See inside...

Our Sisters in action:
- Mission trips for Sisters Colleen & Rosalie
- Sister Mary Anne's service
- Spirituality through art
- Winter event follow-up

Rise.
Break through.
Fear not.
Sr. Renita breaks through. Happy Rising.


Destruction in Creation. Be agents of today, that Spirit still impels us: Go grain, in inner city and suburb schools.

Midwest plains of amber waves of Americans in the Southwest, on the at the heart of desegregation in the We Sisters have always been like those where, no matter who, no matter how. hope, joy and compassion — no matter that new life can emerge. When Sisters Hilaria, Solana, and Ernestine began our congregation in St. Louis in 1901, they were consumed by the desire to be God’s compassion, hope, and joy among people. They were no place is too far, no service is too humble, no person is too lowly.” That set forth our community mission. We were to be a transforming Gospel presence among people. They called to press forward, to abandon safety so break out. A power within calls, “Rise. It’s coming. Spring.” We can all identify with seeds and buds struggling to break out. A power within calls, “Rise. Break through. Fear not.” We Sisters also experience an inner power calling us forth to risk, to speak, to press forward, to abandon safety so that new life can emerge. When Sisters Hilaria, Solana, and Ernestine began our congregation in St. Louis in 1901, they were consumed by the desire to be God’s compassion, hope, and joy among people. They called to press forward, to abandon safety so break out. A power within calls, “Rise. It’s coming. Spring.” We can all identify with seeds and buds struggling to break out. A power within calls, “Rise. It’s coming. Spring.”

Dear Franciscan Friend, It’s coming. Spring. We can all identify with seeds and buds struggling to break out. A power within calls, “Rise. Break through. Fear not.” We Sisters also experience an inner power calling us forth to risk, to speak, to press forward, to abandon safety so that new life can emerge. When Sisters Hilaria, Solana, and Ernestine began our congregation in St. Louis in 1901, they were consumed by the desire to be God’s compassion, hope, and joy among people. They called to press forward, to abandon safety so break out. A power within calls, “Rise. It’s coming. Spring.” We can all identify with seeds and buds struggling to break out. A power within calls, “Rise. It’s coming. Spring.”

As we announced in the Winter edition of the Franciscan Spirit, Jack Zimmerman has joined our Franciscans For Earth program as Franciscan Farm Coordinator. He officially began his service at our property in DeSoto on November 26, 2018. Check out page 8 for his tips on following Creation’s cues in the garden.

On February 22, 2019, Brian Moeller served his last day as our Director of Mission Advancement. Brian brought a deep spirit of sincerity and mission to his time with us. His questions always invited us to more clearly reflect on who we are and how we want to live and share our mission. We’re grateful for all the ways he helped us expand our development office and for his endless hours managing our E-Tapistry database program. We will miss our lunch conversations about his seminary classes as he works toward a ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church. From the very beginning we knew there was a deep call and passion for the Gospel in Brian, and we pray for him and his family as he pursues his call.

Q – What inspired you to become a Franciscan Sister?

A – I had a tinselctorory when I was old enough to be left overnight at the hospital, but not brave enough to exert my needs on a busy nurse. I had had an accident in my bed and was sobbing from embarrassment. A nun-nurse saw me and gently whispered that we would clean it up before anyone else could know what happened. She showed such respect and kindness — I knew that I wanted to be like her, to treat people the same way.

Then on my first day of school, a teacher-nun recognized me from my older siblings and welcomed me with a big bear hug. As I embraced her back through all those layers of clothing, I learned the secret that Sisters are real people, and I realized that I could actually be one of those women I wanted to “be like.”

When I was in junior high, we moved to the “burbs” and my younger siblings attended Our Lady of the Ridge Parish School sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. They had discontinued the upper grades, so I attended the public school. About the time I had to decide where to go for high school, my mother ‘made’ me go with her to a tea at which Sister Sylvia, our then Director of Vocations, spoke. She painted such an inspiring picture of religious life, that I knew I had found my path.

Q – Tell me about nursing and medical missions?

I began as a teacher as customary in our community, but when an opportunity to obtain a Masters degree, I asked and was eventually given the chance to go to St Mary’s for my nursing school. I worked for three years as an LPN, and returned to school, earning a BSN in Nursing from Maryville University.

