



FSM

MAGAZINE

Franciscan Sisters of Mary

THE FINAL FSM CHAPTER

SUMMER 2019

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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Councilors:

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**Message from
Judith A. Bell, FSM
President
Franciscan Sisters of Mary**

Dear Friends,

While this issue of *FSM Magazine* is titled “The Final Chapter,” in no way does it mean the end of our FSM congregation. Quite the opposite—our journey to Collaborative Governance has been guided by listening to God’s will for us and our gifts of faith, trust, and willingness to let go for “what will come.”

We follow in the footsteps of our courageous, pioneering foundress Mother Mary Odilia Berger, who crossed the sea in 1872 seeking a new place to serve God’s people and provide a meaningful communal life of service and presence for her small group of sisters. St. Francis, our FSM patron, embraced and lived Jesus’ gospel message, choosing to lead a simple life attentive to the needs of those living on the edges of society.

On the cover of this *FSM Magazine*, St. Francis extends his blessing or sign or peace upon the hands of the FSM who are handing over the future structure of the congregation to members of the Collaborative Governance team, who gently receive this awesome responsibility, understanding, “It’s in your hands!” The green tree behind Francis acknowledges our Focus, “compassionate care of Creation,” which will be continued through our philanthropic and investment opportunities “in collaboration with others.”

The Franciscan Sisters of Mary will continue to live our lives with courageous hope, love, and gratitude for all the gifts with which God generously blesses us. Be assured we will be here among God’s people for many more years to come. Thank you for being among the many people who have enriched our lives over these many years. We pray God’s blessings be upon each of you.

Judith A. Bell, FSM



From May 6 to 10, 2019, twenty-two Franciscan Sisters of Mary gathered at the Chiara Center in Springfield, Illinois, for the 2019 Chapter—the final FSM Chapter.

For religious communities, “Chapter” means more than a section of a book or even a life. Chapter is an assembly of members or delegates of a congregation of religious women or men to elect a leadership team and to set direction for the future. Chapters generally occur at specific intervals—perhaps every four or six years—and are part of the community’s canonical commitments.

The 2019 FSM Chapter Members considered and voted on a number of resolutions and elected a new leadership team, who will take office in September.

What made this Chapter unique—and bittersweet—is that this 2019 Chapter is the final FSM Chapter. The four FSM elected will be the final Leadership Team.

Within these four years, these women are tasked with bringing the FSM congregation into Collaborative Governance. They will lead the way for the other congregation with whom they have been collaborating (CPPS)—and perhaps other congregations in the future—to follow in their footsteps.



Srs. Sherri, Sandy, Judy and Susan

Congratulations to the courageous sisters chosen to lead the congregation during the coming years!

- Sr. Judy Bell, President
- Sr. Susan Scholl, First Councilor
- Sr. Sandy Schwartz, Councilor
- Sr. Sherri Coleman, Councilor



The Chapter Members

More than a year before Chapter—in February 2018—each FSM was asked to declare her level of participation in the 2019 Chapter.

Twenty-two FSM chose full participation—taking on the responsibility for deliberating, meeting, and making decisions for the congregation. These sisters, if endorsed by fellow Chapter Members, would be eligible for consideration for leadership and would take an active, informed part in voting at the Chapter.



The Chapter

In the peaceful springtime setting of Chiara Retreat Center, the sisters spent time in reflection, prayer, and preparation.

Intentions for this 2019 Chapter included:

In an atmosphere of personal and communal discernment and in a spirit of celebration we gather as Chapter Members

- To open ourselves through prayer and reflection to the presence and guidance of the Spirit leading us
- To review and affirm our Mission and Focus as Franciscan Sisters of Mary
- To accept the Collaborative Governance resolution establishing our way of life going forward
- To elect Sisters to serve as members of the Leadership Team of our congregation for the next four years



On Wednesday, May 8, Chapter Members unanimously approved the resolution moving forward into Collaborative Governance within the next four years. Affirming the Mission of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary, which is *to be the presence of the loving, serving, compassionate, healing Jesus*, the Chapter Members also adopted the following as the 2019 Chapter's FSM Focus: *Flowing from our Mission, we focus the power of our intention on compassionate care of Creation in collaboration with others*. This Focus has been meaningful for the sisters since 2011 and continues to inspire the FSM.



