



CROSSROADS

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF CHICAGO



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FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF CHICAGO

Celebrating 130 Years of Compassionate Service to Those in Need

11500 Theresa Drive, Lemont, IL 60439

Phone (630) 243-3600 • Fax (630) 243-3576

**ROOTED IN THE GOSPEL, UNITED IN PRAYER AND COMMUNITY,
WE SHARE FRANCISCAN JOY AND SERVE GENEROUSLY.**

--- Mission Statement of the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago, December 8, 2010

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION LEADERSHIP TEAM

Sister M. Bernadette Bajuscik, General Minister

Sister Jeanne Marie Toriskie, General Vicar

Sister M. Helene Galuszka, General Councilor/General Secretary

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DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

Timothy McLaughlin, *Communications Coordinator*

Vicki Olsen, *Administrative Assistant*

MANY THANKS TO:

Sr. Emilie Marie Lesniak

Anna Schoon, *St. Jude House*

Lauren Zurbriggen, *St. Jude House*

April Dumas Gray, *Madonna Foundation*

Denise Makowski, *Madonna Foundation*

Patrick Schuerer, *Franciscan Ministries*

PROOFREADING

Jill Kachin

Sister Jeanne Marie Toriskie

Sister Kathleen Melia

FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF CHICAGO CELEBRATE 130TH ANNIVERSARY

On Sunday, December 8, the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago celebrated their 130th anniversary of the founding of their congregation. It was on that date in 1894 that Josephine Dudzik founded the congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of Blessed Kunegunda (the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago's original name). To honor the anniversary, the Sisters held a special Mass in Sacred Heart Chapel in Our Lady of Victory Convent. They then had a celebratory dinner with religious from several congregations, friends, and guests.

The Sisters received an official Apostolic Blessing and message of congratulations from Pope Francis. This was presented in a beautiful frame by Fr. Joe Glab, CR, who gave a wonderful homily about the legacy of the Sisters and their foundress, Mother Mary Theresa. The Sisters also received proclamations and letters of recognition from the Archdiocese of Chicago, JB Pritzker (Governor of Illinois), the Lemont Historical Society, and the city of Lemont. These are all on display near the entrance of OLV Convent. After Mass, the Sisters with their friends, guests, and fellow religious enjoyed a celebratory dinner. At the dinner each Franciscan Sister of Chicago was presented a commemorative book filled with thank you messages and other well wishes from associates of Franciscan Ministries. Many thanks to all who attended and joined the Sisters on this special day!

A brief history of the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago

Mother Mary Theresa was born Josephine Dudzik in 1860 in Płocicz, Poland. She was baptized and made her First Communion at SS. Peter and Paul Church in Kamień Krajeński, Poland. Due to the ongoing political strife in their country, the Dudzik family emigrated to America in 1881 and settled on the northwest side of Chicago, in St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish.



The anniversary Mass was held in Sacred Heart Chapel at Our Lady of Victory Convent.



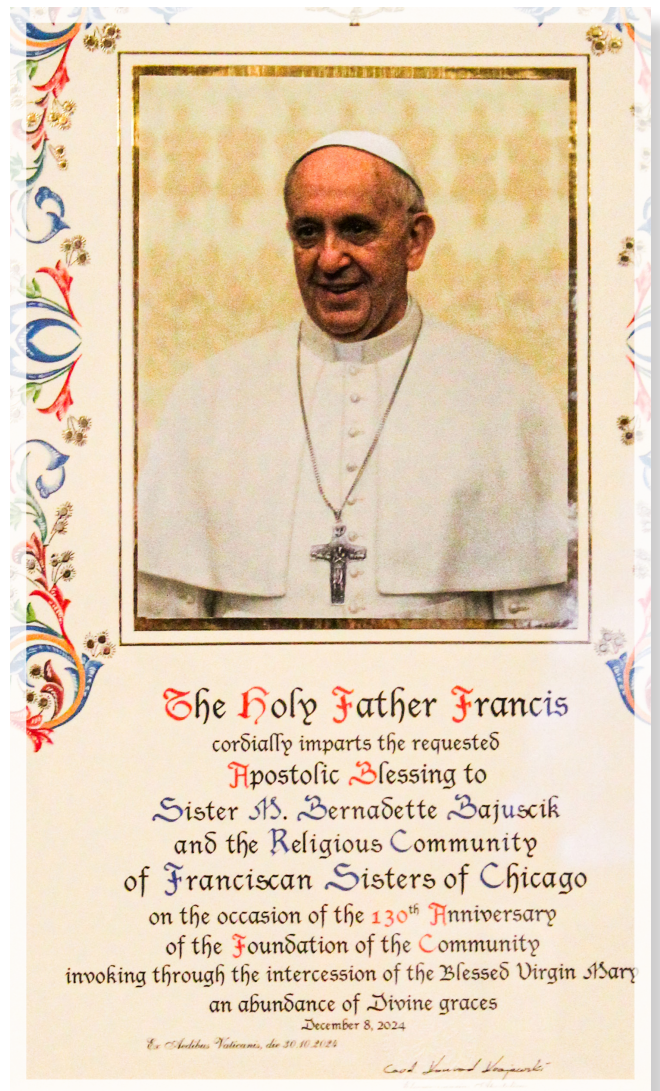
Fr. Joe Glab, CR, presented Sr. M. Bernadette Bajusick, OSF, (General Minister of Franciscan Sisters of Chicago), with an Apostolic Blessing from Pope Francis.



Mother Mary Theresa Dudzik

A generous, compassionate, and devout woman, Josephine was moved by the condition of the aged, poor, and orphaned whom she encountered in her neighborhood. She came to their aid spiritually, physically, and financially, even sheltering some in her own home. Upon the advice of her pastor, Rev. Vincent Barzynski, Josephine formed a religious community to help her support the elderly and those in need. Thus, on December 8, 1894, the congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of Blessed Kunegunda was born (later the Sisters changed the name to the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago). Josephine Dudzik took the name Sister Mary Theresa.

For over 130 years, imbued with the spirit of Mother Mary Theresa, the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago have responded to the needs of God's people. They have served in several ministries, such as care for the elderly and sick in hospitals and nursing homes, and provided housing for people in independent, assisted living, and skilled nursing facilities. The Sisters operated childcare centers, taught in elementary, secondary, and higher education, as well as owned and administered at their own high school in Chicago, Madonna High School. Other ministries the Sisters served in include pastoral care, religious education, campus ministry, social services, and caring for victims of domestic violence. Sister Mary Theresa Dudzik died of cancer on September 20, 1918. She was later given the honorary title of Mother. Because of the heroic virtues evident in her life, Mother Mary Theresa is now a candidate for sainthood. The Vatican recognized her as Servant of God in 1982 and then Venerable in 1994 as the cause for her canonization continues. Please join us in praying that Venerable Mother Mary Theresa will be recognized as a saint in the Catholic Church and serve as a model of compassionate care for others.



The Apostolic Blessing from Pope Francis was framed and now hangs in Our Lady of Victory Convent.

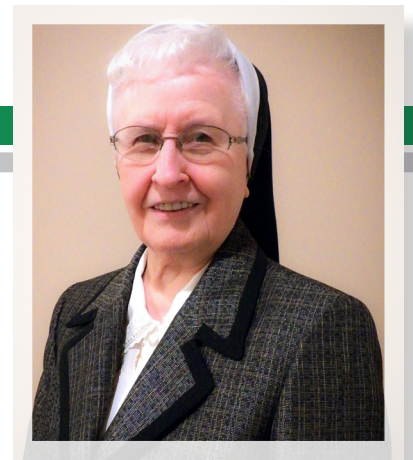


(1) Senior Management from Franciscan Ministries attended the celebration. (2) Harpist, Janelle Lake, Sr. Jeanne Marie Toriskie, OSF and author Pat Camalliere and her husband. (3) Sr. Jean Therese Jarosz, OSF, Fr. Bob Lucas, CM, Mary Mosser (FSC Associate), and Sr. Kathleen Melia, OSF

JUBILEE 2025

Sr. Joseph Marie Zenda celebrates her 70th year in religious life!

