"You are our riches. You are enough for us."
— St. Francis of Assisi

Inside:
Sister Consilia & Mother Teresa
Celebrating the lives of Sisters Angelita, Carolyn & Rose Marie
So many photos!

www.fsolph.org  314-965-3700
Friends,

In October we celebrated our dear St Francis who lived in a time much like ours. Those years were laden with change in the Church, in society, in governments, with much economic disparity, senselessly hated, and with so many wounded spirits. He humbly entered into the messiness and wound of all of it, just like he saw Jesus do. He became the face of Christ in the world. Francis was joyful—not overwhelmed or despairing or blaming. He became part of the transformation as he prayed, “You are our riches. You are enough for us.”

We Sisters recognize we are part of a great shift and evolution happening now in God’s world. We know love is inviting this transformation. We know the experience of vulnerability and the suffering of all of it. We know, too, the truth of Teilhard de Chardin’s words, “The future belongs to those who give the next generation reason for hope.” Pope Francis went on, “The future has a name and its name is hope.”

St Francis who lived in a time much like our time (Laudato Si’), was Superior General of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Help. OurTau Assembly held June 18-25, was a response to our Chapter call to “embrace an emerging vision of religious life and re-imagine our structures, and to broaden our efforts as Franciscans for Earth” as we tend the heart of the world. We were called to deepen our Common Heart, to expand our mission through Franciscans for Earth and charitable giving, to enter more fully into the reality of a Global Sisterhood, to more intentionally enter into the emerging future of religious life and our specific future as a congregation.

We prayed, listened, laughed, discussed, sang, enjoyed a progressive lunch, waved to a drone, visited our Senior Sisters at Carberry Campus, thanked our Prayer Supporters, remembered our Sisters who “went home” since our last gathering, and were missioned to go forth lifting our hearts in a new song for Earth and God’s people.

Each day we had a Scripture verse to guide us, along with reflections from the Emmaus Retreat from Religious Life for our World, Creating Communities of Hope, by Maria Cizmpany, RSCJ.

Our time bore much fruit. We discerned to provide financial support for an indigenous community of Franciscan Sisters serving the poorest of the poor in Haiti. We responded to Pope Francis’s invitation to address the seven goals in the Laudato Si’ Action Platform. Our plan of action will be posted on our website and on the Laudato Si’ Action Platform site. We affirmed our call to be part of the Synod process and committed to providing a space of welcome and encounter for others to share their voice.

Tauf Assembly yielded these discussions and decisions, as well as several others. We are so grateful for our time together and appreciative of all the prayers put forth on our behalf by you, our supporters.

God bless you all! [Lifting Our Common Heart]

For the first time in several years, many of our Sisters gathered at Tau Center in St Louis this summer for Assembly.

Sister Stories: Sister Consilia
Getting to Know a Saint

Sister Consilia Buka, OFS, turned 94 this fall. Throughout those many years, Sister Consilia, like all of the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help (OLPH), met a multitude of wonderful people and helped souls in need from all parts of the world. One of her more remarkable series of encounters was with Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

According to her biography on Nobelpri.se.org, Mother Teresa was born in Macedonia in 1910. She joined the Sisters of Loreto in Dublin in 1938, and after only a few months training, was sent to India where she made first vows in 1931. She taught in a school run by her convent in Calcutta until 1948 when, noticing the poverty and suffering outside the convent walls, she received permission from her superiors to teach the poorest of the poor in the slums. By 1950, Mother Teresa received permission from the Holy See to start her own order, “The Missionaries of Charity,” whose primary mission was to love and care for those persons nobody was prepared to look after. In 1965, the Society became an International Religious Family by a decree of Pope Paul VI. Among the many honors she received, Mother Teresa was awarded the Pope John XXIII Peace Prize in 1971, and the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979. Within two years of her death in 1992, the process to declare her a saint began. Pope John Paul II issued a special dispensation to expedite her canonization. According to Britannica.com, “She was beatified on October 19, 2003, reaching the ranks of the blessed in what was then the shortest time in the history of the church. She was canonized by Pope Francis I on September 4, 2016.”

