

Footprints



Footprints

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

Mount St. Francis
3390 Windsor Avenue
Dubuque, Iowa 52001
Phone: 563.583.9786
Fax: 563.583.3250
Web site: www.osfdbq.org

Cover Photo



Photo by Sister Phyllis Manternach.

Footprints

Spring 2022 | Volume 56 | Number 1

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A message from

Leadership

Our community's 2020-2026 Direction Statement included: the dream of "re-imagining Shalom Spirituality Center as vehicle for transmitting the Franciscan charism and values."

Shalom's story began as the dream of Sister Marie Therese Kalb--a faith response that gave vision to Shalom. Now in 2022--a new chapter is emerging at Shalom. We embrace God's invitation to the mystery of transformation. With this backdrop, we recall the words of Isaiah:

*"See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?"*
(Isaiah 43:19 NIV)

The song, "A New Chapter," begins with the words:
"Today we turn a page, not a beginning or an end but the next part of the journey is born of faith."

Both scripture and the song remind us that a call is born of faith, that in faith we travel together. We would not change the way.

Indeed, we are stronger and wiser with a history richer than if we had gone alone. With gratitude and humility, in community, we continue the story of the ministry at Shalom Spirituality Center. We are in this together. With God, the weaver of the future, may we focus our communal efforts toward implementing the Chapter Direction Statement as we focus our efforts on the intersection of systemic racism, the climate crisis, and the underlying issues revealed by the pandemic.

The words of Mother Xavier ring in our hearts:
"God is with us still and God's loving hand will direct us."

And the words of our Constitutions are also deep in our hearts:
"Inspired by the example of Mother Xavier, we are called to a trustful dependence on God, A spirit of joy, and a courageous response to the changing condition of the times."

--Sister Pat Clemen, 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.

Direction 2020 - 2026:

Rooted in our Franciscan mission and commitment to contemplative dialogue, we the Sisters of St. Francis and Associates set our common heart on the way, responding to the signs of our times as we: focus our efforts within the intersection of our three commitment areas: addressing systemic racism, the climate crisis, and the underlying issues revealed by the pandemic; enhance our collaboration with diverse partners to give expression to our mission; and explore re-imagining Shalom Spirituality Center as a vehicle for transmitting the Franciscan charism and values.

Leadership Team

Sister Kathy Knipper
President

Sister Pat Clemen
Vice President

Sister Maureen Leach
Vice President

Sister Brenda Whetstone
Vice President





Shalom Spirituality Center in Dubuque. Contributed photo.

Re-imagining Shalom Spirituality Center

The ministry of the Sisters of St. Francis' Shalom Spirituality Center provides a variety of retreats and programs for persons of all ages, cultures, faith backgrounds, and religious affiliations wherever they currently are on their spiritual journey.

In 2020, the Dubuque Franciscans included Shalom in their 2020-2026 Direction Statement recognizing the dream of: "re-imagining Shalom Spirituality Center as a vehicle for transmitting the Franciscan charism and values." That direction statement has provided an impetus and foundation for Shalom over the past year. In this issue of *Footprints*, we look at Shalom's history as we prepare for its future:

Sisters of St. Francis History

The Dubuque Franciscans were founded in 1864 in Hereford, Germany to care for orphans, the elderly and the injured on the battlefield. In 1875, Prussia had become increasingly hostile to religion as evidenced in the Kulturkampf, but finally the, "May Laws" made it clear that the sisters would have to leave their community or leave Germany. Twenty-nine sisters left Germany for America on August 21, 1875. They first settled in Iowa City. On December 17, 1878, 33 sisters, 2 postulants, and 10 orphans traveled to Dubuque and set up residence in the old, but

remodeled, Holy Trinity Church located at the corner of 7th and Iowa streets. A plaque is still there today commemorating this residence.

The New Convent on Davis Avenue

Year by year larger numbers of eager candidates sought admission making it necessary to erect the motherhouse on Davis Avenue in Dubuque. The ground breaking occurred on May 15, 1880. Bishop Hennessy blessed the new convent and celebrated Mass in a temporary chapel on June 13, 1881.

The community continued to grow in numbers and as a result of the growth, additions had to be made to St. Francis Convent. Mother Xavier spent much of her time working on the various building projects. In late 1883, construction on the new east wing (about 2/3 of its present size) was begun. It opened on August 9, 1884. Another project was to add on to the chapel. The cornerstone for the chapel was laid on May 17, 1884. In 1889 and 1899 new wings were added.

The congregation was out-growing the motherhouse on Davis Avenue when, under the direction of the fourth Mother General, Mother Mary Dominca Wieneke, ground was broken on November 26, 1922 for what was to become Mount St. Francis, north of the hill from what is now Shalom. The sisters moved to Mount St. Francis on March 16, 1925.

Immaculate Conception Academy

The Academy began at 17th and Iowa streets in downtown Dubuque in 1907 to provide Catholic education for girls of St. Mary's parish. In 1925, two events came together: the Sisters of St. Francis vacated their motherhouse on Davis Avenue to move to the new Mount St. Francis and the Immaculate Conception Academy (ICA) moved to Davis Avenue because they needed more space due to more girls seeking high school education.

