



THE MESSENGER

of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, Kansas



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the *fruits* of their labor

The young women seem to have just one thing in common: They knew very little about the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia before they came to spend time here as volunteers.

Well, yes, all but one are teenagers, and all Catholic. But they came from Red Lodge, Mont., Battle Creek, Mich., Shawnee, Kan., and Benque Viejo Del Carmen, Belize.

Even the two from Concordia were not all

that familiar with the sisters who live here.

Seventeen-year-old Kate Jones is candid about her reasons for finding a place to volunteer for the summer: "I wanted to have something to do and to get out of Red Lodge, Mont.," she explains with a laugh.

In the city of 2,500 in central Montana just north of the Wyoming state line, many of her friends spend their summers "just doing the same things we always

See VOLUNTEERS, page 14



To learn more

Virtually everywhere you find the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, you also find volunteers working side by side with them.

In fact, at any given time there are individuals of all ages donating their time at the Nazareth Motherhouse and Neighbor to Neighbor in Concordia, through a community program of St. Mary's Spirituality Center in Silver City, N.M., as board members of the Center for Enriched Communication in Grand Junction, Colo., and with sisters serving in El Paso, Texas, Atlanta, Ga., Hays, Kan., and more than a dozen other cities and towns.

Some men and women give an hour a week; others are able to donate a year or more. And every donation of time, however long, is precious.

Sister Christine Doman can answer all your questions and provide information. You can reach her at 915/532-7452 or cdoman@csjkansas.org.

Kate Jones, right, and Ciara Malone show off the berries they are picking in the Motherhouse garden in July.

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Christmas already? Save the date for special event

The Sisters of St. Joseph have a special gift in mind for all the organizations and agencies that work with us throughout the year — but the gifts actually depend on your generosity.

The annual Christmas Open House at the Motherhouse has been expanded to include a "Christmas Tree Lane," in which a dozen local nonprofit organizations will decorate trees that will then be sold at a

silent auction. Each organization will keep the proceeds from its tree, along with any other donations received during the public

See TREES, Page 12.

A lesson learned from a little girl dancing

Dear Friends,
As I anticipate the coming months, I'm mindful of this simple poem by the ancient Persian poet Rumi. It seems to be addressed especially to us during this time.

Summer closes and the generous season of autumn begins. Yet before I write to you again, it will already be winter and the great feasts of Thanksgiving and Christmas will be past.

We are entering the seasons when the earth itself hunkers down in the process of generating new life. For the earth these are seasons of silence, darkness and mystery.

For we humans, they are the seasons of Thanksgiving and Christmas. Thanksgiving is that feast honoring earth's sharing of its richness with us — it is a feast for family gatherings, for remembering all the gifts received over generations and here and now. Christmas, another family feast, is one for remembering God's generous sharing of the Word made flesh — not just 2,000 years ago, but still here and now. Both of these feasts are reason for deep gratitude and rejoicing.

Yet in the midst of these celebrations, we can become overwhelmed by the myriad details of daily life and the larger arena of global struggle — the tragedies of war and conflict and family members and friends facing danger in far-off places, the natural disasters whose sud-

Sit down and be quiet.

You are drunk.

And this is the edge of the roof.

— Rumi (1207-1273)

den onslaught destroys our homes and work places and the never-ending litany of news that can grind us down.

The 10th anniversary of 9/11 lives vividly in our memories. That watershed event, which brought us to the understanding that our world is a

dangerous place, has created a national psyche of fear and a stance of defensiveness. That and economic uncertainties have made us a people longing for peace.

And into this culture of anxiety we insert the feasts of Thanksgiving and Christmas.

It's easy to feel life and light seep from our spirits.

We stand at the edge of the roof, drunk with the cacophony of daily life, staggering unsteadily under its demands, and the poet advises us to sit down and be quiet.

We often think that if we could just work harder and faster we would gain that quiet,

A message from
Sister Marcia Allen,
president of the
Sisters of St. Joseph
of Concordia



that peace. But the poet's advice is to quit all that and just sit down and be quiet. What will happen if I take that advice?

It seems to me that when I quiet myself I remember the God-center that is seeded in me and in all others. In the quiet I can remember my purpose and recover the joy in life.

I sober up. I step back from the edge

of the roof. I return to my true self. Perspective returns.

Gratitude wells up in my heart, gratitude for all of life and the strength and courage to embrace it all. Light returns with the life. I can see with greater clarity what is most important and focus on that. I can meet the joys of life and life's tragedies with compassion and heartfelt realism.

All this in just one moment of quiet. I recently attended the Peace Fair (see story on Page 11) celebrating the International Day of Peace. The program began with a musician who taught us to sing "This Little Light of Mine." Such a simple song, too simplistic for the sophisticated audience!

But there was a little girl, right there in the front row, singing that song for the very first time. As the song continued she was soon clapping and then dancing, completely enveloped in the rhythm and the melody. The child was totally alive in the music and every bit of her life was light for those around her. For those few moments she created for those of us who witnessed her an oasis of quiet that brought us back from the edge of the roof.

My hope for all of us these seasons is that we will find in the great feasts we celebrate oases of quiet, beauty, peace and joy that pull us back from the edge of the roof so we can all enjoy the Feast of Life.

Development notes from Sister Jean

We are grateful to our Development Advisory Board for the service they generously give to us. The current board members are Laurita Berland



and Gwyn Johnson, both of Abilene, Kan.; Brandon Vering of Greenleaf, Kan.;

Gene Pestinger of Beloit, Kan.; and Tim Gottschalk of Belleville, Kan. Tim's article (at right) shares some of the discussion at our last meeting regarding the benefits to both the donor and the recipient of giving gifts of grain. Thank you, Tim!

Sister Marquita Murguia, at age 90, is involved in a new ministry that somehow found her. We thought you would enjoy reading about it (also at right).

We are always mindful that our stories are really your stories. We could not do what we do without your friendship and support. Our hearts continue to grow in gratitude and humility for your belief in us. Thank you!

You can reach me at:
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A gift that truly says 'Kansas'

Grain donations benefit both giver & recipient

By TIM GOTTSCHALK

If you are an operating farmer, take some time to explore the option of giving grain directly to the Sisters of St. Joseph or another charity or tax exempt organization.

Charitable gifts of commodities can be made by all types of farmers, including those who operate as sole proprietors, partnerships, corporations or landlords with a crop-share lease agreement.

Most of us think of charitable contributions as what we give in cash, of course. But cash gifts are exposed to myriad taxes before the money is available to your organization while grain donations are not.

When you donate bushels

instead of the cash for the sale of those bushels:

► The value of the donated grain is not included on Schedule F.

► Expenses related to the production of that grain stay on Schedule F in the year paid.

► Federal, state and self-employment tax are not paid on the value of the donated grain.

► Your yield records are unaffected by a gift of grain, preserving your baseline for years to come.

But remember, there is not a charitable contribution deduction for donated grain because no income is recognized on the donation.

To receive the tax breaks and comply with tax code,



there must be a gift of the commodity to the charitable organization with that organization taking on the risks and rewards of ownership of the grain.

The simplest way to accomplish a gift of bushels is this: When you take your crop to your grain buyer, you tell that company how much of the grain you want put into an account for the Sisters of St. Joseph or another charity. The grain buyer then notifies the charity, which can decide whether to sell immediately or hold onto the bushels until some later date.

One other consideration that should not be overlooked is that if you have given a security interest in your crop to a bank, you will need to get

To download a sample "Letter from a Producer Regarding a Gift of Grain," go to www.csjkansas.org/donations/

a partial release from them in order to have clear title to the grain you wish to give away.

Remember, making gifts of commodities to charitable organizations is relatively easy once you've sorted through the qualifying rules that are typically different for each type of farmer.

Certainly, you need to discuss this option with a tax advisor before jumping in with both feet, but the idea of donating grain over cash seems a wise one for both the charity and you, the donor.

— Tim Gottschalk, CPA, is with Gottschalk & Company, CPAs, LLC. He lives in Belleville, Kan., and is a member of the Development Advisory Board.

Ministry replaces thoughts of retirement

When Sister Marquita Murguia turned 90, she breathed a sigh of relief and said, "I am sure I can retire now." With a laugh she continues, "But God said 'No, you can't.'" And with that, her new ministry "just fell into my lap."

Sister Marquita has a good friend who is in a nursing home near where she lives in El Paso, Texas, and she goes faithfully every Sunday to visit.



One Sunday, as Sister Marquita was leaving, a woman wheeled herself down the hall and stopped right in front of her. The woman asked her if she was a nun. When Sister Marquita answered "yes," the woman pleadingly asked if she would pray for her daughter. Sister Marquita assured her that she would and added, "Why

don't we pray for her right now?" She took the woman's

hands and prayed for her daughter. Then Sister Marquita visited with her a little more before leaving for the day.

What Sister Marquita didn't know was that others were watching. The next Sunday when she came, people were waiting for her. Could she pray with them?

