We’re weighing our options and choosing our responses as we continue courageously!
The reunited Franciscan Sisters of Mary is a religious congregation of women within the Roman Catholic Church. Founded in 1872, the Franciscan Sisters of Mary sponsor the following ministries: Almost Home, SSM Health Care, Woman’s Place (St. Louis); co-sponsor Holy Family Services (Weslaco, TX), and collaborate with four other religious congregations of women in The Sarah Community.

President:
Rose Mary Dowling, FSM

Councilors:
Marita Anne Marrah, FSM
Susan Scholl, FSM
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FSM Magazine is published twice a year by the Public Relations/Development Department. For more information, to make any corrections to our mailing list, or to report the receipt of duplicate copies, please contact us at (314) 768-1824, or e-mail us at info@fsmonline.org.

Editor:
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TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Message from the President .................................................... 1
We’re weighing our options and choosing our responses........ 2
We stand for justice without vengeance............................. 8
Our Sisters Are in the Spotlight ............................................. 14
Congratulations to our Jubilarians!................................. 16
Transitions ........................................................................ 18
Gifts to the Franciscan Sisters of Mary.............................. 20

OUR STORY OF THE BASKET

On the streets of St. Louis in the early 1870’s, people often met a woman with a basket on her arm. She was clad in dark garments with a soft veil falling around her shoulders. She walked with a very purposeful step.

Every now and then she stopped to chat with someone in German. Sometimes the person would hand her a few coins or bills, and she would slip them into her basket.

She was a familiar figure with a basket on her arm, stopping at one house after another where her sisters were nursing, bringing them supplies of clean linens, food and medicine for their patients.

The basket on the arm of this woman - Mother Mary Odilia Berger, founder of the congregation now known as the Franciscan Sisters of Mary - became for her sisters a most significant symbol.

Today the basket is woven with the efforts of all people who minister and partner with us.
Message From Rose Dowling, FSM, President
Franciscan Sisters of Mary

I am delighted to have this opportunity to welcome you to the Spring, 2008 issue of FSM Magazine. It is the hope of us on the leadership team, Susan, Marita Anne, Sandy and myself, as well as all the Franciscan Sisters of Mary (FSM), that you will find food for thought as you read through the articles that follow.

In this issue we invite you to reflect on two very important topics of our day. One is leadership. Our country, and that means you and I, are in the midst of “weighing our options and choosing our response” to those we believe are best fit to lead our country at this time. We, FSM, at our 2007 Chapter looked very seriously at what kind of leadership our world desperately needs today and are trying to live into this new paradigm in our lives.

We believe that all in leadership not only need to face the issues of our times, but need to look at how we are going to face these issues. Today, how we address the issues is of utmost importance. Being willing to sit with those who think differently and truly listen until we find common ground on which we can build is crucial. The stakes today are too high to continue to be “over/against”. This is what we FSM are attempting to do in our small group so we can be relevant to our world today.

The second topic we share with you is the Franciscan Sisters of Mary’s stand against the use of the Death Penalty. This is a very controversial issue but an issue that addresses the value and dignity of human life in a way that calls for great magnanimity. Because we believe so strongly in non-violence of any kind, we decided to take what to some is an unpopular decision. Whether you agree with our stance or not, we hope you will take time to read where we stand and why we do so.

Blessings on you and your loved ones from all of your sisters.

Rose M. Dowling, FSM
We’re weighing our options and as we continue Our 2007 Chapter was for us a truly meaningful experience as we affirmed our Charism, our Vision, our Identity and Mission, and our Declaration of Nonviolence, exercising leadership in the spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare.

We look to the future as counter-cultural women of the Gospel. We anticipate creating various structures that will support shared responsibility and accountability.

Together, as leaders and members, we are committed to moving forward in a spirit of conversion and joy.

We ask God’s special blessings on Sr. Rose, Sr. Susan, Sr. Sandy and Sr. Marita Anne – and on each of us as Franciscan Sisters of Mary!

We’re weighing our options and as we continue

The new Leadership team consists of Sr. Rose, Sr. Susan Sr. Marita Anne, and Sr. Sandra
At our 2007 Chapter we articulated more clearly the way we want to be together and what areas of our congregational life and mission we want to address more deeply.

What our options are, weighing them and choosing our responses is a step-by-step process that will always be with us. We’re in the beginning stages of implementing what we committed ourselves to at Chapter.