Sr. Joseph Marie Zenda was born on August 16, 1937, in Cleveland, Ohio. She entered religious life on July 16, 1955, and professed her vows on August 12, 1958. Sister was assigned to the ministry of education. Her first teaching assignment was at St. Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr in Chicago where she taught first grade from 1955-1956. As a novice, Sr. Joseph Marie became a student at St. John College in Cleveland, Ohio, where she received her Bachelor of Science in Education. She then taught second grade at Sacred Heart in Gary, Indiana (1958-1960), multiple grades at St. Leo in Cleveland, Ohio (1960-1967), and seventh and eighth grade at St. Joseph in Campbell, Ohio (1967-1968).



Sr. Joseph Marie Zenda

In 1968, Sr. Joseph Marie was assigned to teach religion and serve as assistant principal at Madonna High School in Chicago. This would be the start of her long connection to the high school which was started and administered by the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago until 2001. In 1970, Sister was promoted to principal of Madonna High School and served in that position until 1983. She also received her Master of Arts in Administration from John Carroll University in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, in 1970.

Sister Joseph Marie was elected General Minister of the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago in 1983. During her ten-year term (she was reelected in 1988), the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago established FSCSC (Franciscan Sisters of Chicago Service Corporation, later renamed Franciscan Ministries). FSCSC united all the communities and ministries sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago and placed them under one corporate umbrella. Sr. Joseph Marie was the first President and CEO of FSCSC and held that position from 1989 to 1993.

During this time, besides leading the congregation, Sr. Joseph Marie served on the board of directors of many entities the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago sponsored: St. Anthony Medical Center and St. Anthony Home in Crown Point, Indiana, Guardian Angel Daycare, St. Joseph Home, Madonna High School (all in Chicago), Mother Theresa Home in Lemont, Illinois, and Mount Alverna Home and Annex in Parma, Ohio. She also helped establish Franciscan Village in Lemont and St. Jude House in Crown Point, Indiana, in 1988.

After her term ended as General Minister, Sr. Joseph Marie continued to be very active in many aspects of the congregation. She served as President and Chairman of the Board of Franciscan Village and was the Executive Director there from 1993 to 2000. She also served in leadership again as a General Councilor for the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago from 1993 to 1998. In 2000, Sister returned home to the Cleveland area and served at Mount Alverna Village as the Regional Vice President of the Ohio Elder Care Region. In 2009, she served as the Director of Philanthropy & Planned Giving at Mount Alverna Village, a position she held for several years. Sr. Joseph Marie lives and now ministers as a Sister Representative at Mount Alverna Village. We congratulate Sr. Joseph Marie Zenda on 70 years of religious life!

THRESHOLDS OF TRANSFORMATION

The Sisters completed a meditative and spiritual program in March.



The Franciscan Sisters of Chicago finished Thresholds of Transformation in March. (First row) Sr. M. Monica Sendlosky, Sr. Jean Therese Jarosz, Sr. M. Joella Bielinski, and Sr. Doloria Kosiek. (Second row) Sr. Jeanne Marie Toriskie, Sr. M. Bernadette Bajusick, Sr. M. Helene Galuszka, Sr. Emilie Marie Lesniak, Sr. M. Francis Clare Radke, and Sr. Lois Marie Rossi.

On March 17, the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago held their final session of *Thresholds of Transformation*, a meditative and spiritual program that they began in April of 2024, and continued over the course of eleven months. These prayer and meditation sessions were held on FSC's community days. The *Thresholds of Transformation* program was moderated by Sr. M. Francis Clare Radke and Sr. M. Helene Galuszka.

The *Thresholds of Transformation* program was developed by Monica Brown, Donna Fyffe, and Hilary Musgrave. Monica is the director of Emmaus Productions, a nonprofit that is dedicated to supporting people in their personal and spiritual journey and ministering internationally through the arts in creative workshops and

retreats. It provides spiritual content for retreats with music and video to guide the viewer through prayer and meditation.

In 2000, during the COVID-19 outbreak, the authors developed the premise of *Thresholds of Transformation*. They were invited to collaborate with an international congregation to bring their creativity to the congregation's Chapter (decision-making body) and develop a meditative and spiritual presentation. All three authors collaborated from their home countries of Australia, North America, and Ireland. "The congregation emphasized their desire that we integrate creative processes and a ritual with a contemplative spirit to be woven into the backdrop of the story of the universe. Through our interactions each of us realized that we were experiencing a significant 'threshold moment' amidst a world in crisis. The crossing of this threshold was a transforming time that led to a communion of trust between us. In this trust, we sensed a sacred call to unite our dreams, experience, and expertise to contribute in a meaningful way to the new world order articulated by Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*. Our sacred call manifested itself in *Thresholds of Transformation*," Monica Brown said.

Sr. M. Francis Clare Radke and Sr. M Helene Galuszka reviewed and planned each session to present to the Sisters. During each of these sessions held in Marian Hall in Our Lady of Victory Convent in Lemont, the Sisters watched a brief presentation complete with video and audio during which they spent time in prayer, reflection, and discussion. A journal was provided to each Sister to keep notes as well as copies of quotations from the program that they could take with them for later reflection. Overall, they found the experience to be rewarding and spiritually fulfilling.

"The 'transformation' that we worked towards is based on Pope Francis' Encyclical, *Laudato Si'*. The Sisters were taken through a process of achieving what Pope Francis and our Franciscan charism has called for us to achieve. This call is to always be conscious of our relationship with all of creation. In *Genesis*, when God created human beings, God did not tell them to dominate creation. Human beings were to work together within all of creation. These presentations were beneficial in transforming our relationships with all of creation including each person



Sr. Jean Therese Jarosz



The Sisters wrote their thoughts down during the program.



Sr. Doloria Kosiek

THRESHOLDS OF TRANSFORMATION

Welcome & Orientation Including The Mysterious Culture of Trees

Pathway 1: The Mysteries of Our Universe

Pathway 2: A Spirituality of the Heart

Pathway 3: A Spirituality of Vulnerability

Pathway 4A: The Transformative Gifts of Our Universe (Part 1: Holons)

Pathway 4B: The Transformative Gifts of Our Universe (Part 2: Morphic Resonance)

Pathway 5A: Transformation of the Collective Soul (Part 1: Exploring)

Pathway 5B: Transformation of the Collective Soul (Part 2: Re-envisioning)

Pathway 6: Systemic Transformation: A Non-Dualistic Way of Leading

Pathway 7: Weaving the Threads Together

whether we meet them personally or simply know they exist,” said Sr. M. Francis Clare. The *Thresholds of Transformation* program is used by congregations from all over the world and has become quite popular. “There are Sisters internationally that participate in this program so that gave us an opportunity to be united with Sisters everywhere,” Sr. M. Francis Clare said. She highlighted several positive impacts of the program :

- Inclusivity (bringing everyone together)
- Mutual sharing (giving and receiving from others)
- Selfless giving (participating with the community for the common good)
- Compassion (sharing in how others feel)
- Equity (assuring others get what they need)
- Justice (being unassuming, nonjudgmental)

During the last session, each Sister was given a prayer and then each read a line of it out loud to all. After all the sessions were completed, the Sisters deeply appreciated the *Thresholds of Transformation* program. It was a very spiritually deep and prayerful experience for all. At the final session, the Sisters held a small celebration featuring a specially decorated cake. Thank you to Sr. M Francis Clare and Sr. M. Helene for their help in organizing all the sessions and many thanks to the Thresholds of Transformation team. You may learn about the program here: thresholdsofttransformation.org.



