



Associate Program

Franciscan Sisters of Allegany, NY

Volume I
Issue 12

December 2018



Pax et Bonum

The Associate Alliance

LCWR Calls for the Welcome and Humane Treatment of Arriving Migrants



The Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) is deeply troubled by President Trump's continued denigration of those fleeing untenable situations in their home countries. These are mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers who have been forced from their homes by unimaginable violence and insecurity, runaway corruption, and droughts and floods linked to climate change. These are women and girls fleeing intolerable situations of domestic violence. These are

young men and women who have no access to quality education and no hope of economic opportunity.

These are courageous people who have rejected cultures of corruption and exploitation. They are traveling the same road trod by our forbearers who fled tyranny and violence in search of the American dream. They are people of hope and promise who only want the opportunity to contribute their toil and talent to this nation.

We reject the president's rhetoric of fear and policy of division that poisons our politics. We choose instead to embrace a dream for America that is filled with hope for a nation united in service of the common good. We stand with Pope Francis who calls us to "promote the dignity of all our brothers and sisters, particularly the poor and the excluded of society, those who are abandoned, immigrants and those who suffer violence and human trafficking."

We urge the administration to manage refugee arrivals humanely and in a manner that respects their dignity and rights under US and international law and to:

- Allow migrants to approach our border and ask for protection in the United States and to be admitted for processing in a timely manner.
- Ensure that asylum seekers have access to legal counsel and receive a fair resolution of their claim.
- Guarantee that parents and children stay together after they are apprehended. Holding families indefinitely in detention or detaining parents while releasing their children violates the values of this nation and the standards set forth in the Flores settlement.
- Eschew detention of those awaiting adjudication of their asylum petitions in favor of alternatives that are more humane and more cost efficient.
- Direct Homeland Security to cooperate with faith-based and humanitarian organizations who are prepared to assist asylum-seekers.

The United States has a long and proud history of welcoming immigrants and sheltering refugees. Women religious have been blessed to be able to accompany and serve migrant communities across this country for a very long time. We will continue to welcome them as our national history demands and our faith requires.

LCWR is an association of leaders of congregations of Catholic sisters in the United States. The conference has nearly 1350 members, who represent more than 45,600 women religious in the United States. Founded in 1956, LCWR assists its members to carry out their service of leadership to further the mission of the Gospel in today's world.



The Associate Community of Pires do Rio celebrated the second day of the Triduum of St. Francis. Not only were FSA Associates present, but the group was joined by Franciscan Sisters of the Poor.

Sister Oneida Resende presided over the celebration in such a beautiful way - it taught us once again about the love of our God!

Participants: Claudio Alves de Oliveira, Goretti Pereira, Iolanda Costa, Lindalva Alexandre Barreto Bal, Anesia Vieira Espindola, Ivanir Martins Vilela, Alderiza de Fatima, Maria Ivonir, Maria Lucia and Sr. Oneida Resende.

Rosary Rally in North Carolina

Betty Parbst

On October 13th, members of the Associate Community of North Carolina, joined other members of St. Brendan parish to pray the rosary for our country. This was part of a national movement which took place at noon all around the country.

From L-R: Betty Parbst, Rita Canfield, Ellen Nash, Alice Ortiz, Janet Shiridon, and Bobby Ann Caldwell.



Helping a Needy Family for Christmas

Sandra Klose

South Jersey Allegany Franciscan Associates load up the trunk with Christmas presents for a needy family... and Lucy helped!

From left to right: Edna Suckow, Carol Ciesielski, Barbara Angelini, Joan Hoolahan, Jane Kopas, Lauretta Chiarini, Jeanette Poole, Anne Bock, Mary Jacques, and Miss Lucy (the puppy).

Jamaican Pearl Party

Margaret Jarrett

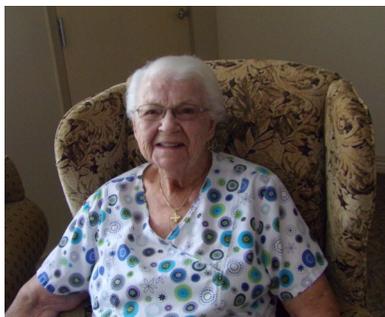
The Kingston Associates celebrated the 30th Anniversary of the FSA Associate program with a "Pearl Party" at the November meeting, complete with an anniversary cake decorated with pearls. It was a wonderful time drinking tea, eating cake and sharing memories as we watched a special presentation of pictures of Associate activities over the past five years.

Sharing in the happy event and showing off their pearls are (from left) Hermine Huie, Jean Fong-Kong, Dell Chai-Onn, Lois Kirton, Theresa Mendes, Giselle Foster, and Sr. Maureen Clare. Not shown are Joan Moses and Margaret Jarrett who was behind the camera.

A great time was had by all!