Serious issues confront all of us. We are all aging and can no longer do all that we once did nor with the energy we have had. So we need to accept reality and respond appropriately.

It’s true that our congregation has certainly changed over the years. Outside forces and our own reality of aging members and diminishment in numbers have contributed to these changes.

But it doesn’t mean that our life and our mission are over. In fact, these times call us to greater accountability to identify and follow what we believe God is calling us to through these circumstances.

We cannot sit by and not put 100% into this life and our call to “be the change we wish to see”! It’s time for us to use the wisdom of our years and experience to truly make a difference!

There are so many needs in our world. Together we can effect positive changes as we develop ways to pass our charism to others when we are no longer around.

And, as an aging group of sisters, we have the luxury of years of experience. This experience has brought us to a deeper level of wisdom and a willingness to engage from this wisdom. Our prayer lives, individually and collectively, ground our experience and deepen our wisdom.

The wisdom of the years gives us the freedom to do and say what needs to be done and said without worry and concern for what others think. It’s a wonderful freedom to know more deeply who you are, who God has called you to be and live from that depth.

Our diminishment puts us in the place of “what do we have to lose?” Let’s use the wisdom of our years and experience to truly make a difference!

...choosing to live counter-culturally...

Culture, in many ways, helps to define how we see ourselves and act in a particular ethnic group, corporate setting, country, family. It’s a sort of “way we are,” an expected way of behaving. Here in our country it’s not unusual that individuals are highly individualistic, youth-oriented and focused on staying young and living forever, motivated to perform or produce and finding it difficult to be around people who, perhaps because of illness or disability, can’t produce. In corporate America it’s important to “work like a dog to become the top dog” and often it doesn’t matter how one gets to the top. Status is favored; one’s worth is often measured by what one does and how much money one earns doing it.

But the Franciscan Sisters of Mary choose to respond differently. Our life is focused on becoming the person God intended us to become; BEing is valued. We

Choosing our responses... courageously!
believe it is better “to be the servant of all, rather than lording it over others.” We are about being present, hospitable and compassionate!

Living counter-culturally is always about making choices...purposefully and deliberately out of values held dear and with the potential to change things and make a difference.

The discrepancy between Gospel values and the values of various cultures is growing wider. So, no matter how small we are, we need to speak to and live out Gospel values in the face of this growing chasm.

It’s really a prophetic stance. It’s doing things and making decisions in a way that is based on Gospel values.

We are saying there is another way, there is a way based on values that could be seen as counter-cultural:
- treat each person and our environment with respect
- the environment is ours to steward, not use up
- each one needs to have a voice and each voice counts equally
- take time – which is a precious commodity in our day and age – to listen, slow down and hear what the situation, or others, or our own inner voice is telling us.

In fact, the very act of weighing our options and choosing our responses around issues of peace, justice and care of creation expands our counter-cultural thinking. And for me if we don’t act on our responses then we really haven’t freely chosen our responses. As I see it, choosing a response implies an action plan to go with it no matter how simple or complex the plan may be. If in the upcoming elections I do my homework of weighing the options by looking closely at what the candidates bring to leadership and then choose which candidate I will vote for, but I don’t vote, then the process is incomplete. Action is essential.

As an example, care of the earth is one way in which the congregation is becoming more aware and willing to make changes. Sisters Irene (Radtke) and Judy (Bell), in collaboration with the Intercommunity Ecological Council, did a survey of sisters’ use of bottled water. Once they did the survey, they used it as a tool to educate us on the ecological impact of using bottled water. We no longer serve bottled water at our FSM functions.

There are still many, many areas with regard to care of the earth that we FSM need to change in our lives individually and as a congregation. But there is no doubt among us that care of the earth is a deeply held value by both Jesus and Francis of Assisi and needs our voices to be added to theirs in our time.

Living counter-culturally means living with a willingness to change. Our global concerns need counter-cultural actions, to care for the

Rose Mary DOWLING

I was born and raised in the St. Louis area and got to know the sisters when I worked at SSM St. Mary’s Health Center during my high school years. In my first ten years of ministry I served as an administrative dietitian. As times changed I created our first Mission Awareness Team at SSM St. Joseph Health Center, St. Charles. That experience was the beginning of an ever-expanding world that took me to South Africa for thirteen years, sharing my skills in organizational development and learning so much more!