With ICA's first graduating class, the Alumnae Associate was organized, and for years it met annually, first at the ICA building, then at Mount St. Francis. ICA closed as a girl's school in the spring of 1959 to make way for the opening of inter-parochial Wahlert Catholic High School.



ICA graduates. Photo from the Dubuque Franciscans archives.

An Aspirancy, Juniorate and Novitiate

The Aspirancy for high school girls discerning a religious vocation opened in September of 1959 in the former ICA. It retained its name and accreditation. Those who attended experienced community and excellent education in small classes, prayer, study of St. Francis, and awareness of justice issues. Nine women became professed members of the Dubuque Franciscans.

The Aspirancy at ICA closed in 1965. The building was then renamed Immaculate Conception (IC) Convent. It also served as a Juniorate for newly professed sisters from 1961-1964 and was home for the senior novices from 1965-1967.

Immaculate Conception Convent

After 1965, IC gradually became a retirement center for sisters, housing 40 in 1975. Sister students at Loras College and retreatants filled the IC buildings summer after summer before IC became strictly a retirement home for senior sisters.

Shalom Retreat Center

The doors swung a wide welcome for the inaugural event of Shalom Retreat Center in early January 1989. The Dubuque Deanery priests were the first small gathering. As the years flew by, the client count grew to about 8,000 persons annually. Breaking into this retreat ministry was difficult at times, as all new ventures may be.

Sister Marie Therese Kalb, first director, allowed her faith to work as she prayed for the phones to ring, prayed the dessert would be baked on time (she doubled as cook for the first few months!), and prayed that the small staff could be flexible with the many unknowns.

Shalom Spirituality Center

From 1989 until 2014, Shalom Retreat Center's

mission and ministry thrived as Shalom welcomed guests into the iconic, red brick building on Davis Street. As visitors entered, they felt a sense of peaceful calm. The ministry began at that threshold, as staff invited guests and friends into a private room, meeting space, or the historic Chapel. In addition, Shalom offered a gift shop and library, which allowed guests to lean into the mission of Shalom and even take a piece of its goodness home with them. In 2014, the name was changed from Shalom Retreat Center to Shalom Spirituality Center as "spirituality" described the movement of the ministry into the 21st century.

Shalom Spirituality Center Re-imagined

A Master Plan Implementation sub-committee of the sisters was formed and convened in November 2021 to delve into "re-imagining" and what that means for the future of Shalom.

In January 2022, the mission and ministry of the Canticle of Creation Center integrated with the mission and ministry of Shalom Spirituality Center. The transformation of these two ministries has multiplied efforts in outreach to diverse groups--local, national, and global participants--all eager to embrace the mission of the Sisters of St. Francis.

Efforts were made to streamline Shalom's internal structures with a continued focus on mission/vision and including partnerships. Shalom, Canticle of Creation Center (CoCC), the Sisters of St. Francis Charism Team, and the Sisters of St. Francis Social Justice Coordinator are exploring ways to partner and collaborate on a variety of programming. In late winter/early spring, the group collaborated on a four part Zoom series titled, "Moving Toward Racial Equity."

Partnerships are being built/sustained with various organizations, such as:

- AmeriCorps
- Mississippi River Museum
- Clarke University
- Area schools
- St. Mark's Enrichment Center
- Hills and Dales
- Stonehill Care Center

New technology equipment has been implemented to allow for restructuring programs offered at Shalom in three different ways: in-person events; hybrid (both in-person and virtual via Zoom) and fully virtual.

Some changes within the structure of the building have been reconfigured to create space to support the growth of a team dedicated to possibilities of what the future holds. The former library will become the gift shop. The large space will provide opportunity for

partnerships with local artisans, offering fair-trade products, local caramels, books, and gifts for adults and children with a Franciscan flair.

Shalom is currently comprised of both seasoned and new staff, who are excited to re-imagine Shalom and its ministry and mission. Dietary Manager Margie Gassman and Administrative Assistant Susan Black, who, together, have over 25 years of service to Shalom and its mission; Mary Kay Kane, Hospitality Coordinator, and Mari Hammel, Program Assistant, offer a new perspective and energy after joining the staff in February 2022; Lori Apel, Director of Programming; and Nicole Baumgartner, Director of Marketing, round out the dynamic group.

As we delve into the future of Shalom, we embrace God's invitation to the mystery of transformation! ■

Sister Kate Katoski, Sister Pat Clemen, Lori Apel, and Nicole Baumgartner all contributed to this article.

Summer 2022 Retreats at Shalom

Boundless Compassion Retreat (4-day Retreat)

Sunday, June 26-Thursday, June 30

Facilitators: Mary Jo Wulf and Jeannine Kosman

During the first evening and following four days, you will glean insights from theology, spirituality, science, sociology, and psychology. You will experience this opportunity as a catalyst for a renewed commitment to being a compassionate presence to yourself and to others who are in the midst of pain and struggle. Boundless Compassion Facilitator training will follow on July 1. Anyone who has completed this four-day retreat may apply to be a facilitator and attend the training. \$500 per person (includes program, overnight accommodations, and meals) or \$375 per person for commuters (includes program, meals, but no overnight accommodations); please register online at shalomretreats.org or by calling (563) 582-3592 by June 10, 2022.

