



interchange inspiration, reflection and recollection

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Dear Friends and Family,

I am fortunate to work in an environment that affords me interaction with over 300 remarkable Franciscan Sisters and Cojourners. Their experiences, observations, and reflections cause me to ponder and find meaning in daily life. They are an inspiration to me.

As you take a few moments to read this issue, you will enjoy a refreshing glimpse into their daily lives. Here are just a few of their stories...

Kathy Gatliff

Editor, Director of Communications

Inspired by Mother Alfred Moes

by Sister Briana McCarthy

One afternoon in July of 2013, while I was walking down the corridor at Saint Marys Hospital where the portraits of our Franciscan leaders are displayed, I experienced an inspiration from Mother Alfred. The energy flow from her portrait suggested that I make a DVD about her life for the Lourdes High School Community. With that challenge planted in my mind, I again reviewed the three sources on Mother Alfred by some of our gifted Franciscan authors: Sisters Carlan Kraman, Ingrid Peterson, and Ellen Whelan. In October, Cathy Dillon, assistant to the director of Rochester Catholic Schools, offered to work on this project with me. The challenge before us was to create a DVD, under 15 minutes in duration, that would engage the Lourdes students and teach them about the Foundress of Lourdes Academy. We also wanted them to know that, in 1941, Lourdes Academy subsequently became Lourdes High School, and recently evolved into the new Lourdes Campus, which opened in 2013.



This story had to be told!

Mother Alfred Moes lived 71 years. Fifty years of her life were dedicated to serving God's people in the United States of America. As a young woman of 22, she left her country of Luxembourg, along with her sister Catherine (later known as Sister Barbara), to teach Native American children in Indiana. She thought Indiana was the state where Native Americans lived!

Mother Alfred was a woman being led by the Holy Spirit as she followed a dream. She received a vision, and had the natural gifts to fulfill her vision of establishing schools in America. Imagine how this incredible woman accomplished these tasks in just twelve years: established

23 schools in five states, founded two Orders for religious women (Joliet, IL and Rochester, MN), and built Lourdes Academy. Yet, there was more to come, as she was being prepared for the next chapter in her life.

On August 23, 1883, a tornado devastated Rochester. Mother Alfred took immediate action. She offered her services, along with the Community of the Sisters of Saint Francis, to help Dr. W.W. Mayo address the crisis. From this early collaboration, Mother Alfred envisioned the need for a hospital in the city. She convinced Dr. Mayo to staff it, if she would raise the money to build it. Six years later, Saint Marys Hospital opened in 1889.

The vision continued, and the seeds were planted for a future Mayo Clinic. Saint Marys Hospital became a place where patients came to recover, not to die. Research improved standards of care and nurses and doctors teamed to give the best medical service. Rochester became known as a first class medical center.

The goal of the DVD was to bring Mother Alfred Moes' story to young people. Working with the staff of Lourdes High School on this project was great. To help tell the story, searched for photos and video from the Archives at Assisi Heights, Saint Marys and Mayo Clinic. Cathy Dillon's technical suggestions and visuals brought the script alive. And the rest, as they say, is history!

On May 21, 2014, the Lourdes students and faculty viewed the DVD on the life of Mother Alfred Moes. During morning convocation, students learned about their Foundress, and became absorbed in her story. They saw photos of their classmates in action. Seeing Franciscans represented, both past and present, gave them a perspective on how Mother Alfred's vision continues on their new campus. The students responded with spontaneous and energetic applause!

Each December, the DVD of Mother Alfred Moes, will be shown at Lourdes High School to keep her legacy and vision before the students. During the Fall of 2014, a portrait of Mother Alfred will be hung in the Lourdes lobby, along with a photo of Sister Callista Hines who was the first principal of Lourdes High School.

Please take the time to [watch](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cIDdDdv7_xg&feature=youtu.be) the story of Mother Alfred Moes at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cIDdDdv7_xg&feature=youtu.be and you, too, will be inspired!