Back in the “states” I continued to use these skills as well as walk with others in spiritual direction. Much to my surprise I was elected President of the congregation last June. We’ve been in leadership since September and I’m finding it very fulfilling and a wonderful experience of “team” among the four of us.
earth, to reduce the disparity
between the very rich and the very
poor.

If we choose to stand with those
who are on the margins it cannot
just be a cliché – it has to be a
choice that makes a difference in
the lives of people we serve.

Sisters within our congregation
have always been leaders, on the
forefront, and did a lot in counter-
cultural ways. But these days we
are being much more deliberate
in taking counter-cultural action
because so many things in our
society have changed that demand
action.

My hope is that by the way we
live our lives and as we speak with
others of our lived experience we
will be credibly able to invite others
who become willing to take steps
in their lives to become counter-
cultural.

...and choosing to
share leadership...

There has developed within
our congregation, a willingness
to “merge” the lines between
membership and leadership,
moving from a we/they mentality
to an “us”. Sisters have become
willing to step forward to assume
responsibility for the ongoing life of
the congregation as a whole.

FSM leadership is about
empowering others...not exercising
power over others. We believe
that each person has a piece of
the truth and part of designated
leadership is to help each and all
speak their truth. Ours is a “shared
leadership.”

We all have a deep investment
in the decisions we make and the
implementation of these decisions
because we all have a deep
commitment to our life together.
We’ve become more acutely aware
of it at this time and are asking
ourselves to engage in it more fully
in these coming years.

Many of our sisters have agreed
that each of us has her opinions
and wisdom around any issue and
is welcome to voice that opinion,
experience, insight and wisdom.
My experience of us now is that
we trust the wisdom of the group
more than we ever have. We’ve
grown into this in recent years. But
we still need more growth in the
willfulness to trust one another
and the group as a whole. I believe
that is why we called ourselves
to what we did during the
Chapter...shared responsibility and
accountability.

Three things that are necessary
and important to making shared
leadership work are:

- leadership and membership
together create structures
that support and aid the
implementation of shared
leadership

- everyone involved at any point in
the process and content of these
structures shares her insights,
opinions, piece of the truth as a
contribution to the truth of the
whole

Prior to becoming part of
the leadership team I was
missioned at SSM Cardinal
Glennon Children’s Medical
Center where I worked for
forty-one years with children
with a broad range of
communication disorders.
I earned Bachelor’s and
Master’s degrees in
Communication Disorders
from Saint Louis University.
everyone involved at any point in the process and content of these structures is open to the truth shared by others and is willing to be influenced by what is shared.

Shared leadership is a new concept for us and probably for religious life, as we all have a history of a very hierarchical structure, much as the Church and the society in which we find ourselves. Shared leadership moves away from “leadership” being the people with all the answers, who carry the full responsibility for the life of the congregation during their term. It speaks instead to leaders who are pulled “from the circle” of sisters to serve in this role for a period of time, whose role is to facilitate the communal discernment which directs our thinking and therefore our actions.

There’s more inclusiveness and a broader sharing of information so all are knowledgeable, so together we can make wise decisions. There is less standing on formality “of the office” and more focus on listening than telling.

Communal discernment is the bedrock of shared leadership. It just cannot evolve without communal discernment, it’s just that simple. Both are a way of life that we desire; both enhance and grow in the presence of one another.

We speak of a process of communal discernment. That means that each sister may have thoughts and opinions, but rather than seeing these as “opinions” which distract or are disruptive, the opinions become part of the discernment process. In it we listen to what each has to say – which means a sister needs to be willing to speak her piece, or opinion. In addition she must be willing to listen with an open mind; she must be open and willing to be influenced by the truth of others.

Trust in this process is so critical as it puts each sister in a real place of vulnerability. When you speak without fear that someone will hold it against you or think less of you…you are being vulnerable. When you open yourself to being changed by others/the group…you are being vulnerable.

Communal discernment says we are in this together, for the common good, to be open to what God is calling us to do. I see it as a concrete way of carrying out our vows and of being an integral part of the reality we call “community.”

We’ve spoken about discernment and communal discernment as a way of life long before the concept of shared leadership appeared in our conversations.

In fact for us it goes back to 1987, at the time of the reunification of the congregations, when the congregation known as the Franciscan Sisters of Mary was born. We said we wanted to make discernment our way of life. We have repeated this often; sometimes we learn slowly and over time!