Meet Virginia Lydon - Associate from Tampa Bay



Virginia Lydon

How long as the Associate program existed in the Tampa-St. Petersburg area? That's how long Virginia has been a part of the Allegany Franciscan family: since the mid-1980's. She began attending Associate meetings at St. Anthony Convent, initially invited by Sr. Kathleen Francis Honc. There were not that many attending and the sisters led the meetings. Virginia kept coming to the meetings even after they moved to Tampa. The initial formation focused on the lives of Francis and Clare and Sr. Regina Catherine Kane always offered a class after the meeting ~ excellent for the Associates since she was quite the scholar!

While she has never been to Allegany, Virginia still enjoys the camaraderie, the sharing and learning, and being with the sisters. The fact that she keeps on learning is what keeps her coming back.

Virginia has been involved in many varied ministries. She has been a Lector in her parish and a Eucharistic Minister to the Sick at St. Anthony Hospital. After the hospital, Virginia worked for four to five years at a retirement home for the deaf as a Eucharistic Minister. For the past two years, she has been visiting The Springs at Boca Ciega Bay. Unbeknown to her, when she underwent surgery last year and needed to go to a rehab center, she was taken to the Springs!

While there, she thought about charities that focus on Christmas presents and toys for children - but what about older folks? Far from their families, alone in rehab centers, hurting, depressed - they needed a little cheering up! With three storage rooms filled with Christmas miniatures, Virginia set up a beautiful Christmas display which brought so much joy to the people who saw it, they have asked her to do it again this year.

And that is just one way Virginia shares Franciscan joy!



Bringing Christmas back for the elderly and infirm

Expand Your Tent ~ Strangers No Longer

Kathy Doyle

In a world of diversity and shrinking borders, what does it mean to be intercultural? How do we build bridges and live in harmony?

Jeanne Williams, Colleen Brady and I are bringing a day-long three-part retreat to the Associates and their local communities. Approximately 40 people, including members of the local parish, attended the Carolina Associates' retreat, the weekend before Thanksgiving.

The topic of Interculturality was introduced at recent Assemblies because it is the reality of our world today. This program looks at the richness and beauty of diversity through a Franciscan lens and incorporates background material, information, reflection, exercises and practical applications that each of us can use as we try to expand our tents and build bridges across the broad spectrum of cultural divides we all experience.

In Jamaica the presentation will be used as their Advent retreat. Miami is scheduled for the first Saturday in 2019, Tampa will follow at the end of that month, and Allegany will be right after Easter. New Jersey has not been scheduled yet.



North Carolina Associates at their retreat

At the St. Elizabeth Mother House, a retreat was given for the Sisters and Associates. Sr. Cathy Cahill started by asking, "Where do we find God?" One way is by praying. One should start by being open-hearted, feel leisurely, be faithful, be authentic and be grateful in prayer. Often in prayer, our mind wanders. Cathy stated that she always says "Into your hands Lord, I give you _____(whatever is not keeping you mindful or is distracting you from prayer.)"



Cathy Cahill, OSF

The time of prayer can lead you closer to Jesus and you will find yourself imitating Him by "giving" time to be with friends, sinners and outcasts.

We all will have crosses. At times the cross may make us feel beloved or bewildered; other times, willing or reluctant. We should look at the situation and be grateful.

God can work good out of evil. Be alert for the good. It was mentioned that at night we should review our day. Some of the questions Cathy asks herself are:

- What did I worry about?
- What about my health?
- Was I true to my life?
- What gave me life? A conversation with a friend, music, a walk, a TV show?
- What drained me of life today?
- What am I grateful for today?

After you give your "hurt feelings" to Jesus and have forgiven the offender, stop telling the story or continuing to describe the unpleasant event over and over. Truly forgive and let go of it.

Share your faith when you feel God wants you to.

We all appreciated Cathy's many helpful suggestions for enhancing our contemplative prayer as well as ways of looking at what in our lives might keep us from or bring us to a greater closeness to God. Cathy also shared so generously that sense of humor for which she is so well known.

Crop Walk 2018

Betty Parbst

Some of our Franciscan Associates walked one mile and some did three miles to raise money for the hungry during the Crop Walk 2018 held on Sunday, November 4th. This event takes place each year, and is sponsored by the Church World Service to help fund food banks locally and all over the world. Our local community had one of the churches do a Gospel Sing, and two restaurants donated chicken and pizza for the walkers.

A good day for a good cause, and lots of fun with our different community churches!

Pictured (L-R) are: Cynde Mitchell, Bobby Ann Caldwell, Ellen Nash, Gayle Hughes, Betty Parbst



Interculturality Discussed at November Gathering

Claudio Alves de Oliveira

The Associate Community of Pires do Rio-Go met at Sacred Heart of Jesus parish for a joyful meeting in which everyone participated. Our topic for the day was Interculturality. We talked about the differences among people and the faith and hope which unites us. Sr. Oneida Resende, inspired as always, helped us reflect on the positive aspects of understanding our differences so that we can have mutual respect among ourselves.



News from South Jersey

Sandra Klose

Our South Jersey Associates have some exciting news: we have a new member! Her name is Christine Moll. She moved to our area from Olean, NY where she was already a FSA Associate.