Art on the Move

by Sister Ellen Whelan, PhD

An adventure awaited Sisters Faith and Cabrini the day they decided to give one of the parlors a new look. They sought suggestions from Sister Michon, noted for her expertise in interior design. "Some of the pieces," she explained, "are too masculine." The Sisters set off to find appropriate substitutes. They discovered unknown treasures in the nooks and crannies of their vast motherhouse, Assisi Heights. About the same time, artist and friend Sister Janel Crumb looked for a place to put a lovely picture she recently refurbished. The picture found a home on the wall of the small parlor.

So began the unlikely art project of Sisters Faith and Cabrini. In the process, they overcame herculean challenges with grit and a grin. Among them, their own physical limitations. Sister Faith, who lost her right leg below the knee, uses a prosthesis. Sister Cabrini, who required oxygen 24/7, carried an oxygen tank. "We energize each other," said S. Cabrini, "You name it; we'll do it. Faith is the leader. I'm the follower with a good sense of space and color. We share a love for beauty."

Using a variety of forms, including art pieces and weavings, restored chairs and lamps, they helped bring beauty to almost every area of the house. Sisters regularly sought their help. "Make the parlors friendly," was an early request from the Director of Residential Life.



S. Cabrini and S. Faith earlier this year

Sisters Faith and Cabrini were quick to mention the invaluable help of Sisters and lay colleagues. They're particularly grateful to the gifted Sister artists who staff the Art Restoration Room - Sisters Clairvaux McFarland, Janel Crumb and Virgana Kacmarcik. Established in 2006, under the leadership of Sister Dolore Rockers, the Art Restoration Room is home to all Assisi Heights' art pieces. The Sisters staffing this room collect and consolidate, organize and document each and every piece of art. The Art Restoration Room works like a lending library; Sisters check out pieces and use them throughout the house. "Assisi Heights," said Sister Janel with pride and conviction, "is an art museum!"



Sisters Faith and Cabrini enjoyed their breaks as well as their work together. "Let's rest a bit," one or the other would say. That was the signal for Sister Faith to bring out chocolate and almonds she carried for such purposes. Then they'd

step back to survey their work (they called it "our awe moment"). Often as not, they were both smiling when one of them would say, "We do good work!"



*In Memory and Gratitude for the life of **Sister Cabrini Walch**, who died at Assisi Heights on May 20, 2014.*

My Retirement at Assisi Heights

By Sister M. Severina Caron

I am surprised I was asked to write of my life in retirement, because I am an ordinary person simply endeavoring to live out my Franciscan call. I have been in retirement for a number of years, so my involvements have had significant changes. Recently, due to physical changes, I resigned from my most loved ministries practiced over 25 years, and for which I received a remuneration, that of taking deputation for the Marriage Tribunal of the Diocese of Winona and volunteering to distribute Holy Communion to patients at Saint Marys Hospital. I've also placed giving tours on hold, hopefully temporarily. Ushering for the Rochester Symphony Orchestra is very rewarding as we meet interesting persons and situations and are able to enjoy the fine concerts.



"Charity begins at home" and there are many opportunities to help and to listen in this "little house on the prairie" (a name given to Assisi Heights by children of the refugees we housed here in the 1980's). Assisting with maintaining order and cleanliness in some common areas of our home; pushing wheelchairs; sending notes; stopping to greet or say a prayer; bringing flowers or homemade treats to Sisters in healthcare all bring their own reward. (Note: the Sisters *not* in healthcare are also *not* reluctant to receive treats, especially caramel corn and waffle cookies!)

In 1988, I was instrumental in organizing a small group to begin the Earth Cluster of Franciscan International (FI), a non-governmental organization of the United Nations. Its purpose is to care for creation, work on behalf of the poor and to work for peace. While Earth Cluster has consistently added members, I am the only charter member living.

I've also maintained a longtime membership in National Catholic Rural Life (it was recently changed to Catholic Rural Life, as it is active globally). I firmly believe that rural life has played and continues to

play an important role in the development and well-being of our country. I grew up on a farm, and as my brother once told me, "You can take the girl out of the country but you can't take the country out of the girl." (I think he paraphrased a commercial for cigarettes!) The Catholic Rural Life (CRL) magazine and its weekly newsletter, both of which I share with FI members and others, make one aware of important issues.