YEARS OF LOVING AND SHARING MY LIFE'S JOURNEY

An Interview with Sister Emilie Marie Lesniak

"I will praise the name of God with a song and will magnify him with thanksgiving." (Psalm 69:30)

Sister Emilie Marie Lesniak has been a Franciscan Sister of Chicago for 64 years. She entered religious life in 1961 and professed her vows in 1964. Sister was assigned to work in the ministry of education, and taught various subjects at Madonna High School, St. Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr School, and Five Holy Martyrs School. A talented piano and organ player, Sister was very active in the ministry of music. She shared her gift of music by playing the organ for the congregation during Mass and directing and performing in various choirs. She also served in leadership with the congregation as a General Councilor and Secretary.

Recently Sr. Emilie Marie spent time writing her memoirs and participated in an interview for *Crossroads*. We thank Sister for sharing her life's story with us.

Sr. Emilie Marie was born on July 12, 1938, to Walter and Emily Lesniak at St. Mary of Nazareth Hospital in Chicago. Her lifelong connection to Five Holy Martyrs Parish began when she was baptized by her uncle, Fr. Francis Lesniak. Her baptismal name was Emily Marie. Her aunt Helen Wronski and her uncle Casimir Lesniak were her godparents. "I was warmly received into my loving family. My immediate family and close friends were present at my home for my baptism reception. My baby book has so many cards and notes commemorating the celebration of my baptism into the Catholic Church," Sr. Emilie Marie said.



A baby photo of Sr. Emilie Marie.

Sr. Emilie Marie and her parents were members of Five Holy Martyrs Parish in Chicago and attended Mass there. Five Holy Martyrs School would also hold a special place in Sister's heart as she not only attended school there, but later served as a teacher and principal of the school. Sister has wonderful early memories of her parents and her religious upbringing. "I had a very happy childhood. My parents and I shared many precious moments together. Mom and Dad taught me about Jesus, and I learned a special prayer to my guardian angel that I would say before bed every night. Mom used to sing a song about angels when she tucked me into bed," she said. Sister grew up as an only child but had a large extended family growing up with many aunts, uncles, grandparents, and cousins who lived near her. She recalls many fun



Sr. Emilie Marie Lesniak



Sr. Emilie Marie with her grandpa, Stanley Wronski.



An early photo of Sister fishing as a child.

times spent at the park or family gatherings, birthday, and holiday celebrations. “Every summer I went with my mom, dad, grandpa (Stanley Wronski), and Dixie, our cocker spaniel, for vacations to cottages by the lakes in Wisconsin and Minnesota. We always had a great time fishing and boating together. When the family gathered for various celebrations, I always enjoyed being with my cousins and I’m still very close to them all to this day,” she said.

When Sister started school and attended kindergarten at Five Holy Martyrs School, she began to take piano lessons at the Ella V. Eggert Piano Academy. Her talent for music was discovered when she was found playing a make-believe piano on the living room radiator cover. “Since we didn't have a piano, my mother devised a miniature cardboard piano on a shoe box which I practiced on for the first six months. I never knew how the music sounded until I went for my weekly piano lesson. Though my parents eventually purchased a new piano, my music teacher was very surprised that we didn’t have one already and couldn’t believe how quickly I picked up piano skills based on my ‘shoe box piano’. This was the beginning of the development of a God-given talent and special gift bestowed upon me. I still play the original Kimball piano that my parents purchased over 80 years ago,” she recalled. Sister would later get her Master's Degree in piano from the Ella V. Eggert Piano Academy in 1956.

Sr. Emilie Marie always looked forward to attending school at Five Holy Martyrs. She was taught by the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago, who had ministered at the school since 1912. They made a great impression on her with their joyfulness and kindness. “I had wonderful Franciscan Sisters who taught at Five Holy Martyrs School, and with whom I continued to keep in touch through the years; namely Sr. M. Alice Klepek (my kindergarten teacher), Sr. M. Celeste Walkowski (who prepared me for my First Holy Communion in second grade), and Sr. M. Charitas Gajdzinski (a fellow musician who became my best friend). I remember and treasure the memories of these Sisters. As I reflect back, their spirit of Franciscan joy was an inspiration for my vocation to our Franciscan community.” She also enjoyed making new friends and attended all the special events held at the school. She especially loved the May Crowning devotions as they deepened her love for the Blessed Mother. “My First Holy Communion was the beginning of a growing relationship with the Lord. As a youngster, I had a deep devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and St. Francis of Assisi which has continued in my life as a religious,” Sister said.



Sr. Emilie Marie's First Holy Communion photo.

After graduating from Five Holy Martyrs, she began to think about religious life. She attended Visitation High School in Chicago where she was involved in school and parish activities. When she graduated from high school in 1956, she told her parents she would like to become a religious and join the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago. “My parents were supportive but encouraged me to wait and first complete my college education. I am happy I took their advice and waited,” Sister said. She went to St. Xavier College (now University) in Chicago. At the time, St. Xavier College was a smaller school with more intimate class sizes, an aspect that Sister Emilie Marie preferred.



Sr. Emilie Marie with her parents.

She enjoyed bonding with other students and teachers and participated in several parish groups that only increased her desire to do more for the Lord. Upon graduating in 1960 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education, Sister revisited the idea of answering the call to religious life, but her parents suggested she teach for one year before making a final decision.

Sr. Emilie Marie began her search for teaching positions and shared her desire with both Sr. M. Alice and Sr. M. Charitas to teach at a Catholic school.

Later that summer, she received a surprise call from Sr. M. Alice who was just appointed the principal at Five Holy Martyrs School. A teaching position was now open and Sr. M. Alice offered Sr. Emilie Marie the position of teaching first grade. Sr. Emilie Marie was thrilled and joined the teaching staff at Five Holy Martyrs school that autumn. "I loved the children and enjoyed that year immensely. I also had the opportunity to spend more time in prayer and spiritual discernment regarding my vocation with my friend Fr. Richard Jozwiak, whom I knew from Five Holy Martyrs Parish. I listened intently to the words of Jesus, and the desire to follow Him became a reality on August 27, 1961, when I entered the postulancy of the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago." As a postulant, Sr. Emilie Marie was assigned to teach religion to freshmen at Madonna High School in Chicago and also played the organ for daily Mass. "It was a challenging and rewarding year. I learned then how important it was to be faithful to God in prayer. God poured forth His love upon me in many different ways," Sister said.

From 1962 until 1964, Sister was a novice and continued playing the organ for Mass at the Motherhouse in Lemont. It was a difficult but rewarding time for Sr. Emilie Marie as she missed family gatherings but enjoyed the companionship of all the Sisters and fellow novices. The novices lived on Our Lady of Victory campus in the Walker Mansion, also known as the "White House." They bonded closely together as fellow religious under the direction of their Novice Director, Sr. M. Doloretta Radzienda. "My novitiate years were priceless. The Lord took me through some trying times, but somehow always let me know that He was with me and that all things were possible with Him. I often thought of the scripture quote from Psalm 46:10, 'Be still, and know that I am God' during this time," Sister recalled.

Sr. Emilie Marie became a professed Sister on August 12, 1964. During the next three years, she lived at the Motherhouse in Lemont, Illinois, and studied at St. Francis College in Joliet, Illinois. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in music from there in 1966. She experienced a great loss later that year when her father passed away. "This was a very difficult time for me because my dad died suddenly and now I knew my mom would be left alone. Thus, I found it more difficult to leave her after visits back home and then returning back to the community. She encouraged me to return and was very supportive of me remaining in the community. I trusted God would take



Sr. Emilie Marie with her mother on the day she became a professed Sister.

care of her. Mom was always a woman of prayer and deep faith and a living example of giving herself totally to the Lord," Sister said.

From 1967 to 1969, Sr. Emilie Marie taught eighth grade at St. Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr School in Chicago. She then returned to her home parish, Five Holy Martyrs, to teach eighth grade and serve as the music teacher and director of the Glee Club. Her mother was especially happy to have her closer to home for visits. During her time teaching, Sister attended DePaul University in Chicago and received her Master's degree in music in 1972.



Sr. Emilie Marie with Bishop Alfred Abramowicz on her graduation day from DePaul University.