The need was so great that she now goes to the nursing home two days a week simply to visit and pray with people. She prays with as many as 15 people a day.

The residents and their visitors stop her wherever she

is — she prays in the hallways, dining room, TV room, anywhere! Most requests are for ill family members or special needs.

"I find such joy in this new ministry," says Sister Marquita. "There are several people who have outlived family and friends... there is literally no one to visit them. What a privilege it is that God invited me into their lives! Now, at 90, rather than thinking I should be retired, I concentrate on how blessed I am to have the health and ability to do this new work."

Mailing Label Update

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To err is human...

An article in the July 2011 issue of The Messenger contained an error. In a synopsis of the history of the Nazareth Motherhouse, we wrote "there haven't been schoolgirls here since 1922, when the Academy moved to Salina as part of what would become Marymount College." Nazareth Academy did, in fact, move to Salina as part of the new Marymount College in 1922. But in 1954 the Sisters of St. Joseph opened an "apostolic school" — designed as a high school for girls interested in entering religious life — at the Motherhouse. That school continued through 1968.

Our thanks to Sherry McCune of Kansas City (who graduated from the apostolic school in 1962) for bringing the error to our attention.



GROWING A NEW CROP OF HOPE

Sisters help tiny community's farmers come together to help themselves

In one of the poorest states in Brazil and one of the poorest municipalities (or townships) in that state, the village of Sítio is the poorest community. The 25 farm families there are only 15 kilometers, or a little over 9 miles, from Guaribas — a city about the size of Concordia that is the heart of the municipality — but they are isolated by a lack of roads, little education and ever-present poverty.



SISTER AUGUSTA MENDES BISPO

More than 10 years ago the city and its surrounding villages — including Sítio — were ranked at the bottom of the Human Development Index for all of Brazil and the federal government promised to make the area a priority for economic growth.



SISTER ANTONIETA FERREIRA DE ARAÚJO

But little attention had been paid to the region in the ensuing years, either from the state capital in Teresina — some 435 miles to the northeast — or from the even more distant national capital of Brasilia. The farmers in Sítio have learned not to rely on their government at any level for help.

Instead, they rely on themselves — and on the two Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, Kan., who

live and serve in Guaribas.

Earlier this year, Sisters Augusta Mendes Bispo and Antonieta Ferreira de Araújo took part in a community meeting to consider economic possibilities that could change their lives.

One idea that garnered strong support was a community garden, which would take advantage of their farming skills, allow them to work together and provide additional income when they sell their produce.

Farmers who had a good spring on their land donated the space for the garden, and 10 families signed up to be part of the project. Then they were able to obtain a small grant — literally seed money — to get the garden going.

Technical assistance comes from Sebastião Rodrigues da Cruz Filho of the Institute of Technical Assistance and Rural Extension for the State of Piauí. He goes to the garden once a week to visit with the families who are working there, and the gardeners and sisters meet with him once a month



Gardening expert Sebastião Rodrigues da Cruz Filho of the Institute of Technical Assistance and Rural Extension for the State of Piauí stops by once a week to visit with the families who are working there.

to talk over the work they've begun and how to become better with it. They also talk about their difficulties and how to overcome them.

By July the land had begun to produce vegetables and greens, and you could see the joy of the families involved as they worked in their garden. With just a little help they know they will be able to better their lives. This project has given hope to this tiny community.

— Information for this article was provided by Sister Antonieta Ferreira de Araújo

'After 51 years as a priest, it's a blessing that I will be here'



Father Jim Hoover poses for a photograph in Lourdes Park just days before he began his new duties as Motherhouse chaplain.

Longtime friend, Father Jim Hoover, begins service as Motherhouse chaplain

For Father Jim Hoover, becoming chaplain at the Nazareth Motherhouse is the natural next step in a lifelong connection to the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia.

"Since I was born, the sisters have been part of my life," says the 77-year-old native of Junction City. "I was taught by them, I worked with them, I've ministered with them, I've prayed with them."

And on Aug. 16, he began celebrating Mass with them in the Sacred Heart Chapel at the Motherhouse, succeeding Father Jack Schlaf, who has retired after five years as chaplain.

Father Jim definitely does not see his new role as a step toward retirement.

"I always said I would never retire," he says with a laugh. "I would die of boredom."

Instead, he sees the chaplaincy as a new opportunity to serve God and the women who have always been a part of his life.

He was born the youngest of three children, to parents who were

active Catholics in the rural Junction City area. His mother Josephine had attended the school run by the Sisters of St. Joseph there, and even boarded at the convent during the school week.

Jim and his siblings attended St. Xavier School in Junction City, and were taught by the sisters there.

His older sister Dorothy had already entered the Sisters of St. Joseph, providing one more connection to the

congregation. (Today, Sister Dorothy is one of the sisters who live at the Motherhouse after retiring from active ministry.)

Jim was ordained a priest in 1960, and was headed toward becoming a canon lawyer when he discovered his love of ministering one-on-one with people in need.

"I know now I could never have taken the path to canon law," he says.

Father Jack returns to Colorado

Father Jack Schlaf has retired after five years as chaplain at the Nazareth Motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia.

He has returned to Fort Collins, Colo., where he lived for a year before coming to Concordia. Before that, the 72-year-old Nebraska native had served his entire priesthood in the Grand Island (Neb.) Diocese.

Father Jack celebrated his final Mass at the Motherhouse on Monday, Aug. 15, the Assumption of Mary. Traditionally, this was a date on which many of the Sisters of St. Joseph entered the congregation.

Father Jack also served throughout the Concordia area, filling in when needed at the parishes in Belleville, Munden and Cuba, Kan., and ministering to the Sisters of St. Joseph at Mount Joseph Senior Village.



FATHER JACK SCHLAF



After a Peace Walk around the circular paths of Lourdes Park on the Motherhouse grounds Sept. 18, five orange-robed monks from the Buddhist Temple of Salina chant their prayers as the other walkers pause for silent reflection and prayer.



RIGHT: Children taking part in the Sept. 18 Peace Fair had a chance to make miniature "Peace Poles."

FAR RIGHT: Patrick Sieben, music director at Cloud County Community College and a member of the Concordia Year of Peace Committee, entertains the crowd Sept. 18 as he teaches them the words to "A Little Piece of the Peace."



A September day to celebrate *Peace*

It was a peaceful day at the Nazareth Motherhouse Sept. 18 as discussions, songs and prayer-filled rooms throughout the building in celebration of the International Day of Peace.

2011 marks the 30th anniversary of the commemoration established by the United Nations, explained Sister Esther Pineda, director of the Justice and Peace Center in Salina and one of the major organizers of the afternoon Peace Fair. So it seemed appropriate, she said, to look at a broad range of issues that have peace and nonviolence at their core. Those topics ranged from telling the children taking part how they can write letters or emails to "pen pals" around the world to a discussion of a 2010 documentary about nuclear proliferation.

The program was sponsored by the Justice and Peace Center, which is a ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia; Pax Christi of Salina; and the Concordia Year of Peace Committee.

The Year of Peace, in fact, was a prominent part of the afternoon's program. Patrick Sieben, Cloud County Community College music director and a member of the Year of Peace Committee, helped get the activities started by teaching the audience the words to "A Little Piece of the Peace," which he wrote as part of launching the Year of Peace idea in September 2009.

There was also a breakout session where other

Year of Peace committee members — including Sue Sutton and Sisters Jean Rosemarynoski, Julie Christensen, Anna Marie Broxterman and Mary Jo Thummel — talked about all the various projects over the past two years and the impact they have had on Concordia.

In another breakout session, Janet Hansen of Pax Christi showed a portion of the film "The Forgotten Bomb," which looks at the damage done by the nuclear blasts in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, in 1945, and at nuclear weapons today.



Sister Mary Jo Thummel, left, shows a "Year of Peace" button to Sister Marilyn Wall as part of a presentation Sept. 18 about Concordia's Year of Peace projects.

In the third breakout session, Phil Holman-Hebert, who owns and operates Sweetlove Farm in Oskaloosa, Kan., discussed "Peace in Family Life" and what he and his family have done to live without damaging the environment.

Meanwhile, the children taking part had a chance to create miniature "Peace

Poles" decorated with the words "May peace prevail around the world" in different languages. Sister Carm Thibault of Salina organized the crafts project.

The formal activities ended with a Peace Walk to Lourdes Park, on the Motherhouse grounds, where five monks from the Buddhist Temple of Salina chanted their prayers. After walking along the circular paths of the park, the participants paused in silent prayer or reflection as the monks completed their chanting.

The Sunday afternoon ended with an ice cream

If there is to be peace in the world,
There must be peace in the nations.



If there is to be peace in the nations,
There must be peace in the cities.

If there is to be peace in the cities,
There must be peace between neighbors.

If there is to be peace between neighbors,
There must be peace in the home.

If there is to be peace in the home,
There must be peace in the heart.

