



FRANCISCAN
SISTERS
OF LITTLE FALLS
MINNESOTA

OCTOBER 2018

The Associate

Expressing our charism creatively every day

AS Verónica Rivadeneira, Quito, Ecuador

In the historical center of the capital of Ecuador, part of the beautiful “Plaza de San Francisco,” stands a jewel of 17th-century architecture. How many emotions flooded me when I entered, with key in hand as house owner, to the Convent of San Francisco in Quito!

Months ago I got in touch with Fray Mario Ortega, Franciscan School Director. When I introduced myself and asked him about the possibility of holding the Annual Franciscan Encounter of the Ecuadorian Associates in his facilities, he was completely open to it. He even informed



us a week before our meeting that Fray David Auqui would accompany us with the story of his congregation and to explain to us the Franciscan presence in the country.

It was thus that the key of the main auditorium of the

Convent came to my hands. This is the place where we, nearly 30 people who responded to the invitation, would comfortably stay.

From August 17-20, 12 Associates (from Coast Region) escaped their routine and traveled (some for 11 hours by bus) to Quito. The local people received, guided and accompanied them as good hosts.

The Convent created and fostered an environment of deep mutual respect where we could talk and listen, give and receive. The theme was built around our charism and the individual and group mission as it relates to us today as members of a specific Franciscan community. The image of a circle (when holding hands) reminded us from the beginning that we were in a relationship



ASs Norma Taylor, Susana De la Guerra and Gloria Castor

Living the Gospel courageously ... with energy, spirit, peace.

Expressing...continued



Participants with Fray David Auqui (center front)

where we can help and receive help, where we have to see ourselves on the same level and know that we are equal.

We called to mind the gifts that God gives us by being part of this community, the gifts that we count on to continue in the building of a new people and the responsibility to express our charism creatively every day. As we've done in previous meetings, we presented our reflections with sketches where Franciscan people were represented in casual situations: asking for attention in a parish office, visiting the sick, going to the doctor, participating in the Franciscan meeting, taking a bus...being people of joy, of prayer, of poverty, of contemplation, of ongoing conversion, of justice—being minority.

We persist with the certainty that if we continue—after a few years or many—as associates, it is for a major reason. We feel the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls's support; but we also ask ourselves about

how to be responsible members of this legacy. Our answers centered on being a witness in our family, neighborhood, work, parish, LIFE; being willing to put our gifts at the service of our greater community. We are aware of the path of holiness according to our personal vocation and we remember that we are complementary between religious and laity.

We finished our meeting with a walk through the historic city center. It is not easy to travel at the same pace and

speed—with people of all ages and physical conditions—at 2,800 meters above sea level (almost 10,000 feet) but we did it! We even arrived to visit the monument: *El Panecillo Virgin*.

We give thanks to those who made it possible for us to meet and strengthen the relationship of our brother/sisterhood and joint mission. ☺



El Panecillo Virgin



My favorite Franciscan story

AS Joan Wingert, Upsala, Minn.



Sister Marie Theis celebrated her 100th birthday on February 17. So it's not surprising that her story is a reflection on Saint Francis—in this case, his total acceptance of others, no matter their "limitations."

"Francis had a charming personality that attracted people. Before he became who he was meant to be, he was on the wrong track. He was a soldier, and he gave his heart and soul to it.

"But he failed, and was in prison for a year. Why so long? Did his father not want to pay to free him? When Francis was freed, it was his mother that got him back on his feet, at least part way. I think Francis should be the patron saint of all people with PTSD (post-traumatic stress syndrome) because of the consequences of his being in a war.

"When Francis realized, perhaps through the encounter with the leper, how good the Lord was to forgive him and how deeply God loved sinners, he turned his life around.

"When we see how Francis's life and Jesus' life fit together, it's really something. The Lord accepted people as they were and helped them to be better. He used all of Francis's characteristics and qualities, accepting him just as he was. Francis also accepted anyone who wanted to follow him, and his influence spread all over Europe.