On May 9, having reviewed the process for Chapter elections, Chapter Members heard from each of the eight sisters endorsed for leadership. That afternoon, they chose the President, Sr. Judy, and the three councilors; later they selected Sr. Susan to serve as First Councilor.

The 2019 Leadership Team

The four sisters who will begin their term in September are no strangers to leadership.

Sr. Judy Bell, President of the new team, is also current FSM President. Originally First Councilor for the 2015–2019 team, she assumed the role of President in 2018. She also served as FSM First Councilor from 2001 to 2007. Besides her many years as a nurse within the SSM Health system, she has been a family nurse practitioner in the Appalachian area of Kentucky, a home health care nurse, a parish nurse, and a faith community nurse in an area senior living center. Her warm and compassionate heart, her courage, and her deep faith will be great assets through the transitions ahead.

Throughout her years as an FSM and a nurse Sr. Susan Scholl has served in many leadership roles. She was President of the current team until 2018, and she was First Councilor and Treasurer on three earlier leadership teams—1995–2001, 2007–2011, and 2011–2015. In the six years between leadership teams she served as SSM St. Mary's Health Center's Executive Vice President and Chief Coordinating Officer, then President. Before her first term in FSM leadership, she was Executive Vice President and Chief Coordinating Officer at SSM St. Mary's Hospital in Madison, Wisconsin. Her wisdom, business acumen, graciousness, and leadership skills will serve her well as she helps the congregation navigate the important changes to come.

Sr. Sandy Schwartz has also answered earlier calls to lead. Before the OSF and SSM congregations reunited in 1987 as the FSM, Sr. Sandy was Councilor and Secretary General (1976–1982) and First Assistant Councilor (1985–1987) for the OSF Leadership Team. She was Councilor and Vicar General for the first FSM Leadership Team following reunification (1987–1991). She served two additional terms as FSM Councilor, 2007–2011 and 2011–2015. Her cheerful optimism and deep compassion as a hospice nurse will be strong gifts in the coming years.

Sr. Sherri Coleman served on the 2001–2007 Leadership Team as Councilor and Congregational Secretary. Early on she honed her public relations and communication skills in service both to the congregation and to SSM Health (1985–2001). Since the mid-1990s she has also been a certified therapeutic massage therapist, providing healing and relief to many through her healing touch. She brings a wealth of gifts and insight to the upcoming Leadership Team.



A Special Thanks to the 2015–2019 Leadership Team Members

For these past four years Srs. Fran Haarmann and Kathy Buchheit have faithfully and courageously opened themselves to whatever the role of leadership demanded.

They have planned joyous jubilee celebrations and offered compassionate presence at their

sisters' passing. They have navigated uncharted paths toward Collaborative Governance, striving to create something that has never existed before—and stay within civil and canonical guidelines.

Each brought her own gifts and talents to her leadership role. Sr. Fran's compassion and understanding for the sisters in her care gave a special nuance to her leadership. Sr. Kathy's upbeat cheerfulness and optimism shed a ray of sunshine whenever the way seemed heavy or dreary.

Both have given selflessly from their depths. They will be missed!

Collaborative Governance: A Unique Challenge

This leadership team faces an unusual challenge: They will be leading the congregation into an entirely new chapter in their history—Collaborative Governance.

If you've never heard of Collaborative Governance, you are not alone. Here is how it came to be and where it is leading.

When the Franciscan Sisters of Mary decided in 2001 not to recruit new members, they knew the congregation would be moving toward completion. The movement accelerated as the numbers of sisters dwindled and the average age of sisters increased.

As early as 2011 FSM leadership began seeking a structure for governance that would answer the congregation's needs and maintain the FSM identity once the sisters were no longer able to lead. They found mergers and covenant relationships but nothing that fit FSM's needs. They set out to create their own governance structure.