— Lao Tzu
Founder of Taoism (570-490 BC)

social in the Motherhouse dining room, hosted by the Sisters of St. Joseph.

The Motherhouse has hosted International Day of Peace ceremonies for the past few years, but this is the first year for a "Peace Fair" involving the entire family, said Sister Esther.

The United Nations established the International Day of Peace in 1981, and the first Peace Day was celebrated in September 1982. Since 2002, it has been observed on Sept. 21, which the U.N. has declared as a day of global ceasefire and nonviolence.

Two women welcomed at annual 'Information Day'

The "agrégée team" played host Sept. 17 to two women who wanted to learn more about this form of religious life offered only by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia.

The women came from Douglasville, Ga., and WaKeeney, Kan.

Team members Sisters Bette Moslander, Pat McLennon and Rosabel Flax were joined in the five-hour presentation by other sisters, both agrégée and canonically vowed, and three of the five current agrégée candidates.

The term agrégée — pronounced *ah-gre-ZHEY* — comes from the French for "attached to" or "aggregated with." It is a form of membership in the religious congregation that dates back to our founding in 17th-century France, when Sisters of St. Joseph were either canonically vowed "principal sis-

ters" or agrégée or "country" sisters. The Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia re-established — and revitalized — this form of religious life in 2006.

Today there are six women who have professed the vow of fidelity to God and to the congregation as agrégées. Another four are in varying stages of the process of deciding if this form of religious life fits them and their spiritual needs.

"Agrégée Information Day" at the Nazareth Motherhouse was designed to allow more women to learn about this alternative. It also provided something of a crash course in the history of the Sisters of St. Joseph, and the mission and ministry of the sisters in Concordia. The two "inquirers" were not asked to make a commitment during the day, but they were encouraged to use the information as part of their process in discerning the next steps in their religious life.

Sister Bette Moslander, considered the author of the agrégée movement, talked about the deeper meaning of "Christian vocation" and her own experience of being called to religious life.

"The faith life is something more than doctrine or following rules," Sister Bette said in her presentation to the group. "It requires that we ask ourselves the

deeper questions: Who am I? Why am I here?"

"A Christian vocation is a personal yielding to God's love for us," she added. "It is not a *stage* in life — like married, single or religious; it is a *direction* in life. ..."

Sister Bette urged the two women to give careful thought and prayer to their next step.

"A Christian vocation is a risky undertaking," she said with a slight laugh. "Much is asked of you, as much was asked of the first disciples who followed Christ. But like those first disciples, it is a choice."

If either of the two women decide she wants to pursue agrégée membership in the congregation, she will make a formal commitment to enter into a period of study and discernment with a mentor. That period has generally been about three years.



Sister Bette Moslander, pictured at left, and Sister Rosabel Flax, above, were among the canonically vowed and agrégée sisters to give presentations during the annual "Agrégée Information Day" at the Nazareth Motherhouse Sept. 17.



If you want more information or have questions about the agrégée movement, contact Sister Bette Moslander 785/243-4428 bmoslander@mannahouse.org



Participants in the "survivors' lap" as part of the 2011 Cloud County Relay for Life included, from left, Sisters Lucy Schneider, Bette Moslander, Carolyn Teter, Janice Koelzer (seated), Carmel Garcia, Anne Martin Reinert, Jeanette Wasinger and Ramona Medina.

Annual Relay raises funds as well as cancer awareness

Sisters, staff, family and friends came together Sept. 10 and 11 for the annual 12-hour Cloud County Relay for Life.

The 22-member Nazareth Motherhouse team, led by captains Alfreda Maley and Sister Dorothy Marquez, joined scores of others from throughout Cloud County in the annual fundraiser for the American Cancer Society. This year's event was held at Concordia City Park.

The Motherhouse team raised \$4,597 this year through the sale of luminarias honoring cancer survivors and those who have died of the disease. Together, the half dozen or so teams that took part this year raised \$27,845. In 2010, the Concordia event raised \$29,900.

A long-distance très bien

Technology allows sister to teach French from her desk more than 750 miles away

The students studying French at Turtle Mountain Community High School in Belcourt, N.D., were only three weeks into their class, but there were a few words and phrases they already knew well:

*Très bien
Excellente
Fantastique*

In their 50-minute class each morning, they heard those repeatedly from Sister Regina Ann Brummel, sitting in front of her laptop computer roughly 750 miles away.

The 17 students in the French I class and Regina Ann are an experiment for the school on the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Reservation near the Canadian border.

Last year for the first time, the North Dakota Legislature added some specific classes to the high school graduation requirements: Now students must complete a year of a foreign language, a Native American language or a career and technical education course.

Spanish was already being offered at Turtle Mountain, as was a class in Mechif, a mixed language that is primarily based on French, Cree and Ojibwe with a little English thrown in. School officials also wanted to offer French — in large part because of the French influence on the native Mechif — but there were no instructors available for the relatively small school.

That's when Andrea Laverdure, a guidance counselor at Turtle Mountain High, asked Sister Regina Ann if

she would be interested.

Laverdure's mother, Betty, and Sister Regina Ann are longtime friends who have collaborated on a number of projects over the years. They met in 1975 when they both took part in the West African Ethnic Heritage Seminar; Betty Laverdure was the only Native American to join the group in its tour of West Africa and Sister Regina Ann had just started on the faculty of Marymount College teaching French.

Regina Ann, who has a master's degree in French from the University of Kansas plus a master's in international relations from the University of Denver and who taught at Marymount for five years, would eventually also earn a Ph.D. from the University of North Dakota in multicultural higher education.

One curious stumbling block to the plan to have her become the first video-teacher at Turtle Mountain, however, was that Regina Ann does not have a certificate to teach high school in North Dakota.

She's in the process of remedying that through a class at Kansas State University this term, and she'll follow that up with additional work at Newman University next year.

The next stumbling block, of course, was the technology.

Turtle Mountain is equipped with state-of-the-art video equipment — but the sisters' Administration Center, where Regina Ann has

her office, does not have the "bandwidth" (or computer speed) to accommodate it. So at a little after 8 each morning, Monday through Friday, she fires up the Skype video phone call software on her laptop and waits for her class to call from North Dakota.

A teacher aide at Turtle Mountain provides technical assistance on the north end of the video call, and at 8:15 students fill the small screen on top of Regina Ann's desk.

For the next 50 minutes, the students on this day practice a conversation about ordering coffee in a restaurant.

Their pronunciation is halting, but they are engaged as Regina Ann heaps continuous praise on their efforts: "*Très bien! Excellente! Fantastique!*" she exclaims, over and over. "*Répéter, s'il vous plait.*"

And each time they repeat, it's with a little more confidence.

"These are sounds they grew up hearing (in the Mechif language)," she says when the lesson is over for the day. "They didn't know there was so much French in it, but that's what they're learning."

And according to the school, the students are responding — both to the teacher and to the technology. "They love it," said a spokeswoman for Turtle Mountain High School. "They love that it's video — and then you hear them trying out their new French words."



At right: On a September morning, Sister Regina Ann Brummel interacts with students at Turtle Mountain Community High School in Belcourt, N.D., via a video call from her office in Concordia.

QuiltFest!



ABOVE: A group of women from western Kansas stops to admire several pieces exhibited on the stage in the Nazareth Motherhouse auditorium Oct. 8. More than 170 full-size quilts filled three large rooms at the Motherhouse for the two-day QuiltFest, while another 50 or so smaller pieces were exhibited at the Living Hope Foursquare Church in downtown Concordia. Proceeds from the entire event benefited the Neighbor to Neighbor center for women, a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia.

PHOTOS ON OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP: Motherhouse staff, sisters and volunteers from several area quilt guilds spent two days assembling quilt racks and then hanging the pieces in the auditorium, vestibule and guest dining room. **SECOND FROM TOP:** Tammy Britt of the Cloud County Convention and Tourism office handled many of the logistical details for the two-day event, plus staffing the "Quilt Thrift Shop" in her downtown Concordia office. **THIRD FROM TOP:** Auctioneer Dannie Kearns, who donated his services for the

event, urges bidders higher on one of the last pieces of the quilt auction. **BOTTOM:** Sister Rosemary Foreman, right, consults with Nancy Welsh, both of Topeka, on Welsh's bid on the "Oopsie Daisy" quilt, held up behind them by Susie Haver, right, and Linda Houser, while Sister Jean Rosemarynoski shares a laugh with Houser. The evening quilt auction, which capped the two-day KS 150 QuiltFest, was held in the parish hall at Old Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church.

Two-day Concordia event raises \$4,000+ for Neighbor to Neighbor

Quilters and quilt-lovers from across Kansas and beyond turned out Oct. 7 and 8 to help raise more than \$4,000 for Neighbor to Neighbor, a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia.

As the KS 150 QuiltFest ended, bidders competed to take home 20 quilted pieces at an auction that capped the first-ever event.