Boundless Compassion Facilitator Workshop

Friday, July 1, 8:00 am-4:00 pm

Shalom Spirituality Center, Dubuque, Iowa

Facilitator: Joyce Rupp (in person)

Joyce is well known for her work as a writer, spiritual midwife, international retreat leader, and conference speaker. Joyce is the author of numerous bestselling books. This workshop offers the opportunity to become a certified facilitator of the Boundless Compassion program. The training prepares participants to use their individual talents and experiences to incorporate the Boundless Compassion program into their sphere of influence and to share the content in a variety of ways. Participants in this one-day event are required to have attended a four-day Boundless Compassion retreat in person before attending this workshop.

Along with full attendance at the four-day retreat, each interested person in the training workshop must request an application form from Joyce Rupp, (email: joycerupposm@yahoo.com), complete it, and send it for review before being accepted into the training workshop. This program is in person. \$175 per person (includes program, overnight accommodations, and meals) or \$80 per person for commuters (includes program and meals); please register online at shalomretreats.org or by calling (563) 582-3592 by June 10, 2022.

Virtues: Come of Age Retreats (5-Day Retreat)

Sunday, July 17-Friday, July 22

Shalom Spirituality Center, Dubuque, Iowa

Facilitator: Father Joe Juknialis

Having spent years seeking to faithfully live the Gospel of Jesus, there comes a time when we need to look back and see how we have grown on the journey of spirituality. Then we are able to give thanks for what God's Spirit has done in our lives, what that Spirit continues to do, and how we might be open to it. While this retreat will not consider the usual traditional virtues, it will consider those such as wonder, freedom, balance, restlessness, perseverance, as well as others, all of which are the movement of God's Spirit in our lives. Each will consider how the Incarnation has taken root in our lives. \$600 per person (includes program, overnight accommodations, and meals) or \$480 per person for commuters (includes program, meals, no overnight accommodations); please register online at shalomretreats.org or by calling 563.582.3592 by July 8, 2022.

2021 Statement of Accountability

Dear Friends,
We hear so often of the gratitude you have for the ministry of the Dubuque Franciscans today and over the past decades in

your life. We trust that you know how very grateful are the Dubuque Franciscans for your support of our lives and ministries. We promise to remember you in our prayers!

DONOR DESIGNATION OF GIFT INCOME

For the needs of retired sisters	\$ 72,365.86
For the ministry fund	\$ 10,259.00
For wherever our need is greatest	\$ 221,500.63
Birdies for Charity	\$ 13,683.60
Estate Gifts	\$ 502,825.99
Sister Water Project and Sister Water Walk	\$ 299,864.35
Honduras Hurricane Relief	\$ 25,530.00
	<u>\$1,146,029.43</u>

HOW YOUR GIFTS WERE DISTRIBUTED

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

Ministry Fund	\$ 10,259.00
Operations	\$ 660,975.92
Birdies purchases	\$ 13,683.60
Sister Water Projects	\$ 435,580.91
Honduras Hurricane Relief	\$ 25,530.00
	<u>\$1,146,029.43</u>

SWP Celebrates 15 Years of Water Projects

The Dubuque Franciscans' Sister Water Project (SWP) celebrated 15 years of sponsoring water projects in Honduras and Tanzania by hosting a SWP Walk in March.

Between March 15 and March 22, participants were asked to walk in a way that honors 15 – whether it was 15 minutes a day, 15 miles, or 15 blocks. From March 15-22, social media posts featured stories of 15 lives that have been impacted by the Sister Water Project.

One of those lives was **Lucia Sarmiento** in Honduras.

“Formerly, our highly contaminated water source was on private property in a neighboring community, causing frequent conflict, so we usually carried water from a distant river. Now we drink 99.5% pure spring water piped to each house. Health conditions are greatly improved. We all shared hard physical labor, like digging ditches, and that really united the community. The Sister Water Project has given Llanito Verde peace and stability. I am very happy!” said Lucia.

The first SWP water projects were installed in 2007. Since then, 330 well projects have been completed in Tanzania and funding has helped support 37 water systems in Honduras. ■

**FOR IT IS IN
GRATITUDE THAT WE
MARK FIFTEEN YEARS OF THE
SISTER WATER PROJECT &
REJOICE IN THE PRECIOUS
GIFT OF WATER IN
TANZANIA & HONDURAS**



Front row: Helen Maddix, Donna Alcocer, and Mary Ann Dorcey; back row: Kathy Giese, Sister Ginny Helderfer, Neece Bowyer, Phil Alcocer, and Linda Leonard, who volunteered at the Fort McCoy military base in Wisconsin to welcome Afghan refugees. Contributed photo.

FWL Group Volunteers with Afghan Refugees

In late November 2021, **Sister Ginny Helderfer** and the Franciscan Way of Life (FWL) group she co-leads with **Linda Tacke**, traveled to Wisconsin to volunteer at the Fort McCoy military base hosting Afghan refugees.

The refugees were temporarily housed at the base between Sparta and Tomah, Wisconsin. Catholic Charities of the LaCrosse Diocese took the lead in helping find volunteers to welcome the refugees.