"Our Franciscan community here in Little Falls accepted anyone who wanted to

be here. It's the Franciscan way of doing things, helping people to better themselves.

"I think especially of Sisters Clarita Schreiner, Jude Godfrey and Sister Lorraine Olmscheid*, all who had physical problems. Look at all they accomplished!

"Sister Clarita was a relative of mine. Her mother died when she was born. When her father remarried, his new wife didn't accept her at all. At some point she threw Clarita down the stairs, resulting in the loss of teeth and a deformity to her face. Her father realized he had to ask his brother and his wife (sister to Clarita's mother) to take her into their family. When she was old enough, she took care of their five children, which included two sets of twins. Later she worked for another family, and then entered our community.



Sister Clarita Schreiner

"As a Franciscan Sister, Clarita took care of residents at St. Otto's and other nursing homes, doing the dirty work no one else wanted to do. Everyone loved her! She spent her life working for poor people.

"As for me, the Lord has his reasons for still wanting me here. God doesn't do anything without a purpose!" 

*Editor's note: Sister Lorraine's story was featured in the December 2017 issue of The Associate.

So many what ifs

AS Ann Anosike, Arlington, Va.

As a former Franciscan Community Volunteer, upon leaving Welcoming House, I was filled with great anxiety and even greater excitement about what was to



come. I knew the ease with which I shared in the Franciscan spirituality from living with the sisters for the 10.5 months prior was not going to be there anymore. I was nervous that the fire that had been ignited during my year of service with the Franciscan Community Volunteers could eventually fizz out as the pressures of everyday life in a major city (Washington, D.C.) increased.

At Welcoming House, prayer life came easily with the sisters, and with our weekly Monday night community prayers and Thursday night Sharing from the Heart with my co-volunteers. I was at peace there—I felt free and I was very happy. I had so many questions as I was leaving this home that felt very safe and very right. What if I cannot carry the Franciscan charisms forward? What if I am too weak to live generously on my own? Worst of all, what if I forget how it feels to know without question that God loves me and that he is mindful of me? So many what ifs.

Sisters Karen, Rose Mae and Michelle and Pat, the FCV program director, did everything possible to make the transition

from Welcoming House smooth. After several conversations, I began to ask, “What if I *can* do this?” I decided before I left that the first and most important thing for me to do was to find a community and get plugged in immediately. And that is exactly what I did. My first Sunday in Washington, DC, was successful. The church my friend took me to was a vibrant Gospel Catholic Church. I immediately felt at home and began to envision a wholesome life in DC. Three weeks later, I found myself at the Young Adult Retreat where I made great connections. A month later, I was joining the young adult leadership team. Next thing I knew, I was serving my new community and had found my new safe haven.

At work, life was becoming increasingly challenging. Work was intense and the long hours with short lunch breaks were grueling. I was feeling drained and constantly anxious about performing well. But I was still passionate about the mission of *Search for Common Ground*: to recognize differences and act on commonalities. To stay motivated, I tried to choose to operate from a place of gratitude for my work. I was and am still grateful for my coworkers who work hard to make funding for our lofty mission possible.

One day, God showed me a great sign with one of my older coworkers. After some long hours of working together, we began to delve deeply into our personal lives. There, we discovered our mutual connection to the Franciscans. She loved Father Richard Rohr and would later take me to an event where he was speaking. She had taken a spiritual trip to Assisi and was taken by the

Franciscans. In that moment and many moments to follow, both at work and in my personal life, I was continually getting messages from God of his mindfulness toward me and my life.

While work continues to be demanding, I recognize the gift that God has given me with this job. My coworker can say “I love you” and I can say “I love you too” without hesitation or consideration about professionalism in the workplace. And I am so grateful that God has placed me in an environment where hearing a colleague say those words to another colleague is not out of place.