After completing this degree, Sister was appointed Formation Director for the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago. "At the time I was quite content with my work at Five Holy Martyrs, especially teaching music. Somehow the Lord had other plans, and it was difficult for me to understand His will for me. Now I look back at my Formation work and can clearly see how the Lord has revealed His plan for me and I praise and thank Him. The opportunities for spiritual growth were awesome," she said. She loved working with the young people in Formation as it helped her find God in everyday encounters. She cites a turning point in her life when she made her first directed retreat under the direction of Sr. Anne Fletcher, RC. at the Warrenville Cenacle. "The Lord touched me deeply and I grew because of His power working in my life." During this time, she worked with her longtime friend, Fr. Richard Jozwiak, whom she had known since the 1950's. Fr. Richard served at Five Holy Martyrs parish and was the chaplain of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary. "We worked together forming a choral group and a Teen Society. I enjoyed working with all of these groups. Fr. Richard helped me spiritually and was my lifelong friend. We also shared a love for music. When he was called to his eternal reward in 2005, I played the organ at his funeral Mass. I have happy memories of our friendship throughout the years."

One of Sister Emilie Marie's childhood dreams was to fly an airplane. Her first opportunity to be a passenger in an airplane came when she graduated from college and flew to California with her friend Dorothy. Sister loved the experience and flew more times after that. Eventually, she got the opportunity to be an actual pilot. Sr. M. Sponsa Bajorek's nephew-in-law, Bob Russo, was a pilot for United Airlines and would come to Our Lady of Victory Convent to visit Sr. M. Sponsa. On one occasion, Sr. Emilie Marie told him about her dream to fly a plane. He owned his own four-passenger plane and offered to give Sister a flying lesson. They set a date and she and Sr. M. Sponsa, along with Sr. M. Sponsa's niece Sherry and nephew-in-law Bob, flew out of Lewis Airport in Romeoville, Illinois. They flew over Lemont and were low enough to see



Sr. Emilie Marie smiles behind the cockpit before she gets a chance to fly.

the quarries and lakes and the Motherhouse. At first Sr. Emilie Marie was the co-pilot, but Bob showed her the controls and eventually she took over and flew the plane to Chicago along Lake Michigan. They were up in the air for nearly three hours. It was quite a memorable experience and Sister loved it.

Throughout the years of her religious life, Sister would often spend vacations with her high school friend, Dorothy Reed. They would take trips together and traveled along the west coast from San Diego to Vancouver. She has fond memories of these trips. Sr. Catherine Jean Hayen, BVM., from Dubuque, Iowa, was another close friend. In 1980, they met at the Warrenville Cenacle during a 30-day directed retreat. Their friendship continued and they would spend fun holidays together such as July 4th and Memorial Day weekends. "Both



*(Left) Sr. Emilie Marie with Sr. Catherine Jean Hayen.
(Right) Sr. Emilie Marie's high school friend Dorothy Reed.*

Dorothy and Sr. Catherine Jean were my best friends for over 40 years. Whether it was praying together or sharing our life experiences, we had wonderful times together. Both are now enjoying their heavenly reward."

In 1980, Sr. Emilie Marie returned to Five Holy Martyrs to serve as principal. She also was the choir director and helped organize the student musical productions. Sister was happy to return to her home school and live near her mother, and spend more time with her. Sadly, her mother was called to her heavenly reward in 1983. Sr. Emilie Marie says her faith helped her through this hard time. "Moving back to Chicago was part of God's plan and I thank God for letting me live close to my mother during her final years." Sister served at Five Holy Martyrs School until 1988. In 1983, Sr. Emilie Marie was appointed Director of the FSC Associate Program. She held this position for 16 years.

After serving in education, Sr. Emilie Marie was called back to Lemont to serve on the leadership team. She was elected General Councilor/Secretary. Sister had a hard time leaving her students whom she loved and missed dearly, but accepted the new challenge. "It was an honor to serve in leadership with the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago," Sister said. She was reelected in 1993 and then went on to serve as General Councilor again from 2003 to 2018. She also continued in the music ministry at St. Patricia Church in Hickory Hills, Illinois, and served as choir director and organist for Sunday Masses, weddings, and funerals. During this time, she continued in leadership as a Local Minister at Our Lady of Victory Convent (2002-2005). Sister also served on the Boards of Directors at St. Joseph Village, Madonna High School, Mount Alverna Village, St. Jude House and Franciscan Village.



Sr. Emilie Marie with the St. Patricia Church choir.

Sr. Emilie Marie is also a member of the National Pastoral Musicians Association (NPM) and the Chicago chapter of the NPM. She would attend conventions every year that were held in different states. "Every convention was attended by thousands of musicians, clergy, and others for learning, prayer, singing and support for one another in the music ministry. I met many new friends from all over the world. We bonded every year and continued to share enriching experiences. Presently we still keep in touch," she said.



Sr. Emilie Marie with friends from the NPM.

For recreation, Sr. Emilie Marie loves to bowl. She's been an avid bowler since she was a teenager. "It's one of my favorite sports and I love the camaraderie with my fellow bowlers." Sister also loves nature and walking around the grounds of Our Lady of Victory Convent in Lemont. "Living in Lemont now for over 35 years has been a blessing that has provided many enriching spiritual and physical experiences. Our beautiful surroundings give me time for prayer and reflection throughout the four seasons." Currently, Sister Emilie Marie continues to share her gift of music, serving as the Music Minister for the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago at Our Lady of Victory Convent in Lemont. "When I look back on my music career, I realize the joy it brings to not only me but to others as well. I feel blessed that God has given me this gift." We thank Sr. Emilie Marie for sharing her story with us. Sister has written a reflection entitled "A Night to Remember" that she wrote during a New Years Eve retreat at the Warrenville Cenacle.



Sr. Emilie Marie with her first place bowling team.



A Night to Remember

On the last eve of the old year, I sit by the fireplace in the White House of the Warrenville Cenacle and listen to its crackling sounds. The warmth and light from the flames reflect God's love for me. Memories...memories...linger in my heart of times past as I watch the fire burn brightly and feel its warmth. The sparks fly like shooting stars touching the lives of those around me. Smoke rises up like incense in prayer. The coals lie on the holy ground all aglow – each piece radiating God's love. I feel the strength of the iron rods that hold the logs. My heart is aglow like these logs with their dancing flames. Dance, flames, dance! My heart is filled with His living flame of love and I feel His peace within me. The logs now burn to ashes that lie on the holy ground. The past is history ... with loving memories. My heart burns with His love like the flames of fire into the mystery of tomorrow – the New Year. All I have is the present – the gift of His love that I hold in my heart.

– Sr. Emilie Marie Lesniak, December 31, 1996

THE SISTERS AND POPE JOHN PAUL II

Pope Leo XIV was elected pope this past May in a historic first for the Catholic Church, as he is the first pope from the United States. This was celebrated by so many Americans who were overjoyed with the news, but it was especially applauded by people from the Chicago area. Pope Leo XIV grew up in the suburb of Dolton, right outside Chicago. When discussing the election of our new pope, a question came up to the Sisters here: Have any of the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago met a pope before? The answer is yes. The Franciscan Sisters of Chicago have a connection to Pope John Paul II. Several of the Sisters have had the opportunity to meet him over the years. This article highlights some of these moments as well as his historic trip to Chicago in 1979.



Pope John Paul II at Five Holy Martyrs in Chicago in 1979.

Pope John Paul II was one of the most beloved popes in modern times. Born Karol Józef Wojtyła in Wadowice, Poland, in 1920, he was the first non-Italian pope since the 16th century and one of the longest serving popes in history. He was elected in 1978 and not long after began a series of overseas trips before making his historical trip to his home country of Poland in 1979. Later in the summer of 1979, he announced his first trip to America as pope and would tour several US cities. The Archbishop of Chicago, John Cardinal Cody, invited Pope John Paul II to visit Chicago during his tour. The Archdiocese of Chicago is one of the biggest dioceses in the United States and contains the largest population of Polish-Americans.

