return to a mailbox.

*Thank You!*

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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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## SWP Seeks Volunteers for Service Trip to Honduras

The Sisters of St. Francis are seeking volunteers for a service trip to Honduras with the Sister Water Project July 17-25, 2020. Sister Water Project service team members will help make potable water accessible to people in the rural village of Mejocote, near the town of Gracias in Lempira, Honduras.

Team members must be 18 years old (16 years old if accompanied by a parent/guardian) and physically healthy and strong enough to perform strenuous activity at higher altitudes. Fees for the trip are \$1,100 which includes ground/air travel from the USA to Honduras, food, and lodging.

To participate in the 2020 Sister Water Project service trip, visit [www.osfdbq.org](http://www.osfdbq.org) to download an application or email Stacy Francois at [francoiss@osfdbq.org](mailto:francoiss@osfdbq.org) for a copy. Applications are due by April 10, 2020. For more information, contact Sister Kathy Knipper at (563) 583-9786 or [knipperk@osfdbq.org](mailto:knipperk@osfdbq.org).



*Members of the 2018 Sister Water Project service trip to Mejocote.*