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OUR CHARISM: The Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help strive to be prayerful women of faith, prophetic vision and courage. Discerning God’s will within the Church, we dedicate our lives to witnessing the Gospel compassionately and joyfully.

OUR FRANCISCAN MISSION: To be a transforming presence in society through witnessing Gospel values. Faithful to our charism in the mission of the Church, we prophetically respond to the needs of contemporary society. As compassionate women alive in the spirit, we enable and empower others to live the Gospel with hope and joy.

Cont’d on page 5
THE SPIRIT OF COLLABORATION:
Sharing Wisdom From Lessons Learned & Discerned

Earlier this year, Sister Renita was asked by the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) to write an article for their Engaging Aging newsletter. She was challenged to share with other religious communities the story of our transformation. In the '90s, we transitioned from the traditional Motherhouse model, to living in community with others and trusting the medical care of our Senior Sisters to professionals within a collaborative agreement with the Archdiocese.

Many religious communities are facing difficult decisions these days and can benefit from lessons learned by others. Most are seeing growing numbers of aging members requiring more care than can be safely provided by the diminished numbers of able-bodied sisters and brothers. Aging facilities are often not accessible, and costs to make them so can be prohibitive. Communities are faced with addressing concerns of property upkeep and issues of aging, especially as costs for this upkeep day-to-day living expenses, and needed medical care continue to rise.

Enter NRRO, an office of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, based in Washington DC. Practicing Catholics may recognize this group from the annual collection during Masses for the “Retirement Fund for Religious.” NRRO sponsors this drive and then distributes the donations to religious institutions in need through financial assistance grants, along with education on planning for retirement needs and realistic asset allocation.

According to www.usccb.org, “the National Religious Retirement Office and the Retirement Fund for Religious are sponsored by the Conference of Major Superiors of Women Religious, Leadership Conference of Women Religious (the group to which we belong), and United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.”

The Holy Spirit helped the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help begin to address the realities of an aging membership and Motherhouse way back in the '90s. What started out as simple questions became a re-imagined reality through discernment, which has turned out to be positive in so many measurable and immeasurable ways.

“The General Chapter of 1990 led us to places of challenge and hope that we could not have imagined. After extensive prayer, study, and discussion, we committed to discernment as our way of life. We also embarked on a Motherhouse Futures Project to assess our current and future retirement needs, and to determine how we could better use the resource of our Motherhouse for mission.”

Sister Renita shared the journey that was “full of surprises, re-imaging, letting go, and re-engaging our mission” in an 8-page article in the Fall 2022 edition of Engaging Aging. The full article can be found at www.usccb.org/offices/national-religious-retirement-office/publications.

Sister Renita shares that trusting the Holy Spirit, and establishing a few “non-negotiables” from the beginning to guide the process turned out to be invaluable. Those non-negotiables were: transparency, communication, and engagement with all our Sisters; collaboration with others as the way to use our resources for mission; faith in the discernment process; and finally, we would never shrink from “difficult decisions.” In the end, after much discernment and God’s providence, we experienced five monumental changes. First, the Motherhouse and its grounds were sold and leveled to make way for a much needed public high school. Second, a collaborative agreement was made with the St Louis Archdiocese to provide all levels of care for our Sisters at Cardinal Ritter Senior Services with Board representation. Third, our deceased Sisters were moved to a special section at Resurrection Cemetery of the St Louis Archdiocese. Fourth, our Sisters moved into apartments and small rental houses and joined local parishes to be a presence among the people they served. And finally, fifth, we established Tau Center in Kirkwood with offices, archives, gathering space and our spiritual heritage art.

We hope that sharing our experiences will help other communities find hope, the strength, and a direction for the future. As Sister Renita shared in her article, “In so many ways, this move thirty years ago transformed us and provided new avenues of being a transforming Gospel presence with and for others.”

