




TRANSFORMING LIVES TOGETHER FOR

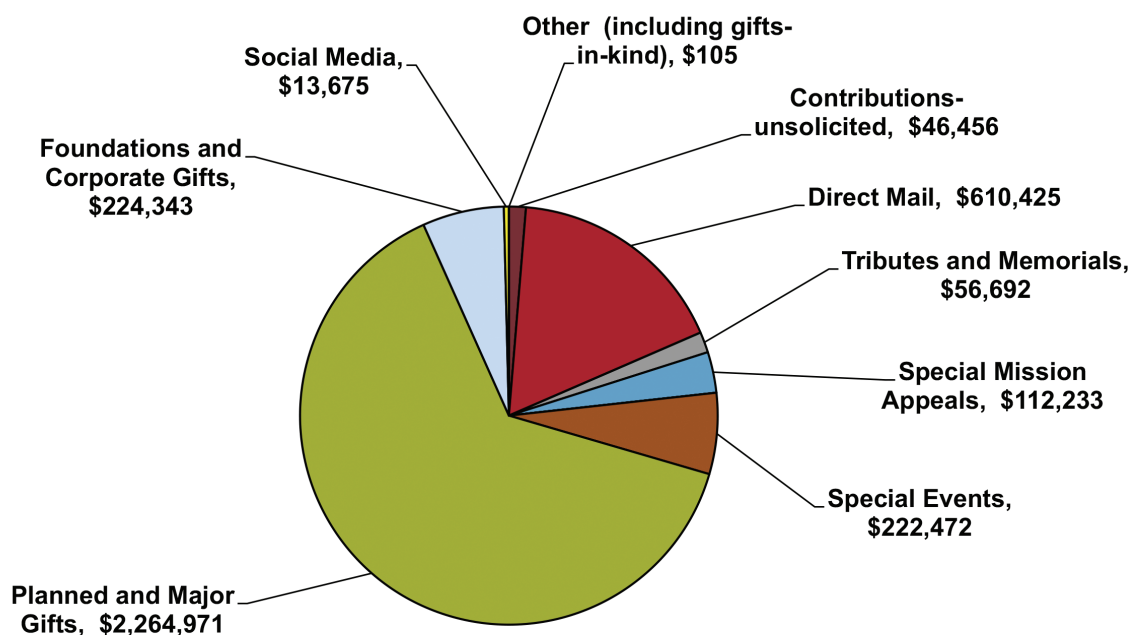
150 Years

Gratitude Report 2023 - 2024

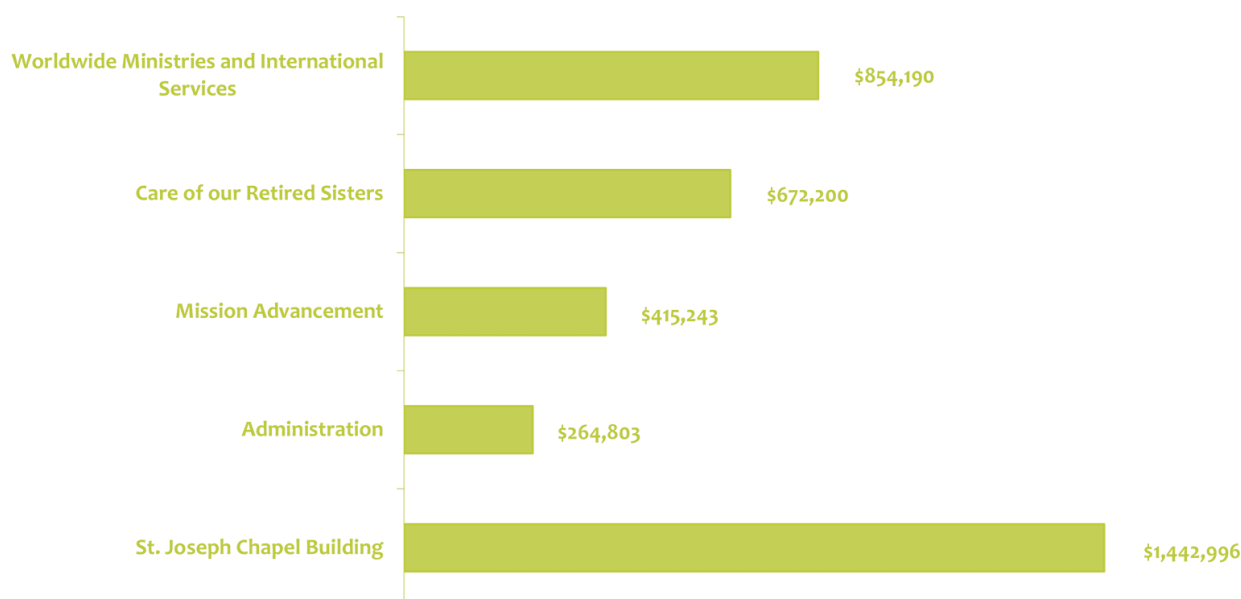
School
Sisters
of  St. Francis

Funding Our Mission

SOURCE OF FUNDS - \$3,551,372
(**\$2,221,521 donor restricted; \$1,329,851 unrestricted**)



USE OF FUNDS



This bar graph represents distributed monies through June 30, 2024.
The financial statements of the School Sisters of St. Francis for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024, were audited by Kerber, Eck & Braeckel LLP and include an unmodified opinion.

