

Celebrating *a Chapter Fulfilled*



FSM MAGAZINE

Franciscan Sisters of Mary

SPRING 2015

Founded in 1872, the Franciscan Sisters of Mary is a religious congregation of women within the Roman Catholic Church. Committed to their mission to be the presence of the loving, serving, compassionate, healing Jesus, the Franciscan Sisters of Mary focus the power of their intention on compassionate care of creation in collaboration with others.

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Message from Rose Dowling, FSM, President Franciscan Sisters of Mary

Four years ago at our Congregational Chapter, the Spirit gave us a HUGE surprise—as the Spirit is wont to do! That surprise was the Focus* that has guided our four years as a congregation.

The living of that Focus has taken us in diverse ways. When we received it in April 2011, I think everyone was shocked that this is where we were directed and within seconds was thinking, *We are women who have spent most of our lives in some part of health care; what do we know about “compassionate care of creation in collaboration with others”!*

But when the Spirit gives, the Spirit gives . . . and over the past four years we have continually been given the direction we needed as to what is ours to do in this huge global endeavor of compassionate care of creation. We are thrilled with where we have been led. Sometimes not knowing is the best thing that can happen to us. Because then we can experience being led . . . watching the path open before us.

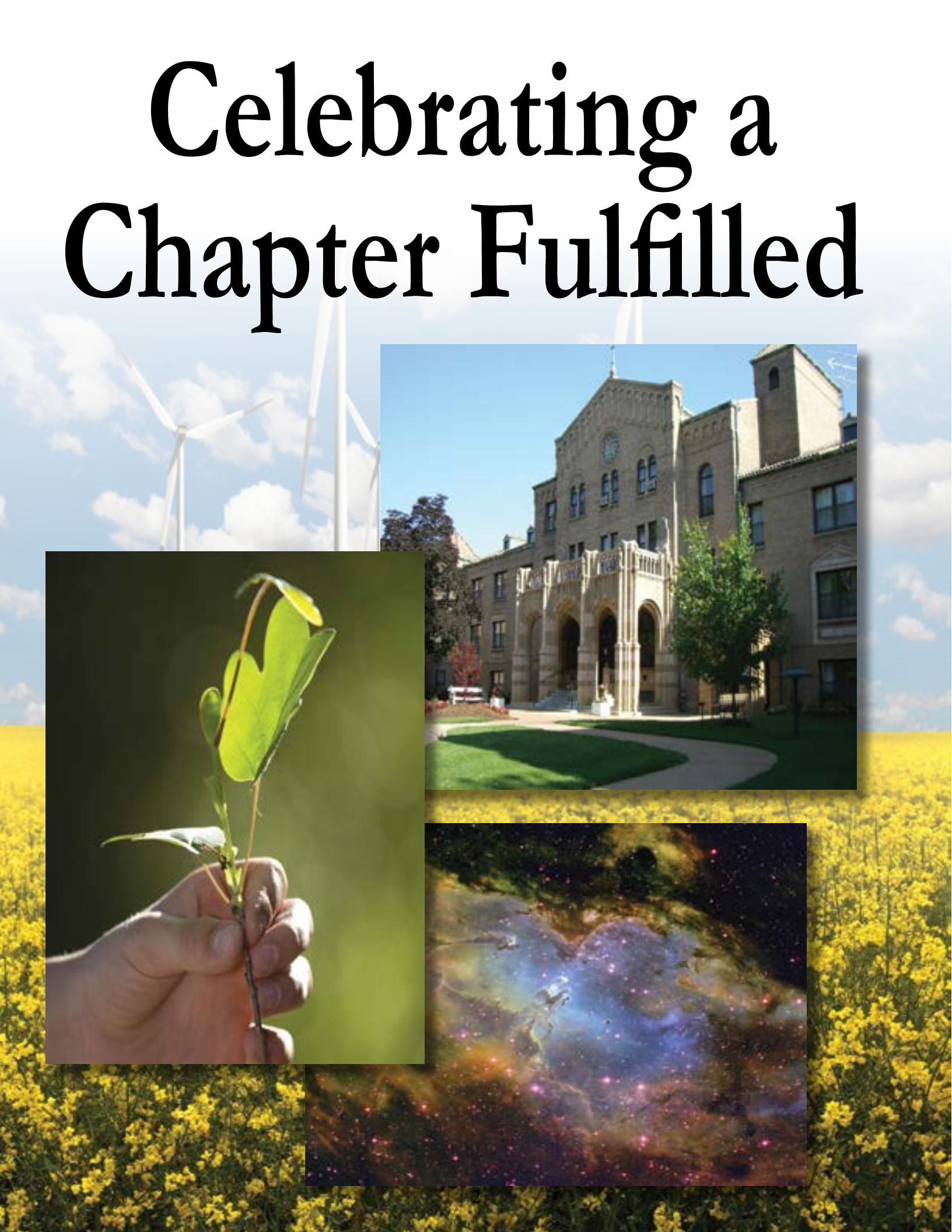
It is time again, time to listen to see where the Spirit wants to take the Focus for the next four years. We ask you to join us in prayer as we listen once again in discernment for what the Spirit is asking of us.

Now, speaking personally, I have had the pleasure of writing this little piece of the *FSM Magazine* for the past eight years. It has always brought me GREAT pleasure to know that so many of you receive this magazine and continue to be interested in and supportive of the life and mission in which we engage. I want to say most sincerely to each one of you, *We keep you in our prayers and close to our hearts. You are special to us.*

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rose Mary Dowling, F.S.M." The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and personal.

**Flowing from our Mission, we focus the power of our intention on compassionate care of Creation in collaboration with others.*

Celebrating a Chapter Fulfilled



Four years have passed since the last FSM Chapter.¹

Back in April 2011, the Franciscan Sisters of Mary gathered to contemplate the coming four years and discern the congregation's direction.

With an immediacy and unanimity that spoke of the Spirit's guidance, the Sisters affirmed the following FSM Mission and Focus for 2011 to 2015:

The Mission of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary is to be the presence of the loving, serving, compassionate, healing Jesus.

Flowing from our Mission, we focus the power of our intention on compassionate care of Creation in collaboration with others.