But I believe we are even more convinced than originally that this is our way of life and manner...
I'm a St. Louis native, although I've lived much of my FSM life “on the road” in ministry at various SSM Health Care (sponsored ministry of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary) hospitals in other cities and states. Much of my ministry has been in hospital administration although my training is in nursing – truly a ministry that also gave me much joy.

Over the years I’ve received much more than I was ever able to give to those I cared for and worked with! I have been blessed to be a member of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary for 43 years and have trusted in the Spirit to lead me where God could best use me, trying always to live in the present moment. This has consistently brought me joy and peace of heart.
“...we stand for
THE FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF MARY HAVE TAKEN A CORPORATE STANCE AGAINST THE USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY.

In light of our commitment to the value and dignity of human life, we join our voices with those who oppose the use of the death penalty. Jesus Christ provides a guiding moral vision for us. He urged the disciples and us to abandon the law of retaliation, to love our enemies, to confront evil without violence, and to forgive our persecutors. As followers of Christ, we stand for justice without vengeance.

The rage, grief and anguish of victims and loved ones are understandable. Our prayers remain with them in their grief, but we believe that publicly legitimized killing is not a solution to pain or even to grave injustices.

We reject the death penalty and support other more appropriate means to assure justice and administer punishment more in keeping with the dignity of the human person, the Gospel vision of respect for life and Christ’s message of reconciling love.

...THE FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF MARY BELIEVE THE DEATH PENALTY TO BE ONE OF THE MOST SERIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN THE UNITED STATES.
Catholic teaching offers a unique perspective on crime and punishment. It begins with the recognition that the dignity of the human person applies to both victims and offenders. It affirms our commitment to comfort and support victims and their families. It also acknowledges the God-given dignity of every human life, even those who do great harm.

“I believe in the dignity of human life and nonviolence; I see the inconsistency and injustice and prejudice involved in the application of the death penalty; I think there are alternatives to keep society safe from those who are violent – such as life without parole”  

(Margaret Mary O’Gorman, FSM)

“... we adopted the following in 1994 and reaffirmed in Chapter 2007: To live out our Declaration of Nonviolence we commit ourselves to work for just and humane solutions in criminal justice and oppose the death penalty”  

(Mary Dismas Emerson, FSM)

“We have an obligation to speak out on these major issues of social justice and peace and it is the right thing for us to do!”  

(Susan Scholl, FSM)

WE BELIEVE

The death penalty diminishes all of us, and contributes towards a brutal cycle of violence because it teaches us that killing is acceptable. It denies the fundamental humanity of all people – including those who commit atrocious crimes. It perpetuates “the tragic illusion that we defend life by taking life.”

The dignity of life must never be taken away. Executions end lives, deny that dignity and remove any opportunity for forgiveness or repentance.

We believe the death penalty is one of the most serious human rights abuses in the U.S. In fact, the United States is the only western industrialized country that still relies upon this punishment.

We believe that to allow the state to commit murder serves no societal value. There are alternatives to capital punishment that maintain public safety and preserve our humanity.

Our Franciscan Sisters of Mary Declaration of Nonviolence, adopted in 1994 and reaffirmed by our 2007 Chapter, states, Catholic teaching offers a unique perspective on crime and punishment. It begins with the recognition that the dignity of the human person applies to both victims and offenders. It affirms our commitment to comfort and support victims and their families. It also acknowledges the God-given dignity of every human life, even those who do great harm.
“We cannot overcome crime by simply executing criminals, nor can we restore the lives of the innocent by ending the lives of those convicted of their murders. The death penalty offers the tragic illusion that we can defend life by taking life.”

…”It’s not for us to judge and take action into our hands. Life is always sacred. The issues are deep”

“(Nora Therese Buckley, FSM)
“I am a Franciscan Sister of Mary and each of us members have committed ourselves to become nonviolent and peaceable people in order to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. MT 11:29 Jesus said...’learn from me for I am gentle and humble of heart”... (Jane L. Rombach, FSM)

“I respect human life”... (Irene A. Radtke, FSM)

A developing list of actions to be undertaken by the congregation in support of the corporate stance includes:

- news releases
- radio messages
- wristbands
- letters to governors in states where our sisters minister
- engage support of sponsored ministries and others
- calls to governors on execution dates of death row inmates
- death penalty kits
- declaration of life forms for sisters (stating that if they are killed by a violent act, they ask the perpetrator not receive the death penalty)
- tolling of chapel bells on execution dates of death row inmates.