Pope John Paul II also had a prior close connection to Chicago. When he was a Cardinal, he visited Chicago as part of a delegation, first in 1969 and then again in 1976. Both times that he visited Chicago, he stayed at the rectory of Five Holy Martyrs Parish in Brighton Park. Five Holy Martyrs Parish had a very large Polish community. The Franciscan Sisters of Chicago served as teachers and in administration at Five Holy Martyrs School from 1912-1994, one of the longest serving tenures in their education ministry. The pastor at Five Holy Martyrs was Bishop Alfred Abramowicz who held a long connection to the parish as he was also baptized there. He also had a long-lasting friendship with Pope



Five Holy Martyrs faculty with Pope John Paul II before he was Pope and was still a Cardinal. (Standing) Srs. Ferdinand, Lenore, Francis Clare, Rosalima, Clarent Marie, Dominic, and Francine. (Seated) Bishop Abramowicz, and Cardinal Wojtyla (Pope John Paul II).

John Paul II going back to the 1960s since he was also of Polish heritage and served as a strong advocate for the Polish community. He worked with the Catholic League for Religious Assistance to Poland which helped support the Catholic Church in Poland during the communist period. Bishop Abramowicz was instrumental in planning the Cardinal's delegation trips in 1969 and 1976 and helping coordinate the Pope's 1979 trip to Chicago. The Sisters got to meet the future Pope John Paul II (then Karol Cardinal Wojtyla) on both occasions during his stay at Five Holy Martyrs. The parish held a welcoming ceremony. "Several of us got to meet him when he was a Cardinal on both of his visits. He was very thoughtful and took the time to speak to all of us. He was so humble and very thankful for the ceremony and the amazing welcome the parish gave him," Sr. M. Francis Clare Radke said.



Pope John Paul II leads a prayer service at Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago.

In 1979, Pope John Paul II began his trip to the United States when he landed in Boston on October 1. From Boston he flew to New York, Philadelphia, and then Des Moines. He arrived in Chicago on October 4. He landed at O'Hare International Airport and was welcomed by Gov. Jim Thompson of Illinois and Mayor Jane Byrne of Chicago. Once in Chicago, he held a prayer service at Holy Name Cathedral. Some of the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago attended this service which was highlighted with singing from Luciano Pavarotti, the famous Italian operatic tenor. Pavarotti sang a beautiful version of "Ave Maria," complete with a full orchestra and choir. After the prayer service, Pope John Paul II went to St. Peter's Catholic Church in the Loop in Chicago where he gave a speech to the parishioners.

The next morning, he traveled to Providence of God Church in Pilsen where nearly 75,000 people greeted him. His motorcade then drove to Five Holy Martyrs Church where he celebrated a morning open-air Mass spoken in the Polish language to over 17,000 people who crowded the neighborhood to view the Pope. Houses in the neighborhood were decorated with welcome signs and posters celebrating his visit. Many of the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago attended this Mass describing it as a joyful, memorable occasion. They remember the enormous crowd that attended the beautiful Mass with everyone united in prayer. During the Mass he paid tribute to the Polish-American community, and noted that their offertory gifts represented, "all the contributions that the sons and daughters of our first homeland, Poland, have made to the history and to the life of their second homeland across the ocean." Bishop Abramowicz presented an honorary street sign to the Pope. The city of Chicago passed a proposal where a section of West 43rd street (the street where Five Holy Martyrs resides) would be renamed "Pope John Paul II Drive." The street still



Pope John Paul II at Five Holy Martyrs in Chicago in 1979.

holds this name to this day. The Pope then made his way to Quigley Preparatory Seminary where he addressed the crowd of seminarians and staff. After stopping at Quigley, the Pope took a helicopter to Grant Park in Chicago. It was here he held a historical Mass. It would be the largest Mass ever held in Chicago as over one million people attended inside and outside the park to view the Pope and celebrate Mass. In total, the Pope was in Chicago for just 37 hours, but he made a lifetime of memories for all who were able to see him and pray with him.

The Sisters' connection to Pope John Paul II continued over the years. Sr. M. Francine Labus and Sr. M. Alvernia Groszek went to Rome a few years later and met him and several Cardinals. They presented him with material on the saintly cause of Mother Mary Theresa Dudzik, foundress of the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago. This material would include a copy of *The Chronicle* (her personal journal writings), testimonies from others on her heroic virtue, and other items intended to advance further her saintly cause. Pope John Paul II would eventually declare Mother Mary Theresa Dudzik Venerable in 1994.



Pope John Paul II with Sr. M. Francine Labus and Sr. M. Alvernia Groszek.

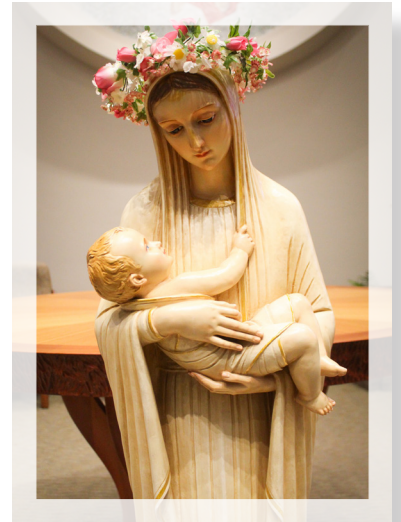
In 2004, Sr. M. Francis Clare Radke and Sr. Diane Marie Collins went on a trip to Rome. They received a gift from John Grele, Director of Plant Operations at Our Lady of Victory Convent. He provided them with tickets for the general audience with the Pope in St. Peter's Square. Both Sisters arrived in the square and were shocked when they were seated in an area as special guests. When Pope John Paul II arrived, he was greeted with cheers, applause, and tears of joy. After a brief address, he blessed the crowd of people. Then everyone in the square sang *Regina Coeli*. Afterwards, the Pope began to receive visitors and to the Sisters' surprise, they were able to meet him. "When we knelt before the Holy Father, we praised the Lord in Polish. He gently touched Sr. Diane Marie's left cheek. Sr. Diane Marie presented the Holy Father with a letter that asked for his prayers for our congregation and for the beatification of Mother Mary Theresa Dudzik. We included a donation to his charities and beatification prayer cards. I will always remember this prayerful experience," Sr. Francis Clare remembers. Just a year later, Pope John Paul II would pass away. He would be celebrated around the world as one of the great religious leaders of our time. The Sisters felt very privileged and happy to get a chance to meet him and pray with him.



Pope John Paul II with Sr. M. Francis Clare Radke and Sr. Diane Marie Collins.

MAY CROWNING 2025

May Crowning is a special Catholic ritual and Marian devotion held during the month of May. This yearly tradition honors Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth. A wreath of flowers is placed on the head of a statue of Mary to crown her and honor her. The month of May has long been associated with the beginning of life and rebirth as the season of spring comes into full bloom. Thus, the May Crowning of Mary is a symbolic start of a new spiritual season. The current conventional form of May Crowning first began in Italy in the seventeenth century as Father Latomia of the Roman College of the Society of Jesus devoted the month of May to Mary. This soon spread to other Jesuit colleges and then to other Catholic parishes and other countries. Thus, this ritual developed into a Catholic tradition that is celebrated every May.



The Franciscan Sisters of Chicago celebrate the May Crowning devotion every year. This year, the Sisters held a prayer ceremony with residents of Franciscan Village in the Sacred Heart Chapel and then crowned various statues of Mary in the chapel and Our Lady of Victory Convent. Below are photos from the ceremony.



(1) The Sisters and residents from Franciscan Village in Sacred Heart Chapel. (2) Sr. Lois Marie Rossi (3) Sr. Jean Therese Jarosz (4) Sr. M. Francis Clare Radke (5) Statue of Mary in Sacred Heart Chapel (6) Sr. Jeanne Marie Toriskie (7) Sr. Emilie Marie Lesniak



THANK YOU TO DAWN MAYER, CHIEF MISSION INTEGRATION & PASTORAL CARE OFFICER

The Franciscan Sisters of Chicago and Franciscan Ministries announce the resignation of Dawn Mayer, Chief Mission Integration & Pastoral Care Officer. Dawn Mayer joined Franciscan Ministries as Vice President of Mission Integration and Pastoral Care in 2015. Previously, she served as the Director of Mission Integration and Pastoral Care for five years at The Village at Victory Lakes, one of Franciscan Ministries' senior living communities.