In June of that year, the FSM elected four Sisters to carry forward that Mission and Focus: Srs. Rose M. Dowling, Susan Scholl, Irma Kennebeck, and Sandra J. Schwartz.



Now, in May 2015, the Sisters will gather to discern their path for 2015 to 2019 and elect a new leadership team to move that focus forward. The new team will take office in September 2015.

¹A *Chapter* is an assembly of an ecclesiastical group, often with the purpose of discerning direction or electing leadership. *Chapter* is derived from the Latin word *caput*, "head." When a chapter is in session, it serves as the highest governing body for that congregation—the "head" of the congregation.

The 2011–2015 FSM Leadership Team Approach

Early in their tenure, Srs. Rose, Susan, Irma, and Sandy laid out a strategic plan to empower the movement of the FSM Focus “off the page and into creation.”

A guiding principle for this team has been participative leadership: “We do what is ours to do and invite members to do what is theirs to do.” By sharing responsibility as possible and appropriate, the Leadership Team has involved the community at some level of the decision-making process in matters that affect the congregation.

A second principle, well aligned with shared leadership, is transparency. Through the many changes and challenges, the Leadership Team has striven to share information as soon as possible with anyone who would be affected by it—not only with the Sisters but with employees and others connected with the Franciscan Sisters of Mary.

The 2011–2015 team envisioned their leadership as furthering two primary initiatives: the FSM Focus and the FSM legacy.

Furthering the Focus: Involving the Sisters

Just a few months into their term, Srs. Rose, Susan, Irma, and Sandy proposed a structure to allow the FSM to participate in furthering the Focus: three Focus Implementation Groups of five Sisters each that would lead the FSM in exploring ecological issues and living out practices of compassionate care of creation. Each group had a leader and an assistant; the three groups were the

Spirituality Implementation Group, the Internal Implementation Group, and the External Implementation Group.

- The Spirituality Implementation Group has helped the FSM explore and deepen their understanding of the spirituality underlying compassionate care of creation.
- The Internal Implementation Group has helped the FSM as individuals, groups, and the entire congregation to take part in spiritual practices to deepen their experience of the ecological issues related to compassionate care of creation.
- The External Implementation Group identified ways for the Sisters to collaborate with other groups on ecological issues related to compassionate care of creation.

The Sisters have opened themselves to seeing creation with new eyes. Brian Swimme’s *Journey of the Universe* presented a new understanding of how the universe came to be and continues to expand even now. *Awakening the Dreamer, Changing the Dream* brought a new sensitivity to how much our actions have an impact on others, even across the world—and how we need to adjust our perception of how we behave.

Each Franciscan Sister of Mary has been encouraged to consider how she personally might care for creation in a more compassionate way. The Sisters have been involved in recycling and repurposing, living more simply, and joining in efforts like Earth Hour and Earth Day.

The move to Bridgeton propelled the FSM into a major environmental conflict involving two area landfills—the Bridgeton Landfill with its uncontrolled underground fire spewing noxious odors into the surrounding atmosphere, and the adjoining West Lake Landfill, where 8,700 tons of radioactive waste were illegally dumped some forty years ago without appropriate containment measures to prevent leaching of the radioactive elements into the air, soil, and groundwater. The Sisters have joined with the Missouri Coalition for the Environment, as well as residents of the area, to urge the safe containment and removal of the dangerous wastes through the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP). Besides writing and phoning elected officials and providing a prominent presence at community town-hall meetings, the Sisters sponsor a twice-monthly prayer vigil across from the Bridgeton Landfill to pray for healing of the ravaged land and its inhabitants.



The FSM have also established relationships with area environmental groups, providing support and encouragement for initiatives that further the FSM Focus on compassionate care of creation. Included are:

- Missouri Coalition for the Environment, *an organization working to protect and restore the environment through education, engagement, and legal action.*



- Forest ReLeaf of Missouri, *a group that helps restore and sustain urban and community forests through planting trees.*



- St. Louis Earth Day, *an organization that works year-round to improve the area's environment; it sponsors Earth Day and the Earth Day Symposium.*



- Gateway Greening, *a group that educates and empowers people to strengthen their communities through gardening and urban agriculture. It sponsors an urban farm, community gardens, youth programs, and a project to beautify the downtown St. Louis urban landscape.*



- Rockhaven Ecozoic Center, *the center in House Springs that offers programs, rituals, celebrations, and sacred space intended to promote ecospiritual awareness, to create an environment and model a way of living that embodies our connection to the earth.*



Gale Thackrey, the FSM Justice-Ecological Coordinator, has been deeply involved in ecological advocacy and education on behalf of the FSM. She has coordinated the FSM response to the threats posed by the landfills and collaborates in the strategic planning for the community meetings and other events aimed at raising consciousness about the threats the landfills pose. She has successfully helped bring state officials on board with the dangers from the landfills and arranged for activist Lois Gibbs to come and share her experiences with the toxic Love Canal fiasco in New York. On behalf of the FSM, Gale participated in the People's Climate March in New York City in September 2014, joining some 400,000 people who gathered to urge world leaders to take immediate and comprehensive action on climate change. She is working with Rockhaven Ecozoic Center on the possibility of bringing a Sisters of Earth conference to St. Louis.

Besides keeping the Sisters apprised of ecological issues both at home and far away, Gale has immersed herself in the thinking of ecological spirituality—ideas of Thomas Berry and Brian Swimme, Teilhard de Chardin's cosmic Christology, and Barbara Marx Hubbard's conscious evolution. As a result of the Focus on compassionate care of creation,

Gale has found a richer, more collaborative way to live. She shares those ideas with the Sisters to help enrich their understanding of the thinking behind the Focus and find viable, concrete ways to engage in compassionate care of creation in collaboration with others.

A New Vision for Investment and Philanthropy

The Fall 2014 *FSM Magazine* described yet another way the 2011–2015 FSM Leadership Team has promoted the Focus on compassionate care of creation.

John O'Shaughnessy, FSM Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer, has moved FSM investing beyond Socially Responsible Investing (a somewhat passive process where investments use exclusionary screens to avoid harm to the environment but do little to further the commitment to compassionate care of creation) to a more proactive practice called Mission-Related (Impact) Investing.

