

Alive

WITH THE CALL OF THE GOSPEL

School
Sisters
of  St. Francis


Caring for
**Immigrant
Children**

Archives Bring
History to Life

Planning a
Successful
Mission Trip

2018-2019
Annual Report





Jesus said to Simon,
“There is nothing to fear. From now
on you’ll be fishing for men and
women.” They pulled their boats up
on the beach, left them, nets and all,
and followed him. (Luke 5:10-11)

Fi(ni)shing School

It made no sense.
Fish didn't bite at that time of day.
A carpenter's son from Nazareth –
what would he know about fishing?
Yet the command in his voice
sent us out to sea again.

After the catch we followed him.
I'll make you fishers of people, he said.
For three years we watched him
hauling in sinners, the blind and lame,
the deaf and dumb, those possessed
of evil spirits, those dispossessed.

One late afternoon when we were far
from any town, we asked Jesus
to dismiss the crowd – they numbered
in the thousands and all we had to offer
were a few loaves and fish.
Feed them yourselves, he said.

That day we learned
his most elementary lesson:
to fish for people
you have to put yourself
on the hook.

—SISTER IRENE ZIMMERMAN

WHERE GOD IS AT HOME

Poems of God's Word and World
Illuminated by The Message®



IRENE ZIMMERMAN, OSF

with Photographs by James Stephen Behrens, OCSO

Excerpt from *Where God is at Home: Poems of God's Word and World*, by Sister Irene Zimmerman. This new book may be ordered online from the publisher, ACTA Publications, at www.actapublications.com. Use the code “SSSF” when ordering from ACTA and receive a 10% discount on your entire order. The School Sisters of St. Francis will also receive a donation for 20% of your order.

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FRONT COVER
Jordan Vavra comforts a young patient
on her recent medical mission trip
to South America. Read about the visit
by members of St. Paul Parish,
Genesee Depot, Wisconsin, with our sisters
who minister in Païta, Peru,
on pages 12-14 of this issue.

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From Our Leadership



We are so grateful to you, our partners in ministry, for sharing our concern for the needs of people around the world. On a recent visit to our European Province, we were reminded again how our sisters touch the lives of people in many different ways.



Sister Wilfriede Schmitt works with refugee children who have come to Germany from Turkey, Bulgaria, Spain, and Romania in a public school in Hüfingen. Her patience and creativity in meeting the needs of the learners are prized both by students and their other teachers.



Sister Andrea Zimmermann has a vibrant ministry to street people in Freiburg, Germany. She helps connect them to needed services, and is a kind and listening ear. She was delighted when some of "her men" came to our Motherhouse in Erlenbad to help celebrate her 60th Jubilee. For 10 years, Sister Jutta Endriß has been part of a parish outreach program in Freiburg that serves homeless and elderly people seeking help and counsel.



Sister Rosmarie Gschlößl works with Caritas, the Catholic charitable organization, in Aachern, Germany. She provides home care for elderly and disabled people with a caring touch.



In Switzerland, three of our sisters are active in pastoral care. In Allschwil, Sister Bonifatia Metzger works at a parish as the primary staff member visiting people in the hospital and providing prayer and Communion services; Sister Gertrude Weber visits the elderly and homebound in the parish. In Obergöesgen, Sister Hildegard Schallenberg is also a faithful visitor of the sick at home and in the hospital.

All but one of these sisters is well past the common retirement age in their countries. They continue serving because they see the many needs of their society and have energy to make a difference. We are proud of the work of these and all our sisters and thank you for the support you give!

Gratefully yours in Christ,

Sisters Mary, Tresa Abraham, Barbara, and Lucy

International Leadership Team
School Sisters of St. Francis



Former archivist Annette Scherber with volunteer Sister Jamine Angelina inside the repository at Sacred Heart.

Ready Reference for Community Life

Archives contain nearly 150 years of our congregation's history

The School Sisters of St. Francis Archives is a treasure trove of photographs, artifacts, and documents that reflect our community's heritage. Located in Sacred Heart in Milwaukee, the Archives collect, preserve, and provide access to the historic records that give evidence to the life, work, ministry and administration of the School Sisters of St. Francis.