"Throughout her tenure, Dawn has been a steady and visionary leader, guiding our mission efforts with passion, integrity, and deep commitment. Dawn has played a pivotal role with the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago and Franciscan Ministries in educating and guiding our associates and affiliates in following the charisms of Mother Mary Theresa Dudzik and St. Francis of Assisi. Her leadership and passion for our mission have been evident in the work she has done," said Sr. M. Bernadette Bajuscik, General Minister of the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago. The Sisters held a farewell party in May for Dawn where associates from Our Lady of Victory also attended to say goodbye and wish her well. We thank Dawn for all her years of service and wish her the very best in her future endeavors.



Dawn Mayer stands next to a cutout of Mother Mary Theresa Dudzik.

FRANCISCAN MINISTRIES AND FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF CHICAGO SHOWCASED IN GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Franciscan Ministries and the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago were recently featured in the May edition of the magazine *Good Housekeeping*. The article is entitled "Finding a Legacy of Compassionate Care." Patrick Schuerer, Vice President of Communications and Brand Strategy with Franciscan Ministries, provides insight in the piece on Franciscan Ministries' continuing mission of "Celebrate Life and Serve with Joy." This mission upholds the legacy of Mother Mary Theresa Dudzik, Foundress of the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago, which was then carried on through the years by the Sisters and later through their creation and sponsorship of Franciscan Ministries. The article discusses how the associates of Franciscan Ministries' senior living communities care for their residents by applying the seven pillars of 'Living Joyfully' philosophy. This philosophy helps the residents live with joy and purpose. Many thanks to Patrick Schuerer, Vice President of Communications & Brand Strategy with Franciscan Ministries, for all his work on this piece. You may read this article on the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago website: chicagofranciscans.org



Good Housekeeping magazine

FIRST LOOK FOR CHARITY

The Annual Fundraiser was held in February.

The 33rd annual First Look for Charity event took place at McCormick Place in Chicago on February 7. This major charity event, in cooperation with the Chicago Auto Show, raises money every year for 18 local charities. First Look for Charity has raised over \$63 million since 1992. Franciscan Community Benefit Services, which consists of St. Jude House and Madonna Foundation, was one of the featured charities. Associates, sponsors, and friends of Franciscan Ministries attended the event held in one of the suites at McCormick Place. Guests enjoyed food and refreshments as well as an early look at the Chicago Auto Show. It was a successful night and there was a tremendous amount of support shown for Franciscan Community Benefit Services.

Regina Umanskiy, President and CEO of Franciscan Ministries, welcomed everyone and began her speech with a famous Winston Churchill quote. "Winston Churchill once said 'We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.' It is a true honor to stand before you tonight surrounded by such generous and compassionate people." She continued on by paying tribute to the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago. She also highlighted some of the great work done by both St. Jude House and Madonna Foundation and their mission of helping and giving. "When I joined Franciscan Ministries, I was drawn to the mission of giving and making a contribution to something bigger. Every contribution we make tonight no matter how small is a step towards building something bigger than ourselves by making the lives of others and our lives just a little bit better. Because when we give, whether it is time, resources, or our compassion, we don't just change the lives of others—we transform ourselves. Our sense of purpose and connection to the mission of charity brings us fulfillment that cannot be measured by money or possessions."



Anna Schoon (Director of St. Jude House), Regina Umanskiy (President and CEO of Franciscan Ministries), Denise Makowski (Manager of Programming and Alumnae Relations, Madonna Foundation), and Eileen Gutierrez (Director of Philanthropy and Planned Giving Administration).



*(Left) Sr. Jeanne Marie Toriskie and Sr. Emilie Marie Lesniak
(Right) A group photo of associates from Franciscan Ministries.*

ST. JUDE HOUSE HOLDS ANNUAL COMEDY FUNDRAISER

The event celebrated St. Jude House's 30th Anniversary.

St. Jude House held its annual major fundraiser 'Stand Up for St. Jude House Comedy Night' on May 16 at County Line Orchard in Crown Point, Indiana. Over 400 guests came to the event to show support for St. Jude House and enjoy a night of comedy and entertainment. The main sponsors this year were Apple Blossom Trails, Ameriprise Financial, Centier Bank, and Ozinga. This year is a special year as it's the 30th anniversary of St. Jude House.

St. Jude House began in 1995 with the vision of Don Burrell, a local Crown Point businessman, who sought to honor Saint Jude, the patron saint of those in need. It was through him and the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago that funding was possible to build a family violence prevention center that would help provide services and support for domestic abuse survivors and their families. In his honor, St. Jude House awards the "Don Burrell Corporate Responsibility Award," an award given annually to an individual or group that has been a big support to St. Jude House over the years. This year's winner was Centier Bank. Centier Bank's employees volunteer often at St. Jude House as they work with survivors and provide money management classes.



Lauren Zurbriggen, St. Jude House Director of Development, awards Centier Bank with the Don Burrell Corporate Responsibility Award.



Amy McCarthy

The event opened with clips of video interviews with the staff of St. Jude House and St. Jude House survivors who highlighted their experiences and all the amazing work that St. Jude House has done over the years. Amy McCarthy, chair of St. Jude House's Survivor Council, addressed the attendees, sharing her survival story and how she became a part of the St. Jude House Survivor's Council. This led to her being a mentor to other survivors. The St. Jude House Survivor Council holds several engagement events during the year aimed at providing support and building one-on-one relationships with domestic abuse survivors. Anna Schoon, Director of St. Jude House, also spoke to the crowd. "St. Jude House is committed to ending domestic violence in Northwest Indiana. We

cannot do that without the support of the whole community. While tonight's event enables the guests to support St. Jude House financially, it also allows them to join the effort to end domestic violence in Northwest Indiana," she said.

There were several fundraising opportunities such as a digital paddle raise silent auction and a raffle that were very successful. The featured comedians at the event were Jeannie Dougan and headliner Mike Toomey, who is a regular performer on the WGN Morning News in Chicago. Music was also performed by local musician Frank Ruvoli. St. Jude House would like to thank all who attended and volunteered their time. Many thanks to the numerous businesses that donated prizes for the silent auction: Cold Stone Creamery, Dawn Brancheau Foundation, Centier



1



2



3



4

(1) Anna Schoon, Director of St. Jude House (2) Jeannie Dougan and Mike Toomey (3) There was a digital paddle raise silent auction at the event. (4) Frank Ruvoli

Bank, White Castle, Off Square Brewing, Lerner & Rowe, Crossroads YMCA, Innsbrook Country Club, Kenwal Steel, Humane Indiana, Chick-Fil-A, Coopers Party Rentals, Briar Ridge Country Club, Wallace Consulting, LLC, Astro Snax Freeze Dried Goods, Good Ball, Lifestyles Unique Gifts, Crumbles Bake Shop, Youche Country Club, Green is Good by Kate, Miller, Sachs, & Hess, PC Stride Pink Flamingo Cotton Candy, Industrial Dance Project, Enve Salon, Hometown Happenings, Franciscan Health Fitness Centers, Miller Lite, Net Par, Mullaly Med Spa, Sweat 219, Tavern on Main, Hard Rock Casino Northern Indiana, Sky Zone, Cinnabon, Lake County Corn Dogs, Dear Dani Boutique, Amy Watts, Mark Zimmerman, Regions Medical Group, Aimee Gabbert, Carrie Kuck, Keisha White, Ryne Pishkur, Eileen Gutierrez and Lauren Zurbriggen. For more information on St. Jude House, and how you can support this mission call (219) 662-7066 or visit their website: stjudehouse.org and facebook at facebook.com/stjudehouse.