With Mission-Related Investing, investments generate a social and/or environmental impact in addition to providing a solid market return—investments offer a double or even triple bottom line, meeting ethical as well as financial goals.

John had wondered whether FSM investments could work harder to counteract global climate change and heal the Earth. After John's substantial research into mission-related investing, in September 2012 the Franciscan Sisters of Mary hired Imprint Capital of San Francisco to help them develop an investment strategy, construct a portfolio, and monitor financial and mission performance.

Last June, John traveled to Washington, DC, to take part in the White House Roundtable on Impact Investing, joining others who were

pledging investments in the efforts of social entrepreneurs and businesses that would further their missions and values and still generate good financial returns.

In October 2014, John traveled to Kenya to see first-hand how M-KOPA Solar, one of the companies in which the FSM are investing, is promoting sustainable, clean energy and at the same time greatly improving life for more than 150,000 customers through their solar energy systems. He also had the opportunity to visit several other entrepreneurs in whose efforts the FSM are investing.

In September 2014, the Franciscan Sisters of Mary pledged Fossil Fuel Divestment—the congregation will no longer invest in oil, gas, and consumable fuel (e.g., coal) producers, especially the “Filthy Fifteen.”

In 2013 the FSM hired Arabella Advisors to help direct their philanthropic efforts to support groups that are successfully lessening the effects of climate change.

With John’s vision, painstaking research, and strong financial judgment, the FSM Leadership Team has striven to align their investment and philanthropic efforts strongly with compassionate care of creation.

Carrying Forward the FSM Legacy

When Mother Odilia Berger and her companions arrived on the St. Louis riverfront, their ministry was clearly defined: to offer care to the poorest of the poor in the slums



of downtown St. Louis, caring for people who could not afford medical care. Over the years the Sisters developed hospitals and other medical facilities; ultimately in 1986 these individual entities became the SSM Health Care system.

While the largest of the FSM-sponsored ministries, SSM Health is not the only one.

In the years following Vatican II, the Sisters—individually and as a congregation—opened themselves to new calls to ministry. A few of these calls included:

- The congregation established a presence in South America—Peru and Brazil—bringing medical care and education to people there.



- For more than 25 years FSM nurse midwives helped mothers in the impoverished south-eastern Texas border area safely bring new life into the world (Holy Family Birthing Services).



- In the early 1990s the FSM reached out to help homeless teenage mothers rise out of poverty by providing a safe place to live, education, parenting skills, and accountability (Almost Home).



- Two FSM founded a safe, drop-in haven for women suffering domestic abuse so that they could find a listening ear and resources for help (Woman’s Place).



These and other ministries founded by the FSM grew and flourished, with many Sisters choosing to serve in new ways in and through them.

Gradually, the Sisters recognized that as the congregation aged, it was time to transition these ministries.

In June 2004, the FSM closed the missions in South America.

In 2009, after the departure of the last FSM from Holy Family Services, the Sisters relinquished sponsorship of the ministry in Weslaco, Texas, celebrating the passage of leadership from the Sisters to capable laypeople.

On October 3, 2014, the FSM celebrated the transition to an independent future of two sponsored ministries, Almost Home and Woman's Place. For some years the FSM Leadership Team had encouraged the ministries, both closely aligned with the Franciscan Sisters of Mary, to begin finding ways to move toward independence—establishing strong donor bases, writing grants, establishing or strengthening boards, and building development strategies to take them securely into the future.



At the celebration in October the FSM gathered with the Boards of Directors and staffs of Almost Home and Woman's Place. The founders of each ministry—Sr. Jacinta Elmendorf for Almost Home, Srs. Irma Kennebeck and Jeanne Meurer for Woman's Place—presented a replica of Mother Odilia's basket to the executive chair of the Board of Directors for each, who then presented the basket to the executive director of the particular ministry. The baskets signified the call for the ministries to continue courageously the FSM legacy and mission to be the presence of the loving, serving, compassionate, healing Jesus.



SSM Health

In many ways the transition to independence of SSM Health has been under way for many years. Decades ago, the hospitals were headed and staffed primarily by Sisters. Slowly, talented, educated, compassionate laypeople began to take over leadership positions and other roles in the hospitals and medical facilities.

For many years, the presence of the Sisters ensured that the health care system reflected the legacy and values of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary. Sr. Mary Jean Ryan served as CEO and President of SSM Health Care for 25 years before transitioning leadership to Mr. Bill Thompson in August 2011. The Mission of SSM Health, "Through our exceptional health care services, we reveal the healing presence of God," reflects a deep understanding of the FSM

commitment both to excellent health care and true compassionate presence for all.



But a time will come when SSM Health will no longer have Franciscan Sisters of Mary in any of their facilities.

From the earliest days, the FSM congregation served as the sponsor of SSM Health Care, ensuring that the health care system reflected its Roman Catholic nature and specifically the FSM legacy. The FSM congregation was the entity responsible to the Vatican for the Catholic nature of SSM's practice of health care.

To provide for the time when the Sisters could no longer maintain that responsibility, the 2011–2015 Leadership Team, working with canon lawyers, began the process of establishing SSM Health Ministries, a group of laypeople and Sisters that would serve as a Public Juridic Personality on behalf of SSM Health. SSM Health Ministries, as liaison with the Vatican, would assume ultimate responsibility for ensuring that SSM Health retains its Catholic identity, mission, and values.

In June 2012, the Franciscan Sisters of Mary completed the application with the Vatican for transition of sponsorship from the congregation to SSM Health Ministries. The application was approved, and SSM Health Ministries was formally established on November 16, 2013.

Planning for the Future of the Congregation

What lies ahead for the Franciscan Sisters of Mary?

The present Leadership Team has begun to explore possible options for the congregation. They will leave the incoming team with the results of their research into possible paths for religious congregations. While major changes are not imminent, this team has opened the conversation.