Other congregations of women religious face similar challenges. Since 2013 the FSM have been working with another congregation, the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood of O'Fallon, Missouri (CPPS), as well as with canon lawyers and other consultants, to imagine a structure that would allow them to collaborate on governance and management issues without losing the unique identity of the congregation.

In Collaborative Governance the congregations do not merge—and each group will determine when the time is right to enter Collaborative Governance. The FSM have decided that the newly elected Leadership Team will be the last; this team will bring FSM into Collaborative Governance. The CPPS congregation will probably enter a few years later—and it is possible that other congregations may be admitted as well.

The congregations' finances remain separate; each will contribute to the cost of collaborative management and governance.

Collaborative Governance congregations will share an Executive Director, who will manage the congregations' everyday workings. She or he will oversee the Finance Director, Health Care Director, Communications Director, and Spiritual Life and Community Life Director. While congregations maintain their separate identities, the staff of the various departments will serve all participating congregations.

Instead of a president or leadership team, Collaborative Governance calls for a Chairperson or Commissary, a woman religious not belonging to any of the participating congregations, who is chosen by the CG Members and officially appointed by the Vatican. This person will assume the role of governance for the CG congregations.

A CG Council will be formed to ensure representation by each congregation and help provide direction for the Commissary. The Council will include Members appointed from each participating congregation.

Collaborative Governance has begun. The FSM and CPPS leadership teams have chosen an Executive Director and will in time be seeking a Commissary. We move forward in faith.

Sooner Rather Than Later

The Franciscan Sisters of Mary are a community of vibrant women who continue to have a strong impact on the world. They have chosen investment and philanthropy partnerships that directly support the environmental and social justice goals they are pursuing. They have intentionally used their influence to counter climate change and encourage efforts that heal the earth. Compassionate care of Creation is a powerful Focus that underlies everything they do.

Still, as of June 2019, only 55 Franciscan Sisters of Mary remain. Of those 55, some are physically fragile, and some struggle with memory loss. Thirteen are over 90 years old; an additional 21 are over 80. While some are strong, vital women who continue to minister and have a strong impact on the world, it will not always be so—and the time to make provision for the future is now, before it becomes a crisis.



Sr. Judy Bell, FSM President, presents Sr. Kelly Connors, PM, with the FSM basket in gratitude for her service as canon lawyer in building Collaborative Governance.



For close to 150 years Mother Odilia Berger's encouragement to her small band of sisters to "Continue courageously for the love of God" has inspired the FSM. And as our sisters prepare to venture out into the uncharted waters of Collaborative Governance, we recall that courageous pilgrim, Mother Odilia, who herself followed the call of the Spirit, sailing off to a new and unknown world so many years ago.



"For all that has been, thanks. For all that will be, yes." (Dag Hammarskjöld)

Sisters in the Spotlight



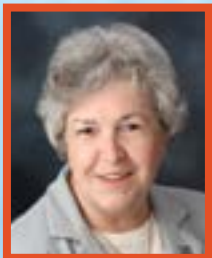
Srs. Sherri Coleman and André Evanicsko received the 2019 Franciscan Federation Award for the Franciscan Sisters of Mary. The awards banquet, held Sunday evening, June 23, at the Sheraton Westport Chalet Hotel in St. Louis, honored Franciscans who answered the “Call to Be Saints, Founders, and Prophets.” Srs. André and Sherri were honored for their long-term ministry to women inmates, especially through the Center for Women in Transition, which provides transitional housing, basic necessities, mentoring possibilities, case management, etc., for women re-entering the community after jail or prison.



Sr. Thelma Marie Mitchell was featured in the article “Q & A with Sr. Thelma Marie Mitchell, Tubman Award recipient” by Dan Stockman. The article appeared in *Global Sisters Report*, an online section of the *National Catholic Reporter*. Sr. Thelma received the Harriet Tubman Award at the National Black Sisters’ Conference in August 2018 in New Orleans. The award is presented to a sister who has been a Moses to her people, showing spiritual leadership.