According to Sister Consilia, her actions were beautiful, and “her silence spoke more than words could ever say.”

In June of 1999, Cardinal Carberry of the Archdiocese of St Louis opened the General Chapter Meeting of the Franciscan Sisters-OLPH. At that time, he told Mother Consilia that he had invited Mother Teresa to minister to the poor of the poor in North St Louis City. He was picking her up at the airport the next day.

When Mother Teresa’s Missionaries of Charity arrived, they opened a soup kitchen in the Jeff-Vanderlou neighborhood. In the spirit of collaboration, our Franciscan Sisters were among many who assisted them. For years, Sister Consilia and others would take the Missionary Sisters nonperishable food items on Sunday afternoons. Sister Modesta gathered clothing for them to distribute. Missionaries of Charity would visit us Sisters’ Motherhouse in Ferguson to pick apples from the orchard. Quite often, our Franciscan Sisters would provide them with fresh breads and rolls, and Sister Consilia made the deliveries.

She described that three Missionary of Charity Sisters shared a very small apartment on Bacon Street. It had the most simple furnishings and rolled up pads for beds. On one such visit, Mother Teresa was helping others to scrub the floor. Sister Consilia was awed by the humility Mother Teresa modeled and the sense of poverty she imbued within her Missionary Sisters.

Their last meeting occurred when Mother Teresa was visiting her Sisters in St Louis on the occasion of her Jubilee in 1981. Many of our Sisters, including Sister Consilia, attended a special Mass of celebration at what is now St Teresa and Blessed Francis in North St Louis City. Sister Consilia was able to speak briefly with Mother Teresa following her presentation at the end of Mass.

The black and white photo on page 3 was taken the first time the Congregational Leaders met, by award-winning St Louis photographer Richard C Finke. Finke captured images for the St Louis Review for more than 30 years. This photo is now part of the St Louis Archdiocese archives and is used here with permission.

Sister Consilia was recently contacted by the Missionary of Charity Sisters as they work to establish the Mother Teresa of Calcutta Center (MTC). The Center aims to promote and support authentic knowledge of, and devotion to, Mother Teresa by the study, development and dissemination of her work, spirituality and message. They wish to include this photo in their archives and reached out to Sister Consilia to document her firsthand comments.

To learn more about MTC, visit www.mothertheresa.org.

We had a gorgeous day for our annual prayer service and rose ceremony at Resurrection Cemetery. A celebration meal with the Senior Sisters was a joyful event with smiles all around!

Inaugural Clergy Luncheon
We invited several St. Louis-area priests for a meet and greet meal. There was no real agenda — just the opportunity to gather around a table and get to know one another better.

Thank you to His Eminence Wilton Cardinal Gregory, friend of Sister Mary Kath, for celebrating the Eucharist.

Foundation Day 2022
2022 Jubilee
Sister Therese Herlage - 60 Yrs
Sister Joann Nowak - 60 Yrs
Sister Elizabeth Ann Hall - 50 Yrs
Sister Marlene Geppert - 60 Yrs
Sister Mary Anne Eckstein - 25 Yrs
Sister Marlene Geppert - 60 Yrs
Sister Connie Probst & Sister Mary Kathleen Craig - 50 Yrs
As Waterbear.com describes this film, ‘No matter how small, any one voice can make a world of difference...Never afraid to speak the harsh and terrifying truths of impending climate disaster, Greta is taking on the world for the ultimate cause.’ This film was produced by Jordan Hill.

**Tue, Mar 14, 6:30pm Central**

**Mar 14 FFE Eco-Speaker**

**Melissa Vatterott**

Policy Director, MO Coalition for the Environment

Melissa will share updates on this session of the Missouri Legislature as it relates to public health and the environment: answer questions, and provide ways to take action on bills that are moving. She has been involved with the Missouri Coalition for the Environment (MCE) for 10 years. She uses her law degree, a bachelor’s in environmental science, and a minor in agricultural economics to lead the MCE’s policy department. She works with federal, state, and local elected officials and agencies to address environmental justice and health equity issues impacting Missouri.