I was assigned to a hospital in Milwaukee where a team was preparing to make a medical mission to Nicaragua. I asked to go, thinking it would be a vacation — haha! I wasn’t prepared for the depths of deprivation and inhumanity I found. People were deprived the basic needs of human survival. I didn’t speak the language. I all could do was follow directions to assist the hundreds lined at the clinic door each morning. Nothing was sterile — surgical sponges hung in the open to dry. Living conditions were miserable. Everyone works so hard just to survive, including children, yet I never saw a sad face. I returned a second year, before my job was transferred to St Louis. I became an ER nurse at St Mary’s in Clayton. One of the doctors there invited me to join a mission to El Salvador. I became a part of the Helping Hands Organization (HHO). This group works with international health practitioners to ensure that medical mission teams are properly staffed and arrive with all the rations and medical supplies necessary. I have made eight more trips to El Salvador, and each trip near 5000 patients are seen.

In spite of the fact that lines arrive each day early in the morning until late at night, I know that I receive much more than I could ever give. The faith of the people is so real. The people of El Salvador have nothing in the way of material possessions. Yet, they have what keeps them going, what makes them radiant with joy. Stripped of everything, they have only God.

Sister Colleen Olsen was transferred to St Mary’s in Clayton. One of the doctors there invited me to join a mission to El Salvador. I became a part of the Helping Hands Organization (HHO). This group works with international health practitioners to ensure that medical mission teams are properly staffed and arrive with all the rations and medical supplies necessary. I have made eight more trips to El Salvador, and each trip near 5000 patients are seen. In spite of the fact that lines arrive each day early in the morning until late at night, I know that I receive much more than I could ever give. The faith of the people is so real. The people of El Salvador have nothing in the way of material possessions. Yet, they have what keeps them going, what makes them radiant with joy. Stripped of everything, they have only God.
Sister Rosalie

The holiday break turned into an opportunity this year for Sister Rosalie. With the talk of walls and immigration problems, she chose to be part of a loving solution. She left St Louis to volunteer in El Paso, TX, one of the epicenters of immigrant outreach centers. She worked the 2-10pm shift offering a welcoming smile, some creature comforts and helpful direction to migrants and refugees arriving mostly from Honduras and Guatemala. The oldest of four children, Sister Rosalie grew up in Ferguson, MO, and her siblings continue to remain close to their St Louis County roots. She currently serves on our Community’s Leadership Team at Tau Center in Kirkwood.

As you will learn, Sister Rose is gifted with a recirculated love for ‘little ones.’ She has a smile that lights up her businesslike demeanor when she is in the presence of a youngster.

Sister Rosalie greets a young visitor at Tau Center.

Excerpts of Sister’s texts from El Paso

12/22/18: Last night’s shift was intense, only three of us working. Local volunteers are celebrating the holidays. Needless to say, there wasn’t a moment for a breath. We couldn’t feed our guests until about 6:30. By then there wasn’t enough food. Annunciation House sent some potatoes and beans. I packed food bags for those starting their journey. Can’t tell you how many PB&J sandwiches I made. In one of our bathrooms, half the counter is first aid and meds; the other side is where we make sandwiches. On our way home we took a 2-year-old boy to Children’s Hospital. The little one was burning up with fever and holding his tummy. Also, ICE released 100 people to the streets last night, lots of police out. The blessing of yesterday is seeing the welcome the families give to another family when I tell them they will have to share their room or their bed. It brings tears to my eyes and heart. Mi casa, su casa! We have so many families welcoming 46-50 refugees. They are so tired and grateful for a bed. There was no toothpaste, none found and no baby food either. We have to share our room or our bed. It brings tears to my eyes and heart. Mi casa, su casa!

12/23/18: Yesterday was crazy but good. Christmas. For the families entering the US) until after space. A lot of sponsors could not get tickets although there was a lot of confusion, we had to bring the family with sister Amelia to the bus station. There was a little girl and gave medicine to a baby boy. Went to the hotel desk manager, a big burly teddy bear of a man, gave a room with a sick 8-month-old baby boy a break. He held and rocked that baby. Then three boys, 7-10 years old, took turns carrying the baby up and down the halls. At 10:30pm sitting in the airport, hearing O Come All Ye Faithful over the speaker, Jesus had long eyelashes, dark hair and he was sick. Gifts from my purse were a pack of Kleenex and lip balm for his cracked and bleeding lips. I sat there knowing he was the Christ Child for me. “Christ has not come to be few or some, the Holy One wears the skin of everyone.”