The FI and CRL organizations provide knowledge and opportunities to take an active part in my duties as a citizen. They connect me with a number of different organizations of Church and secular groups. Our monthly meetings of FI raise awareness and promote action. I have 300+ group and individual contacts on my e-mail, which are very helpful in exercising my duties as a citizen. The e-mail contacts and telephone also provide a quick means to maintain relationships with my extended family and friends. When my siblings were living, I wrote more letters, but now the younger generations have fax, e-mail, i-Pad, i-Pod, cell phones, you name it, at their fingertips, so I choose not to spend pennies on a square inch of paper except for my elderly counterparts and for special occasions.

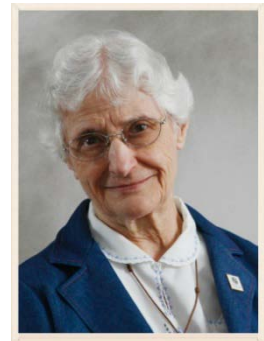
Our Congregation has embarked on a program called Cojourning, inviting persons who desire to be involved with us but do not wish to become vowed members. A Sister, known as their contact person, helps them to become better acquainted with our life and values and to prepare for a commitment if they and the Congregation mutually decide if that would be a good decision. For some time I have been one of the contact persons.

Recreation is part of each day. Among other group activities, I find a game of Bridge is an excellent way to relax. I belong to a Bridge Club and three study groups, as well as the Lifelong Learning Program in hopes of keeping my mind lubricated! We have two very fine libraries from which to choose books and periodicals as well as tapes and DVDs.

Three times a week I take part in professionally led group exercises which are encouraged and provided for us here at home. I also take part in many research programs of the Mayo Clinic. We are fortunate to have ready access to this world-renown medical institution from which we receive the care of experts.

Last, but foremost, the real joy for me is taking part in our liturgical celebrations and to have the privilege of helping to prepare for them. Our statutes encourage us to "share the responsibility to enrich community prayer," which usually takes place in one of our two private chapels, as well as in our Lady of Lourdes Chapel, which is open to the public. Once a week I have the inspiring experience of assisting as a Eucharistic Minister for our Sisters in health care. Most of our centenarians worship there as well as others who have need of nursing care. A blessing of retirement is to have more time for private prayer and I jealously guard this time.

God has blessed me with almost 70 years of vowed life with its peaks and valleys, challenges, failures and successes. "O God, you are the center of my life; how great thou art." With St. Francis I pray, "My God and My All!"



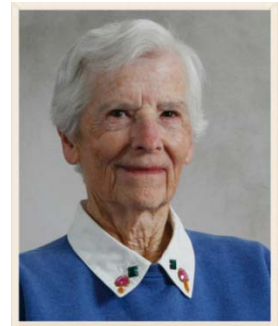
Taking a Trip Down Memory Lane

By Jean Zamboni, Cojourner (and twin sister of Sister Edith Zamboni!)

The following is my recollection of what it was like to be a child going to school in the early 1930s. I may, however, refer to "we" and "us," as I am a twin.

At age four, we spent the first half of our year in afternoon kindergarten next to the Baptist Church on Main Street in Owatonna. But, in the middle of that year, we switched to attending kindergarten at Roosevelt School, where we learned to write our names, in script, on a piece of paper, copying it over and over.

In first grade, we attended St. Mary's Academy, only a block from our house, so we could always walk there. We had four rows of desks and learned to read, write, sing, draw and paste. Art period is one of the things I remember best, because we each got a



little piece of paper with some white paste on it. A classmate, Mary Ann, kept eating her paste and going to the teacher to ask for more! We all applied the paste with our fingers. I don't remember being given any ditto page outlines to fill in with color - at least we were spared that! Crayons were the art tool of the day. Scissors were passed around in class from a wooden box.