Sr. Jeanne Derer was featured in the article “Franciscan Sisters of Mary back community in struggle against nuclear waste threat,” by Julie Minda, which appeared in the February 1, 2019, issue of *Catholic Health World*. Sr. Jeanne spoke about how the FSM have been a leading force, providing strong support to local community groups in their efforts to achieve a fair and safe resolution to the problem of radioactive waste illegally dumped in the West Lake Landfill.



The FSM were further highlighted in the accompanying article “Franciscan Sisters of Mary focus on their legacy in congregation’s ‘journey toward completion,’” also by Julie Minda. The article describes the congregation’s efforts to live out its Focus of compassionate care of creation in collaboration with others, both within the congregation and through SSM Health as well. The article relies strongly on information shared by **Sr. Judy Bell**, current FSM President; **Sr. Mary Jean Ryan**, President and CEO of SSM Health from 1986 to 2011; **Sr. Rose Mary Dowling**, FSM President from 2007 through 2015, as well as **Laura Kaiser**, President and Chief Executive Officer of SSM Health, and **John O’Shaughnessy**, FSM CEO and CFO.

Congratulations to Our 2019 Jubilarians

50
Years

in religious life PEARL



Mary Jacqueline Nelson, FSM

Kathleen Mary Maloney, FSM



Mary Jeanice Speidel, FSM



70
Years

in religious life CARNELIAN

Patricia Haarmann, FSM



Margaret Ann Jackson, FSM



60
Years

in religious life

DIAMOND



Marita Anne Marrah, FSM



Priscilla Weber, FSM

Sherri Ann Coleman, FSM



40
Years

in religious life

RUBY

*“Love of God
and Neighbor”*



Transitions

Sr. Mary Teresa Noth, FSM

October 28, 1923 – December 14, 2018

For 16 years Sr. Mary Teresa Noth was Dean of Saint Louis University School of Nursing and Allied Health Professions. Her transformational leadership made her a legend.

Mary Teresa Noth was born October 28, 1923, in Glasgow, Missouri, to Frank and Mathilda (Sellmeyer) Noth. She earned a BS in Chemistry from St. Mary's College, Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1945.

She entered the Sisters of St. Mary August 2, 1946; receiving the name Sr. Mary Stephen, she professed final vows February 11, 1952. She earned her BS (1952) and MS (1957) in Nursing Education, both through Saint Louis University (SLU), and her EdD at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York (1964). In 1988 she earned a certificate in Corporate Ministry through Saint Louis University.

She served as head nurse/supervisor at St. Mary's Health Center, St. Louis (1952–1956). She was assistant to the dean of SLU's School of Nursing and taught nursing (1956–1962). She directed SLU's Department of Nursing (1964–1966).

In 1966 she was appointed Dean of SLU's School of Nursing and Allied Health Professions, serving until 1982. While dean, she established the accelerated BSN program and built a strong faculty also committed to meeting student needs. She developed and implemented innovative programs and curricula on both the undergraduate and graduate levels, including the midwifery program.

From 1981 to 1985 she served as SSM Councilor and Vicar General.

In 1988 she joined the pastoral care staff at St. Francis Hospital in Blue Island, Illinois, serving as director from 1989 to 1994. She was chaplain at St. Mary's Health Center (1994–2006). In June 2010 she moved to The Sarah Community.

Of her leadership, she said: “It was never about you. All the graduates speak for themselves. It was a faculty and staff that worked together that brought the School of Nursing to where it is today. . . . Maybe I was able to make the nursing school more about education. It helped us to become all that we could become—just a little better all the time.”

On December 14, 2018, Sr. Mary Teresa heard the words of her Beloved: “Well done, good and faithful servant!”

***“Come to Me
and I Will
Give You Rest”***



Sr. Mary Paul Schmidt, FSM

November 23, 1927 – April 29, 2019

Alberta Rose Schmidt was born November 23, 1927, in St. Louis, one of nine children born to John and Appolonia (Hortschitz) Schmidt.

She came to know the Sisters of St. Mary working at St. Mary's Health Center in St. Louis. Alberta entered the SSM on November 24, 1943; she received the name Sr. Mary Paul, and she professed final vows June 5, 1949.

Sr. Mary Paul served in the nursery and Obstetrics Department at St. Mary's Health Center, St. Louis (1943–1953). She worked in the nursery at St. Francis Hospital in Blue Island, Illinois, for a year.