Every box, file cabinet, or drawer offers up materials that illustrate a different facet of School Sisters of St. Francis history. These include our ties to education, health care, music and the arts, immigration, social justice, and the renewal of religious life after Vatican II.

The Archives are the official repository for both the United States Province and our international congregation's historical records. A major source of the items housed there comes straight from our American sisters. Sisters may choose to donate their personal papers, including photographs, academic records, materials from mission and vocation work, and

writings such as dissertations, poetry, journals, and autobiographies. Anything that illustrates a sister's life and ministry with the School Sisters of St. Francis usually fits well in the collection.

A prime example includes a beautiful, hand-written autobiography by Sister Ruth Hoemberg. Sister Ruth passed away in May of this year, and among the personal papers she donated was a booklet she created for her mother. Sister gave it to her mom when she was received into community on June 13, 1950. Filled with anecdotes, photographs, and personal illustrations, this booklet describes Sister Ruth's childhood and personal journey during early adulthood that led her to join the School Sisters of St. Francis.

In addition to sisters' personal papers, other important records were created at School Sisters of St. Francis mission locations, including schools, parishes, and clinics. These artifacts, photographs, yearbooks, scrapbooks, and textual documents remind us of the legacy our sisters

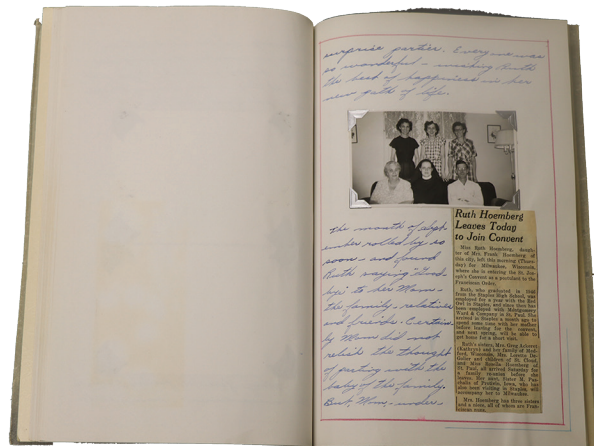
have built as outstanding educators, social workers, healthcare providers, and more.

Unique and rare materials, like a photograph of first grade students playing in the school yard at Yazoo City, Mississippi, document the lives and traditions of underprivileged groups, such as poor, rural, and minority communities. These records are important sources for members of our community, former students, genealogists as well as scholars, since the documents of these groups have historically been neglected in favor of preserving the histories of the privileged.

Sisters have touched the lives of many people around the country, and even around the world. For this reason, materials sometimes arrive from unexpected places. This fall, the community received a white silk scarf in the mail. The man who sent it said he found it while cleaning out his father's apartment. His father told him he bought the scarf from our sisters in Tsingtao, China, while stationed there with the Navy in the 1940s.

Raised in a Catholic orphanage and a former Catholic school student, the sailor made sure to seek out our sisters, who ran a school and orphanage in Tsingtao. Sisters sold Chinese handwork, such as the white silk scarf, in a shop to help support the mission. Today, the scarf symbolizes the community our sisters built with the people of Tsingtao, their dedication to their mission work, and the breadth of the impact they have had on so many people, from former students to curious shoppers!

The Archives is currently working hard to preserve these great artifacts, photographs, and textual materials and engage others with the vibrant history of our congregation. The Archives welcomes visitors and researchers by appointment. To start your dive into School Sisters of St. Francis history, or to donate materials, please call 414-944-6031 or email archives@sssf.org.



Sister Ruth Hoemberg's handmade booklet detailing her spiritual journey was a gift to her mother in 1950.



A silk scarf purchased more than 70 years ago from our sisters' mission gift shop in Tsingtao, China, accompanied by a photo of U.S. sailors visiting with Sister Eustelle at the mission.

A Franciscan Call to Hospitality

Sisters bring healing and hope to young immigrants in Chicago

The words emblazoned on the pedestal supporting the Statue of Liberty (“Give me your tired, your poor...”), written by poet Emma Lazarus, are made more poignant by the conditions we see in government centers now detaining immigrant children. They are a reminder that it is our legacy and responsibility to ensure liberty and justice for all, and they are a hymn of praise and gratitude to those who offer hope.