Tammy Britt of the Cloud County Tourism and Convention office, who was part of the organizing committee, said more than \$4,000 — and maybe closer to \$4,500 — will be given to the Neighbor to Neighbor center once all the expenses are paid. She expects to present a check later this month to the three Sisters of St. Joseph who operate the center for women in downtown Concordia.

The idea for the QuiltFest to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Kansas statehood began with quilter Gerry Pounds of Glasco, who wanted to find a way to help Neighbor to Neighbor.

She enlisted fellow quilter Sister Betty Suther and they turned to Britt and Susie Haver of the Tourism and Convention office. Others who joined the planning committee were Linda Houser of Jade Travel, Marsha Doyenne of Fabric Essentials and quilter Bonnie Strait of Jamestown.

Over the two days of QuiltFest, more than 210 pieces were exhibited in three large rooms at the Nazareth Motherhouse and at Living Hope Foursquare Church. Other QuiltFest events included a Friday evening "quilters' social" featuring Debbie Devine of Salina in a historical portrayal of renowned Emporia, Kan., quilter Rose Kretsinger, plus a series of demonstrations of various quilting techniques and a "quilting thrift shop" where fabrics, notions, books and patterns were available for a donation.

The featured events, though, were a Saturday evening dinner at the parish hall of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church, followed by the quilt auction. Auctioneer Dannie Kearns donated his services for the event.

Auction items ranged from a Northcott Flower-of-the-Month tabletopper and a Baby Cat child's quilt to king-size and antique quilts in an array of designs and colors. The highlight of the evening was a Harley-Davidson quilt made and donated by Sister Betty Suther.

The highest price of the evening was \$825 for a queen-sized quilt named "Oopsie Daisy," which was made and donated by Beverly Olson and quilted by Ann Houtchens of Clifton, Kan.

Quilters who donated a piece to the auction were asked to give at least a portion of the proceeds to Neighbor to Neighbor.

Dr. Nancy Welsh of Topeka, who is a CSJ Associate, had the biggest load to carry home at the end of the evening; she purchased a total of seven pieces. Her final purchase was an antique hand-pieced and hand-quilted full-size quilt, which, after the end of the auction, she gave to Neighbor to Neighbor for display there.

The center for women and their young children opened in May 2010 in downtown Concordia and is staffed by Sisters Pat McLennon, Jean Befort and Ramona Medina, along with a growing cadre of volunteers.

From Monday through Friday, the sisters and volunteers offer classes and services that range from one-on-one tutoring for GED exams and book studies to providing a place to do laundry or take showers and classes in sewing, baking, lacemaking and household budgeting. Individual counseling services are also available as needed, as is help in navigating the social services maze. And, for some moms, the center has become a place to go with their young children, to give the kids a chance to play and the women a chance to befriend other moms.

There is never any cost to the women taking part; funding for all the programs offered at Neighbor to Neighbor comes from grants and individual donations. The QuiltFest marks the first time proceeds from an event will benefit the center.

Sponsors and supporters of the QuiltFest included the Knot-Tea Ladies Quilt Guild of Glasco, Kan., Stained Glass Stitchers of Concordia and the Solomon Valley Quilt Guild of Beloit.



For more photos from the KS 150 QuiltFest or to learn more about Neighbor to Neighbor, go to www.csjkansas.org

Sister Lucille gave 'tender, loving care' to sustain Marymount Forever spirit

By EILEEN THIBAUT '81
Marymount Alumni President

Marymount College lost another good one. On Wednesday, Oct. 5, Sister Lucille Herman passed away. Due in large part to the tender loving care Sister Lucille gave Marymount Forever as director of the Alumni Association, the spirit has continued to thrive 22 years after the college closed.

Three weeks ago Sister Lucille and I were attending the graveside services of another Marymounter. Little did I (and I suspect Sister Lucille), know that I would be preparing for her farewell today. We got in the car after the service



and were talking about the next Marymount College reunion scheduled for August 2012.

She was talking me through her checklist of things we needed to get done. I commented to her, half joking, "Oh, Sister, you worry too much! We'll get it done and people will step up as they always do!"

She laughed and said that she was counting on it.

No truer or prophetic words were spoken that day. But it wasn't just that one day that defines her.

Sister Lucille was such a woman of faith. She reached out to everyone; she was not judgmental or selective. And I always admired the way she was able to share her faith without fanfare.



Sister Lucille Herman was among the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia who volunteered in Greensburg, Kan., after a tornado destroyed the small city in May 2007.

... I've heard it said
That people come into our lives for a reason
Bringing something we must learn
And we are led
To those who help us most to grow
If we let them
And we help them in return
Well, I don't know if I believe that's true
But I know I'm who I am today
Because I knew you

It well may be
That we will never meet again
In this lifetime
So let me say before we part
So much of me
Is made of what I learned from you

I love the lyrics from a song from the Broadway Show "Wicked" (*above*) because they resonate what I and numerous other alumni felt about Sister Lucille.

I and the entire Marymount community have been changed — for the

You'll be with me
Like a handprint on my heart
And now whatever way our stories end
I know you have re-written mine
By being my friend...

Who can say if I've been
Changed for the better?
I do believe I have been
Changed for the better

And because I knew you...
Because I knew you...
Because I knew you...
I have been changed for good.

— Music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz

better — because we knew her.

Sister Lucille, you are a handprint on my heart and the hearts of all alumni. On behalf of the Marymount Alumni Board and the Marymount Community, Sister Lucille, you will be missed but not forgotten.

Yvonne Matthews '57
April 22, 2011

Eileen Schumaker Hiller '69A
July 8, 2011

Sheila Ribordy '71
July 12, 2011

Sister Redempta Eilert '38 & faculty
July 25, 2011

Sister Louise Hageman OP '61
July 25, 2011

Angela Barnett '67
Aug. 30, 2011

Janet Silhan Deneault '78
Sept. 1, 2011

Sister Lucille Herman '60 and staff
Oct. 5, 2011

Eternal rest grant
unto them, O God!

Members of the Marymount
family we've lost

Trees

Continued from page 1.

event Dec. 3.

On the evening before, the sisters will host a special "preview party," which will also be a fundraiser for the 12 participating organizations.

"These have been difficult times for all the agencies trying to help people in our area," explained committee chair Holly Brown. "This is just our way of seeing if we can help those nonprofits that offer help to others all year 'round."

The sisters have been hosting a Christmas Open House at the Nazareth Motherhouse for several years. This year's will be from 1 to 4 p.m. Dec. 3.

More details will be posted at www.csjkansas.org as the date approaches.

Priest

Continued from page 5.

and Holyrood.

His 24 years of full-time parish ministry ended early this summer when the Sisters of St. Joseph turned to him to serve as their chaplain.

But he'll keep his hand in a bit: He'll help Concordia's Father Barry Brinkman as a fill-in priest in Belleville, Munden and Cuba, Kan. And, of course, he already knows the people of his new congregation at the Motherhouse.

"I have always loved the sisters, I have always felt such esteem for the sisters," he says. "After 51 years as a priest, it's a blessing that I will be here."



Two September projects demonstrate breadth of Neighborhood Initiatives

Coordinator goes to Ellis to help start conversation

The director of the Ellis (Kansas) Alliance had been thinking about a "community roundtable discussion" for some time. But, says Dena Patee, she was reluctant to propose, let alone lead, such an event herself. In a city of just 2,000 residents, she knew it would be difficult to appear neutral. "There's a tendency to think you're taking sides, or promoting one idea or another," Patee said.

Enter Cheryl Lyn Higgins, the coordinator of Neighborhood Initiatives Inc. and the leader of the Sept. 10 "community conversation" in Ellis.

One of the many goals of Neighborhood Initiatives is to reach out to communities where sisters serve and offer whatever assistance is needed in bringing people together to talk about challenges and solutions.

Sister Doris Marie Flax has served as pastoral minister at St. Mary's Church in Ellis since 1994, and introduced Higgins to Patee and several other community leaders. As a result, Higgins offered her services — free of charge — to organize the Saturday meeting and then walk the 20 or so participants through the process of really looking at their city.

"In a small community, it's sometimes difficult to lay out the facts when you're there with all your neighbors and people you've known all your life," Higgins explained. "Somebody coming in from the outside can say things that someone inside the community cannot always say. But someone has to say, 'Elected officials can't do everything' and 'We have to



Participants in the Sept. 10 "community conversation" in Ellis, Kan., break into small groups to discuss the challenges facing their city.

be citizens in our community.'"

According to Patee, Higgins was exactly the person needed to start the conversation. Everyone at the meeting knew that she was just there to help.

Higgins' assistance — and, in fact, the creation of Neighborhood Initiatives in 2010 — continues a tradition the Sisters of St. Joseph have lived out since their founding 128 years ago. In their early days in Kansas, the congregation founded schools and hospitals to educate young people and provide health care — services that were crucial in the communities where they lived and served.

As the need arose, they founded orphanages and nursing homes to provide care for children and elders who needed it.