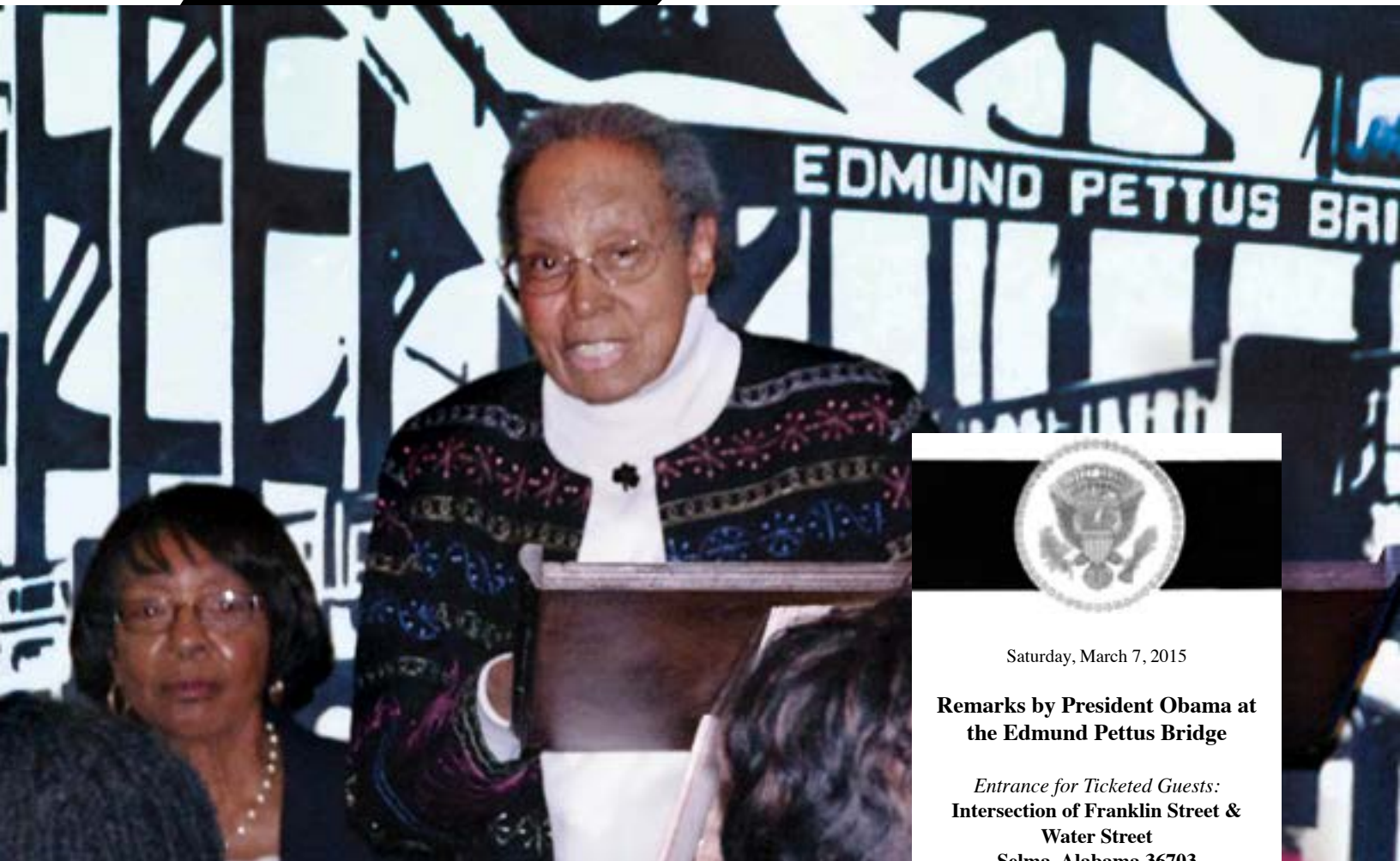
While only God knows what lies ahead, these four Sisters—Srs. Rose Dowling, Susan Scholl, Irma Kennebeck, and Sandy Schwartz—have spent the past four years leading the congregation into a bright future. They have not shrunk away from the difficult issues, and they have offered the Franciscan Sisters of Mary a vital role in making a true difference for the world.

We offer our deepest thanks to these four courageous women for their brilliance, their insight, their unwavering commitment to and love for their Sisters. Their countless hours and deep caring have borne fruit: They have dealt with bringing the congregation to a solid place and have left the incoming team a strong foundation upon which to build.

God's richest blessings on Srs. Rose, Susan, Irma, and Sandy as they begin the next leg of their journey! Continue courageously!



Revisiting Selma: 50 Years Later



Photos courtesy of Jenny Rose Beatrice, Director of Communications, Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. Used with permission.



Saturday, March 7, 2015

**Remarks by President Obama at
the Edmund Pettus Bridge**

*Entrance for Ticketed Guests:
Intersection of Franklin Street &
Water Street
Selma, Alabama 36703*

Doors Open at 8:30 a.m.

ADMIT ONE

*This ticket is complimentary and not for sale or re-sale.
Tickets are required but do not guarantee admission.
All attendees will go through airport-like security and
should bring as few personal items as possible.
No bags, sharp objects, umbrellas, liquids, or signs
will be allowed in the venue.
Cameras are permitted.*

On March 10, 1965, a young African American Sister, pushed to the front of the crowd gathered in Selma, Alabama, to protest the brutal attacks on peaceful protesters a few days earlier, spoke simply: “I am here because I am a Negro, a nun, a Catholic, and because I want to bear witness.”

Sr. Antona Ebo’s simple, heartfelt, yet powerful testimony helped establish her for many as the face of the Civil Rights Movement.