“As part of FWL, we had talked about going to the southern border for our ‘immersion experience,’ but when I heard about Fort McCoy housing refugees from Afghanistan, I suggested it to the group and everyone jumped on it immediately,” said Sister Ginny.

The group spent five days volunteering in the three main centers on the military base set up for women and children--a sewing center, learning center, and mother/baby center.

“I spent most of my time with the children,” said **Helen Maddix**. “We would get to the base early, were given our assignments and then we’d get ready for the day.”

Among the 9,000 refugees at the military base were 148 young women who had been students at the Asian University for Women in Bangladesh.

“I worked in the sewing center and was lucky enough to have these young women translating for us,” said **Linda Leonard**. “They not only translated



Sister Ginny Helderfer volunteering at Fort McCoy in Wisconsin. Contributed photo.

but shared their experiences and showed us what resilience, patience, and courage are all about.”

For **Donna Alcocer**, her time with the Afghan refugees was one she will not soon forget.

“One day the women invited me to their circle to dance and started cheering. I knew what I was experiencing was a piece of heaven for me and that I would remember the rest of my life,” said Donna. “I couldn’t get over the warmth of these women after they’ve been through so much I will always be grateful for that experience.” ■



Nurse Lynn King Retires After 42 Years of Service with the Sisters

by Jessi Russo

Lynn King (left) with Sister Monica McMahon in 2017. Photo by Jessi Russo.

Though nurse **Lynn King** retired in December 2021 after working for the Dubuque Franciscans for 42 years, she's actually known the sisters even longer.

"I have been around them all my life--I was taught by them since kindergarten," said Lynn.

After being taught by Dubuque Franciscans in both grade school and high school, Lynn began working with Dubuque Franciscan Sisters at Xavier Hospital when she was 16 until she attended nursing school. When she finished her nursing degree, she returned to Xavier Hospital where she was a nurse for 15 years until it closed. She was then invited to care for the elderly sisters at Holy Family Hall at Mount St. Francis Center, where she was employed since 1979.

"People would ask me, 'why don't you retire?' and I would tell them, 'I love what I do.' It's true--I love what I do or wouldn't work here. I worked in the best of places--the staff are so nice and the sisters are so caring. They are easy to love."

The sisters offered their thanks and prayers for Lynn after her 42 years as an employee for the Sisters of St. Francis.

"We are deeply grateful to Lynn for her many years of service with the Sisters of St. Francis," said **Sister Kathy Knipper**, president. "Her gentle, comforting care knew no bounds. She always took time to listen and understand our sisters and walked with them in their time of need."

Kathy McDonnell, Director of Nursing for the

Sisters of St. Francis, also noted Lynn's love for the sisters in the care she gave them in her role as a nurse.

"Lynn showed such compassion always. She is a true professional in every sense of the word. She treated all she encountered with respect--sisters and staff," said Kathy. "The sisters trusted her with every need and they could be themselves with her immediately, letting her know their concerns. If you talked to a sister about their medical needs, they would frequently reference what Lynn thought was the problem, as they valued her input so," added Kathy.

Sister Marge Burkle is one sister who experienced Lynn's loving service.

"It wasn't like her coming to a job but more like coming to share time with us--and us sharing time with her," said Sister Marge. "Sometimes she made us fresh cookies or a surprise dessert just to make the weekend special."

Sister Marge said that Lynn always went above and beyond her call as a nurse to help care for the sisters.

"For so many of us at Clare House, our body and hearts have needed her caring heart and hand and her smile and encouragement," she said "When we had difficult days, her smile or, 'is there something I can do for you?' was the greatest gift to us. She is an awesome woman to share the journey with. She truly made a difference in my life and those she cared for over the years," added Sister Marge. ■

Coalition Recognized for Efforts to End Human Trafficking

The Tri-State Coalition Against Human Trafficking was among five recognized by Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds' office at the Iowa Capitol in Des Moines on Thursday, January 13 with "Outstanding Anti-Trafficking Service Awards." The awards were presented as part of Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month.

Dubuque Franciscan **Sister Mary Lechtenberg**, co-coordinator of the coalition, received the award on behalf of the coalition.

"We are committed to continue these efforts and to collaborate with other organizations to end the demand for human trafficking," she said in her remarks at the capitol.

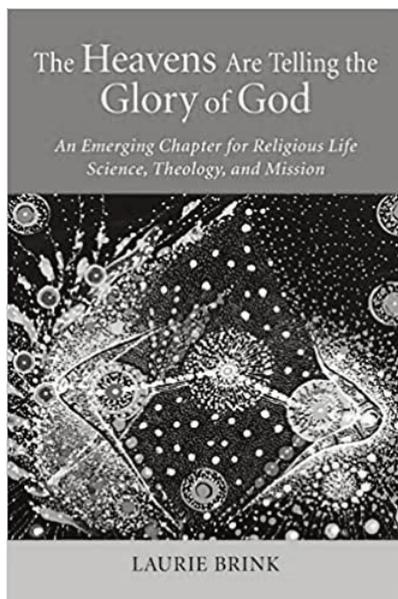
An Iowa law passed in 2020 requires hotels and motels to train employees to spot signs of human trafficking in order to be included on a list of places public employees can stay while traveling on government business. The effort was supported by all Dubuque area women religious..