**Tue, May 9, 6:30pm Central**

**May FFE Eco-Film & Discussion**

**My Octopus Teacher**

"What she taught me is that we are a part of this place...There’s a huge difference." My Octopus Teacher, the true story of Craig Foster and his underwater friend, was directed by Pippa Erlich and James Reed. It won Best Documentary Feature at 2021’s Academy Awards. This film was the feel-good choice as it portrayed the filmmaker forging an unusual friendship with an octopus living in a South African kelp forest. We learn along with him as a young octopus displays remarkable curiosity and shares the mysteries of her world. Visiting her den and tracking her movements for months on end, he eventually wins the animal’s trust and they develop this never before seen bond between human and wild animal. Reflecting on her lessons changes his life for the better.

**Tue, Apr 11, 6:30pm Central**

**FEB FFE Eco-Film & Discussion**

**The Letter**

Laudato Si’ Movement’s film on the encyclical and the unfolding ecological emergency - starring John Franckis.

In October, ‘YouTube Originals released this grand documentary telling the story of the encyclical letter and the unfolding ecological emergency. It’s the fruit of a few years of work of Laudato Si’ Movement in partnership with Off the Fence (Oscar-winning producers of My Octopus Teacher) and the Vatican.

Pope Francis is the film’s star, and he generously spent time during the production, sharing his deep wisdom. Other voices are also featured, representing the perspectives of the ecological crisis: a teenage youth activist from India, an indigenous leader from the Amazon, a climate refugee from Senegal, and scientists from Hawaii. Be touched by the touching stories of Richarda, Chief Dada, Arouna, and Robin and Greg—all real-life heroes in and outside the film. Their in-person dialogue with the Pope was priceless. As the film powerfully explains, "the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor are growing increasingly desperate. Droughts, floods, wildfires, hurricanes, deforestation—they all keep getting worse and worse.”

**Access our YouTube Channel for past Speaker events!**

**NOV FFE Eco-Speaker Series - Successes & Stalls**

**St Barbara Jennings**

Environmental, Social, & Governance; the moral impact of your investments

Can your investments make a real difference? Recent studies on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) issues are showing definite impacts on corporations and their bottom lines, and for the bottom lines of the investor.

This discussion will not only focus on the moral impact of investing, but also on how you are saving money in the short and long term. You will learn why most Investor Services are now offering ESG choices, and how you and future generations will benefit. We will see why ESG is here to stay...and how you can make a difference.

Sister Barbara was born in St. Louis and is a member of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. Her impressive and diverse resume includes education and social justice, and ministering for a dozen years at Midwest Coalition for Responsible Investment (MCR) where she monitored the shareholder activity of members in large companies. Barbara recently completed a year as interim chancellor at Fontbonne University; now her dream is to guide the University further into Socially Responsible Investment and ESG curriculum.

**Leaders & Laggards**

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**Jan, 10, 6:30pm Central**

**JAN FFE Eco-Film & Discussion**

**Francesco: The Film**

Director Evgeny Afinevsky was given unprecedented access to the Vatican & Pope Francis himself to make this moving documentary.

According to Vimeo, “FRANCESCO is a generous, hopeful, and moving film for and about all of us. At a time when we need a bold, new vision and visionary leadership to inspire us to build a better, healthier and more equitable future—one that can be shared widely now and for generations to come. The film touches on the pandemic, police violence, racism, border walls, migration and refugees, LGBTQ, women’s empowerment, sexual abuse and much more of today’s headlines. This film takes an honest look at the most pressing challenges at this moment in time and examines how we might take action to transition into a new way of living and thriving in the 21st century.”