From 1954 to 1996, Sr. Mary Paul served at St. Mary of the Ozarks Hospital in Ironton, Missouri, and at Arcadia Valley Hospital in Pilot Knob, Missouri. She was sacristan, pharmacy assistant, surgical aide, and technician.

In 1996 she returned to St. Mary's Health Center, working in the laboratory and serving in the surgery hospitality room until 2010, when she moved to The Sarah Community in Bridgeton.

Sr. Mary Paul said of her ministry, “I have most enjoyed helping others, especially those most in need.” She continued to carry out that commitment, knitting scarves, hats, and booties for the babies born at St. Mary's Health Center and DePaul Health Center. She also made adult hats and scarves for poor families helped by the City of St. Louis Lead-Safe Program.

Sr. Mary Paul enjoyed contemplative prayer, reading, working with crafts, and visiting her fellow FSM sisters. Being a Franciscan Sister of Mary brought her great joy and satisfaction.

Early Monday morning, April 29, 2019, Sr. Mary Paul joined the ranks of the saints in eternity.

***“My Shepherd
Is the Lord;
I Will Follow”***



Sr. Ann Miriam Stenger, FSM

August 29, 1922 – May 13, 2019

Emma Josephine Stenger was born at home in the little town of Glennonville, Missouri, on August 29, 1922, the second child of sixteen (twelve girls, four boys) born to Joseph Caspar and Elise Veronica (Meyer) Stenger. The family had little money, raising all their own food, but the children helped with all the work and the family remained close always.

Emma graduated from Glennonville High School in May 1940. She entered the Sisters of St. Mary on September 8, 1944; her aunt, Sr. Placida Stenger, was also in the community. She received the name Sr. Ann Miriam, and she professed final vows on June 5, 1950. Three other sisters joined the congregation—Srs. Jovita Marie Stenger (passed away May 8, 2013), Mariella Stenger (passed away June 24, 2015), and Mary Antoinette Stenger (passed away February 21, 2015). (The Sisters of St. Mary and the Sisters of St. Francis of Maryville, Missouri, reunited in August 1987 as the Franciscan Sisters of Mary.)

From 1950 to 1957 she worked in the business office at St. Mary's Hospital in Kansas City. She then served in the Admitting Clinical Office at Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center (1957–1966). In 1966 she became manager of Patient Accounts at St. Mary's Health Center in St. Louis and served in this office until 1995.

Sr. Ann Miriam then took on the role of community director at St. Mary of the Angels Convent, co-serving in that position from 1995 to 1999. She helped the elder sisters handle financial issues and helped move them from their rooms to chapel or the dining room. Her patience and kindness were a great gift to all.

Sr. Ann Miriam was deeply devout and devoted herself to prayer. She was a member of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary prayer program. She moved to The Sarah Community in July 2010, where she could often be found praying in the chapel.

On May 13, 2019, Sr. Ann Miriam left to join her sisters awaiting her with the saints and angels.

***“I Know That My
Redeemer Lives”***



Sr. Mary Juliana Droste, FSM

March 19, 1920 – June 1, 2019

Mary Anna Droste was born March 19, 1920, in Godfrey, Illinois, the second of thirteen children (nine girls, four boys) born to Theodore and Mary Anna (Brinkman) Droste. She attended school at St. Mary's in Alton. She credits her parents with having planted the seeds of love, labor, and sacrifice.

Her aunts Srs. Mary Albertine Droste and Mary Emmanuella Droste invited her to a reception at the Sisters of St. Mary motherhouse; Mother Mary Concordia Puppenthal welcomed her. Mary Anna entered the SSM congregation March 22, 1944. She received the name Sr. Mary Juliana, and she professed final vows February 11, 1950. (*The Sisters of St. Mary and the Sisters of St. Francis of Maryville reunited in 1987 as the Franciscan Sisters of Mary.*) Her younger sister Clare Louise, also a Franciscan Sister of Mary, passed away January 18, 2014.