ST. JUDE HOUSE LAUNCHES NEW TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM

St. Jude House launched a new transitional housing program for survivors of domestic violence this past April. “Transitional housing programs are essential for domestic violence survivors as these programs provide a bridge between emergency shelter and permanent housing. Our program offers not only a safe place to live but also a range of supportive services designed to help survivors rebuild their lives. This program will prevent homelessness and help ensure that the unavailability of affordable housing isn't a reason why survivors return to their abusers,” said Anna Schoon, Executive Director at St. Jude House. St. Jude House will provide rent support for up to two years for these families who need support. “It's generally agreed that families should not spend more than 30% of their income on housing related expenses. Our program is based on that guideline. We calculate the clients' share of housing expenses (rent and utilities) at 30% of their income, and then we make up the balance,” Anna said. St. Jude House will also continue to provide case management and support services to families during this time

This transitional housing program will produce many positive outcomes for survivors and their families. Studies have shown that survivors with access to transitional housing will experience reduced levels of anxiety, depression, and PTSD. The program will also help provide survivors with economic independence and enhance their life skills with budgeting and other life skills. The goal is to help survivors integrate into new communities which will reduce their isolation and build a supportive network around them. “Our transitional housing program is a lifeline for domestic violence survivors, providing the safety, stability, and support necessary to rebuild their lives. By addressing immediate needs and offering comprehensive services, our program helps survivors achieve independence and improve their overall well-being,” Anna said.

Madonna Foundation Graduation

The Madonna Foundation held its annual graduation ceremony on May 28 at Dominican University in River Forest, Illinois. Fifteen Madonna Foundation scholars were recognized for their hard work and dedication which resulted in multiple scholarships and acceptances into colleges and universities. Overall the Madonna scholars were accepted to over 72 colleges and universities and collectively they have received over \$6.2 million in awards towards their further education. Congratulations to all graduates as they begin the next stage of their educational journey.



Madonna Scholars pose with sweatshirts from their chosen college.



Wintrust provided the financial workshop.

Financial Literacy Workshop

This past spring, the Madonna Scholars participated in financial literacy workshops provided by community partner, Wintrust Community Bank. Employees from bank branches in their local school communities met with the scholars and provided valuable information about money management. Special thanks to everyone at Wintrust for their time and for sharing their knowledge with the Madonna Scholars.

Women Everywhere Program

The Madonna Scholars participated in the Women Everywhere Program in April. This program, provided by the Cook County Courthouse, exposes young women in high school to various careers in the criminal justice and legal system. The scholars met women who discussed their career path and provided advice to them. Many thanks to the Cook Country Courthouse.



The Women Everywhere Program was sponsored by the Cook County Courthouse.

Madonna High School Alumnae Spring Luncheon

The Madonna High School Alumnae Spring Luncheon was held on April 27 at the Lone Tree Manor Banquet Hall in Niles, Illinois. There was a wonderful turnout as the Madonna classes of 1955, 1965, 1975, 1985, 1995 and 2000 were celebrated. This year the Spirit of Madonna award recipients



(1) Betsy Garbrecht and family (2) Denise Makowski, Mary Slowik, and April Dumas-Gray (3) Several Madonna High School classes were celebrated.

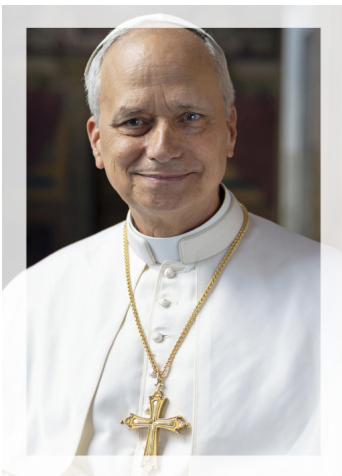
were Mary Slowik who won the Stewardship Award, and Betsy Garbrecht, who won the Dedication Award. Mary is from the Madonna High School class of 1983. She has been an integral part in revitalizing the Madonna High School Alumnae Association and continues to be a major support to the foundation. Betsy is the former director of the Madonna Foundation. Through her dedication and service, Betsy worked tirelessly to strengthen the Madonna Foundation mission. Thank you to all for attending and special thanks to the luncheon committee and everyone who generously donated raffle items, flowers, and decorations.

New Director of the Madonna Foundation

April Dumas-Gray was recently promoted to Director of the Madonna Foundation. April previously served as the Scholarship Manager for the Madonna Foundation where she supported the ever-growing needs of the Madonna Scholars and their families. April brings a wealth of philanthropic expertise and knowledge and has played a key role in the Madonna Foundation's growth over the past several years. She has significantly expanded the Madonna Foundation's programs to include the addition of health and wellness workshops, college application programs and essay programs. Good luck to April in her new position.



April Dumas-Gray, Director of Madonna Foundation.



The Franciscan Sisters of Chicago offer congratulations and God's blessing to newly elected Pope Leo XIV!

"All of us are in God's hands. So, let us move forward, without fear, together, hand in hand with God and with one another other! We are followers of Christ. Christ goes before us. The world needs his light. Humanity needs him as the bridge that can lead us to God and his love. Help us, one and all, to build bridges through dialogue and encounter, joining together as one people, always at peace." - Pope Leo XIV

HONOR ROLL OF DONORS

November 1, 2024 - May 31, 2025

The Franciscan Sisters of Chicago thank their donors and friends for partnering with them. The Sisters offer their gratitude and sincere appreciation for their donors' generosity, which has allowed the ministry started by Venerable Mary Theresa Dudzik to continue.

These donations have helped the ministries of the Sisters in a profound way. Their sponsored ministries include a shelter for victims of domestic abuse, senior retirement communities, and scholarships for all-girls Catholic high school tuition.

The donor list in this issue is recorded from **November 1, 2024 - May 31, 2025**. The Sisters make every effort to keep accurate records and each gift is acknowledged promptly. Should something be amiss, however, the Sisters ask the donors to call them at once. Inquiries should be directed to Vicki Olsen at (630) 243-3556 or email: volsen@chicagofranciscans.com.



VENERABLE MARY THERESA DUDZIK BEATIFICATION FUND

Gifts sent to the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago for the Beatification Cause are sent immediately to this Fund. Gifts received through the League of Mother Theresa are used to cover the cost of operating the League Office and once a year (or more often) money from the League is transferred to the Beatification Fund. Thanks to everyone who has helped build the Beatification Fund. Every step in the process requires fees and the Beatification Fund must continue to grow so that funds are there when needed.

Dr. and Mrs. Peter Doris
Joan Gallagher

RESTRICTED GIFTS

Restricted Gifts enable the Sisters to purchase the items that donors specifically request their donations be used for. The explicit designation by the benefactor allows the donor to become an integral part of the ministries of the Sisters.

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

The Unrestricted Fund is important because it allows flexibility for the Sisters' use. Gifts are directed to where the need is greatest. The Sisters are able to use unrestricted gifts immediately or to allow them to accumulate until a significant need arises. The thoughtfulness of unrestricted gifts is greatly appreciated.

Tim and Wendy Bellagamba
Florence Budz
Don and Alice Burrell
Joanne A. Cartor
Sandra Jamison Chafen
Karen Chuey
Kathy and Joesph Filipiak
Sally R. Franz
Ray Ingham
Marion Jelcz, M.D.
Louise Karwowski
Therese F. Kolczak
Edwin C. Malixi
Diane M. Milkowski
Mary I. Mosser
Raymond and Marlene Mosser
Henry J. Ruczewski
Debbie L. Spear
Patricia Tarczewski
Deborah D. Wagner
Alberta and Dennis Wilde
John A. Zuraw

NON-CASH

The Sisters are restricted by law and policy as to the kinds of non-cash gifts they can accept. Among those items are medications and some used items or partially used items. Some changes in legislation also affect the donor. In fact, Congress passed new rules for deducting household goods, clothing and other items. Unless the item is in good used condition or better or was donated before August 18, 2006, donors will not get the tax deduction. Congress wanted to stop people from using charitable organizations to dump unwanted items in order to write off a donation of minimal or no value. It is always best to call the Development Office at 630-243-3556 before giving a non-cash gift. Dropping off something the Sisters cannot legally accept often requires the Sisters to pay for the disposal of these items, which assuredly was not the donor's intent.