12/24/18: Merry Day After! Yesterday the Loretto Community started us for Christmas supper. The welcome is big, warm and genuine. Sister Judy and I cleaned out the refrigerator this morning. I am still well and trying to be cautious because germs are everywhere you turn. Rumor has it we will be overwhelmed today with many released from ICE. If you Google, ‘release of immigrants in El Paso’ and Google ‘another child dies in US custody’ you will get the stories. These people are so mistreated and frightened. Will write again soon.

12/28/18: After two days of sickness, I am finally on the mend. A friend went with me to URGENT Care yesterday and I am advised to take one more day for recovery and recoup.

12/29/18: I have been reflecting on all that is happening here. The media may call it a crisis. But it is much more. It is a tsunami of painful injustice. It is physically draining, emotionally disturbing and psychologically unerving. So many people are grieving and caring for our immigrants but the US government should hang its head in shame. In my imagination I see Lady Liberty and Uncle Sam in tears hugging saying, “What have they done to us?” Last night a dusting of snow. The sisters said the children were squawling with delight.

12/31/18: Happy New Year’s Eve! I am well and energy has returned. Our shift was quiet, no new guests. Rumor has it we will receive two buses today. Presently we are well stocked. Stamford is here to play in the Sun Bowl, and the coaches’ wives brought lunch, supper, hats and gloves. The blessing of the shift was a 2-year-old boy who would come and put out his hand. I would give him 3 popcorn kernels. We did this off and on throughout the shift. He looked like a Teddy Bear in his black fuzzy coat and hat. It’s those precious moments that make Love real. The Loretto School gym was set up for 118 guests! Annunciation House has about 15 shelters in El Paso, TX, and about five in Las Cruces, NM.

1/1/19: Yesterday the bus came early so our duties were very light. We put together a small party for our guests who gathered at 11:30. We honored their tradition of eating 12 grapes at midnight and making a wish for each month of the new year. Even more touching was sitting in the midst of everyone praying in their native languages; it was a deep touching of the Spirit. A Pentecost moment for sure! I just saw a bus arrive. It caged like a jalapeno transport vehicle. There were only 3 people. They were welcomed around a lot. One of the men last night expressed his deep relief when he realized he and his daughter were with kind people. At 10:30 at the airport, the hugs and kisses were heartfelt.

1/2/19: The bus had just arrived when we came on shift. The evening was uneventful and the guests were very tired, but we did not have enough food. Pizza was ordered for those that didn’t get cold rice and beans. In this situation we become Sisters very quickly. I will miss the guests, the work, the Sisters and the generous spirit of the people of El Paso. God is Good. Perhaps, I will be able to come back again sometime.

1/3/19: The woman at the airport — she was the Mag! She knelt before 6-year-old boy and his Dad, a Guatemalan with a deer in the headlights looking hold a plastic grocery bag with all of their belongings. She spoke in Spanish in a gentle low tone. She left the man and returned with food and water. Once again she knelt in front of the man and his son. She brought her son of about 12 years of age. They had bought the boy a stuffed animal. She left again. She came back a third time, kneeling and speaking gently. She left with the man’s papers and his tickets. She went to the person who would announce the Southwest number seating. It is my guest that she explained that this many must understand that they do need some assistance. The woman typified generosity, care and love for this obviously frightened man and his boy. She knelt in selfless love! She was the Mag! — all three wrapped into one Love.

Final entry: The huge star of Texas on the side of El Paso’s Franklin mountains shone brightly in white moonlight. It called us and guided us to the house each night. At a highpoint, we could see the star so clearly. For that moment, it was my “my” star — beckoning me to peace, to silence, to quiet, to you, O God.

Sisterly Expressions

Mixed media by the late Sister Cecelia Vasquez (1945-2008)

Until we meet again...

Sister Jovita Chierek, OSF, October 2, 1920 – February 16, 2019

Our dear Sister Jovita went to her rest in the arms of our loving God on February 16. Sister Jovita received all of her sacraments and elementary education at St Stanislaus Parish in St Louis. It is here that her spirit was touched by the Franciscan Sisters. She entered the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in 1935 and professed perpetual vows in 1942.

Sister Jovita was a kind, generous person who was ever ready to assist others with a happy heart. It’s no wonder that the Gospel reading for her Mass of Resurrection was the account of Jesus visiting with Martha and Mary.