One place those caring souls can be found is at Maryville Academy in suburban Chicago. Here, young arrivals from Central America have found a safe place to reside temporarily while waiting to be united with family members.

Several of our sisters minister at Maryville, carrying on the center’s 135-year tradition of providing care for children in need. Sister Maureen Jerkowski is the lead clinician for Maryville’s Unaccompanied Children’s Shelter, and Sister Gerda Moehler, a retired clinical psychologist, serves as an English-language volunteer tutor. Sister Catherine Ryan is Maryville Academy’s executive director.

Sister Cathy explained the genesis of Maryville’s role with helping young immigrants. “Several years ago, Cardinal Francis George called me about news stories he saw about the suffering of unaccompanied minors at the border,” she said. “The Cardinal asked that Maryville help these unaccompanied minors, and we applied to the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) to offer a family reunification program.”

Sister Cathy said the ORR arranges to bring children to Maryville whenever

space becomes available. During their time at Maryville, these children make friends, receive their education, and have opportunities to worship.

“We help unaccompanied minors ages 12 to 17 adjust to a new culture and achieve independence,” Sister Maureen said. “Many of them arrive with complex trauma and migration histories. They may be diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or depression, or may have developed unhealthy behaviors to cope with the trauma they experienced.” Physical and mental health assessments are completed within 48 hours of a child’s arrival at Maryville, and can reveal long-neglected needs.

“One young man, a 16-year-old from rural Guatemala, could not read or write,” she recalled. “At first, we thought he might be cognitively challenged. We soon learned he was legally blind and had never seen an eye doctor or had glasses before. When he received his glasses, he was so excited. He kept looking around in awe, like he was seeing for the first time.”



ARTWORK: MARYVILLE ACADEMY



Sister Maureen said many of the children are fleeing gang violence. "Gangs control who comes into and leaves their villages, and they extort money from innocent people. Many of the youth have seen family members murdered. Most of the refugees have also endured poverty. Because of a severe drought in Guatemala, farmers are unable to feed their families or sell their livestock or produce."

The children have a strong desire to be nurtured intellectually, Sister Gerda said. "They have a deep respect for elders. They are attentive and so eager to learn."

Sister Gerda, who is also an accomplished violinist, recognizes the talents of the youth she works with. "There hasn't been a single child whose intelligence I haven't marveled at," she said. "They value being here; they value everything, right down to having a notebook to write in. And you should see their artwork!"

Sister Maureen said the students are encouraged to share the richness of their cultures through artistic expression. Maryville also gives them time to express their spirituality. "We encourage them to practice their faith," she said. "They are given the opportunity to attend Mass or evangelical services on Sunday. Most of the youth are very spiritual. They will tell you, 'God will provide.'"

Sister Maureen is grateful for the strength she receives from her Franciscan charism. "I do this work because I believe that all children deserve to be safe and cared for," she said. "The work is hard. We ourselves are at risk for vicarious trauma from hearing the children's stories. It's emotionally draining. But I am happy I can do

something for the children who are brought to Maryville.

"I entered the School Sisters of St. Francis because I wanted to be a missionary," she continued. "The community provided me with the opportunity to study Spanish and international social work. My 18 years of working on the El Paso-Juárez border and with immigrant families in the Bronx, as well as in visiting our sisters' missions in Central America, have prepared me for my ministry today."

Sister Gerda concurred that it's her privilege to minister with the children. "They've already suffered more loss, fear, and trauma than I can imagine," she said. "I look at them and say, 'They are amazing!'"



Your financial support enables our sisters to help children reach their God-given potential. We invite you to make a gift today using the enclosed envelope, or make a

secure gift online at www.sssf.org.

“God is Here with Us”

Sisters provide a loving home for abandoned women in India

Renowned theologian Henri Nouwen once said, “Through the sharing of gifts, those who have needs and those who can meet those needs come together on the common ground of God’s love.” That is how the School Sisters of St. Francis at the Asha Bhavan mission of the St. Francis Province (North India) have been serving people since 1997.

Asha Bhavan is a study in caring and compassion. “The mission was founded by Sister Marie Lourdes Thaikaden, who recognized the need for helping a growing number of impoverished women abandoned by their families,” said Sister Sunita Armo, a former staff member of Asha Bhavan. “To raise money for the care of these women, Sister Marie Lourdes worked in Germany for several years. When she returned to India in 1997, she opened a shelter in Bangalore for destitute women.”