Living the Franciscan spirituality for me means living openly and loving deeply. While there continues to be challenging moments in the everyday, I can honestly say that life with the Franciscan Sisters set me up for success in this big city. I am grateful to you all for your continued prayers and love. I feel all of it. ☺



Associate Commitment Day
Sunday, October 14
11 AM-1 PM

If you plan to attend and have not registered, please contact Joan:
320.632.0669
jwingert@fslf.org



Living Today as Franciscans
Our Life and Mission

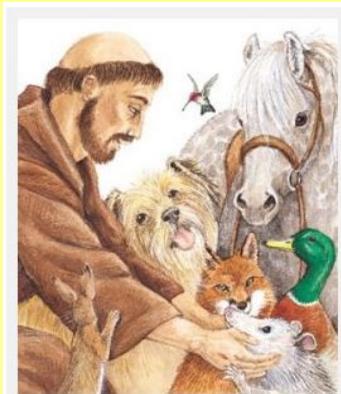
Reminder:
Applicants & Associates!
If you plan to register for the Franciscan Sisters' community gathering, *Living Today as Franciscans: Our Life and Mission*, **the deadline is October 5.**
Late registrations will not be accepted.

There are two options of participating:
#1: The entire time: October 23—26
OR
#2: Wednesday, October 24 only

Contact Joan to register:
phone: 320.632.0669

EVENTS SURROUNDING THE FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS

- Franciscan Ritual of Transitus
Wednesday, October 3, 7 PM
Sacred Heart Chapel
- FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS
OCTOBER 4
 - Thursday, 11 AM Mass
Bishop Donald Kettler, presider
Associates are invited
to Mass and lunch.
Please sign up with the
St. Francis receptionist
(320-632-2981).



- BLESSING OF ANIMALS
Sunday, October 7, 12 noon
Washington Park (113 NE 4th Street,
Little Falls)

*For more information: (320) 632-0668
franciscanlife@fslf.org*



Franciscan Harvest Supper

November 10, 4:30–7 pm
St. Francis Convent
Little Falls

Chicken breast, sausage, garden vegetables, coleslaw, breadsticks, homemade bars and beverages will be served.

Tickets are available at the door or by calling (320)632-2981.

Adults--\$10; Children 5-12 years--\$5;
Children under 5 years—Free.

Proceeds will go toward
St. Francis Health & Wellness Center
and St. Francis Music Center

For more information:
(320)632-2981 or info@fslf.org
www.fslf.org.

Request for Prayers

The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. (Nahum 1:7)

- For safety and stamina for AS Joan Bednarczyk as she walks the Camino de Santiago.
- For AS Petita Ramírez who is in very delicate health.
- For AS Phyllis Dobis's back and legs, and for her daughter, Jill.
- For the health of ASs Maritza Campoverde, Fabiola Ávila and AP Carmita Malucin.
- For Dick Perlinger, cousin of ASs Barb Oemcke, Bev Gerads, Missy Gerads and John Fakler, who has been diagnosed with lung and prostate cancer, COPD and emphysema.
- For William, son of AS Susana De la Guerra, who is depressed and struggling following surgery.
- For Jeff, husband of AS Jan Everson, who is dealing with hip and back pain and is waiting for a hip replacement. Also for her daughter, Kari, who is having thyroid nodule removal surgery, that her recovery go well.
- For AS Yessenia Vallejo who needs a job.
- For Sherry and Matt, stepchildren of AS Kathie Pflueger, who are both going through a divorce.
- For safe travel to the USA for Christmas for AS Rosa Vargas. Also for the safe pregnancy and delivery of her grandchild at the end of 2018.
- For Luis, oldest brother of AS Brianda Cediel, who lives in Colombia. Also for the birth of her first grandchild due in September, that mother and child will have good health.
- For AS Oswaldo Dávila, whose arm surgery did not go well. He still has pain when moving it.
- For Stephen, son of AS Yvonne Warzecha, who is struggling with health concerns.
- For ASs Iris Prieto and Glahecer Baque while they are missioning on the coast of Ecuador. Also for Ghahecer's mother, whose health is not good.
- For healing and comfort for AS Judy Virnig's mother, age 92, who fell and broke her femur, and for her caregivers.