Sister Jovita taught hundreds of children at the elementary level in Illinois, Missouri, West Virginia, Ohio, and Texas. In her later years, she shined as a volunteer. She tended her own journey, never judging others, always giving praise and glory to God. A wake and Mass of Resurrection was held in the Lally Room on the Carbery Campus in St Louis, and she was buried on February 22nd at the St Louis Chapel in Resurrection Cemetery.
Baby Supply DONATIONS
Thanks to nativity viewers, we delivered carloads of supplies and $2222 to Birthright and Our Lady’s Inn!

Joy to the World NATIVITY DISPLAY
At least 400 guests enjoyed more than 200 unique nativities from around the world at Tau Center!

Celebration of Peace & All Good BENEFIT JAZZ CONCERT
January 19
(Above) Several Sisters (front) line up under the spotlights with Dawn Weber & Friends and event Gold Sponsor Pontillo Construction Company representatives Lynn and Floyd Hollenkamp (top center). (Below) Dawn Weber draws the lucky winner of the Sisters’ Beauty of the World $2500 Trip Raffle.

a thousand words
Each change of season gives us a chance to marvel at the beauty of God’s Creation and the sublime artistry of how it all works together. Weather, soil, animals and plants each sing their unique part in a magnificent chorus of praise (see Psalm 8). Here in Missouri, the increasing temperatures and longer days bring welcome signs that spring is surely on the way. Pussy willows bloom their name sake “fur” and fragrant hyscanda add a splash of color to the brittle, gray landscape. Pretty soon, geese are arrowing north above the quickly greening branches of trees and shrubs. Can the nightly music of spring peepers be far behind?

Observing these signs in nature is a way to marvel at the beauty of God’s Creation to tune with the rhythm of life, letting us know when to plant their food crops. As climate change alters calendar-phenology — to know when to plant their signs they may differ where you are, so seek out information specific to your local area. Examples from Zone 6 include:

• Radishes, spinach and parsnips can be planted when crocuses bloom.
• Plant lettuce, peas and beans when forsythia flowers or when the red-winged blackbird females return.
• The cue to plant potatoes is when the first dandelions bloom.
• Plant carrots, cabbage family crops, and beets when lilac leaves unfurl or dafodils bloom.
• Cucumbers, squash, beans, and tender annual flowers can be planted when lilacs are in full bloom or apple blossoms fall.
• Peppers and eggplants can be transplanted when asparagus is in full bloom. Set out tomatoes when lily of the valley or dogwoods are in full flower.
• When oak leaves are the size of a squirrel’s ear, plant.
• Plant heat-loving melons when peonies are in flower.

Watch the seasonal cues where you live and talk to other gardeners about the signs they look for, and soon you’ll be gardening in harmony with Creation.

Nature IS Healthy!

Ideas to think about from the February 2019 edition of Missouri Conservationist magazine (shared with permission):

• Feeling tired? Spending just 20 minutes outside can give your brain an energy boost comparable to a cup of coffee.
• Spending time in nature, conservation areas, woods, backyards, and urban parks may ease stress levels.
• Getting away from busy schedules allows people to connect with nature and themselves in a way that brings calm and a sense of well-being.
• Taking a nature walk may increase attention spans & creative problem-solving skills by as much as 50 percent.
• Exposure to nature contributes to physical well-being, reduced blood pressure, heart rate, muscle tension, and the production of stress hormones. Visit svdpusa.org to find out more about the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the production of stress hormones.

Nature THE WAY to GO!

Join us to learn ways to help save our “Common Home,” our Earth! The Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help will host this conference on Saturday, March 9, from 9am to 2:30pm at Nerinx Hall High School. We are pleased to join with other members of the Ecological Consortium Collaborators including Ohiotea Ecological Institute of Godfrey, IL, Jamie Hasemeier of Holy Redeemer Parish in Webster Groves, MO, Mark Etling of St. Nicholas Parish in O’Fallon, IL, and Nerinx Hall High School in Webster Groves, MO. This event is offered in cooperation with Byne Catering and St. Louis-Composting.

The exciting program was inspired by Pope Francis’ Laudato Si’ and was prepared for parishioners, educators, administrators, and high school students. The agenda includes discussions of the importance of caring for our Earth, and attendees will come away with practical solutions to get started. The keynote address will be offered by Dr. Ed Birnser, alumnus of St. Louis University. UNA MISTI (Observations of Purpose) and the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change. Dr. Birnser will be joined in a dialogue on the topic of the environment and the generation of the future. The keynote will be followed by a panel discussion on topics ranging from reducing energy consumption to environmental stewardship.