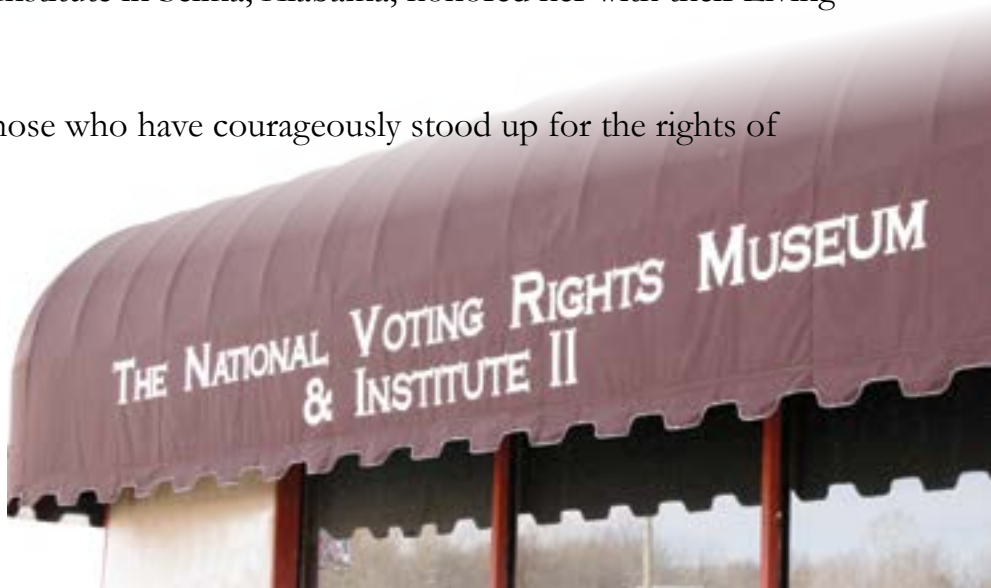
Sr. Antona and Sr. Eugene Marie Smith had flown into Selma that morning, part of a contingent of 51 religious from the St. Louis Archdiocese who responded to the Rev. Martin Luther King’s call for support for the peaceful protesters, beaten and routed by troopers on horseback with whips, clubs and dogs as they attempted to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge on their march from Selma to Montgomery on March 7, 1965—later known as Bloody Sunday.

On March 5, 2015, at 90, Sr. Antona traveled back to Selma for the 50th Anniversary Voting Rights Movement Celebration. Tens of thousands flocked to Selma, including President Barack Obama and his family and a number of members of the U. S. Congress, to commemorate the courage of so many.

On Friday, March 6, Sr. Antona was inducted into the Voting Rights Women’s Hall of Fame for 2015 by the Selma National Voting Rights Museum and Institute; her nomination “is a testament to your lifelong commitment to service and the fight for justice and equality for all.” Previous inductees included Marian Wright Edelman and Coretta Scott King.

Her courage and commitment to equal rights for all people have been recognized by many; she has received honorary doctorates from six universities, as well as many other honors and awards. In 2000, the Voting Rights Institute in Selma, Alabama, honored her with their Living Legend Award.

We honor Sr. Antona Ebo and all those who have courageously stood up for the rights of others. Congratulations, Sr. Antona!



New Zealand Basket and Lantern

By Mary Jean Ryan, FSM

In early March I traveled to New Zealand to offer presentations about continuous quality improvement methodology with colleagues interested in improving their workplace and applying for the Malcolm Baldrige award. It was my second trip to New Zealand.

On the trip one of my hosts, Joanne Greatbanks, presented me with a lovely basket intricately woven of flax leaves and a cardboard lantern, with cutouts of the kiwi and the pukeko birds, made of New Zealand ecofriendly and sustainable cardboard, with a yellow glass candle inside with the word "Friends." She commented that they were the Kiwi (New Zealand) version of our own FSM basket and lantern!

I later asked her how she had learned what significant symbols the basket and lantern are for the Franciscan Sisters of Mary. She referred back to her visit last year to SSM St. Clare's and St. Mary's in Wisconsin; this is what she told me.

"If you recall, when we were in the Wisconsin Dells over dinner, you told me that you had no intention of travelling long distance anymore and wanted to return your New Zealand coins, except that you had forgotten to bring them. I told you that this was obviously a sign and that you were intended to come to New Zealand and spend them yourself. You looked up from your soup and smiled.

"At that very moment I had complete faith that we would see you on Kiwi shores someday soon, and so I was inspired to learn more about SSM and the Franciscan Sisters of Mary and ended up reading every *FSM Magazine* available online. They made for very interesting reading and I learned a lot along the way . . . including the symbolism. After that, the Kiwi versions of those symbols seemed to find their own way to me!

"You travelled so very far to help us, when I knew that it hadn't been on your to-do list. It was the very least that I could do to thoughtfully acknowledge that."

I was so deeply touched by her sensitivity, her desire to find out so much about us. Sometimes I find we touch people that are even nineteen hours ahead of us!



Sisters



Sr. Mary Jean Ryan Honored for Quality Leadership

In the past few months, Sr. Mary Jean has received three major awards honoring her outstanding leadership and unwavering commitment to quality.

She has been elected an Honorary Member of the American Society for Quality (ASQ) "for long-term inspirational leadership and unselfish sharing of distinguished contributions to the profession by significantly extending the reach of quality into healthcare and living a role model life that demonstrates the heart of quality in service to humanity." This is the highest individual award the American Society for Quality bestows.

in the SPOTLIGHT

Sr. Mary Jean is the first woman to receive the award and the first from the field of health care. Nineteen people—twelve from the United States and one each from Finland, Argentina, Italy, Japan, India, Sweden, and New Zealand—wrote letters in support of her recognition with this award. In receiving this honor, she joins the ranks of 26 previous awardees, including W. Edwards Deming and Joseph M. Juran, both considered giants in the field of quality. The award was officially recorded in the minutes of the ASQ Board on February 27, 2015.

In 2011, Sr. Mary Jean received ASQ’s Distinguished Service Medal, a recognition presented to an individual for exceptionally distinguished lifetime service to ASQ and the quality community.

Sr. Mary Jean also received the Marcos E. J. Bertin Quality in Governance Medal from the International Academy for Quality (IAQ) “for exemplary visionary leadership and distinguished contributions to the quality profession by extending the reach of quality into the profession of healthcare Governance and developing

an inspiring personal role model for what it means to pursue quality as an executive leading an organization that is truly committed to delivering quality services to its customers.” Sr. Mary Jean has distinguished herself in encouraging the development of a quality governance system and collaborative working environment that encourages customer engagement and responsibility for decisions by enabling all employees to exercise leadership. The medal honors Dr. Marcos E. J. Bertin, a past President of the Academy, for his pioneering work in applying the philosophy, principles, methods and tools of quality management to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and ethical standards of organizational governance.