I give them eternal life. (John 10)

- For Kathy, sister of AS Pat Flicker.
- For Juana Lalangui, mother of AS Luis González, who died September 11, 2018.

The Associate is published monthly to acquaint Associates, Applicants and Sisters with each other, to reflect on elements of the Franciscan tradition, to inform about events, and to call us all into mission. Managing Editors.....Geri Dietz and Joan Wingert Contributors.....Associates, Applicants and Sisters Design and Layout.....Joan Wingert Mailing.....Joan Wingert

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Birthdays -- Sisters

3 S Marjorie Bischoff
3 S Pat Imdieke
4 S Loretta Bloch
5 S Rose Margaret Schneider
11 S Jean Lieser
12 SM Rosaria Hagel
15 S Beverly Weidner
16 S Jeanette Quinn
17 S Rita Kuhl
27 S Eileen Ghesquiere
27 S Ruth Lentner
28 S Carmen Barsody
30 S Joyce Piotrowski

Feastdays

1 S Therese Furnstahl
1 SM Therese Lenz
4 S Bernice Ebner
4 S Bernice Rieland
7 SM Rosaria Hagel
11 S Mary Zirbes
14 SM Callista Robinson
16 S Marjorie Bischoff
16 S Marguerite Ostendorf
16 S Rose Margaret
Schneider
19 S Caroline Stoltz
20 S Irenemaree Rodak
22 S Cordelia Korkowski
25 S Beverly Weidner

Birthdays --

Associates / Applicants

1 Fran Marks
1 Cindy Ritter
4 Heidi Meza
6 Ruth Bollig
6 Maritza Campoverde
6 Robert Yorek
7 Julia Navarrete
8 Karen Zamora
9 Rosario Mosquera
11 Sara Castro
13 Bud Bankes
13 Marsha Bryan
13 Juliana Frome
18 Piedad Sánchez
19 Petita Ramírez
21 Fanny Mora
24 Leonor Gallegos
26 Nancy McCoy
27 Susana De la
Guerra
28 Joe Kresky
28 Bridget Yorek
30 MJ Park
31 Judith Hecht
31 Sharon Reiter

A Prayer for the Dead

1/1997 SM Francis Winter	10/1904 SM Augustine Aret	21/2017 S Helen Hassler
1/2012 AS Egda Narvaez	11/2007 SM Beata Lorsung	23/1988 SM Inez Niehaus
2/1992 SM Helen Niehaus	12/1998 S Mary Leone Furnstahl	24/1964 SM Hedwig Kubicek
2/2017 AS Alex Haag	13/1939 SM Leo Richard	25/2003 SM Johnita Omann
3/1905 SM Michael McClarney	13/1986 S Margaret Champagne	25/2013 SM Judine Cassidy
3/1982 SM Clothilda Schwartz	13/1996 AS L.B. McCollough	25/2013 SM Sylvia Schik
3/1999 SM Anita Hennek	13/1997 S Irene Germer	26/2004 SM Cecilia Schreiner
5/1949 SM Bonaventure Thometz	14/2010 SM Gerard Wald	28/1906 SM Bernardine Bergen
7/1921 SM Rose Ethier	15/1958 SM Benedict Bock	28/2010 AS Olga Salcedo
7/1978 SM Louise Schwinghammer	15/1996 SM Francine Bunzel	29/1899 SM Pauline Bock
8/2006 SM Josine Schneider	17/2016 AS Margaret LeBlanc	29/1925 SM Angela Michaud
9/1992 SM Imelda Ressemann	20/1949 SM Adelheid Wohletz	30/1970 SM Philomena Weivoda
9/1993 SM Alverna Stommes	20/2004 SM Clarentia Kroll	
	21/1986 SM Dorothy Burke	

“Go green” in 2018! Receive *The Associate* via email!

Contact Joan (jwingert@fslf.org) to try a sample issue or be added to the list!