Leading the effort were members of the Cultural and Woman’s Issues Committee, comprised of Mary Chaudet, FSM, Marilyn Jean Davis, FSM, Margaret O’Gorman, FSM, and Sherri Coleman, FSM. They worked closely with Gale Thackrey, Justice Ministry Coordinator.

The Franciscan Sisters of Mary will join with others who work in opposition to the death penalty.

(The Cultural and Woman’s Issues Committee of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary expresses its appreciation to the School Sisters of Notre Dame for their strategic assistance.)

“Jesus Christ provides a guiding moral reason for us, all of us need forgiveness”

...(Judith Ann Moyers, FSM)

“Taking one life for another is totally against our religious beliefs. Punishment should be given in keeping with the dignity of human beings”

...(Mary Anne Murphy, FSM)
Losing a beloved family member to murder is a tragedy of unimaginable proportions. The effects on the family and even on the wider community extend well beyond the initial shock and trauma. The common assumption in this country is that families who have suffered this kind of loss will support the death penalty. That assumption is so widespread and so unquestioned that a prosecutor will say to a grieving family, “We will seek the death penalty in order to seek justice for your family.” A lawmaker introduces a bill to expand the application of the death penalty and announces that he is doing this “to honor victims.” A politician believes that she must run on a pro-death penalty platform or risk being labeled soft on crime and thus unconcerned about victims.

My daughter Shannon was 23 when she was murdered in 1998 by a serial rapist in Philadelphia.

Ultimately he pled guilty to assaulting, raping and killing Shannon. He also pled guilty to 13 other sexual assaults in the two state crime sprees.

My husband and I were both raised in homes with a deep-seated religious faith. We were both raised in households where hatred was never condoned and where the ultimate form of hate was thought to be the deliberate taking of another person’s life. The death penalty involves the deliberate, premeditated killing of another human being. In carrying forth the principles with which we raised our daughter, we cannot in good conscience support the killing of anyone, even the murderer of our own daughter, if such a person could be imprisoned without parole and thereby no long a danger to society.

No one should infer from our opposition to the death penalty that we did not want Shannon’s murderer caught, prosecuted, and put away for the remainder of his life. We believe he is where he belongs today, as he serves his prison sentence, and we rest assured that he will never again perpetrate his sort of crime on any other young women. But killing this man would not bring our daughter back.

Had we bent to this natural inclination, however, it would have put us on essentially the same footing as the murderer himself: willing to take someone else’s life to satisfy our own ends.

What kind of message do we convey to young people when we tell them that killing another human being is wrong but then impose the death penalty on someone with whom they have some direct or indirect relationship? Isn’t there the possibility that the imposition of the death penalty sends a conflicted message about our society’s respect for life?..

decided that family members of the Oklahoma City bombing victims should be allowed to witness the execution…the experience would “meet their needs for closure…

I can tell you that there is no such thing as closure when a violent crime rips away the life of someone dear to you…killing Shannon’s murderer would not stop the unfolding of the world around us with its constant reminders of unfulfilled hopes and dreams…

We have chosen to honor our daughter by setting up several memorials in her name…

We also believe that we honor her by working to abolish the death penalty, because…working to oppose the death penalty is a way of working to create a world in which life is valued and in which our chief goal is to reduce violence rather than to perpetuate it…

We must move beyond vague sentiments about being tough on crime and seeking justice for victims and look closely at what actions would truly prevent violence or help victims heal in the aftermath of violence…

When the focus is on healing for the victims, instead of blind retribution against the perpetrators, we truly honor the meaning of justice.

Vicki Schieber and her family are relatives of our sister, Mary Joan Schieber, FSM.

(To read Vicki Schieber’s testimony in its entirety, visit us at www.fsmonline.org and click Justice Ministry)
Our Sisters Are in the Spotlight

Antona Ebo, FSM, has been elected to the Academy of Missouri Squires. In congratulating Sr. Antona for her election to the Academy, Missouri Governor Matt Blunt noted: “Since the inception of the Academy in 1960, Missourians of all backgrounds have been recognized for their service and leadership. Your election continues this tradition.”