"Those were all needs relevant to the times," Higgins explained. "Today rural communities are concerned about sustainability — that's what makes these community conversations relevant to this time and to the communities where sisters serve."

Higgins is looking at other cities where there are Sisters of St. Joseph with the hope that Neighborhood Initiatives can be of service there, too.



Sister Jan McCormick answers a question during the Sept. 1 B.E.S.T. program at the Neighbor to Neighbor center in downtown Concordia.

Employees, job-seekers learn to be the B.E.S.T.

The first batch of Concordia's B.E.S.T. employees completed their two-day training program Sept. 2.

The "Basic Employability Skills Training" — or B.E.S.T. — program was offered free of charge at Neighbor to Neighbor, and sponsored by Neighborhood Initiatives Inc., a new office of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia. Eight women and one man enrolled in the series of eight classes that cover everything from punctuality and dependability to customer service and workplace ethics. Participants receive a certificate of completion for each class.

"This is about allowing your employees to get better, and about finding people who have the basic skills you need," said Cheryl Lyn Higgins, coordinator for Neighborhood Initiatives. Higgins was instrumental in creating B.E.S.T. when she was president and CEO of the Junction City Area Chamber of Commerce.

The program is offered statewide by the Kansas Department of Commerce, but Higgins was able to arrange to offer it free in Concordia because one of the Sisters of St. Joseph was trained to teach it when she was on the staff of KANSASWORKS, an office of the commerce department. Sister Jan McCormick of Chapman, Kan., led the sessions at Neighbor to Neighbor Sept. 1 and 2.

To learn more about programs available through Neighborhood Initiatives, you may contact Cheryl Lyn Higgins at clhiggins@csjkansas.org or 785/243-2113, ext. 1215.

RECOGNIZING CATHOLIC YOUTH



Rebecca Greif

SCHOOL: Kansas State University, Civil Engineering, Junior Year

ACTIVITIES: KSU Society of Women Engineers, KSU Civil Engineering Concrete Canoe Team, St. Isidore's Church Praise and Worship Team, Pathways Retreat Planning Committee, St. Thomas More High School Youth Group Leader

WHAT MOTIVATES ME: Throughout high school I found enjoyment in many types of activities, band, choir, CYO, volunteering, etc. As I got into college and truly started to understand my faith those involvements became an opportunity to share my faith in places where it may not be known but it also became a way to learn more about my faith and the way that faith can be shared, learned and deepened. As I continue to find myself involved in different things on campus and in the community, I am finding more and more that this presents so many amazing opportunities for me to see God in everyday life, which in turn helps me to want to continue staying involved.

PARENTS: Wade and Dionne Greif, Manhattan, Kan.

If you know a young person — either male or female — you'd like to recommend to be featured in The Messenger's "Recognizing Catholic Youth," please let us know by contacting:

Sister Beverly Carlin
785/220-7996
srbevc@csjkansas.org

Volunteers

Continued from page 1

do," she said. "I wanted a change, to be forced to get out of my habits and try some new things."

During her month in Concordia and living with the sisters at Manna House of Prayer, that included a lot of work in the Motherhouse garden plus other chores wherever she was needed.

Kate was often in the company of Ciara Malone, a 19-year-old from Shawnee, who came across the Sisters of St. Joseph last spring when she "Googled 'convents in Kansas,'" she said.

A sophomore at the University of Kansas majoring in math, she, too, was looking for something different to do during the summer.

And because she was able to spend two months with the sisters, she found it: She served as a counselor during the annual Discover Camp at the Motherhouse, was part of the contingent from Concordia who attended the Sisters of St. Joseph Federation conference in St. Louis and joined Kate for gardening and other chores at the Motherhouse and Manna House, where she lived.

"I didn't really have a whole lot of expectations," she said near the end of her time here. "It was easier than I thought it would be, and I had free time to enjoy myself. And I got to know so many of the sisters."

That, too, has been a high point for Cindy Ponce, the "veteran" of the group who at age 20 came to live at Manna House last January as a student at Cloud County Community College.

When the end of the school year rolled around in May, Cindy decided that rather than return home to her native Belize, she would stay at Manna House as a summer volunteer. After nearly six months with the sisters, she had become an important part of the small community at Manna House and knew there was work to be done.

That was the same message Brittany Dibbell and

Lauren Funk heard. The two 16-year-olds, who have both just started their junior year at Concordia High

School, are members of the CYO at Concordia's Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church. They spent a month this summer helping with all kinds of work at the Motherhouse — cleaning vegetables from the garden, taking on some light housekeeping duties, helping the liturgist organize music and assisting in the Gift Shop.

The last volunteer in the group — 19-year-old Ali Remick — won't have that kind of variety but she will have longer to spend with the sisters.



After living at Manna House of Prayer for the school year, Cloud County Community College student Cindy Ponce decided to stay on for the summer as a volunteer rather than return to her home in Belize.

Ali, from Battle Creek, Mich., arrived July 23 and will spend a year with the sisters at Neighbor to Neighbor, helping with the women and young children who come to the downtown center.

After a semester at Central Michigan University, Ali decided to take a year off to volunteer. "I was looking at the Catholic Volunteer Network website and I saw the posting for Neighbor to Neighbor," she says.

"My dad had been taught by Sisters of St. Joseph in Kalamazoo, Mich., and the idea of working with women and children really appealed to me." So now she lives with four sisters in a Concordia house they call "the North Mound community" and works at Neighbor to Neighbor with the sisters five days a week. Soon into her stint at

Neighbor to Neighbor, there has already been one change for Ali: When she returns to college, she expects to change her major from



Ali Remick is taking a year off from Central Michigan University to volunteer at the Neighbor to Neighbor center and live with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia. She will celebrate her 20th birthday later this month.

secondary education with a focus on European history to something in social work for children.

The change, she says, "is mostly just from being here — from being with the kids upstairs (in the newly renovated play area on the second floor of the center). I see it as something I really want to do with my life."

'Emergent Christ' author to lead Theological Institute

Noted theologian and author Sister Ilia Delio will lead the 2012 Theological Institute at Manna House of Prayer in Concordia.

The residential institute is scheduled for July 19-22. The registration fee is \$125 and lodging at Manna House and all meals is \$150.

To reserve a space or for more information, contact Susan LeDuc at retreatcenter@mannahouse.org or 785/243-4428.

Delio, who is a Franciscan sister, is the author of "The Emergent Christ:



SISTER ILIA DELIO

Exploring the Meaning of Catholic in an Evolutionary Universe," published this year. Previous books include "Simply Bonaventure," "Franciscan Prayer," "The Humility of God" and "Christ in Evolution."

Delio holds doctorates from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and from Fordham University. She lectures internationally in Franciscan theology/

spirituality with a particular focus on integrating Franciscan theology and contemporary questions.

She currently serves as a research analyst for the Franciscan Action Network and is a senior research fellow in the Woodstock Theological Center at Georgetown University.

A review for "Catholic Books Review" called "The Emergent Christ" "a timely contribution to discussion on the relation between scientific explanations of the evolving cosmos and the convictions of Christian faith about God's relation to the created order."

"There is much food for thought in Delio's work," the reviewer added. "...

(It) is an effort to work toward deeper understanding, inviting examination and discussion."

During July's Theological Institute, titled "Evolutionary Christianity: Hope for the Future," Delio will lead participants to do just that.

Two basic questions will be explored: What is the meaning of Christ in evolution and what are the implications for Christian life?

The Theological Institute was established at Manna House in 1995 as a way to continue the long-standing educational tradition of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, which sponsors the annual seminar.

Don't have time for a spiritual retreat?

With our jobs, our families, our friends, our church when we can get there and all the other demands of daily life, a spiritual retreat to help us "find God in all things" sounds like a great idea. But who has the time? Who can afford to take four days out of their busy life for that kind of commitment?

How about an hour a day for four days? Is that a commitment you could make?

Then consider the "Busy Person Retreats" set for Dec. 4-8 in Manhattan, Kan., and in March 2012 in Concordia.

Designed for single women and men from 22 to 40, the retreat requires that each participant commit to half an hour of prayer and half an hour with a spiritual director at a time that fits the participant's schedule.

Each retreat will begin with a gathering on Sunday evening to explain the process, talk about prayer styles and introduce the spiritual directors, Sisters Anna Marie Broxterman and Barbara Ellen Apaceller.

The cost for the retreat is \$35 or \$25 with the coupon available at www.csjkansas.org. To register or for more information, contact Sister Beverly Carlin at srbevc@csjkansas.org or 785/220-7996.