In addition to the Community duties at Tau Center, Sister volunteers with the St Vincent de Paul Society at Little Flower Parish in Webster Groves, MO. She has been with the organization since 2009 when she signed up on Stewardship Sunday because she recognized the name — her father had been part of the Society in Chicago when she was young.

According to the National website, svdpusa.org, the St Vincent de Paul Society began in Paris in 1833 to help the poor. The Society came to the US in 1845 by way of St. Louis. Fr Ambrose Heim served as the first spiritual advisor through the Old Cathedral on the riverfront. Little Flower’s eight Sisterhood members meet twice a month, and take turns answering the hotline where people call with requests. Members visit with each client and get to know them, their situation and needs. Clients can be from 1845 background, but must live within five miles of Little Flower Parish’s boundaries. Local programs are funded through parish donations, and larger programs are provided through the Archdiocesan level of the Society.

Sister Mary Anne enjoys this ministry because “it’s a way to stay connected and serve the poor.” Members are committed to fighting hunger, homelessness, and poverty by reaching out to offer assistance with utilities, rent, food, clothing, automotive, healthcare, legal services and many other needs. Sister Mary Anne also volunteers as bookkeeper for Nie Kuumba, a position she has held since 2015. According to the website niekuumbacenter.org, the mission of this Catholic organization is to provide an atmosphere in which African and African American women:

• Can come together in community to be challenged and encouraged to live as fully possible, lives of purpose (Nia) and creativity.
• Can be nourished spiritually through prayer, mentoring, spiritual direction, body-mind-spirit practices, and mutual support.
• Are empowered to express their uniqueness as women of vision and hope.

The group offers a monthly book club, lunch obtainings for retired professionals, a prayer group and more.

“I enjoy working with such an inspiring group of women, deeply rooted in the Catholic faith and active in their communities.”

Volunteer Spotlight

Sister Mary Anne Eckstein

The current Treasurer General of the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help (FSLPH) Sister Mary Anne Eckstein was nominated for our Spotlight. She reluctantly agreed, only to bring attention to two of the outstanding organizations with which she volunteers.

Sister grew up on Chicago’s west side. She was very active in her parish for decades, but didn’t hear her ‘calling’ until she had earned a degree in business/finance, established a career in banking operations, purchased a home in the Chicago suburb of Hoffman Estates, and stopped going to church for several months. A chance encounter with a fellow choir member at a funeral brought her back to Mass at her former parish, where our Sister Dolores (Doie) Sanchez had in the meantime started working. They grew to be friends, and Sister Doie eventually asked Mary Anne to chaperon some young women on a trip to the FSLPH Motherhouse, located there in Ferguson, MO. Mary Anne agreed. She eventually heard her calling and relocated for formation, earning a Masters in Pastoral Studies at St Anselm’s where she served for ten years. In 2005, she accepted the position as Treasurer General for the Community, and in 2006 Mary Anne finished an MBA in Finance from Webster University.

Perpetual Prayer Cards

Need a special gift or remembrance? Consider enrolling your loved one for Perpetual Remembrance in Our Lady of Perpetual Help Membership of Prayer. Each member shares in the graces of the Eucharist Celebration offered monthly, and in the daily prayers and good works of each of our Sisters. For the $52 donation, the enrollee (or a family member) will receive a beautiful gold presentation booklet with a personalized certificate inside. Visit our website or call Mission Advancement at 314.965.3700, x109, with your name, address, phone number, email address and credit card information, as well as the recipient’s mailing address, and the name of the enrollee.
UPCOMING EVENTS

PAVING PATHS FOR PEACE & ALL GOOD

In 2018, we presented stories of St Francis and explored their lasting lessons with folks in Effingham County, IL; Monroe, LA; Omaha, NE; and Kirkwood, MO. We plan to expand in 2019, as we hit the road to examine a new story — The Picnic of Francis and Clare — and look for its relevance in life today. Spring dates follow. In the fall, we will also host this event for those in the St Louis, MO, and Clinton County, IL, areas. Please plan to join us for this simple evening of hope and connection, and invite your families and friends to do the same. There is no cost to attend and RSVPs are NOT REQUIRED, but we would love to know approximately how many to expect. For email reminders prior to the evening, please register on our website at www.fsolph.org/event.