Betty Brucker, FSM, received the 2008 Marianist Service Award in March, 2008. The award is given annually to “those individuals who have made a significant contribution of their time, talent and resources for the betterment of our community.”

Evelyn Marie Peterman, FSM, was acknowledged as a St. Mary’s (Jefferson City, MO) Mission Exceptional Monthly Winner, nominated for her exceptional pastoral care service.

Sr. Evelyn retired from her position in December, 2007, marking the first time in St. Mary’s history that the hospital will be without an FSM on staff.

Judith Bell, FSM, has been elected president of The Sarah Community Board of Directors. The Sarah Community is a collaborative effort of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary and four other religious congregations of women, providing a continuum of care for senior and infirm religious and laity.

Mary Louise Jaegers, FSM, has received recognition from the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, for her steadfast support of efforts to protect America’s social insurance programs.

Mary Jean Ryan, FSM, President and CEO of SSM Health Care, received the Susan Blow Award in January, 2008. The St. Louis Business Journal established the award to honor trailblazing women whose work has changed lives in St. Louis and the entire nation.

Sr. Mary Jean has authored a book entitled On Becoming Exceptional SSM Health Care’s Journey to Baldrige and Beyond. For more information, visit www.ssmhc.com.

Sr. Evelyn Marie Peterman

Sr. Betty Brucker

Sr. Antona Ebo

Sr. Judith Bell

Sr. Mary Louise Jaegers

Sr. Mary Jean Ryan
Patricia Haarmann, FSM, was honored as Peacemaker at the 2007 Annual Franciscan Federation Conference. Sr. Patricia ministers to elderly people in their homes through CSJ Care, St. Louis, MO. In addition, she beautifies the grounds of the St. Mary of the Angels Convent campus with flowering gardens and colorful indoor arrangements. She began her ministry as a dietitian. Since 2003 Sr. Patricia has volunteered her time beautifying the grounds of Almost Home, an FSM ministry which provides residential care to teen mothers and their children who are homeless.

Susan Scholl, FSM, was identified as a 2007 Influential Business Women by the St. Louis Business Journal. Sr. Susan left her position as president of SSM St. Mary’s Health Center, Richmond Heights, MO, to become a member of leadership team for the Franciscan Sisters of Mary.

Marylu Stueber, FSM, Congregational Archivist, was invited to attend a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) basic course training for deaf and hearing impaired citizens, which she attended in Columbia, MO in December, 2007. CERT training is designed to prepare individuals to help themselves, their family and their neighbors in the event of a catastrophic disaster; the course was provided and funded by the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA).

Cecilia Lackman, FSM, was among several people within the St. Louis Archdiocese who have been recognized for selfless devotion to the gospel of Jesus Christ. In a letter Archbishop Burke wrote to Sr. Cecilia, announcing her as a recipient of the Cardinal Rigali Service Award, he said:

“As we do the Lord’s work, we must also express appreciation for those who take up the burden of Christ’s mission in an outstanding manner.”

In July, 2007, over 160 people participated in the first annual St. Clare 5K Walk-Run, sponsored by St. Clare Hospital and Health Services, St. Clare Meadows Care Center and St. Clare Health Care Foundation in Barbaraoo, WI. Bridgid McNamara, FSM, and Mary Anne Murphy, FSM, operated a water stop for the walkers and runners in front of their home.
Congratulations to our 2007 Franciscan Jubilarians!

**80 Years**

*IN RELIGIOUS LIFE*

**PEARL**

Mary Louise MAYER

**70 Years**

*IN RELIGIOUS LIFE*

**CARNELIAN**

Mary Damien FRANCOIS

**60 Years**

*IN RELIGIOUS LIFE*

**DIAMOND**

Mary Bernetta ARMSTRONG

(Standing)

Marie WEISS

(Seated)
Congratulations to our 2007 Franciscan Sisters of Mary Jubilarians!

2008 Jubilarians

50 Years in Religious Life

Golden

Mary Bridgid McNamara

Cecilia Lackman

Mary Catherine Ann Dahmen

Mary Anne Murphy

Rose Mary Dowling

Rosanna Marie Carter

Mary Inez Kennedy

Jeannie Marie Meurer

Jane L. Rombach

Jovita Marie Stenger

Mary Unterreiner

Veronica Boss

Helen Marie Norko

See our Jubilarians' photos in our Fall/Winter issue of FSM Magazine!
Sr. Mary Francesca Drees
October 20, 1920 – August 10, 2007

Jeanette Amelia Drees was born October 20, 1920, in St. Louis, to Frank and Ella Louis Reichmann Drees. She was one of nine children and loved her childhood experiences. Before entering the congregation in 1940, she lived in Immaculate Conception parish in Maplewood, MO.