Lauretta Chiarini is going on the 9th Annual Pilgrimage Retreat to Assisi with sisters from the Lourdes Wellness Center. The "Advent Wisdom Journey" will take place from November 29th to December 6th. Blessings on your trip, Lauretta!

. The Associate Community gathering of November 17th is when there will be a collection of Christmas presents for a needy family

As we approach the end of the year, we think of all the blessings for which we are grateful. One of the great blessings of 2018 is the 30th Anniversary of the founding of the Associate Program. We rejoice and give thanks for all the ways our associates have enriched our Congregation as they continue to journey with the sisters, growing together in living out our Franciscan/Clarian charism, and extending the mission of the Congregation in ways and places where our sisters are not able to be present.



Jeanne Williams, osf

Although the concept of an associate program was introduced in 1974 and again at the Chapter of 1984, the Associate Program did not formally begin until March 1987. At that time, a small group of interested persons began to meet regularly in South Jersey. Soon, groups were formed in Miami and Jamaica; eventually, local communities of associates formed in Florida, New Jersey, Allegany, Jamaica and Brazil. A little later, a community was formed by a former member in North Carolina and recently, a group has begun to come together in Bolivia.

The vision of the Congregation for the associates is to provide an opportunity for those who have heard a call to personal holiness in the Franciscan spirit to experience journeying together with the Allegany Franciscans as they strive to live the Gospel message in their own way as laity. Over the years, the associates have shared their individual gifts and talents with the communities where they live. They have grown in their understanding of the charism of the Allegany Franciscans and each one lives it out according to her/his ability to do so.

For the celebration of a 30th anniversary, the icon is a pearl. What better way to describe the meaning of the Associate Way of Life than as the **pearl of great price**. The parable of the Pearl in Matthew's Gospel uses the image of the pearl to describe the Kingdom of God. The merchant searches for the pearl; when he finds it, he sells all that he has to purchase the valuable possession. How blessed we are that the valuable pearl of our Franciscan charism is a gift from God – it is already within us. We do need to relinquish some of our attachments in order to embrace the charism when we discover it within. But, this pearl of our vocation as Allegany Franciscan sisters and associates, is God's gift to us – what we need to do is accept it, nurture it, and live it to the best of our ability in our own lives.

We encourage each of our local communities of Associates to incorporate into their December meeting a remembrance and celebration of the 30th anniversary. Perhaps a prayer service could be designed around the theme of Pearl of Great Price and/or Vocation. Happy Anniversary to all of our associates and all who have enabled the program to develop into what it has become today!

The Coming of Christmas

When is the Christmas season? For most people, the reality falls somewhere in between when the Halloween candy is whisked off the shelves or the last week in November or, as religious tradition would say, Christmas Eve and lasting until January 6 (the source of the Twelve Days of Christmas).

For all the stories of out-of-control shopping binges and fist fights in the aisles of Walmart over the season's hottest toys, most of us have found ways to balance the many sides of Christmas in our homes and families.

We should all love the Advent season. To settle into the silence, the darkness, the candlelight, contemplative Advent music, the readings from the prophets of longing and anticipation, praying around the Advent wreath, setting up a nativity set on the dining room table ~ these show us the gradual movement toward Christmas through the month of December.

Yet even the most faithful users of Advent devotionals can find themselves forgetting the readings as routines change with the holidays' arrival. The wonder of the Christmas event itself can get lost in the celebration. Like his namesake St. Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis calls us to reflect on the central mystery of this season: our God became one of us, came to dwell in our midst, and began life as we all do: as a tiny baby, needy and vulnerable and dependent on the people around him for his very survival.

Just as God chose to become one of us, entering into a life shaped by the time and place of his birth, so our lives are shaped and changed by the world around us. But Pope Francis reminds us of what is eternal and unchanging about the Incarnation: "On this day of joy, we are all called to contemplate the Child Jesus, who gives hope once again to every person on the face of the earth. By his grace, let us with our voices and our actions give witness to solidarity and peace."

More than anything else, Christmas is about peace: in our heart, in our families, in our world. May we always make caring, sharing and reaching out to those in need the true reflection of God's great gift to us of his Son.



A Lasting Legacy

Will your legacy nurture the spiritual journeys of people like you? Will the FSA Associate program continue after you are gone? It can. When you make a gift of any size to the FSA Associate Program through your will or living trust, you create a personal legacy to spread the Gospel in the spirit of St. Francis to people just like you. Making a charitable bequest to further the mission and charism of the Associates of the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany is simple to arrange, does not require giving away current income or assets you depend on, and costs nothing to make now. Just state it is for the "designated restricted fund for the FSA Associate Program."

By providing a source of support for the future, gifts made through wills and trusts help to ensure that FSA Associates can continue to be a steadfast source of inspiration and witness, enriching the spiritual lives of people just like you.

To learn more about how you can support our future, contact Sr. Chris Treichel, Congregational Treasurer, email: cjtreichel46@gmail.com. Tel: 315 246 8004

The Associate Alliance is a publication of the Associates of the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany, NY.

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Please send articles & photos to: svincent@comcast.net ♦ Deadline for next issue: Jan 28, 2019