Mon, March 4 - West Monroe, LA
St Paschalis Parish Hall, 6:30-8pm
711 N 7th, West Monroe, LA

Mon, Apr 8 - Effingham County, IL
St Aloysius Hall-Bishop Creek, 6:30-8pm
19812 E 100th Ave, Dieterich, IL

Mon, May 6 - Chicago, IL
Our Lady of the Ridge Parish, 6:30-8pm
10859 Ridgeland Ave, Chicago Ridge, IL

OUR COMMON HOME

Sat, March 9
Nerinx High School, 9am-2:30pm

LET YOUR EYE SEE

Come learn how to pray with the eyes of the heart. Experience visio divina, "sacred seeing" — an ancient form of Christian prayer in which our hearts and imaginations enter into a sacred image, in silence, to see what God might have to say to us.

Tue, March 19
Cathedral Basilica of St Louis, 6:30pm
All Saints Chapel, 4431 Lindell Blvd

This visio divina experience will focus on the Heritage edition, a meticulously reproduced copy of the hand-written and hand-illuminated Bible from Saint John's Abbey and University in Collegeville, MN, preserved at the Cathedral Basilica of St Louis. Created via an ancient Benedictine tradition, the Saint John's Bible is divided into seven volumes and the Heritage Edition, meticulously reproduced copies of the original, is available for viewing in select locations around the world.

Thu, May 9
Tau Center in Kirkwood, 6:30pm
335 S Kirkwood Rd (behind PNC Bank)

This visio divina experience will feature a treasured replica of a medieval Franciscan icon/diocle of St. Francis of Assisi.

E-COMO SERIES

Join us as we continue our monthly series of earth-shocking films offered at no charge in two metro-St Louis locations:

• FILM - A Plastic Ocean
  Thu, Mar 12, 6:30 Kirkwood Tau Center
  Thu, Mar 28, 6:30 DeSoto Community Ctr

This documentary dives into the devastation plastic has done to our environment, especially our marine life. What starts as an adventure to film the blue whale, leads to discovery of a thick layer of plastic debris floating in the middle of the Ocean. Filmmakers travel the globe reporting on the havoc caused by decades of plastics disposal. This film juxtaposes beautiful shots of the marine life with footage of heavily polluted cities and plastic rubbish dumps. This eco-event is free, but registration is required by noon the day of at (314) 965-3700 or through event at www.fsolph.org.

• FILM - The Human Element
  Thu, Apr 11, 7pm at Kirkwood Tau Center

We are pleased to host this film as part of the St Louis Earth Day Film Festival. This 2018 Earth Vision Film Production is in association with Earth Vision Institute, and examines humans as forces of nature. At the same time human activities alter the basic elements of life (earth, air, water, and fire) those elements change human life. Environmental photographer James Balog captures everyday Americans on the front lines of climate change. With rare compassion and heart, this coast-to-coast series of captivating stories inspires us to reevaluate our relationship with the natural world.

COME & BE RETREAT

Sat, March 30
Tau Center in Kirkwood, 9am-2pm
Join us as we come together to experience contemplative engagement, dwelling in the present moment, and prayer as intimacy with Divine Mystery. The cost is $20 per person, $30 per couple. Registration is due by Mar 22. Contact Sister Renita with questions or to register at srenita@fsolph.org or 314-965-3700, x102.

FARMERS MARKETS

Sat, Apr 20
Kirkwood Farmers Market, 10am-3pm
Join us for the Kirkwood Farmers’ Market Earth Day Celebration including Plant Sale!

DeSoto Farmers Market, 8am-Noon
We will see you Opening Day (Apr 20) at our booth under the pavilion at 520 N Main, as well as most Saturdays through October.

EARTH DAY

Mon, Apr 22
Meramec College Campus, 10am-1pm
Connect with us at our booth on campus

Tue, Apr 23
Annual Plant Sale at Tau Center, 6:30pm
We once again look forward to beginning the evening with an introspective film or speakers; followed by collaborative conversation and concluding with tomato and other plant startups from the Franciscan Farm. Watch our website or sign up for email blasts — send your address to info@fsolph.org.

SAVE THE DATE!

The Sisters’ Sunshine Gala & Reverse Raffle
Sat, July 20, Orlando’s Event Center
4300 Hoffmeister Ave, St Louis, MO
For sponsorship opportunities, please contact the Sisters at info@fsolph.org.