She has also been chosen and approved for Honorary Membership of the International Academy for Quality (IAQ)—the highest individual honor given by IAQ, which requires letters of endorsement by three academicians and unanimous approval by the IAQ Board of Trustees. This distinction recognizes Sr. Mary Jean’s

leadership of SSM Health’s quality efforts, as well as her service to IAQ, most recently as Chair of the Board of IAQ (2012–2014). Sr. Mary Jean is honored as a role model of an executive who lives the quality philosophy in word and in deed.

Sr. Mary Jean’s insights and wisdom on quality and leadership continue to be in high demand; in the past year she has traveled to Winnipeg and Toronto, Canada; Sweden, and New Zealand, as well as cities across the United States; prior years included trips to China, India, and Australia, among other countries. She is set to travel to Saskatchewan, Canada, this fall.

Sr. Mary Jean said, “These three recognitions both honor and humble me, knowing that so many others are at least as deserving as I am—and maybe even more deserving. The Franciscan Sisters of Mary gave me the education, the opportunities, and the support. SSM’s people and mission gave me the reason and the vision for us to become exceptional. I give thanks to God and to all.”

Sisters in the Spotlight *(Continued)*



Marie Michel Crooks, FSM, was honored Wednesday, February 4, 2015, for her service as a member of the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) from April 1943 to December 1945. SSM Health's Hospice Team presented her with an American flag, a flag pin, and a certificate of appreciation for her selfless service to her country.



Margaret Mary O'Gorman, FSM, was part of a panel at the "Lit in the Lou" First Annual Book Festival on Saturday, October 11, 2014. Her presentation was "Write Out Loud: LGBT Voices in the Literary World." Her book, *Living True: Lesbian Women Share Stories of Faith*, topped the St. Louis Best-Seller List a week during the fall.



Antona Ebo, FSM, traveled to Loyola Marymount University in mid-January 2015 to speak with students and faculty. While in Los Angeles she also spoke at the Martin Luther King Prayer Breakfast at the African American Catholic Center for Evangelization. In February she received the 2015 Joseph Cardinal Ritter Award at Cardinal Ritter College Prep High School's "Celebrating Success in Urban Education" gala. Her comments on Ferguson were featured in the *St. Louis Review* in an article in October 2014 ("Looking under the Rug"). She traveled to Selma, Alabama, for the 50th Anniversary Voting Rights Movement Celebration March 5–9, 2015; she was honored for her pivotal role in the march to the Edmund Pettus Bridge March 10, 1965. During the ceremonies in Selma she was inducted into the Voting Rights Women's Hall of Fame for 2015 by the Selma Voting Rights Museum and Institute. She was featured in a number of newscasts and articles during the celebration, including an interview on EWTN News Nightly aired March 12. The day after she returned to St. Louis and the 50th anniversary of the actual march in Selma, Sr. Antona gave the reflection at the Archdiocese of St. Louis's Faith in Ferguson prayer service.

Sr. Nora Therese Buckley, FSM

July 5, 1926 – January 6, 2015

Moved by babies born with AIDS with mothers too ill and families too fearful to care for them, Sr. Nora helped establish home care for infants and children with AIDS in Tampa, Florida. During the 1990s she ministered to women with AIDS and was a licensed medical foster parent to many special-needs infants and toddlers.

Nora Therese Buckley was born July 5, 1926, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to John D. and Margaret (Curtayne) Buckley. She entered the Sisters of St. Mary June 30, 1941; she received the name Sr. Kenneth Marie, and she professed final vows September 29, 1947. She earned a BSN (Saint Louis University, 1951), a BA in Theology (St. Joseph's College, Rensselaer, Indiana, 1964), and an MS in Nursing of Adults and Adolescents (New York University, 1972). She earned certificates in Culture and Creation Spirituality (Holy Name College, Oakland, California, 1989) and Infant Massage (International Association of Infant Massage, Chicago, 2002).

Sr. Nora taught and supervised nursing at St. Mary's Infirmiry School of Nursing, St. Louis (1951–1952); St. Mary's Hospital, Madison, Wisconsin (1952–1958); and St. Mary's Health Center, St. Louis (1958–1963). She was SSM novice mistress (1963–1969). She directed Nursing Service at St. Mary's Hospital, Kansas City, Missouri (1972–1980); she was Vice President of the SSM Hospitals Governing Board (1978–1984) and Vice President for Patient Care Services at Cardinal Glennon Hospital (1984–1989). She served in Hospice of Hillsborough, Florida, and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Sr. Nora taught infant massage at Almost Home and worked in the convent library. She moved to The Sarah Community in April 2011. Sr. Nora enjoyed the Chicago White Sox, reading, crocheting, and sewing.

On January 6, 2015, Sr. Nora Therese answered God's call to eternal life.



***“Speak, Lord,
Your Servant
Is Listening”***

Sr. Mary Celine Gress, FSM

January 17, 1913 – January 21, 2015

She was known as the angel of a peaceful death for her ministry of presence to dying sisters over many years. For hours she would sit with them, holding their hands and stroking their heads, offering comfort and encouragement.

Margaret Mary Gress was born January 17, 1913, in Nebraska City, Nebraska, to Andrew Fred and Mary Anna Frances (Zeiner) Gress. She attended a one-room grade school and finished high school at St. Patrick's in Maryville, Missouri.

On March 19, 1934, she joined the Sisters of St. Francis of Maryville, Missouri. She received the name Sr. Mary Celine, and she professed final vows October 4, 1939.

She studied nursing at St. Anthony School of Nursing, Oklahoma City, becoming a registered nurse in 1940. She was an excellent nurse, serving on general nursing, obstetrical, surgical and recovery, pediatric, and GU floors at St. Francis Hospital, Maryville, Missouri; St. Anthony Hospital, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; St. Mary's Hospital, Nebraska City, Nebraska; and St. Elizabeth Hospital, Hannibal, Missouri. She especially enjoyed night duty—“You get in on everything then.”

In 1976 she began her pastoral care ministry, first at St. Elizabeth Hospital, Hannibal, then at St. Anthony Hospital, Oklahoma City. Sr. Celine then served in the infirmiry at Mount Alverno Convent in Maryville, driving sisters to appointments and providing care.

Sr. Celine moved to St. Mary of the Angels Convent in 1987, where she volunteered in the laboratory and in Activities. She retired in 1993. She moved to The Sarah Community in March 2011.