“Some residents are developmentally or physically disabled,” said Sister Reena George Kannanaikal, who serves as the animator and administrator of the mission. “Others are mentally handicapped, or have been abandoned or rejected by their families.” Together with Sister Arpana Saharia, a registered nurse, and two retired sisters, Sister Marie Lourdes and Sister Rita Maria Chiriyankandath, they provide food, shelter, medical care, and companionship for 27 women, regardless of their religion, origin or background.

“The daily routine includes feeding, cleaning, conducting prayers, counseling, recreation and meeting the health needs of the residents,” Sister Reena said. “My work is usually not finished until around 10:30 p.m.”

Many Asha Bhavan residents are elderly, but “there are times when we also take in children who are in need of special healing,” said Sister Reena. One of the residents, Runa, lost her parents when she was only eight years old and suffered traumatic abuse while being raised by neighbors. Another child, brought to the shelter as a seven-year old, is hearing and speech impaired. Today, both girls are examples of resilient hope, bringing joy and healing to everyone around them.

“It has been a blessing to continue the mission of Jesus by caring for the least and most needy in our society,” said Sister Reena. “It is most rewarding to see how much the residents feel at home here. God is here. God is with us.”

Prayerfully consider making a tax-deductible donation today to help our sisters care for women and girls living on the margins in Bangalore, and around the world. Use the enclosed envelope or donate online at www.sssf.org.



Called to the Desert

Associate Pauline Hovey's spiritual journey took her in a surprising direction

If Associate Pauline Hovey's name seems familiar to you, it may be because you've seen her byline recently on compelling reporting about the crisis on the United States-Mexico border in publications like *U.S. Catholic* and *National Catholic Reporter*.

El Paso is at the center of Pauline's life and ministry today, but it was six years ago that she first came to know the city and our sisters at Casa Alexia, our mission on the border. She met them on a border immersion experience with fellow parishioners from Charlottesville, Virginia.

"After our week together, I felt called to come back to Casa Alexia and volunteer," she recalled. "I didn't speak Spanish and I don't think Sister Fran Hicks knew what she was going to do with me, but it worked out. It really affected me."

She also visited the sisters who minister on the Ciudad Juárez side of the border. "I saw real poverty in terms of destitute people. When I went back home to Virginia, I had El Paso and Juárez in my heart."

Pauline has run her own business writing and editing enterprise for a quarter century, but now that she is semiretired, her affection for the people on the border called her to make a radical life change. She sold her home in Virginia, moved to Las Cruces, New Mexico, and commutes several times a week to El Paso, where she volunteers at one of the hospitality centers for newly arrived immigrants.

Pauline said that the Franciscan ideals of care for the environment and living a simple lifestyle appeal to her. "I've come to see the importance of simplicity after being exposed to so many of the challenges—the poverty and other challenges—that people in Mexico and Central America are facing."



Pauline (second from left) with other volunteers at one of El Paso's hospitality centers. Pauline assists asylum seekers and immigrant families with basic necessities after they have been processed and released by Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Pauline said her faith is sustained by the local El Paso community and volunteers, and monthly meetings she has had with other associates and sisters at Casa Alexia. "I think the support of a faith community is very important, especially when you're involved in a ministry where you're faced with the difficult circumstances that other people live with day to day," she said. "Solidarity with people who have similar minds and hearts is important to strengthen your faith and provide encouragement when you need it."

Asked what she would tell a friend interested in exploring Associate Relationship, Pauline advised, "Having an open mind and heart are vital to being able to listen more deeply. When I first came out to volunteer, I had no intentions of moving to El Paso and leaving Virginia. But it just became clear as time went on that this is where I was being called to be."

To learn more about Associate Relationship, please email associates@sssf.org or call 414- 385-5253.

Making Memory Care a Priority

OLA is a place of loving care for retired sisters

Our Lady of the Angels Convent (OLA) is a beautiful and peaceful home providing retired sisters with specialized memory care, health care, and other services in a compassionate, supportive and enriching environment. It's a lifelong home where sisters receive the care they need for their mind, body, and soul.