Earlier in January 2022, the Tri-State Coalition Against Human Trafficking received Proclamations from the Dubuque City Council, Dubuque County Board of Supervisors and the Galena City Council declaring January Human Trafficking Awareness Month. ■



Sister Mary Lechtenberg with Iowa Lieutenant Governor Adam Gregg (center) and Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate. Photo by Sister Nancy Miller.

Sister Sarah Kohles Writes Afterword in New Book



Sister Sarah Kohles has written the afterword of a new book titled, "The Heavens Are Telling the Glory of God," by **Sister Laurie Brink, OP, PhD.**

Sister Laurie was Sister Sarah's Scripture professor at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

"Sister Laurie asked **Sister Dianne Bergant, CSA**, to write the forward and me to write the afterword so that three generations of religious life are represented," said Sister Sarah.

In her afterword, Sister Sarah discusses the future of religious life.

"We women religious have been invited to 'trust the process' many times. We've had to trust the process of entering into the deep, personal work of the novitiate. We have learned to trust the process of negotiating the liminal space of changing ministries and moving into new communities. We are now learning to trust that the processes and structures of religious life as we have known them are evolving into something new," writes Sister Sarah. ■

Cover of "The Heavens are Telling the Glory of God." Contributed photo.

In Remembrance

Sister Colane Recker May 19, 1940 - November 19, 2021



There was a terrible snowstorm in the Remsen, Iowa area on May 19, 1940 when Colane was born to Ed and Gertrude

(Hansen) Recker. Her grandmother delivered her because the doctor couldn't make it through the snow. Colane's mother originally named her Colleen at birth, but due to a typo in the newspaper Gertrude decided she liked the spelling of Colane, so it was kept. At six months of age the family moved to a farm in Alton, Iowa. A total of nine children completed the family.

Colane attended St. Mary's

Academy in Alton throughout her grade and high school years where she was taught by the Dubuque Franciscan Sisters. After high school graduation, Colane entered the Franciscan Order in Dubuque on September 3, 1958. The following year on August 10, 1959 Colane received the name Sister Mary Martinella. Colane decided to return to her baptismal name when the Sisters were able and was known as Sister Mary Colane after that. For 33 years Sister taught elementary students in Iowa beginning at Holy Trinity, Dubuque, three different St. Mary's Schools in Manchester, Remsen, and Danbury; two St. John's Schools in Arcadia and Bancroft; and Gehlen High School in Le Mars and Bishop Heelan High School in Sioux

City.

In 1990, Sister Colane started work on her master's degree in Library Science. Coincidentally, it was at the same time that Sister was delving into the world of computers. After receiving her master's degree in 1995, Sister was assigned to Gehlen High School teaching students the "ins and outs" of the computer world. After seven years at Gehlen, she moved into her "ideal job" as Library/Media Specialist at Bishop Heelan High School.

Sister is survived by her sisters Gayle (Chuck) Schmidt, Elaine Harriman, Jeanette (George) Curry, and Mary Lou Bauler; brother Ed (Rena) Recker; sister-in-law Jean Recker; nieces, nephews, and her Franciscan sisters. ■

Sister Marla Smith December 29, 1922 - November 21, 2021



Virginia Marie, daughter of William and Mae Agnes (Forey) was born December 29, 1922 on a farm near

Webster City, Iowa. She was baptized at St. Thomas Aquinas Church, Webster City. When Virginia was four years old the family moved to a farm near Williams, Iowa, where they lived for nine years.

After graduating high school at the age of 16, Virginia attended the American Institute of Business in Des Moines.

She worked a few months as a secretary in Webster City then four years in a government office (Farm

Security Administration) in Indianapolis, Indiana. During her time in Webster City Virginia met Dubuque Franciscan Sisters Sienna Freiling and Callista Loosbrock, who started a catechetical school there. The sisters lived next door to the family Virginia was staying with. It was just long enough to get acquainted with the Franciscan Community. Virginia kept in contact with the sisters, and while earning her BA in food and nutrition from Clarke College in Dubuque, she would occasionally meet with Mother Irmina Manternach at Mount St. Francis.

On August 25, 1949, after completing a 12-month dietetic internship at John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, Virginia entered the Sisters of St. Francis. The following year on

August 12, she was received into the community and given the name Sister Mary Marla.

Sister Marla was a dietitian at Xavier Hospital in Dubuque for 21 years. During this time she was given one year and some summers to pursue a master's degree in nutrition at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. She moved to Ames and was a dietitian for 17 years at Mary Greeley Medical Center.

Sister Marla retired from her work in Ames and moved to Mount St. Francis in June 2010. She moved to Clare House in 2015.

Sister is survived by her sister, Harriet Weeg, nieces, nephews, and her Franciscan sisters. ■

In Remembrance

Sister Jolene Wingert June 16, 1925 - January 31, 2022



On June 16, 1925, on one of her grandfather's farms near the little town of Raymond, Iowa, Louise Josephine was born to her parents, Lioba (Kraut) and George Wingert.