COMING EVENTS

► **OCT. 21-22** — "BEYOND BLOGS AND BLACKBERRYS," a spiritual retreat for women in their 40s; in Concordia. It is grounded in Ignatian spirituality and designed to provide nourishment for the spiritually hungry; begins at 7 pm Friday and ends by 4 pm Saturday. Cost is \$40 (includes lodging and all meals) or \$35 with a COUPON available at csjkansas.org. To register or for more information, contact Sister Beverly Carlin at 785/220-7996 or srbevc@csjkansas.org

► **SUNDAY, OCT. 23** — "TAILGATE FOR CHRIST" at Thomas More Preparatory High School grounds near football field, in Hays, Kan., from 3 to 5 pm. High school and college age individuals are invited to enjoy grilled food, outdoor games, Christian music and fellowship in our Catholic faith. Cost \$3. (NOTE: High school participants need completed diocesan paperwork, available on the Youth Ministry page of salinadiocese.org) Register with Sister Beverly Carlin at 785/220-7996 or srbevc@csjkansas.org

► **MONDAY, OCT. 24, 7 PM** — 2011 CONCORDIA SPEAKERS SERIES at the Nazareth Motherhouse: Cameron Thurner, Outreach Specialist, Domestic Violence Association of Central Kansas, "Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in Rural Communities." Free and open to the public.

► **SATURDAY, OCT. 29** — AUTUMN SPIRITUALITY: "Entertaining Saints at the Table of Our Lives," presented by Sister Janet Lander at Manna House of Prayer, Concordia. Anticipate All Saints Day with a day of prayer and contemplative activities. This day will be modeled on a Busy Woman's retreat day: input, optional spiritual direction, communal prayer, centering prayer, creative expression, rest and relaxation. From 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.; registration \$40 (includes lunch). You may extend your time to a full 24 hours by coming the afternoon before. Additional meals and overnight accommodation \$40.

► **NOV. 18-20** — QUILTING RETREAT: "FRACTIONS," at Manna House. Presenter Tammy Ashloch is back with another fast and easy quilt. This one uses fat quarters and is so fun you may want to make several. Begins with supper at 5:30 p.m. Friday and concludes after dinner at 1 p.m. Sunday. Registration: \$40. Room and Meals: \$100. Noon meals only: \$8.50 each. Quilters need your own sewing machine and materials.

► **SATURDAY, NOV. 26, 9 AM-2 PM** — ANNUAL NAZARETH MOTHERHOUSE CRAFT SALE. Sisters Cecilia Green, Leah Smith, Jackie Kircher, Susan Stoerber and others offer beautiful handmade items for sale.

► **SATURDAY, DEC. 3** — "LED BY A STAR" at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Salina. A retreat for women to focus on the star of our hearts, Jesus Christ, as we enter into the season of Advent; from 9 am to 3 pm. Cost \$25 (includes lunch). Register with Sister Beverly Carlin at 785/220-7996 or srbevc@csjkansas.org

► **SATURDAY, DEC. 3** — "GUIDED WRITING," presented by Sister Liberata Pellerin at Manna House. Come to this day of meditative writing to continue your awareness of life's experiences through this process. If you haven't kept a journal, this day will teach you how simple it is. From 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.; registration: \$40 (includes lunch).

► **JAN. 4-8, 2012** — QUILTING MARATHON at Manna House. Need a break after the holidays? Join us for an extended quilting retreat. Starts at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday and continues until 1 p.m. Sunday. Quilters need your own sewing machine and materials.

► **JAN. 6-8, 2012** — QUILTING RETREAT: "Coloring with Embroidery," at Manna House. Lisa Kobetich will teach the technique of using colored crayons with the basic embroidery stitches. The student will pick her own pattern on the Crabapple Hill website. Marathon quilters are welcome to join in. Begins with supper at 5:30 p.m. Friday and concludes after dinner at 1 p.m. Sunday. Registration: \$40. Room and Meals: \$100. Noon meals only: \$8.50 each. Quilters need your own sewing machine and materials.

► **SATURDAY, JAN. 28, 2012** — WINTER SPIRITUALITY: "One of a Kind, Like a Snowflake," presented by Manna House staff at Manna House. There will never be another you! What is the gift that you are? Do you know it and celebrate it? The day will include contemplative writing, time for personal and communal prayer, input and creative process. From 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.; registration: \$40 (includes lunch).

For programs at Manna House of Prayer, call 785/243-4428 or email retreatcenter@mannahouse.org for details or to register.

Sister Redempta Eilert: Nov. 29, 1913-July 25, 2011

VIGIL: July 26, 2011, at the Nazareth Motherhouse, Concordia
EULOGIST: Sister Bette Moslander

We are gathered here to remember and to honor Sister Redempta Eilert who died on July 25, 2011.

Her extensive life review reveals the kind of woman we all knew Sister Redempta Eilert to be. As I read it I was struck by the comprehensive nature of her memories of her early life, chronicling rural America in the early to mid-20th century.

As her life review moves on it renders an account of life in a religious community prior to the Vatican II renewal as well as some of the painful struggles religious women experienced during the years following the Council. It is a detailed, clear and accurate account reflecting Sister Redempta's disciplined and responsible approach to her long and productive life.

She was second of 13 children born to Frederic and Elizabeth Selting Eilert on Nov. 29, 1913, in Scottsville, Kan., a rural community not far from Beloit. She was baptized and given the name, Margaret.

The life review describes Margaret's parents' efforts to provide their growing family with the necessities of life relying on the produce of the family farm.

Clearly the family was self-reliant and industrious and the children thrived. Both parents were strong supporters of Catholic education and both Margaret and her older sister, Gertrude (whom we knew as Sister Frederic), attended the Catholic grade school in Beloit. As the girls entered into the mid and upper grade school years, Rev. Joseph Selting and his sister, Lena offered to take over the education of Gertrude and Margaret. The two girls moved into the parish house in Father Selting's parish in Flush where they lived a strictly disciplined life and attended a school taught by the Benedictine Sisters.

After completing the eighth grade, Margaret dropped out of school for a couple of years but eventually returned and earned her high school diploma in three years. During her senior year she lived with the Benedictine Sisters, and it was about that time that Margaret began to consider entering religious life.

The Benedictine Sisters offered her a scholarship at Mount St. Scholastica College in Atchison, Kan. It was during a college student retreat that she knew with certainty that she was called to religious life, although to which community, the Benedictines or the Sisters of St. Joseph, was not clear. Margaret leaned toward the Sisters of St. Joseph and the deci-

sion was made when she received a letter from her sister Gertrude telling her that if she would come to Concordia, Gertrude would join her. They entered together on Sept. 8, 1933.

Redempta was received into the novitiate on March 18, 1934, and made temporary vows on March 19, 1935, and perpetual profession on Aug. 15, 1938.

Redempta's account of her early years in the community describes frankly the emphasis on work and busyness of life in the postulancy. She notes that the mistress of the Postulate was kind and helpful, but



HOMECOMINGS

"seemed to believe that sanctity would be achieved through scrubbing and cleaning." She tells how she was assigned the name Redempta, which she came to love, although at the time she had wanted to be assigned the name Elizabeth Marie.

Her first assignment as a vowed religious was Marymount College to earn her 60-hour certificate. It was soon evident that Redempta's leaning and talent were in the area of the sciences, so she was asked to return to the college and complete a major in chemistry. Her life course was thus determined. She commented that while initially she did not care much for chemistry she eventually came to love it.

Upon completion of her baccalaureate degree, she was assigned to the high school in Boonville, Mo., where she taught general science and math, and began to learn how to negotiate the give-and-take of forming a "reasonably peaceful community." This one-year assignment at Boonville was her only year of mission life away from Marymount.

That summer she was assigned to attend the Institutum Divi Thomae in Cincinnati, Ohio, a research center in the sciences to prepare for teaching at the college. In the fall of 1942 Redempta returned to Marymount, having completed her master's degree at the Research Center. In the ensuing years she enhanced her degree with a number of National Science Foundation grants gradually acquiring a solid body of knowledge about her field.

In a kind of summary statement Redempta wrote, "As I ponder the 46 years that I spent at Marymount, there were moments of pain and moments of joy. Prior to Vatican II, when we were immersed in the letter of the law, many unreasonable demands were

made on us." She describes the pressures of serving on committees, responding to students' extracurricular parties and activities, studying and preparing her classes while at the same time strictly observing the rules regarding lights out and early rising bells and a heavy schedule of community prayer.

In her extensive description of the renewal years initiated by Vatican II, she offers her reflections on the radical changes that occurred; changes in the prayer life of the community, the wearing of the habit and the choice of ministries were difficult for her to accept initially. Gradually, however, she was able to accept the changes and to recognize the gains as well, always respecting those with whom she disagreed. Throughout these years she participated actively in the Senates and Assemblies and brought to the consideration of the members the values of her disciplined yet charitable positions.

In 1988, she resigned from Marymount and moved to the South Mound community in Concordia. She spent her days at the Motherhouse serving at the reception desk, teaching GED students or harvesting the fruits of the large garden.

In early spring of 1998 she moved to the Motherhouse. She records with chronological precision the gradual encroachment of the diminishments and losses of her health and strength as she grew older: a couple of transitory ischemic attacks, difficulties with her eye-sight, the death of her brother Al in a fire that destroyed the family home, of her brother Eddy in a wheat bin accident and the death of her beloved sister, Sister Frederic.