Located in Greenfield, Wisconsin, this home-like facility was established in February 2011 as a co-sponsored ministry of the U.S. Province of the School Sisters of St. Francis and the School Sisters of Notre Dame Central Pacific Province. The two religious communities were responding to a rise in the number of aging members with memory loss, and their combined strengths and collaboration have contributed to OLA's success.

Since all OLA residents are living with memory loss, and almost 50 percent of the sisters use wheelchairs or walkers, the single-level convent is designed for easy navigation, comfort, and safety. It is shaped like a butterfly, with two wings with 48 resident rooms for sisters from both communities and a middle section for common area activities.

Each resident's room includes three or four windows for ample natural light and a private, handicap-accessible bathroom with shower. To help the sisters find their way, there is a plaque outside each room, including their photo, name and religious community.

The north and south sides of the building offer access to secure outdoor courtyards with gardens. In addition, the common areas include a chapel, screened porch, spa, hair salon, two dining rooms, two living rooms, and activity rooms. The healthcare/wellness section has an exam room, lab, and areas for rehab care.



A resident at Our Lady of the Angels visits with Jodi, the daytime comfort dog.

An Enriching Environment

As you enter the convent, the first thing you'll see is a sitting area with a large, delightful indoor display of song birds, which is soothing for the sisters. You may also see sisters praying in the chapel, singing songs during daily Mass and other religious gatherings, eating in the dining room, participating in programs and activities based on their interests and abilities, or taking an indoor walk with the daytime comfort dog.

"Religious culture and activities set us apart from other facilities," said Jane Morgan, OLA's administrator. "There is ultimate respect for the sisters as we maintain their dignity, physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being during this final stage of life."

Residents have opportunities to take part in daily physical exercise, sensory stimulation sessions, birthday parties, and games. A room equipped with touch-screen, senior-friendly computers gives the sisters access to their favorite online



Jane Morgan, Our Lady of the Angels administrator, and Sister Ruth Gengler, personal services coordinator, enjoy a chat in the convent's garden.

podiatry, optometry, and lab work. There is a dietician on site and staffing ratios are very generous, with three shifts of health care professionals. Additionally, more than 40 volunteers assist the sisters by escorting them to doctor visits and assisting with daily activities, special events, religious services, and more. They are caring, patient and respectful people who are trained to be dementia specialists.

games, puzzles, news sources, and more.

“The sisters especially enjoy music, children, and educational programs,” remarks Sister Ruth Gengler, personal services coordinator. “There is a lot of exposure to music, ranging from grade school bands and senior groups to weekly professional music therapy sessions. In addition, children from St. John the Evangelist School are pen pals with the sisters, and high school special education students are paired with sisters to visit and do interactive activities.”

Providing Specialized Care

The convent offers specialized care, which includes an assessment of each sister's overall cognitive and physical condition every six months. A comprehensive care plan is then tailored to her specific needs.

All health care services are provided on site, including primary care, physical and occupational therapy; behavioral health therapy; and dental,

“I enjoy ministering to the sisters at OLA because they are women who have spent their lives in the service of others,” Sister Ruth said. “I am always amazed when they share where they have been, and what they have done, and how God has been with them as they remained faithful to their vows. Now it is my turn to serve their needs.”

“The best part of my day is the time I spend interacting with the sister residents,” Jane said. “These are extraordinary women with huge servant hearts and unbelievable life stories. It is my privilege to be able to assist them and spend time with them.”



We invite you to make a gift of gratitude for our sisters' loving lives of ministry and service. You may use the enclosed envelope or make a donation on our website, www.sssf.org.

Parishioners on a Mission

Medical mission to Peru promotes healing and wellness

There's something extraordinary about the Connecting Hearts and Hands Team. These parishioners from St. Paul Church, Genesee Depot, Wisconsin, have teamed up to give generously of their time, talent, and treasure to aid people in need in a foreign country. They may look like ordinary parishioners, but deep within are hearts of gold!

In June, two dozen team members, including four doctors, three nurses, two physician's assistants, a physical therapist, a chiropractor, a self-defense expert, and several teenagers set out on a mission to Paita, Peru. This once-thriving whaling port with a population of 170,000 is weighed down by an overwhelming poverty characterized by lack of access to clean water and medical care, as well as the prevalence of human trafficking and abduction.