International Office of Mission Advancement

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One Vehicle Changes Many Lives

The northeast corner of India is home to a population of almost two million Catholics. It is also remote, predominantly agricultural, and surrounded by the Himalayan Mountain range. Our sisters based at St. Francis Nilaya in Ranchi have long had a goal of reaching the remote parts of northeast India to encourage vocations to religious life and to provide medical and educational assistance that is not well supported in those rural communities.

Last year, thanks to your generous support, our sisters in Ranchi were able to purchase a seven-passenger sport utility vehicle. This enables our sisters, and young women who are candidates, to safely travel across the regions that are served by our St. Francis Province sisters.

“Being a formation house, we have to go out often to purchase food items,” explained Sister Lucy Arackal, the provincial superior of St. Francis Province. “We used to either rent a vehicle or we would carry things and walk. Now, we are able to do all this work by using our vehicle.”

The sisters were so excited to get a reliable vehicle after more than a decade of trying to

reach their more remote congregation members through unpredictable weather, unfamiliar communities, and unsafe conditions. Waiting by the roadside for hours to make transportation connections brought great risk to the sisters and candidates. Everything from wild animals to the insecurity of sleeping in strangers’ houses while waiting for a car created fear and uncertainty for the sisters.

Now, young women from remote parts of the states like Jharkhand, Chhattisghat, and Orissa can travel safely to the provincial house and visit their families’ homes for holidays. Sisters ministering at St. Francis Nilaya are able to meet candidates at the train station (9 miles away) and airport (29 miles), and they can also transport parishioners who need access to medical care that is not available in their home state.

“Since our house is very far from the city and railway station, our vehicle is very useful. Many things have become easier, and we save our time and energy,” Sister Lucy said. “We are very pleased and grateful to have wonderful donors who have worked for our project.”



A student of medicine supported by the center's scholarship program provides care during her internship.

Empowering Young Women to Succeed

In Guatemala, an epidemic of malnutrition stunts the development of many children, affecting their lives for years to come. A lack of access to education—especially for girls and women—also keeps young people from reaching their full potential. The Santa María de Guadalupe Center for Alternative Programs in Santa Apolonia is working to address both of these issues.

Led by our sisters and supported by your generous contributions to our congregation, the center presents nutrition and education programs. The mission, said the center's director, Sister Argelina Marroquin, is "to provide support and improve the living conditions of vulnerable children and young people in Guatemala."

To help children recover from malnutrition, the center provides monthly check-ups for youngsters and informational training for their parents and guardians. In addition, all program participants receive a nutritious lunch and a bag of food to take home and prepare with their families. This teaches them valuable skills and aids them in their nutritional needs, keeping them on track to a healthier future.

The center has also been making great strides with its education program. Thanks to

scholarships awarded by the center, 18 young women have been able to complete their studies this year. Sister Matilde Maravi, vice president of our international congregation, said the scholarships are made available to "women who wish to pursue university studies, but lack the financial means."

The women are free to choose their professional field of study and are supported in their choice. "They study nursing, teaching, accounting, social service, and other fields," Sister Matilde said. As part of their scholarship agreement, the students collaborate with the sisters by participating and assisting with the center's many activities.

"This experience involves a lot of learning, sacrifice, and satisfaction," Sister Argelina said. "The young women bring joy and enthusiasm to the everyday work of the center. We appreciate the sacrifices they make to dedicate themselves to their studies, especially in educational conditions that do not favor working women."

"I want to thank all our donors," Sister Matilde said. "Through their generosity in support of the Center for Alternative Programs, many women can develop personally and professionally, directly impacting the society in which they live."

Improving Health and Wellness Around the World

At every stage of life, physical health and mental wellness are critical to every person's ability to thrive as an individual and in community. It is no surprise then that new physiotherapy equipment, made possible by your generous contributions, has significantly benefitted the children served at Assisi Special School in Bangalore, India, as well as retired sisters residing at Sacred Heart in Milwaukee.

At Assisi Special School, the new equipment benefits 75 -100 students with intellectual and physical challenges who range in age from 3 to 18 years old. It also is a significant help for the sisters and other personnel who are responsible for the students' school day care.

The school's physiotherapy regimen focuses on helping each child move with optimal strength

and energy. The programs are customized to meet each child's individual needs, address specific areas of concern, and honor their human dignity through supporting their physical capabilities and mental wellness.

"Our community benefits when we help these underprivileged and needy students," said Sister Kripa Maria Jerass. "It also is a significant area for evangelizing gospel ideals and promoting human dignity. I feel it is the primary aim of our ministries, since we have come to do only God's will."

More than 8,000 miles away, at Sacred Heart in Milwaukee, physiotherapy equipment enables the 76 sisters in residence to maintain health and target areas in need of more focused attention. Sacred Heart recently received six pieces of equipment: two recumbent bikes, two swivel elliptical machines, and two massage chairs.