Sr. Celine enjoyed crocheting, knitting, and corresponding with family. She was known for her deep compassion and caring heart.

On Wednesday evening, January 21, 2015, Sr. Celine slipped away to Jesus after a long life spent generously in his service.



***“My God and My All,
I Give You Thanks”***

Sr. Mary Antoinette Stenger, FSM

February 3, 1928 – February 21, 2015

Mary Antoinette Stenger was born February 3, 1928, in Glennonville, Missouri, fifth of sixteen children born to Joseph Caspar and Elsa Veronica (Meyer) Stenger.

She completed grade school and high school at St. Theresa's in Glennonville; she won blue ribbons in track, high jump, and relays. She entered the Sisters of St. Mary July 1, 1946. She received the name Sr. Mary Clement, and she professed final vows September 8, 1952. Two sisters, Sr. Ann Miriam and Sr. Mariella Stenger, are also Franciscan Sisters of Mary.

She studied business at Saint Louis University, then worked in the admitting office at St. Mary's Hospital, St. Louis (1946–1951, 1952–1956), and St. Mary's Ringling, Baraboo, Wisconsin (1951–1952). She directed admitting at Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center (1956–1957), and at St. Mary's Ringling (1957–1963) and the new St. Clare Hospital (1963–1965) in Baraboo, Wisconsin. She headed the business office at St. Joseph Hospital in St. Charles for eight years, implementing their data processing.

After visiting her sister, Sr. Jovita Marie, at the SSM mission in Sento Se, Brazil, she wanted to serve God and the congregation in this missionary work. She left for Brazil in January, 1974. She learned first aid, general nursing, and midwifery.

In October 1986 the sisters established a health mission in Manacapuru, Brazil, caring for patients with Hansen's Disease (leprosy).

Her work in Brazil was a blessing: "Just to be there for the poor, the suffering; just to be there to hug those who needed a hug, to smile at the old people as they pass by (that means so much to them; a smile goes a long way)."

On June 4, 2004, the FSM closed the mission in Brazil. Living with her sisters Jovita and Mariella, Sr. Mary drove convent sisters to doctors' appointments and ministered to them in many ways. The three sisters often entertained the Sisters with their music. In November 2012, they moved to The Sarah Community.

On Saturday, February 21, 2015, Sr. Mary completed her race, achieving the ultimate prize of her beloved's presence for eternity.



***"It Is in Giving
That We Receive"***

Sr. Mary Georgene Gaffney, FSM

November 17, 1932 – February 25, 2015

On St. Patrick's Day she would show up with green hair—anything to get the sisters to join in the fun.

Ruth Loretta Gaffney was born November 17, 1932, in Richmond Heights, Missouri, to George R. and Ruth L. (Coombe) Gaffney.

She entered the Sisters of St. Mary August 1, 1950. She received the name Sr. Mary Georgene, and she professed final vows February 11, 1956. She attended St. Mary's Hospital School of Nursing, Kansas City, becoming an RN in 1963. She earned post-graduate certification in OR Technique and Management through Montreal General Hospital School of Nursing (1970).

She worked at St. Mary's Health Center, St. Louis (1950–1958); St. Joseph's Hospital, St. Charles (1958–1959; 1973–1977); and Firmin Desloge Hospital (1959–1960). She supervised surgery and the ER at St. Eugene Hospital, Dillon, South Carolina (1963–1967); St. Clare Hospital, Baraboo, Wisconsin (1967–1969; 1970–1973); and St. Francis Hospital, Blue Island, Illinois (1970).

For 18 months she was a nurse at the SSM mission in Sento Se, Brazil.

At St. Elizabeth Hospital, Hannibal, Missouri, she was surgical and recovery supervisor (1979–1983), then patient representative (1983–1988). She studied alcohol and drug abuse at Quincy College and did counseling for the State of Missouri. At SSM St. Joseph Hospital, St. Charles, she worked in ICU and SSM Rehabilitation. From 1990 to 1995, she directed nursing for the Sacred Heart Sisters at Regis Hall in St. Charles.

She was FSM convent community director (1995–2008). After retiring, she volunteered at The Sarah Community and SSM St. Mary's Health Center. She moved to The Sarah Community in October 2011.

Sr. Georgene enjoyed gardening, swimming, sports, reading, and travel. She loved caring for "our sisters" and took joy in being a Franciscan Sister of Mary, "in living out what we are about—to be the loving, serving, compassionate, healing Jesus, sharing our lives together. Our friendships are one of the greatest gifts we have."

On Wednesday, February 25, 2015, Sr. Georgene joined the saints in heaven.



***"God Is Ever Faithful
and I Thank God
for My Life
as an FSM"***

Sr. Mary Unterreiner, FSM

September 19, 1933 – March 9, 2015

Mary Frances Unterreiner was born September 19, 1933, in Richmond Heights, Missouri, oldest of five children born to Caspar Michel and Frances Catherine Caroline (Walck) Unterreiner. Mary Frances entered the Sisters of St. Mary on November 5, 1948. She received the name Sr. Mary Caspar, and she professed final vows February 11, 1955.

She earned a bachelor's in Commerce and Finance from Saint Louis University (1959) and a master's in Spirituality from Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska (1979). For many years she maintained certification with the National Association of Catholic Chaplains.

She worked in the laundry at St. Mary's Hospital in St. Louis. From 1960 to 1971 she managed the laundry at St. Mary's Hospital, Kansas City. While there, Sr. Mary became involved in the Cursillo retreat movement.

In 1971 she moved to South Texas to do retreat work at a retreat house in San Juan; she experienced the birth of the Catholic Charismatic renewal there. In 1975 she began serving as pastoral associate, helping establish the Brownsville diocesan Marriage Encounter program.

She provided pastoral care at St. Mary's Health Center in Jefferson City (1976), then worked in Jefferson City parishes, exploring needs and offering retreats. She served as Christian Missionary Coordinator at St. Joseph's Health Center, St. Charles, in 1981, then set up the central laundry there (1982–1984). For almost a year she directed the SSM Central Laundry in St. Louis.