In the early 1990s, St. Paul Parish started a relationship with a sister parish in Guatemala. With the support of Pastoral Associate Len Grassmann and Sister Marietta Hanus, Deb Passino began leading teams on mission trips to Guatemala. A decade later, in 2013, Sister Matilde Maraví, who had moved from Guatemala City to Paita, invited Deb and her team to come to Peru. Sister Mónica Olguín and other sisters who operate St. Clare School told Deb that people there needed treatment for intestinal parasites, skin conditions, and many other medical issues, many of which are related to unclean water.

Deb and her parish pal Aracelis "Charlie" Spindt, a physician assistant specialist, have worked on three medical mission trips together. They fine-tuned their June intentions as coordinators to provide:

- Healthcare appointments
- Distributing easy-to-use home water purification systems, and replacing systems their team had previously installed
- Self-defense education to empower women and children, who are prime targets for sex trafficking and labor camps

"Many people in Paita have no running water or flush toilets," Deb explained. "The people are accustomed to walking a block to pay for and pick up their water at a center where the water



Marc Spindt gets a helping hand from a St. Clare School student in preparing the water filter buckets.

ST. PAUL PARISH PHOTOS



Olivia Weber, a member of the Connecting Hearts and Hands Team, examines a patient during the team's June medical mission trip to Paita, Peru.

“The sisters are a gift from God. They know if they didn’t do the work, it wouldn’t get done.”

is delivered by truck.” The water’s source is the Piura River, 40 miles away. Because of toxins that run off into the river from the surrounding farmland, the water has to be purified in order to be drinkable.

“A few years ago, we set up training sessions about the filter systems with the families of students at St. Clare School, and we also visited homes to help families set up their water filters,” Deb said. “During Lent, our parish collection is designated for the purchase of more of these buckets and Berkey-brand water filters. People are very eager to get involved in something tangible, like water purification.”

Generous donations covering supplies and transportation were received from parish members, with the assistance of the sisters’ International Office of Mission Advancement. Director Pam Mueller gladly responded to Deb’s

request to have donation and acknowledgment letters originate from her office, and with \$21,000 raised—half of which was a donation for the ministry of the sisters in Peru—it was “all systems go.”

“The Mission Advancement staff were awesome,” said Deb. “In general, mission trips don’t take a lot of money, but medical mission trips do.” It requires a lot of approvals through the health ministry as well.

Life-Changing Results

The collaboration between her team and the sisters in Peru was key to the success of these trips, too. “We begin planning with the sisters a year in advance,” Deb said. “The sisters take appointments a month before our arrival to see our doctors.”

There is always a surplus of medical supplies that Deb’s team ships to Paita to use during their visit.

Sister Paula Girón and other sisters responsible for the pharmacy add these leftovers to their stock.

For Deb and her team, providing medical services to families in Paita isn't about numbers but rather about relationships. Nevertheless, for the record, more than 700 people received medical care from the team in June. Deb recalls the plight of one young patient.

"There was a little girl there with butterfly disease (*epidermolysis bullosa*). She would get blisters easily, even from fabric touching her skin," Deb said. "She had to wear a wig because she had lost all her hair. Her family would take her by bus 650 miles away to Lima for her treatment. We helped by bringing her a very expensive medical oil from Canada.

"The sisters are a gift from God—they work really hard in Paita," she continued. "I keep in contact with Sister Mónica to learn what the families need. The sisters know if they didn't do the work, it wouldn't get done. They themselves don't live with a lot. We've been glad to leave them griddles, kitchen knives, and coffee pots—things we've used while visiting that they don't already have themselves."

Plans to Return

"In 2020, we're going back, and our focus will be on education as requested by the sisters," said Deb. Classes in self-defense will be offered to women of the community to protect themselves. Adolescent pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, often contracted through sexual violence, are rampant among young women there, she said.