After graduating from high school, Louise began working as a bookkeeper at the Waterloo Savings Bank. The challenge soon wore off, so she went to Washington, DC for a year to work as a secretary for the FBI during WWII. This opportunity, away from family, afforded the time

and possibilities Louise needed to test the choice of vocation without outside influences.

While on paid vacation from the FBI, the time seemed right to listen to that persistent voice within and to pursue a religious vocation. Louise entered the convent on August 25, 1944 to silence that still, small voice once and for all. The following year on August 12, 1945 Louise was given the name Sister Mary Jolene. Her ministry began with teaching students in fourth through seventh grade in Iowa at St. Boniface, Ionia; SS. Peter and Paul, Petersburg; St. Mary's, Manchester; Immaculate Conception, North Washington; and St. Mary, Larchwood. After receiving her BA from Briar Cliff Sister was

assigned to teach at Columbus High School, Waterloo. It was at this time in her life that Sister received her master's degree in English and a theology degree.

Sister Jolene also ministered in San Pablo, California; Fort Smith, Arkansas; Bethlehem, Israel; Tulsa, Oklahoma; Plano, Illinois; Bronx, New York; Branson, Missouri; Des Moines, Iowa; Little Falls, Minnesota; Bellevue, Washington; Springfield, Missouri; Houston, Texas; and Sparkill, New York.

Sister Jolene retired to Mount St. Francis in 1996 and moved to Clare House in 2012.

Sister is survived by her nieces, nephews, and Franciscan sisters. ■

Sister Rachel Berns September 21, 1923 - February 1, 2022



Rachel Agnes Berns was born September 21, 1923, to Herman and Anna (Hoeger) Berns, Jr. She was the seventh of 10 children.

On August 8, 1941 Rachel entered Mount St. Francis. The following year on August 12, she was given the religious name, Sister Mary Petra. After Vatican II Sister returned to her baptismal name. For 49 years Sister taught in grades one through five and loved every moment of it. Sister Rachel was always at home in the classroom, spending great energy helping students to learn and to love learning. It was very important to her to be creative, organized, and well-prepared. Besides classroom

teaching, Sister also worked with authors, field-tested five different series of books, was a cooperating teacher for many college students majoring in elementary education, and coordinated CCD classes (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine). Music was always an important part of her life. Sister Rachel took piano lessons during her grade school years, accordion in high school, and some violin and guitar lessons while on mission.

Sister's teaching assignments took her to missions in Iowa at Visitation, Stacyville, Sacred Heart and Holy Ghost, both in Dubuque, St. John, Bancroft, St. Joseph, Earlville, St. Timothy, Minneapolis, Minnesota, and two schools in Illinois, Sacred Heart, Melrose Park, and St. John Brebeuf, Niles. In August of 1993 Sister retired from teaching and moved to Mount St. Francis where she volunteered

as a secretary for the Liturgy Department. Sister Rachel lived at Holy Family Hall from 2004-2011 at which time she moved to her new home, Clare House.

Sister is survived by her nieces, nephews, and Franciscan sisters. ■

Rest in Peace

Grace Schaff
Sister of Sisters
Denise and Clara
Streng

Lewis Scholl
Brother-in-law of
Sister Carol Ann
Hauber

**Father Melvin
"Mel" Hemann**
Brother of Sister
Camilla Hemann

**Patricia "Pat"
Johnson**
Sister of Sister Mary
Day

**George Berte
Robert Berte**
Brothers of Sister
Carol Ann Berte

Doris Thilges
Sister-in-law of Sister
Alda Thilges

Bill Hellman
Brother of Sr. Lila
Hellman

**Father Gerald
Hartz**
Brother of Sister
Dorothy Hartz

Joseph "Joe" Stoll
Brother of Sister
Dorothy Stoll

**Margaret Galles
Hager**
Sister of Sister
Michaela Galles

In Remembrance

Sister Corinne Kutsch July 17, 1923 - December 8, 2021



Clarence and Irene (Nierling) Kutsch had their first child on July 17, 1923 in Dubuque. The baby girl was baptized five

days later in St. Mary's Church and given the name Lorraine Margaret.

Prayer and church attendance was very important in the Kutsch home. Daily prayer included the rosary. The family always arrived a half hour beforehand to attend every church service. They walked most places because they had no car nor money for the bus. Walking to school at St. Mary's was not difficult, but when

Lorraine went to Immaculate Conception Academy (ICA) she had to walk daily from 11th and Bluff. She would sometimes stop in Sacred Heart Church to make a visit and get warm. She chose to go to ICA because she wanted to be close to the Franciscan sisters. Her part-time work at ICA afforded her the opportunity to help pay for her tuition.

On August 25, 1940, Sister entered Mount St. Francis. She completed her senior year with other aspirants/postulants at ICA in June, 1941. Soon after, on August 12, she was received and given the name Sister Mary Corinne.

Much of Sister Corinne's life was spent teaching various grades from

two to eight. She was missioned in Iowa at Templeton, Garnavillo, New Hampton, and Dyersville, and Hazel Crest and Midlothian in Illinois. She also spent a year as Religious Education Coordinator in Lansing, a suburb of Chicago. In her later years she moved into a secretarial position at Beckman High School, Dyersville, IA. She also worked with the elderly at Alverno Apartments and Stonehill Care Center. In 2002 she moved to Mount St. Francis and to Clare House in 2013.