Sr. Mary directed volunteers at Mercy Hospice in Conway, South Carolina (1985–1986). From 1987 to 1991 she was a pastoral associate at St. Mary's Hospital, West Palm Beach, Florida. In 1991, she returned to St. Louis as director of Pastoral Care for Alexian Brothers Lansdowne Manor. From 1992 until retiring in August 2003, she was a chaplain at SSM St. Joseph's Health Center. She moved to The Sarah Community in May 2010—one of the first sisters to leave the motherhouse.

On March 9, 2015, Sr. Mary joined the angels and saints in heaven.



*“Here I Am . . .
Send Me”*

Sr. Mary Dismas Emerson, FSM

January 9, 1925–April 2, 2015

Helen Kathryn Joan Emerson was born January 9, 1925, in St. Louis to Josephine Lebre (nee Blechle). On March 3, 1943, she entered the Sisters of St. Mary (SSM). She received the name Sr. Mary Dismas (the good thief next to Jesus on the cross), and she professed final vows September 29, 1948.

She completed high school at St. Mary of the Angels, then finished her BSN at Saint Louis University in 1952. She served in the operating room at Firmin Desloge (1952–1954), then as surgical unit supervisor at St. Mary's Hospital, St. Louis (1954–1956). While there she set up the recovery room, a new concept at the time. In 1956 she helped set up surgery at the new Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center, then took over as director of Nursing Service at Firmin Desloge. From 1958 to 1962 she supervised the operating room at St. Mary's Hospital.

She always hoped to serve in the missions. In February 1962 she was sent to Arequipa, Peru, as director of Nursing Service and superior of the sisters, remaining until late 1968.

Sr. Dismas then spent several months as OR supervisor at St. Mary's Hospital, Madison, Wisconsin. In late 1969 she became administrator of St. Eugene Hospital, Dillon, South Carolina, and spent three years revamping and developing the new hospital.

She was Nursing Service director and later supervisor for the new Our Lady of Victories FSM skilled nursing unit at the convent in St. Louis (1972–1976). She was a staff nurse at SSM St. Mary's Health Center in St. Louis (1976–1991), then support coordinator for SSM Health Care (1991–1998). She provided pastoral care for skilled nursing residents of The Sarah Community and volunteered for the FSM. She moved to The Sarah Community in May 2010.

She enjoyed making greeting cards from recycled materials. As a nurse she loved direct bedside care. She enjoyed being available to the other sisters and the residents at The Sarah Community.

On Holy Thursday, April 2, 2015, Sr. Dismas embraced eternity in the arms of her beloved Lord.



*“Loving Trust
in God My Savior”*

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In memory of Ron Courtney
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In memory of Clare Louise Droste, FSM
The Family of John J. Driscoll

In memory of Drew Eckstein
Dawn Runge

In memory of all the deceased
Franciscan Sisters of Mary
Ed and Annie Raback

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In memory of Michael J. Frank
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In memory of Mary Eloise Haberstock, FSM
James G. and Dorothy N. Skofronick

In memory of Mary Maxelinda Heimericks, FSM,
My aunt
Rita and Roger Lueckenotte

In loving memory of and with prayers for Louise Hirner, FSM,
Our aunt
Joyce and Charles Stone

In memory of my mother, Ethel M. Hurley,
and your kindness to her long ago
Jean H. Schulenberg

In memory of Florence Mary Imhoff, FSM
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In memory of Mary Josepha Imhoff, FSM
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In memory of Mary Eligia Koehl, FSM
John and Kathleen Koehl

In memory of Frank P. Kowalik
Ms. Evelyn J. Kowalik

In memory of Mary Geraldine (Clara) Kulleck, FSM,
My great-aunt
Mr. William E. Lyons

In memory of Mary Leonette (Agnes) Kulleck, FSM,
My great-aunt
Mr. William E. Lyons

In memory of John M. Langan
Ms. Agnes E. Langan

ived

JULY 1, 2014 -
DECEMBER 31, 2014

*In memory of Ronald Langan,
Our son
Ms. Agnes E. Langan*

*In memory of Herbert Lieneke,
My husband
Mrs. Tharsilla Lieneke*

*In memory of Michael Marie Lischwe, FSM
Bernard and Deborah Lischwe*

*In memory of Carole Longbella
John and Kathleen Koehl*

*In memory and honor of Mary Noreen McGowan, FSM
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*In memory of Olympia McLaughlin
Mrs. Joyce Moultrie*

*In memory of Robert McLaughlin
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of the Petrelli family
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*In memory of Mary Rose Catherine Poetz, FSM,
My aunt
Mark and JoAnn Haendel*

*In memory of Mary Cloud Poetz, FSM,
My aunt
Mark and JoAnn Haendel*

*In memory of Rose Ann Poetz, FSM,
My aunt
Mark and JoAnn Haendel*

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*In memory of Rose Ann Poetz, FSM,
Our aunt
Helen and Michael Hawksley*

*In memory of Rose Ann Poetz, FSM
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*In memory of Rose Ann Poetz, FSM
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*In memory of Rose Ann Poetz, FSM,
My aunt
Jean M. and Leo M. Malone*

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*In memory of Irene A. Radtke, FSM
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My Aunt Agnes
Mrs. Marilyn A. Barone*

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Ron and Bobbie Tousignant*

*In memory of Mary Olivet Zielinski, FSM
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On the occasion of her 50th Jubilee
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On the occasion of her 50th Jubilee
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*In honor of Mary Elmendorf, FSM,
On the occasion of her 70th Jubilee
Ms. Linda Breitbarth*

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*In honor of Jeanne M. Meurer, FSM,
My midwife mentor
Ms. Lisa L. Paine*

*In honor of Angela Murdaugh, FSM,
My midwife mentor
Ms. Lisa L. Paine*

*In honor of all the retired Franciscan Sisters of Mary
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On the occasion of her birthday
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James and Kimberley Malone*

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Ms. Kim Malone*

*With thanks to Priscilla Weber, FSM
Ms. Kim Malone*

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In celebration of her 80 years in religious life
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is to be the presence of the loving,
serving, compassionate, healing Jesus.*

*Flowing from our Mission, we
focus the power of our intention
on compassionate care of Creation
in collaboration with others.*