RETIREMENT FUND

Gifts to the Retirement Fund are very important to us as they provide support in the care of the retired and infirm members of our Community. The rising cost of health care and medicine are as serious an issue for us as they are with the general public. We're grateful for your gifts.

Denise Boudreau
Mary Rose Jaskula
Stanley Kedzior
Henry J. Kuczewski
Frank Swiderski

LEGACY FUND

Using the envelope included with this issue of Crossroads is the easiest way to contribute to any of the Sisters' funds and it makes it especially easy to direct a gift to the Legacy Fund. There are several categories to which a Legacy gift can be directed — the two most popular are Memorials (for deceased loved ones) and Tributes (in honor of living individuals or groups). Some donors make regular gifts to this fund on anniversaries as in the case of memorials, birthdays, marriages,

and our Jubilarians. General, undesignated gifts may be made to this fund as well as donations for one's own special intention. The Legacy Fund is the Sisters' Endowment, which they continue to grow by reinvesting the income from the fund. A gift to the Legacy Fund also continues to grow in perpetuity.

MEMORIALS

In Honor of Mary Rita Rzonca
The Urban Giving Foundation
Keith and Karen Urban

TRIBUTES

In Memory of
Sister M. Claudia Bomba
Robert Bomba

In Memory of Sister M.
Alacoque Czartoryski
Joanne A. Cartor

In Memory of
Robert Fastenau
Samantha Fastenau

In Memory of
Sister Evelyn Furman
Mr. and Mrs. Francis Papuga

In Memory of
Sister M. Seraphinia Furman
Mr. and Mrs. Francis Papuga

In Memory of
George and Eleanor Haske
Douglas Haske

In Memory of
Sister Josephine Haske
Douglas Haske

In Memory of
Sister Mary Kulik
Michele Gulas

In Memory of
Sister M. Olga Kulik
Michele Gulas

In Memory of
Mildred Lang
Marie Maciejewski

In Memory of
Sister M. Rosaline Lenart
Roselyn Lucas

In Memory of Wanda Niemiec

Michael Niemiec

In Memory of Sister M. Dolorine Piwowarski

Vincent Sztul

In Memory of Mary Reynolds

Jean Reynolds

In Memory of Michael Robkak

Michele Gulas

In Memory of Janet Rzonca

The Urban Giving Foundation

Keith and Karen Urban

In Memory of Sister M. Placidia Rzonca

The Urban Giving Foundation

Keith and Karen Urban

In Memory of Sister M. Albertine Schab

John and Bernadette Vlock

In Memory of Sister M. Marylla Stanislawczyk

Mr. and Mrs. Francis Papuga

In Memory of Sister M. Kingnetta Szczypula

Cindy A. Tidei

In Memory of Sister M. Agatha Walerski

Van and Rita Stout

In Memory of Carol Witkiewicz

Patricia Witkiewicz

In Memory of Harry and Sophie Witkiewicz

Patricia Witkiewicz

In Memory of Annette Wontor

The Urban Giving Foundation

Keith and Karen Urban



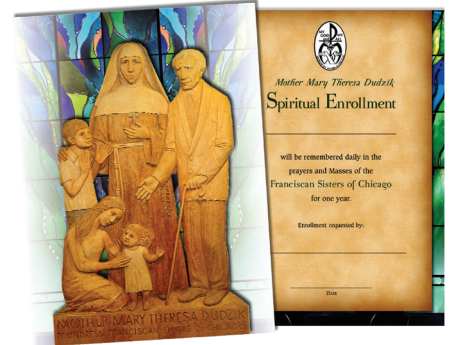
“Love is the greatest power for the transformation of reality because it pulls down the walls of selfishness and fills the ditches that keep us apart.”

- Pope Francis (1936 - 2025)

MOTHER MARY THERESA DUDZIK SPIRITUAL ENROLLMENT

November 1, 2024 - May 31, 2025

The Mother Mary Theresa Dudzik Spiritual Enrollment Program provides an opportunity for the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago to share their prayer with others in a special way. A monthly Mass is celebrated for all those enrolled, living or deceased. The Franciscan Sisters of Chicago remember everyone who is enrolled in their prayers. The Spiritual Enrollment card with a matching mailing envelope is exquisitely designed and easy to use. It may be used to celebrate any occasion or to remember a loved one. Please be sure to complete the section requesting the donor's name and address so that the Spiritual Enrollment Book has the donor's name as well as the name of the person being enrolled. A one-year enrollment is \$15. To obtain the enrollment packet, please contact Vicki Olsen at (630) 243-3556.



SPIRITUAL ENROLLMENT - LIVING

Ismelda Barajas

Enrolled by Crystal Barajas

Susan Brunovsky

Enrolled by
Sister Doloria Kosiek
Sister Jeanne Marie Toriskie

Cardinal Blasé Cupich

Enrolled by Franciscan Sisters of Chicago

Governor Ron DeSantis and Family

Enrolled by Pam Hussey

James Anthony Devereaux, II

Enrolled by Karen Fritz

Kim Eickelman

Enrolled by Edyie Ospalski

Theresa Gazdziak

Enrolled by Elizabeth Pienta

David Kinder

Enrolled by Franciscan Sisters of Chicago

Donna Kral

Enrolled by Lauren and Dan Fixel

Nora Mark

Enrolled by Sister Kathleen Melia

Dawn Mayer

Enrolled by Franciscan Sisters of Chicago

NACC-Michele Metlach

Enrolled by Franciscan Sisters of Chicago

Sharon Miller

Enrolled by Sister Doloria Kosiek

Sisters of the Resurrection

Enrolled by Sister Kathleen Melia

Reverend Daniel Stempora

Enrolled by the Family of Reverend Stempora

The Society of Helpers

Enrolled by Franciscan Sisters of Chicago

Sister M. Celeste Walkowski

Enrolled by Mary I. Mosser

SPIRITUAL ENROLLMENT - DECEASED

Mark Andrus

Enrolled by Franciscan Sisters of Chicago

Adalbert Bayer

Enrolled by Elissa Ospalski

Joe and Bernice Bedus

Enrolled by Kathy Florence

Ken Bielski

Enrolled by Gayla Janicek

Perry Bonner

Enrolled by Sister Jean Therese Jarosz

Michael Broderick

Enrolled by Christine Schuler

Steven Dale Buelter

Enrolled by Tim and Wendy Bellagamba

Rich and Susie Bulak

Enrolled by Sister Kathleen Melia

Teresa Choragwicki

Enrolled by Anna Choragwicki

Alisa "Lisa" Pope Duda

Enrolled by Sister Jean Therese Jarosz

Kathleen Duffy

Enrolled by Jim and Kathy Kelly

Patrick F. Duggan, Jr.

Enrolled by Joe Budzyn

Edward Frick

Enrolled by Bill and Peggy Hogan

Helen Ganiec

Enrolled by Corrine Ganiec

Dominador Gasmen

Enrolled by Felictas Gonzalez

Ernie Gastineau

Enrolled by Barb Tokarski

Rich Gemmell

Enrolled by Joe Budzyn

Pat Gruszka

Enrolled by Sister Doloria Kosiek

Ron Hankey

Enrolled by Gayla Janicek

Jean Jackson

Enrolled by Christine Schuler

Michael Janicek

Enrolled by Gayla Janicek

Gregory C. Janicki

Enrolled by Kathy and Jim Kelly

Cathy L. Jarmusz

Enrolled by Jim and Kathy Kelly

Michael J. Kelly

Enrolled by Kathy and Jim Kelly

Cherie L. Kent

Enrolled by Michele Gulas

Hank Kielbowicz

Enrolled by
Marea Gonska
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