Jeanette, received as a novice in 1940, was given the name Sr. Mary Francesca. Two years later she made her first vows followed by final vows on September 19, 1945. Sr. Francesca enjoyed the experience of religious life and the meaningful rituals she experienced.

During her days of active ministry, she served at several SSMHC hospitals: SSM St. Mary’s Health Center, St. Louis, St. Mary’s Ringling, Baraboo, WI, St. Francis Health Center, Blue Island, IL, St. Mary’s Health Center, Jefferson City, MO, and SSM Cardinal Glennon Children’s Medical Center, St. Louis, MO. She delighted most in her ministry in pediatrics and the nursery, as she loved babies and young children.

After her retirement, Sr. Francesca moved to St. Mary of the Angels Convent and began her ministry of prayer.

Sr. Francesca enjoyed following the St. Louis Cardinals! She watched or listened when she could, and was an avid reader of the sports page to keep up with her team.

With eyes that twinkled and a heart filled with compassion, Sr. Francesca enjoyed making people happy. On Friday morning, August 10, 2007, Sr. Mary Francesca, a person who wanted to be at peace with everyone, was invited to enjoy eternal peace with God.

“Make Me a Channel of Your Peace”

Sr. Rosemary Reinhold
May 19, 1920 – September 25, 2007

Born May 19, 1920, Rosemary Reinhold was the oldest of seven children born to Oscar and Josephine (Scharfenberger) Reinhold. She was a tomboy who enjoyed swimming, fishing and camping. Years later, after getting a job in the pharmacy at Mount St. Rose, she decided to enter the congregation now known as the Franciscan Sisters of Mary. She entered the congregation in 1940; when she was received as a novice she was given the name Sr. Mary Tarcissa. She made her perpetual vows in 1946. (Sister resumed the use of her baptismal name after Vatican II).

Sister graduated from the St. Louis College of Pharmacy in 1950. Already working at SSM St. Mary’s Health Center, St. Louis, she continued there before her transfer to St. Francis Hospital and Health Center, Blue Island, IL. While working at SSM Cardinal Glennon Children’s Medical Center she studied for her Master’s degree, which she received in 1961. Other places of ministry in the pharmacy included St. Clare Hospital and Health Services, Baraboo, WI, St. Joseph Health Center, St. Charles, St. Mary’s Health Center, Jefferson City, and St. Elizabeth Hospital, Hannibal. Sister also ministered as Activities Director at Beth Haven Shelter Care, Hannibal, and in pastoral care and activities at Villa Marie Skilled Nursing Facility, Jefferson City.

She left Villa Marie to return to St. Louis, to live at St. Mary of the Angels Convent. Sister enjoyed life and laughter, and was a fun-loving person.

When time was available to go into the civic and church community, she found herself in new ministries as a volunteer. One program was Teens Encounter Christ (TEC). She also served over twenty years working behind the scenes in juvenile and prison ministry, bringing the healing presence of Christ, especially to those who are forgotten by society and, often, their families. Volunteering in prison ministry, she coordinated the Residents Encounter Christ program.

Over the past few years, Sr. Rosemary concentrated her ministry praying for the needs of the Congregation, her family and the world. She was called by God to life everlasting on September 25, 2007.

“God is Faithful”
Sr. Florence Kremer
September 4, 1913 – December 29, 2007

Born on September 4, 1913, in Frankenstein, MO, Florence Frances was the oldest of eight children born to Adolph and Anna (Samson) Kremer. When she expressed interest in entering religious life, her family’s parish priest suggested she contact the congregation now known as the Franciscan Sisters of Mary.

She entered the congregation in 1935; having received the name Sr. Mary Adolph Ann, she professed her final vows in 1940. (Sister resumed use of her baptismal name following Vatican II).

Her ministry included assignments in patient care and as sacristan at SSM St. Mary’s Health Center, St. Louis; working in the convent and assisting with nursing duties at St. Mary’s Hospital, Jefferson City; as an assistant in the dietary department and chapel at St. Mary’s Hospital, Kansas City; and as sacristan and general assistant at St. Mary of the Angels Convent.