Sister is survived by her brothers, Reverend Eugene (Gene) Kutsch and Charles Kutsch; a brother-in-law Alfred Breitbach; nieces and nephews, and her Franciscan sisters. ■

Sister Bona Joan Hebig August 21, 1925 - December 17, 2021



On August 21, 1925 a baby girl was born to George and Josepha (Loosbrock) Hebig.

Bona Joan was born on a farm one mile north of St. Kilian, Minnesota. She was the youngest girl of the family joined by three brothers and three sisters.

On August 25, 1943, after saying good-bye to her Dad and her brothers at the threshing machine, Bona Joan, her mother, and Sister Verona Loosbrock, Bona Joan's aunt, went to the train depot at Adrian. They traveled to Mount St. Francis in Dubuque where she entered the Franciscan community.

This was her first train ride. A year later, on August 12, 1944 she was received into the community and given the name, Sister Mary Johanna in honor of both grandmothers.

Sister Bona Joan began her professional career as an educator in 1946. In Iowa she was missioned at St. Joseph, Garnavillo; St. Mary, Waterloo; St. Mary, Remsen; SS. Peter & Paul, Petersburg; Visitation, Stacyville; Guttenberg; Holy Ghost and combined schools of St. Mary/St. Patrick in Dubuque; St. Joseph, Bode; St. Francis Xavier, Dyersville; and at All Saints in Portland, Oregon and Sacred Heart in Melrose Park, Illinois. Sister also served on the staff of Wakonda Retreat Center in the Des Moines Diocese for 3 years.

Retiring to Mount St. Francis in

1996, Sister Bona Joan continued service as a switchboard operator/receptionist, helped in the craft shop, prepared rooms for guests, and volunteered in the kitchen as well as the sewing room. In 2014 Sister Bona Joan moved to Clare House.

Sister is survived by her sister-in-law, Sonya Hebig, nieces, nephews, and her Franciscan sisters. Sister was preceded in death by her parents; her sisters, Marcella (Joseph) Probst, Julitta (John) Durband, and Rita (William) Probst; her brothers, Reynold (Malinda) Hebig, Adrian (Dolores) Hebig, and Alfred Hebig. ■

In Remembrance

Sister Donalda Kehoe February 3, 1927 - February 5, 2022



Rosemary Kehoe was born on February 3, 1927. Rosemary was the 8th of nine children born to Joseph William and Rose Elizabeth (Schwendinger)

Kehoe. The family lived on a farm three miles south of Epworth, Iowa.

Sister entered the Sisters of St. Francis on August 25, 1945. As a postulant, Rosemary attended Loras College in Dubuque. The following year on August 12, 1946, she was received into the community and given the name, Sister Mary Donalda. This name was chosen in memory of

her brother Donald who died at the age of 12. As a senior novice, she continued her studies at Loras College and did practice teaching at Trinity Laboratory School. Her teaching ministries included Sacred Heart School, Dubuque; St. Mary of the Woods, Chicago; and St. Francis De Sales, Ossian, Iowa. She completed her teaching career at Sacred Heart in Fillmore, Iowa.

At Xavier Hospital in Dubuque she assisted with various tasks, including payroll, housekeeping, landscaping, and personnel. Sister Donalda also ministered at St. Mary's Hospital in Emporia, Kansas; Briar Cliff University, Sioux City, Iowa; Immaculate Conception Parish in Tulsa, Oklahoma; Assumption Parish

in Muskogee, Oklahoma; and Holy Name Parish in Ketchikan, Alaska.

In 1983 Sister was the secretary-accountant at the Witness Newspaper Diocesan Office in Dubuque. Sister enjoyed this position and stayed for thirteen and a half years. In 1997, during her retirement, she volunteered as an assistant in the Sisters of St. Francis Development Office. In her spare time Sister Donalda authored the book, "The China Story," our community history in China. Until the end, her communications were done on her beloved Royal 440 manual typewriter.

Sister is survived by her nieces, nephews, and Franciscan sisters. ■

Sister Marlys Becker August 21, 1933 - February 18, 2022



Marlys Becker was born on a farm near Watkins, Iowa, on August 21, 1933 to John and Anna (Frese) Becker

Marlys began her formal education as a kindergarten student in a one room country school. For grades 1-8 she was taught by the Sisters of St. Francis at St. Michael's School in Norway, Iowa. She admired Sister Monica Hatt and the piano teacher. Daily, she prayed that she would become a sister and teach music.

High school meant going to a different town, meeting new friends, and being introduced to a predominately Lutheran community. In her senior year she was engaged, but six months later

returned the ring after making a retreat at Mount Mercy College. Marlys was certain that she had to go to the convent, get this out of her mind, and then be able to return home, free of the "vocation" thing. On August 25, 1952, her brother Louie and his wife Mary, took her to Dubuque where Marlys joined the Sisters of St. Francis. The following year on August 12, Marlys was given the name Sister Mary Felice.