In June, Deb's husband Michael offered self-defense classes to high school students at St. Clare School. He emphasized the need for mental preparedness in adversarial circumstances. The students were particularly fortunate to be

The most important elements in conducting a mission trip

- A chairperson with a heart and soul for mission must be willing to dedicate countless hours of planning and coordinating.
- Coordinators must place eye-catching flyers and displays throughout the parish, in pews, and in parish bulletins to encourage prayers and buy-in from participants and supporters.
- Choose to work with a dependable fundraising administrator like our sisters' Mission Advancement Office to ensure that funds are channeled safely to the designated cause.
- The presence of sisters at the mission site ensures that visitors have been thoroughly informed of any need for extra caution (political or otherwise) well in advance, thus ensuring everyone's safety.

mentored by Michael, a first-degree black belt in taekwondo who teaches martial arts at the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Milwaukee. Michael was assisted by 17-year-old Jonathan Weber, who made a real connection with the students.

"The School Sisters of St. Francis have a presence and know how to work in a global environment," Deb concluded, with gratitude. "We couldn't do this without them."

Prayerfully consider making a tax-deductible donation today to support our sisters' global ministries with women, men and children who struggle with poverty and its effects. Use the enclosed envelope or donate online at www.sssf.org.



Mark Your Calendars!

Join us for these autumn and winter events at St. Joseph Center

Our community invites all *Alive* readers and their families and friends to join us at our many special events in the coming months. These gatherings at St. Joseph Center in Milwaukee are wonderful opportunities for fellowship, spiritual nourishment, and experiences that broaden the mind, heart, and soul!

The **Pancake Breakfast and Fall Festival** has been a community tradition for decades and this year's edition will be held Sunday, October 13 from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Mass will be celebrated at 9 a.m. and we'll be serving all-you-can-eat pancakes until noon, followed by sloppy joes. All your favorites are back: our famous bakery sale, 50/50 raffle, dozens of silent auction baskets, and live polka music. Visit our website event page for full details.

At our **Candles of Love Liturgy** on the Feast of All Saints, we commemorate family, friends, and benefactors of our community who have gone to eternal life. All are welcome on Friday, November 1, at 6 p.m. as we pray for your deceased loved ones and special intentions.

Find your place among friends at our annual **bilingual Mass and Fiesta** on Saturday, November 16. Milwaukee Bishop James Schuerman will preside during the 4 p.m. Mass, and blended parish choirs will lead us in liturgical music. Our *artistas fabulosas*, Son Monarcas of Chicago, will get the party going with traditional Cuban, Colombian, and Mexican music, flavored with jazz and folk. As always, delicious foods, raffles, free family portraits, face painting for children, and the very popular Mexican-style Bingo called Lotería round out this welcoming cultural event!

Nothing says "Christmas" like the warm sound of brass. On Friday, December 6, a **concert of Christmas music** will be presented by the Milwaukee Festival Brass. Members of this renowned ensemble will herald in the most wonderful time of the year before life becomes a frenzy of ribbons and tinsel.

As bells peal for the New Year, reimagine your life with more joy and fewer worries by attending our **wellness workshop** focused on eliminating anxiety and finding contentment. On Saturday, January 25, guest speaker Ann Sullivan, author of *Unsatisfied: Finding Contentment in a Discontented World*, will help participants to face fears and find solace with the help of scripture. Let 2020 be the year when we realize our inner reserves to trust in God's protective love!

Jazz standards and showtunes for **Valentine's Day** have become something of a tradition at St. Joseph Center. The Bernadette Garza Duo, featuring soprano voice and piano by two ladies of jazz, will have us recalling the days of Ella Fitzgerald and other legends of swing. Make a date with friends and family to enjoy this Chicago-based team on Saturday, February 8.

Finally, all are invited to join our sisters and associates for a one-day **Lenten Retreat** on Saturday, March 7. "By His Wounds We are Healed," led by our very own Sister Mary Carroll, OSF, D Min, will offer a full day of reflection to quiet the soul and focus our prayer on the Light of the World and the power of Love. The retreat will culminate with Mass in St. Joseph Chapel.

For more information on these and other events, visit www.sssf.org.

First hour: English. Second hour: Hats.



Did you learn hat making in high school? Generations of Alvernia High School students did, as part of the home economics instruction they received from Sister Pacifica. When the Chicago high school first opened in 1924, Sister Pacifica (born Margaret Rothgerber) was asked to help out for a few weeks. What was expected to be a short-term assignment ended up lasting 49 years, until 1973!

Sister Pacifica's life of service is just one example of the amazing stories of faith and ministry contained in our School Sisters of St. Francis Archives. Turn to pages 4 and 5 of this issue to read more!