**Tue, Feb 14, 6:30pm Central**

**Feb FFE Eco-Film & Discussion**

**Greta Thunberg: Rebel with a Cause**

Join us on Waterbear.com as we follow Greta’s incredible true story from lone teenage rebel to international revolutionary icon.
Our Sisters gather at Tau Center after participating in the “Forgive Us Our Trespasses” Prayer Service & Maafa Procession sponsored by the Archdiocesan Office of Racial Harmony. In June, Archbishop Mitchell Rozanski joined other faith leaders in acknowledging the Church’s participation in slavery with education, testimony, and prayer under the Arch.

Thank you to everyone who has supported us through our recent appeals, through Memberships of Prayer and other donations, and with memorial gifts & bequests. You make our Mission possible—you are always in our prayers!

7 ways to help us further our Gospel Mission:
1. Call/email us with contact info. We always love to hear from you and are working to update our mailing list with email addresses and phone numbers.
2. Change to Amazon Smile. Update your regular Amazon account and designate the Franciscan Sisters of our Lady of Perpetual Help as your beneficiary. Every time you shop, Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase price to the Sisters.
3. In lieu of funeral flowers, send a Perpetual Membership of Prayer. Members share in the graces of a monthly Mass intention for all of our Sisters. For this $25 donation, a family can send the acknowledgment to family members and include them in prayer. You may even be able to deduct the gift from your taxes—consult your financial advisor to determine your specific situation.

For more information, leave a voicemail with your contact information for Sister Connie at (314) 965-3700, x109, or email sconnie@fslph.org.

Until we meet again...

This summer, we tearfully bid farewell to three of our Sisters who were called Home. Memorial gifts may be made to help the Community provide for the health care needs of Sisters. To leave a memorial or share a story, visit www.fslph.org, or leave a voicemail at (314) 965-3700, ext 109, with your contact information for a call back.

Sister Angelita Laws, OSF
1941–2022
Let them be concerned to serve, love, adore and honor God, as best they can, with a single heart and a pure mind.
— Third Order Rule 7
Sister Angelita Laws, as best she could, embodied these words of our Third Order Rule. Her single-heartedness was lovingly expressed as the middle child in a large Catholic family in Monroe, Louisiana. From an early age she desired to belong, to help others, to give herself to God, and to include everyone in her love. By God’s grace she became a Franciscan Sister of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Sister Angelita soon discovered a natural ability to teach, and was especially skilled at teaching math. Her love of teaching touched the lives of thousands of children in Louisiana, West Virginia, Missouri, Ohio, Illinois, and Texas. Her last assignments were teaching math in a correctional facility, in an alternative high school, and in a special residential children’s home — all in her beloved Louisiana. Sister Angelita kept it simple. She lived her vows. She loved her students. She witnessed God’s “elastic” love as she affirmed each person, no matter the size, personality, skill, religion, or culture. Wherever she was in ministry, she served with joy. She always knew how and when to wash feet. Her combination of heart and mind brought her a profound respect and care for Creation. No weed or trash was safe when she walked the neighborhood. Anywhere she walked, greater beauty was left behind. Despite challenging health issues in recent months, Sister Angelita continued to smile, to obey, to serve with single-heartedness. July 1, 2022, the day after celebrating 60 years of faithful religious life with her Franciscan Sisters and her family, she went home to God; whom she so faithfully had loved and served.