Devotion to the Eucharist and a spirit of prayer were hallmarks of her life. Her spiritual life was one of being actively present, waiting on God.

Sr. Florence was a quiet person; she had a distinctive chuckle and easily shared her smile with others. She enjoyed music and loved to play the piano.

When Sr. Florence died on December 29, 2007, she truly experienced the God-with-us as she entered a new relationship of intimacy with God. She now has a new beginning in eternal life.

“I Go to Prepare a Place for You”
John 14:2

Sr. Mary James Krieg

A native of Rich Fountain, MO, Bertha Gertrude Krieg was born January 23, 1926, the middle child of five children born to George L. and Sophie (Reinkemeyer) Krieg.

Bertha entered the congregation now known as the Franciscan Sisters of Mary in 1946. Her postulancy was a preview of her future ministry – she worked in the dietary department at the convent. Received as a novice in 1947, she was given the name Sr. Mary James, a name she requested after a dream. She professed her final vows in 1952.

Sister earned her Bachelor of Science and Masters’ Degrees in Dietetics from Saint Louis University.

Sr. Mary James ministered at SSM St. Mary’s Health Center, SSM Cardinal Glennon Children’s Medical Center and the former Firmin Desloge Hospital, St. Louis; she served at St. Mary’s Hospital, Madison, WI, St. Mary’s Health Center, and Villa Marie Skilled Nursing Facility, both of Jefferson City, MO; she ministered at the St. Louis Agency for the Aging, and at St. Mary of the Angels Convent.

With her effervescent personality, Sr. Mary James was a guiding light for candy stripers at St. Mary’s in Jefferson City; in 2002 she joyfully spoke to mothers and daughters at an annual Mother’s Day breakfast, reminding them that God does not limit graces.

She missed farm life, for she held a great love of nature. She enjoyed music and sports, and Steak ‘n Shake. She was close to her family, and they visited her faithfully.

Later in her life, during her dialysis treatments, she ministered as a compassionate presence to her companion dialysis patients.

Sr. Mary James, a most valiant woman, was welcomed to eternal life by her God on February 25, 2008.

“My Being Proclaims Your Greatness, Oh My God”
Gifts Given In Memory Of:

In memory of John Achenreiner
Mr. and Mrs. Allen Spaeth

In memory of Mary Ludmilla Bauer, FSM, Mary Octavia Bertram, FSM, and Geraldine Kuldeck, FSM “for kindness and support during nursing training”
Mrs. Florence Murphy

In memory of Alphonse Bax and Teresa Bax
Mr. and Mrs. Alex J. Reinkemeyer

In memory of Norbert Berendzen
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Mr. and Mrs. Leo F. Childers, Jr.

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In memory of my mother, Regina M. Buchheit
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In memory of Regina Esther Cain “the mother of my seven children”
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In memory of Frances Cerny
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In memory of Mae Ellen Chaudet
Franciscan Sisters of Mary

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Ms. Helen Davidson

In memory of my brother, Paul Debrecht
Mr. Carl Debrecht

In memory of Mary Helen Louise Deeken, FSM
Ms. Irene Deeken

In memory of my husband, F. Joe DeLong
Mrs. Betty Jo DeLong

In memory of my husband, Frank J. Fick
Mrs. Edna Fick

In memory of Michael J. Frank
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Frank

In memory of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary who served at St. Mary's Hospital, Kansas City, MO
Sr. Michele M. Donahue, SFO

In memory of Vera Gallio
Mr. and Mrs. William C. Parham, Jr.

In memory of our mothers, Josephine Gioia and Agatha Hogan
Dr. and Mrs. John Hogan

In memory of Jeanne Golliber, FSM
Mr. Martin Will

In memory of Mrs. Richard Will
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In memory of Lawrence and Sylvia Hamtil
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Ms. Dorothy J. Hegney

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Ms. Elizabeth Pegnato
Mr. Maurice St. Pierre

In memory of my parents, Rev. Joseph and Alma Henry
Mrs. Rose Henry

In memory of Duchesne Herold, FSM
Mr. and Mrs. Ferdinand E. Herold

In memory of Maria Hinkebein, FSM
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hinkebein

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St. James Congregation, Madison, WI
Msgr. Thomas Baxter

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the congregation and the 20th anniversary of
reunification as the Franciscan Sisters of Mary”
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