In these last years of her life, Sister Redempta found it enjoyable to play a few hands of bridge after supper. She developed her own skill with the same patience and perseverance that she brought to the intricacies of chemistry.

In fact, she was engaged in a card game when the sisters noticed that her response movements were not quite normal and called for a nurse. She died at 9 the next morning, July 25, 2011.

It is not possible to do justice to the life of this woman but we celebrate her life that was fully poured out in the service of God and the dear neighbor. She was, without doubt a valiant woman, who lived her convictions and her dedication as a Sister of St. Joseph without wavering.



Sister Frances Cabrini Wahlmeier: April 4, 1930-Sept. 18, 2011

VIGIL: Sept. 19, 2011, at the Nazareth Motherhouse, Concordia
EULOGIST: Sister Pat McLennon

While reflecting on the life and spirit of Sister Frances Cabrini it was clear to me, and to so many of us, that her journey with God was never half-hearted. In her quiet and unassuming way, she was attentive to God's love and it was this selfless love and presence that she brought to all of us and to all whom she encountered.

Sister Frances Cabrini didn't write a life-review and we only have a few articles about her life and years of service during the 63 years she lived as a member of our community. Now we simply want to remember and celebrate her life among us and how she touched so many of us throughout the years with her gentle, compassionate, and loving heart.

Mae Catherine Wahlmeier was the sixth child of 15 children born to Aloysius and Ruth Sphorer Wahlmeier, April 4, 1930 in Jennings, Kan. She was preceded in death by her parents, her brothers Norbert, Paul and Robert and her sister Virginia. She is survived by her sisters Loretta, Rita, Elaine and Jane, and her brothers Vincent, Hugh, Galen, John, Louis and Carl. She is also survived by her sister-in-laws Francis, Catherine, Kay, Janet, and Linda and her brother-in-law John as well as, nieces and nephews. This large family has been a wonderful support to Sister Frances Cabrini and she often expressed her love and appreciation for them. The family also counted on her prayerful support and enjoyed her visits.

Mae attended the Jennings Consolidated Grade and High School. She loved music and taught herself how to read music and play the piano. Later she had some music lessons and played other instruments in the school band. She was a good student, popular, and enjoyed going to dances and other school events. Mae graduated from high school in June 1948 and enrolled at the St. John's School of Nursing in Salina, Kan.

Mae was only in the nursing program a short time when she felt called to religious life. She wrote a letter to Mother M. Chrysostom on Dec. 2, 1948, indicating that while she was home during Thanksgiving vacation she secured permission from her parents to become a Sister of St. Joseph. She requested an application to enter with the class in February. She was 18 years old and felt that she could better serve God by following this vocation and expressed her belief

that she could really be happy. She was accepted and Mae entered the postulancy Feb. 2, 1949, with Sister Maureen Kelley, Sister Mary Agnes Drees, and Sister Francine LaGesse. She was received as a novice Aug. 15, 1949, and was given the name Sister Frances Cabrini. She professed first vows Aug. 15, 1950, and perpetual vows Aug. 15, 1953.

After she completed the novitiate, Sister Frances Cabrini returned to St. John's Hospital to complete her studies and she received an R.N. degree from Marymount College in 1953. Her first mission was at the hospital in Sabetha, Kan., where she worked for nine years. She was then sent to Rawlins County Hospital in Atwood, Kan., where she served for six years as the hospital administrator as well as a lab



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and X-ray technician — a skill she had learned out of necessity in Sabetha. She reflected about this in an interview saying, "We were almost frontier people. We were finding our way and trusting God." In 1968 she was sent to St. Mary's Hospital in Manhattan as assistant administrator.

During the many years she ministered in the hospitals, there were a few times when she sacrificed the work she was doing in order to fill a needed position in the hospital. One example of this was when an administrator at the Manhattan hospital was fired and she was asked to be the interim administrator. The hospital was struggling financially and employee morale was low. She responded to these challenges wholeheartedly and her calm and kind presence brought a sense of well-being to the situation. With her leadership the hospital got out of the red and the employees felt secure in their jobs.

After 20 years at St. Mary's Hospital, she was asked to serve as administrator of St. Mary's Convent, the retirement center for our community in Concordia. Ten years later, St. Mary's was closed and the sisters moved to the newly remodeled Stafford Hall at the Motherhouse. Sister Frances Cabrini was asked to serve as coordinator of health-care services at the Motherhouse and, in 2004, her position was expanded

to include our sisters residing at Mount Joseph Senior Village. She continued in that work until her retirement in June 2008.

I was always struck by the gentle and quiet way she went about the care of our sisters at St. Mary's, the Motherhouse and Mount Joseph. She was totally self-giving and attentive to God's presence in the ordinary and extraordinary life experiences of the sisters in her care. We can't begin to count the times she was called during the day or in the middle of the night to accompany a sister to the hospital or to be with a dying sister. The next day she would be up doing her daily visits with each sister at Mount Joseph and Stafford Hall. She brought them their mail, news of the day, and checked to see how they were feeling and if they had any other needs. She never complained of being tired or overworked.

Her life was not all work and no play. She thoroughly enjoyed traveling. In 1990 she and Sister Rose Alma Newell went on a two-week American Heritage Tour. She kept a journal of all the places they visited and she was very interested in learning American history. Later, she accompanied Sister Myra Joseph to Ireland to visit her family, on what was to be Myra Joseph's last trip home.

Her yearly mission statements reflected her commitment to being available to those in her care and providing spiritual, medical and nursing care for them, as well as helping to create a home-like atmosphere for the sisters at the Motherhouse and Mt. Joseph. She was also sensitive to our employees. She saw to it that they were respected for their contributions and provided resources for their work. Sister Frances Cabrini knew that to love with the love of God required the will to be attentive and self-giving. These qualities formed and shaped Sister Frances Cabrini's life in mission.

In 2008 Sister Frances Cabrini visited with the members of the Leadership Council and asked to retire after 20 years of service to our retired sisters. She told us that she was experiencing extreme fatigue and wanted to move to the Motherhouse and rest. During the past three years her health has consistently declined. She died early Sunday morning, Sept. 18, 2011. May she now be at peace in the fullness of God's love.



Sister Lucille Herman: May 22, 1931-Oct. 5, 2011

VIGIL: Oct. 9, 2011, Nazareth Motherhouse, Concordia
EULOGIST: Sister Jodi Creten

THE DASH (By Linda Ellis)

*I read of a man who stood to speak
at the funeral of a friend.*

*He referred to the dates on her tombstone
from the beginning ...to the end.*

*He noted that first came the date of her birth
and spoke of the following date with tears,
but he said what mattered most of all
was the dash between the years.*

*For that dash represents all the time
that she spent alive on earth,
and now only those who love her
know what that little line is worth.*

*For it matters not how much we own,
the cars...the house...the cash.*

*What matters is how we live and love
And how we spend our dash.*

Life is measured not by the year of birth or the year of one's passing, but by the dash between the two, as poet Linda Ellis reminds us. Lucille was blessed with quite a long dash measured in years — 80 — but how did she live that dash?

Lucille's dash was enthusiastic, full, fulfilling, overflowing and totally given to life and to others. She lived with gentleness, generosity and great heartedness. She was also a woman of tremendous hospitality. Lucille had an enthusiasm for life, and it shined in her demeanor and in her eyes.

The Maxim that always comes to me when I think of Lucille is Maxim 39, "Be nothing to yourself and be utterly given to God and to the neighbor."

Lucille Catherine Herman, born on May 22, 1931, in Hays, Kansas, was the younger of two daughters born to Mike and Bridget (Wasinger) Herman. Her parents have preceded her in death. She is survived by her sister Francie, her brother-in-law Frank and their children.

In the second semester of her freshman year, Lucille decided to enter the convent. Sometime later, her father told her than if she entered and then decided to leave, it would be for one of two reasons: either because she couldn't have all of the ice cream she wanted or because she couldn't go to the theater every time the movies changed."

Throughout her life, Lucille loved milk shakes, and

we often sat together at Dairy Queen or Sonic here in Concordia where she could delight in her favorite treat. And movies? She always enjoyed them!

On Sept. 1, 1946, Lucille entered the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, receiving the habit on March 19, 1947, and the name Sister Mary Richard. Her first profession was on March 19, 1948, and she was finally professed on May 23, 1952.

We are all aware of Lucille's expertise as a dedicated and very fine educator, but did you know that her first mission in 1949 was to New Almelo, Kan., as housekeeper? She has always loved things neat, clean and well organized, but could she cook? Not really!

Living with Carolyn Juenemann these last years, Lucille knew that she wouldn't have to cook, and that was a relief to her!

Lucille's love for English literature was probably first nurtured by her superior on mission, Sister



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Maura, who became a fast friend of the Herman family until her death.

In 1952, Lucille went to Marymount College to begin certification for teaching, and from that time on, her teaching career spanned first grade through high school.