Symbolic Art at Tau Center
One piece of treasured art transferred in 1999 from our Motherhouse in Ferguson to the Tau Center in Kirkwood is the beautiful wooden sculpture hanging in the lobby. Like all good art, it invites each viewer to experience something different: its significant 9ft by 9ft size, the different hues of the wood, the beautifully carved figure. It’s easy to miss the small metal plaque that indicates the sculpture is in memory of our Sisters Gabriel Sawicki and Bernadette Walas. They were killed in a head-on collision while returning to Humboldt, TN, from St Louis on March 21, 1972. They ministered as pharmacist and administrator, respectively, at a hospital our Community owned there. The loss of these two Sisters was heartbreaking for our congregation and for their families. Knowing in whose honor this sculpture was commissioned makes the first words on the cross, “Imitate Christ — serve in joy without counting the cost — LOVE because he first loved us,” all the more poignant.

No place too far, no service too humble, no person too lowly and do everything to the glory of God” are words from one of our foundresses, Mother Ernestine Matz. Though congregations and businesses didn’t talk about mission statements when we were founded in 1901, we look back now at the past 118 years and can clearly state that her words about place, service and people, have formed who we are and are part of our DNA as Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

The sculpture honors the Trinity by depicting the eye of God, the cross of Jesus, and the dove of the Holy Spirit. This was requested by Mother Genevieve Janata, our General Superior at the time of commission. An outstanding carving of St Francis finishes the piece with beauty. We follow St Francis of Assisi and like you, strive each day to live out the grace given to us when we were baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit! The next time you are in the St Louis area, give us a call to schedule a visit to Tau Center. As you enter, we hope you too appreciate this sculpture and the other symbols expressed throughout our peaceful space.

Please join us! There is no cost to attend:

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Our Lady of the Ridge Parish, 6:30-8pm
10859 Ridgeland Ave, Chicago Ridge, IL

To receive last minute updates and a reminder the week of the event, sign up to attend at www.fsolph.org/events

The Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help invite you and your friends to share in the second event in our “Paving Paths for Peace & All Good” series showing how the life of St Francis of Assisi is surprisingly relevant for all of us today. Our 2019 experience entitled Sharing a Picnic with St Francis and St Clare will teach us to:

• Celebrate special places
• Explore the importance of coming together for a meal
• Look to all of Creation for life’s lessons

Francis and Clare were both brought up in the Italian town of Assisi in the 13th-century. They gathered one day for a picnic that turned in to so much more. Please join our Franciscan Sisters as they examine the effects of the story of this celebrated gathering and lead in activities to help us apply its lessons to our lives.

PAVING PATHS FOR PEACE & ALL GOOD

AN EVENING OF LESSONS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY FROM ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Please join us! There is no cost to attend:

Mon, March 4 - Monroe, LA
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10859 Ridgeland Ave, Chicago Ridge, IL

To receive last minute updates and a reminder the week of the event, sign up to attend at www.fsolph.org/events

The Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help invite you and your friends to share in the second event in our “Paving Paths for Peace & All Good” series showing how the life of St Francis of Assisi is surprisingly relevant for all of us today. Our 2019 experience entitled Sharing a Picnic with St Francis and St Clare will teach us to:

• Celebrate special places
• Explore the importance of coming together for a meal
• Look to all of Creation for life’s lessons

Francis and Clare were both brought up in the Italian town of Assisi in the 13th-century. They gathered one day for a picnic that turned in to so much more. Please join our Franciscan Sisters as they examine the effects of the story of this celebrated gathering and lead in activities to help us apply its lessons to our lives.

PAVING PATHS FOR PEACE & ALL GOOD

AN EVENING OF LESSONS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY FROM ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI
Learn to pray with the eyes of the : 

Experiencing the Divine through Spiritual Art

Experience visio divina, a method of praying with sacred images, of allowing an image to be a window into God, a silent experience seeing what God sees.

We are excited to provide opportunities for visio divina this spring through a new presentation series to include illuminations of the Saint John’s Bible at the Cathedral Basilica of St Louis, and Franciscan icons at Tau Center in Kirkwood.

Saint John’s Bible – Tue, March 19, at 6:30pm
meet us at Cathedral Basilica of St Louis All Saints Chapel, 4431 Lindell Blvd
San Damiano Cross, Docile of Francis – Thu, May 9, at 6:30pm
at Tau Center, 335 S Kirkwood Rd

There is no cost to attend, but we ask that you RSVP.
Sign up today at fsolph.org/events,
or call (314) 965-3700.

For more information, contact nicole@fsolph.org