Sr. Juliana worked at St. Mary's Hospital, St. Louis, until June 1954, when she took charge of the laundry at St. Mary's Hospital in Madison, Wisconsin. In 1957 she returned to the motherhouse as assistant novice mistress for three years. She worked in the new laundry and in housekeeping at St. Mary of the Ozarks Hospital in Ironton, Missouri (1960–1964). She then managed the new laundry at St. Mary's Hospital, Jefferson City, for more than eleven years, then served as executive housekeeper and worked in the laundry at the new Arcadia Valley Hospital in Pilot Knob, Missouri (1975–1980).

In August 1980 she moved to St. Francis Hospital, Marceline, Missouri, serving as activities therapy aide for the first two years. She ministered to shut-ins and patients in hospitals and nursing homes, providing pastoral care, bringing the Eucharist, and helping out as needed. She served at St. Bonaventure Parish and at Pioneer Health Care Center. After ministering 32 years in Marceline, she moved to The Sarah Community in Bridgeton at the end of November 2012.

She loved the opportunity to reach out to the elderly and lonely. “To bring the Eucharist to the shut-ins is one of the greatest blessings, a special privilege,” she said. She learned early on that she needed to “bring life's little crosses to the foot of the big cross.” She was well known for her faithfulness and self-sacrifice.

Early Saturday, June 1, 2019, her beloved Jesus welcomed her into eternal life.

JULY 1, 2018 - DECEMBER 31, 2018 Gifts Received

Gifts given in memory of:

In memory of Nora Therese Buckley, FSM
Ms. Janet C. Huenke

In memory of Margaret Mary Coens, FSM
Ms. Dolores A. Weekly

In memory of Drew Eckstein
Alanna Dawn Runge

In memory of Jacinta Marie Elmendorf, FSM
Mary Ruth Kettenbach

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James and Lynette O'Brien

In memory of Jacinta Marie Elmendorf, FSM
Mary Tamboli

In memory of Marianne Francois, FSM
My cousin
Kathryn F. Jancik

In memory of Mary Damien Francois, FSM
My cousin
Kathryn F. Jancik

In memory of Mary Martina Kliethermes, FSM
My sister
Mrs. Delphine C. Schanzmeyer

In memory of Mary Eligia Koehl, FSM
John and Kathleen Koehl

In memory of Mary Noreen McGowan, FSM
Ms. Janet C. Huenke

In memory of Mary Cloud Poetz, FSM
Mrs. Myrtle Lehnertz

In memory of my dear friend
Theresa Poetz
Mary Margaret Kleba

In memory of Annie Raback,
wife and mother
Edmund, Tony, and Maria Raback

In memory of Agnes Reinkemeyer, FSM
Carolyn and Peter Rummel

In memory of Agnes Reinkemeyer, FSM
Mary Ann and John H. Scharf

In memory of Dorothy Rufkahr, FSM
Beatrice T. Terbrock

In memory of Melba Slattery, FSM
Beatrice T. Terbrock

In memory of Agnes Stottmann, FSM
My aunt
Agnes P. and Jimmy Spiller

In memory of Mary Olivet Zielinski, FSM
Our aunt
Janet and John Downey

Gifts given in honor of:

In honor of Jane Rombach, FSM,
for 70 years of service—and still giving!
Our love and blessings,
The Rev. Dr. Al and Marilyn Horst

In thanksgiving
H. L. Dufour Woolfley

Dear Friends,

It has been my pleasure to write and produce these past 22 *FSM Magazines*, from Fall 2008 to Summer 2019.

I will retire in early September, so this will be my last issue.

It has been a delight to share these messages about the Sisters these 11 years. I love and cherish them, as you do; they are amazing women who live lives of presence, grace, and generosity. I will miss being part of their Mission and Focus.

I also want to thank my graphic artist, Sandy Timpe, who has designed and laid out the magazines since the beginning of 2012. She is a brilliant artist and one of the kindest people I know. Working with her has been a joy.

God's richest blessings to all of you. Please keep us in your prayers as we navigate in faith the unknown paths that lie ahead.

Always,

Sandy Ashby
Director of Public Relations



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Mission and Focus of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary



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.