Exercise balls used in gym classes help students with disabilities develop coordination and confidence while having fun.

The heated massage chairs use artificial intelligence to create custom massages specific to each person's body structure and health needs – a treatment that could be used by any of the sisters at Sacred Heart. The recumbent bikes provide all the benefits of walking with less stress on the joints and more stability. The swivel elliptical machines exercise the cardiovascular system, improve endurance, and tone muscles.

"This new equipment offers excellent ways for sisters who reside at Sacred Heart to keep up their upper and lower body strength and maintain their cardiovascular status," said Cathleen Kelling, Sacred Heart's executive director.

Blessed by Our Partners in Ministry

These ministries were made possible by your prayers and the more than 5,900 generous gifts to our congregation in 2023-2024.

- Repair and replacement of the aging HVAC system at Our Lady of the Angels in Greenfield, Wisconsin.
- New exercise equipment for our sisters living at Sacred Heart in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- Undergraduate scholarships for Guadalupe Homes alumni in Santa Apolonia, Guatemala.
- Medical and nutritional care for low-income people at the Santa Ana Clinic in La Libertad, Honduras.
- Restoration and needed repairs for the historic St. Joseph Chapel in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- Care for retired sisters around the world.
- Library books, textbooks, and bilingual educational materials for Catholic schools through the Albert Whitman Trust.
- Street outreach, counseling services, and funds for food needs for victims of the street-based sex trade in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, through the Sisters Program South collaborative.
- Support for the School Sisters of St. Francis Archives, including the salaries of three archive personnel in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- Peace and social justice initiatives around the world.
- Salary and expenses for the Music Ministry Archive Program in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- Food, medicine, nurse's salary, and spiritual care for abandoned women living at Asha Bhavan, Bangalore, India.
- Education and boarding expenses for rural girls and young women aged 5 to 15 years living at the St. Francis Convent Hostel in Karkutta, India.
- Construction of a boundary wall for safety of the 15-acre site, and preserving the ability to cultivate the land for our future formation house for young women in Baresia, Bhopal, India.
- Student scholarships, physiotherapy equipment, vocational training materials, and teacher salaries for the 230 children with special needs served at Assisi Special School in Bangalore, India.
- Construction of our new convent building for three sisters and 13 women in formation in Chengena, Tanzania.



Karkhutta Hostel



Care of our retired sisters, Milwaukee, Wisconsin



First Profession of vows in Tanzania

- Educational, personal development, and family nutrition programs for women, infants, and children at the Center for Alternative Programs in Santa Apolonia, Guatemala.
- Food assistance for residents living in Juárez, Mexico.
- Pastoral care and spiritual counseling and support for undocumented immigrants on the Texas/Mexico border.
- Funds to support the School Sisters of St. Francis Associate Relationship ministry.
- Medical and living expenses for sisters serving destitute people at Assisi Care Home in Kanjikode, India.
- Installation of borewells and tree planting at future formation houses in Songea and Dar es Saalam, Tanzania.
- Vehicle for our sisters traveling to remote villages from our St. Francis Provincial House in Bhopal, India.
- Holistic health, therapy and treatments for the poor at Franciscan Oasis Rieti mission in San Marcos, Guatemala.
- Support for La Libertad Medical Clinic in Libertad, Honduras.
- Mission San Jose is providing food, scholarships, medical clinic, and Christian formation at San Jose El Tesoro Parish in Yalpamech, Guatemala.
- A new stove and refrigerator for our sisters' house in Guatemala City, which provides a short-term residence for sisters traveling for medical care.
- Farm equipment and a borewell to help cultivate the 31 acres of fruit trees, paddy fields, and animals, providing nutrition and an income source to the people residing at Assisi Farm in Walayar, Tamil Nadu, India.
- Rainwater harvest system to provide a reliable source of fresh water for the students and staff at Assisi CBSE School in Bangalore, India.
- Solar panels for Assisi Convent in Kerala and solar streetlights for St. Francis Convent in Carmelaram, India.
- Furnishing a complete science lab that will allow St. Francis School in Budani, India, to offer expand its curriculum to grades 11 and 12, enabling its 750 students to obtain higher education.
- Providing furniture, smart interactive panels, water coolers, books, sporting items, and a composite lab for St. Francis Convent Co-Ed School in Bhopal, India.



Through your generous offerings of prayer, time, and treasure to the School Sisters of St. Francis, you are a witness to God's love in the world! We invite you to continue partnering with us through...

Your Prayers

They sustain us every day!

Legacy Giving

Make an enduring impact through a will, bequest, charitable gift annuity, or life insurance policy.

Event Attendance

Visit www.sssf.org to learn about liturgies and events where you can connect with our sisters in person.

Circle of Prayer

Remember a loved one through our tribute and memorial prayer ministry.

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Follow us on Facebook and Instagram, and tune in to Masses and special events on our Ustream channel. It's all free, and you can find all the links on our website homepage: www.sssf.org.



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