Sister Carolyn Muzr, OSF
1930–2022
The manifestation of the Holy Spirit is given for the sake of the common good.
— 1 Cor 12:7
Our dear Sister Carolyn Muzr, who made her journey home on July 18, 2022, was filled with the zeal of the Lord. She was a spirited woman whose circle of influence and service was expansive and inclusive. She was an educator at heart, always able to draw forth from others their best gifts for the sake of the common good. Whether a teacher at Little Flower Academy in Louisiana, a director of formation for young women becoming Sisters, the Minister General of the congregation, a massage therapist, the developer of a program to serve Bosnian refugees, a member of a delegation traveling to Lithuania to help religious rebuild after Soviet occupation, an advocate with those who are poor, a member on a county park board, or a teacher of drama and journalism at Maniscal College, Sister Carolyn was an innovator, a promoter of community, and an agent of transformation. Her passion for life was rooted in her Polish heritage and her vocation as a Franciscan Sister of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. In every age there are prophets whose foresight and vision prepare people for the events that shape the future of the world and God’s reign. Sister Carolyn was such a prophet, who fearlessly and faithfully proclaimed the joy and justice of the Gospel. Just before her death Sister Carolyn smiled, and said, “I have no fears, no regrets, only a heart full of gratitude.” Her Franciscan spirit was free and ready for eternal life in the fullness of God’s love. She had done what was mine to do.

Sister Rose Marie Przybylowicz, OSF 1939–2022
A dear friend whom Sister Rose Marie accompanied through death often prayed “God, when you are ready call me; when you call me, let me be ready.” This prayer became her prayer the last two weeks of her life. God called Sister Rose Marie sooner than she anticipated, on September 9, 2022. Her plans for retirement and moving back to St Louis and celebrating her 60th Jubilee were all in place. She was ready to enjoy tending her flowers and being with her Sisters in Community. Then, the Lord called. Though surprised by Sister Death approaching so soon, she was ready and like St Francis said, “I’ve done what was mine to do.” Indeed she did. Sister Rose Marie, who was from Dayton, Ohio, and so proud of her Polish heritage, was a Math teacher par excellence. She shared analytical mind with her exceptional organizational skills, her attention to details, and her deep sense of commitment, were readily recognized and soon led to other major responsibilities. She served seven years in key positions at St Francis Rehabilitation Hospital in Green Springs, Ohio; 14 years as Treasurer General of the congregation; and 16 years as Administrative Assistant with the Glenmary Home Missioners. She also served as consultant for national organizations like the National Association of Treasurers of Religious Institutes. She was key in creating CACE, Corporate Action for Care of the Elderly, in St Louis which was the beginning of Cardinal Ritter Senior Services. Above all, Sister Rose Marie loved being a Franciscan Sister of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. She served on many committees and loved to bake for her Sisters. Her well worn Bible with an embossed leather cover of Assisi, was filled with post it note messages from retreats and spiritual directors. The messages reveal her deep desire to accept and surrender to God’s profound love. Thank you Sister Rose Marie for being God’s handiwork and surrendering to His love.

The earthly remains of all of our Franciscan Sisters are laid to rest in a special plot at Resurrection Cemetery, 6901 MacKenzie Rd, St Louis

THROUGH THESE DOORS
When we were in our Motherhouse in Ferguson, these glass doors with the Franciscan Tau cross, opened into our beautiful chapel. Today they welcome guests into our Assisi Gathering Room in Kirkwood, Missouri. The Tau door handles are worn by the touch of hundreds of our Sisters over many years. Each time we touch the Tau, we sense the spirit of our Sisters and God’s continuing blessing and presence.
Save our common home! To receive this via email, or to be removed from the list, please send your contact information with your specific request to info@fsolph.org

The Franciscan Sisters wish you hope & peace this holiday season!

Joy to the World!

You are invited to join us for our Annual Benefit Nativity Display at Tau Center
Sat, Dec 17 & Sun, Dec 18 – Noon to 5pm

Celebrate the true meaning of Christmas, and help those who are poor stay warm this winter! Experience this Franciscan tradition the weekend of Dec 17-18. Dozens of unique creches from diverse cultures will be displayed between Noon and 5pm at Tau Center. Suggested donation of $5/household or a new/gently used blanket are appreciated. Children under 12 must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Use covered entrance on East side. Call (314) 965-3700 from lot to use accessible entrance on Southwest corner. Groups over 10, please call ahead.

Good tidings of comfort and joy!