Lucille spoke fondly of all of her missions and she would often regale me with stories about certain students and faculty members with whom she kept in touch through the years. I never met many of those folks, but I knew them through the word pictures she painted.

Lucille taught grade school in Manhattan, Concordia, and Gladstone, Mich., but in 1961, she was asked to change gears and enter secondary education. She said, "When the time came to leave Gladstone, I was so sad."

She came to the Apostolic School where she taught for eight years with half of them as director.

Lucille spent her last year of teaching high school in Grand Island, Neb., and in 1968 she was asked to take the position of Director of Secondary Education at Marymount. She spent time preparing for her tenure there by getting her master's degree at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. In 1969, she became full-time Associate Dean of Students.

Of the 10 years Lucille spent at Marymount, the last two were as Alumni Director.

When Lucille's position at the college was terminated, she found ministry as an educator for eight years at Savior of the World Seminary in Kansas City, Kan., followed by a year in public relations at Notre Dame de Sion Upper School in Kansas City, Mo., and then on to St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Overland Park, Kan., for another eight years.

Again a change, when she was appointed to community ministry as the Secretary General of the Congregation from 1995-2005. At the end of her term, she accepted the assignment of Director of Alumni for Marymount, a position she held until her death.

Quite a dash, wouldn't you agree? But the dash has more to do with how one *was* rather than what one *did!* We call that *presence*.

Lucille's dash put her in many situations and in many places with a great diversity of personalities, but she had the inner God spirit and qualities to always meet the challenges.

When we went to New Orleans to help after Hurricane Katrina, Lucille was there with hands and heart ready, as she did also in Greensburg, Kan., after the tornado there, and again in Chapman, Kan., because she knew she had gifts that could serve community with community.

She had so many friends as evidenced by the many cards, emails, flowers and kind words of gratitude she received during her illness.

She worked easily with others, always networking and making contacts that would be of service to another. She was never half-hearted or lukewarm. She was not ostentatious. Nothing was beneath her care or attention, whether it was hauling a carload of recycling from Concordia to Salina, making beds at the Motherhouse, serving a meal to the homeless or painting or cleaning toilets.

She loved what she did and she did what she loved with sleeves rolled up, a smile on her face, and her big, brown eyes twinkling, always ready and willing to meet the "dear neighbor" wherever that one may be found! What a gift she was to all of us!

On Oct. 5, 2011, our sister, our aunt, our friend and companion, Lucille, went home to the God she so faithfully served.



Sister Leo Frances Winbinger: June 18, 1930-Oct. 5, 2011

VIGIL: Oct. 10, 2011, at the Nazareth Motherhouse in Concordia
EULOGIST: Sister Pat McLennon

*"My life of ministry is thanksgiving to God
for all the gifts he has given to me."*

— Sister Leo Frances Winbinger

This simple mission statement of Sister Leo Frances reveals how she lived her life with acceptance and gratitude to God for whatever was asked of her or given to her. It was in this spirit that her life revealed God's presence, and spoke God's words of acceptance and thanksgiving.

Theresa Elizabeth Winbinger was the first child born to Leon and Frances Baxa Winbinger, June 18, 1930, at St. Joseph's Hospital, Concordia.

In her own words she described her birth: "This bundle of loveliness and joy was very much welcomed in love and thanksgiving. There was another reason for the joy because I was the first girl baby on both sides of my family." A few years later her brother Charles was welcomed into the family. She was preceded in death by her parents, her brother and nephew Charles. She is survived by her sister-in-law Kathleen and her nieces Beth, Deborah, Kristine, and Amy and her nephews Matthew and Greg.

Theresa grew up in Cuba, Kan., and she was baptized at St. Isadore Church, a mission of St. Edward's in Belleville, Kan. She attended Bates Rural School in Republic County. It was a one-room building. She remembered that there were only six students, three in first grade and three students in the eighth grade. She attended religious vacation school in Belleville taught by the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Theresa loved music and her natural talent was discovered at an early age. She sang her first solo when she was just 2 years old. She said a vocalist usually needs an accompanist so she began to take piano lessons when she was in the third-grade from a professional teacher. She practiced at home on what she described as a manually operated instrument that supplied compressed air through foot feeders by using pedals. She said she practiced her piano lessons on this instrument as long as the keys held out. She played for her first High Mass when she was 8 years old. Later on she wanted to be in the school band and so as a fifth-grade student she began lessons on the clarinet.

When Theresa attended Belleville High School

many of her hopes and desires were realized. She was not only in the band, she was a member of a clarinet quartet woodwind trio, marching and concert band, girl's glee and mixed chorus. She continued her piano lessons so that she could perform well and to accompany these music groups.

Theresa was fortunate to receive a scholarship from Marymount College when she graduated from high school. During her freshman year at Marymount she felt called to religious life as a Sister of St. Joseph.

Theresa entered the postulancy on Sept. 7, 1949, and was received as a novice March 19, 1950. She was given the name Sister Leo Frances. During the novitiate she said she "studied the Constitution and other qualities needed to fit the bill as a prospective Sister of St. Joseph." She made first Profession March 19, 1951, and Final Profession March 19, 1954.

Following the novitiate Sister Leo Frances was



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sent to teach fourth-, fifth- and sixth-grades in Hernon, Kan. The following year she was sent to Sacred Heart in Salina and it was then that she began teaching classroom music, choir and private lessons.

The year she was to make final profession she was teaching in Gladstone, Michigan. She expressed a deep disappointment because she wanted to come home for the profession ceremony but was asked to make her profession in Gladstone due to the distance. In her usual gracious way she expressed her gratitude for the generosity, concern, and hospitality, of the pastor, Father Matt LaViolette who presided at the ceremony.

During her active years of ministry she also taught music at schools in Plainville, Tipton and Manhattan, Kan.; Chicago; Boonville, Mo.; and Silver City, N.M.

In 1973, she came to the Motherhouse to work at the reception desk.

It was during these years that her health began to fail. During the time I was her regional coordinator it was necessary for her to have a shunt put in to drain fluid from her brain. The doctor told us that she would gradually lose her ability to walk and she would experience memory loss. At that time, I talked to her about moving from the Motherhouse

to St. Mary's. I told her about the long-term diagnosis and promised her that we would always care for her. She expressed her gratitude to me for telling her and she said that she knew she would have very good care at St. Mary's. She lived at St. Mary's for 10 years and then in 1997 she moved to the newly remodeled Stafford Hall.

During that time she and Sister Mary Kevin shared a room together and they became very good friends. They prayed together every day, they enjoyed watching the same old movies on their TV, shared letters and news, and looked after one another when they were not feeling well. They were both happy and always expressed their appreciation for one another and the wonderful care they received at the Motherhouse.

In 2004, the community made a decision to move some of our Sisters to Mt. Joseph Senior Village. I visited with Sister Leo Frances and Sister Mary Kevin about this decision and asked them to be in the first group to move. They both said they would be happy to move but they had one request; they wanted to room together at Mt. Joseph. I said that we could arrange that for them. They were both aware that they each could have had a private room.

I helped them pack and move over to Mt. Joseph. Every time I went to visit, Sister Leo Frances would say, "Thank you for letting me be here. We are physically, spiritually and psychologically cared for." There were times when I knew she must have been suffering extreme pain, especially in her feet, but she never complained. Everything was always wonderful and she was always thankful.

What I always appreciated about Sister Leo Frances was her constant spirit of acceptance and gratitude. In her own simple way she had an ability to be present to each encounter and respond wholeheartedly. Her life was definitely not an easy one. She experienced trials, doubts and failures, but she always seemed to counter them with gratitude, trust and faith.

Sister Leo Frances died Oct. 5, 2011 at Mt. Joseph Senior Village. Her gifts to us of acceptance and thanksgiving have now blossomed into the fullness that she zealously nurtured during her life with us as she is embraced in the fullness of God's life in abundance. May she rest in peace.





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All the news that didn't fit

Snapshots of events at the Motherhouse and Manna House of Prayer



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Keep track of all our events & projects at
<http://www.csjkansas.org>



FAR LEFT: Browsers check out the offerings at the first-ever Concordia Volunteer Fair Sept. 10 at the Nazareth Motherhouse. The Sisters of St. Joseph hosted the new event to introduce people to organizations in need of volunteers.

ABOVE LEFT: Bishop Emeritus George Fitzsimons thanks the sisters for inviting him to dinner at the Motherhouse Aug. 26 to celebrate his 50th anniversary as a priest and his 83rd birthday.

ABOVE RIGHT: CSJ Associate Sue Riordan of Salina concentrates on her project during the annual summer bobbin lacemaking retreat at Manna House of Prayer in Concordia.



LEFT: Sister Beth Stover checks the number on her chili sample at the Chili for Charity fundraiser Oct. 6. Eleven organizations — including Manna House of Prayer and Neighbor to Neighbor — competed in the annual "taste off."