Two brothers made a bet with each other. Louie bet that Marlys would stay in the convent, and George bet that she would leave. Fifty years later on Marlys' golden Jubilee celebration, Louie's wife suggested to George that it was time to pay the bet plus interest. George replied, "No, the bet is still on. She could still come home."

Sister Marlys taught in parochial schools in Iowa at Holy Trinity and

St. Mary's both in Dubuque; Sacred Heart schools in Monticello and Meyer; St. Mary, Waterloo; St. John, Bancroft; Visitation, Stacyville; and St. John Brebeuf in Niles, Illinois. After a career in teaching, Marlys began a new ministry in Clinical Pastoral Education at Finley Hospital, Dubuque and at Wilmar State Hospital, Minnesota. After the completion of her training she was employed by Marian Health Center (MercyOne Siouxland Medical Center), Hospice of Siouxland, and the June E. Nysten Cancer Center in Sioux City. In 2012 Sister Marlys moved to Mount St. Francis in Dubuque. She moved to Clare House in 2019.

Sister is survived by her sister, Sr. Mary Ann Becker, RSM; sister-in-law Mary Becker; nieces and nephews; and her Franciscan Sisters.

In the fall of 2021, Charism Team Member **Julie Tebbe** met with a group of young women from Dubuque Wahlert Catholic High School at Mount St. Francis who had attended summer camps with the Dubuque Franciscans.

“A recurring theme from our time of sharing was, ‘How can young people continue to connect with the sisters?’” said Julie.

Bridget Schmid, a senior at Wahlert Catholic High School, took what was shared that night to heart and created the “Sister Pal Club” at her high school as a way to continue to connect with the sisters who she knew from her years of attending and volunteering at camps.

“What motivated me to make this club was when I went on a college visit, they told us that there was a club where they took walks with sisters near the college and I thought that was such a great idea and way to communicate!” said Bridget. “I was concerned with COVID and other factors about how we’d get people to the sisters, so I decided a pen pal situation seemed much more appropriate.”

Bridget knew that her sisters, **Jamie and Caroline**, and their friends would help with the club, but she thought other students might want to participate. So she sought the help of Dubuque Franciscan **Sister Kay Gaul**, who teaches at Wahlert Catholic. Sister Kay sent a request to all the students at the school to see who would be interested in being involved. A group of 30 students started to meet monthly to create cards for the sisters.

“I was excited and amazed,” said Sister Kay. “I am proud of the students. I am happy to be the moderator of this enthusiastic group. They are very creative and fun.”

Concern for the sisters living in the midst of a pandemic also inspired the club’s beginnings.

“I wanted to start this club to give the sisters a little more joy in their life, especially with COVID, and I wanted to give them a way to interact with young people,” said Bridget. “I know the members appreciate the club, too, as it gives them ways to be involved in service and a way to show off their arts and crafts skills!”

So far the club has met to make cards for the sisters for the Feast of St. Francis, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Valentine’s Day.



Schmid Sisters from left to right: Bridget, Caroline, and Jamie show the Valentines created in the Sister Pal Club. Photo by Jessi Russo.



“Some of our favorite memories revolve around the Sisters of St. Francis,” said Jamie. “We had so much fun connecting them during the summer camps (BFF and Surfin’ the C’s camps), and we wanted high schoolers in our own community to be able to experience that connection, too. It means a lot to be able to still communicate with the sisters during the school year and I love, and I’m sure the other group members also love, writing letters to the sisters. We know that during these times it can be hard to look on the bright side of things so we wanted to be able to bring some sunshine to the sisters’ days.” ■

Wahlert Catholic Students in the “Sister Pal Club” work on Valentines for the Dubuque Franciscan Sisters. Photo by Jessi Russo.

Footprints



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Spring Events at Shalom Spirituality Center

Grandparent Tea

Thursday, May 5, 9:30-11 a.m.

Thursday, June 2, 9:30-11 a.m.

In-person, Shalom Dining Room

Facilitator: Lori Apel

Let's celebrate the gift of grandparenthood over a cup of tea! This monthly group will meet to share prayer, stories, ideas, and unique family dynamics while musing over the joys of grandparenting! This series will meet monthly on the FIRST Thursday of each month from 9:30-11 am at Shalom Spirituality Freewill donation; please RSVP for each monthly session online at shalomretreats.org or by calling 563.582.3592.

Taize Prayer

Thursday, May 5

7:00-7:45 pm

Facilitators: Jim Brimeyer, Carol Hemesath, OSF, and other area musicians

Held in our beautiful and historic chapel, this contemplative prayer

time includes a Scripture reading, sung repetition of short refrains, shared silence, and intercessions. Taize' prayer invites the participants to sing simple refrains repeatedly to reinforce the meditative quality of the prayer. This basic style can penetrate the marrow of our spirits and the silence of our hearts. Come and tune into the solitude of this holy place and praise of our God! Freewill offering, no registration necessary.

Picnic on the Hill

Thursday, May 26

11:30-1:00 p.m.

Enjoy one of your first picnic



lunches of the season with our annual summer lunch. Bring your own lawn chair to enjoy lunch on our outdoor grounds, or pick up a box lunch prepared by our cook, Margie, to take to your office, home, or local park. \$10 per person. Register and prepay by Monday, May 19, to reserve your lunch.