St. Mary's Academy, next to Sacred Heart Church
Owatonna, MN

Recess was a time for ring games on the playground. We lined up to go in and out for recess. We had to straighten the desks to have them in nice lines before we could go home. It was a well-disciplined life and it continued like that for years. We did have homework - I remember crying while learning the multiplication tables. The Baltimore Catechism was also taught; and we had to recite from memory.

In our home, and I suppose other homes as well, we had school clothes and play clothes. We usually wore the same dress for a week, and once we got home, we quickly changed into play clothes. We took advantage of every chance we had to play outdoors. In the neighborhood, there was always a sandbox in which we could play. Later on, as we got a little older, we had plenty of empty lots on which to play ball with other neighboring children. One ball and a bat, plus scratching away at four spots in the grass, would give us a good playing field.

As the years went by, new 'technical' inventions came along and were introduced in school. We had a slide projector so we could view a slide show and give a report about what the class could see on the screen. My topic was "sponges." When "lessons" were offered on the radio from St. Olaf or the University of Minnesota, one of us would sit at the teacher's desk, where the radio was located, and hold our finger on the 'ground' to assure we had a good signal, so we could listen and learn some scientific information from an expert in the field.

Friday afternoons, before dismissal, were spent singing from the *100 Best Loved Songs* booklet -- our school send-off for the weekend. In those years, teachers were all Franciscan Sisters who also lived in the school building. They would spend their weekends praying, cleaning and doing their laundry. There weren't a lot of meetings or parent-teacher programs in which to be involved.

As we grew older, we attended early morning Mass during Lent, at Sacred Heart Church. We took our breakfast in a bag to eat in the lunchroom, which was located in the basement of the school, and then started our school day. We could use the Sisters' Chapel on first floor to "say the stations" of the cross. That was always a lovely time - spent over the noon hour or afternoons right after school.

When we had school plays, a stage was set up on sawhorses at the north end of the biggest classroom. The productions were pretty elaborate! Programs were always in the evening for all the parents, while we children had to sit upstairs in quiet classrooms, waiting to be told to go silently downstairs to perform. There were always a lot of rehearsals for these programs.

The May Crowning of the statue of Mary always involved a lot of practice, also - lining up in the long front hall, getting everyone in proper order according to height, regardless of age, and then singing Marian hymns while walking down those wooden front steps from the porch, around toward the music house, and to the end of the property to the statue of Mary. I don't know how the girl was chosen to crown the statue with a wreath of flowers - I never did it and I don't remember who did it either!

Everyone carried a flower they brought from home, usually from a spirea bush, since the crowning was in early May and this was the season for them.

These are a few of the happy memories of my youth!

Sharing Our Gifts

By Barb DeCramer, Cojourner, Director of the Office of Development

The gifts that the Sisters of Saint Francis bring to all who encounter them are countless and treasured. With the support of our generous donors, Sisters serve in ministries throughout the United States and in Bogota, Colombia. Those Sisters who are retired continue to serve as volunteers, as companions and in prayer. Assisi Heights, the congregational home of the Sisters of Saint Francis, is an iconic source of inspiration and spiritual renewal for those who visit.



Each of these facets of the Sisters' outreach provides opportunities for us to sustain their work. The Franciscan Fund supports Sisters whose ministries don't provide a salary sufficient to cover their modest lifestyle. The Retirement Fund cares for the needs of Sisters who have completed their public ministries and are living out their lives in volunteer work and prayer. This fall, you will hear more about the Chapel Fund, which is providing the dollars necessary to care for the beautiful Lourdes Chapel at Assisi Heights.

We are ever so grateful for whatever gift you are able to share. To make a donation today, [go to our website](#) or call the Development Office at (507) 282-7441, ext. 536.

Assisi Heights Spirituality Center

How do you recognize your need for spiritual renewal?

Seeking quiet in the age of distractions . . .

Maybe you have noticed a need or longing for some quiet time away. Assisi Heights and the Assisi Heights Spirituality Center are open and available for you to take time for yourself. Those who have come to Assisi Heights for **Days of Solitude*** often remark on the welcome and the quiet when they arrive 'at the Heights'.

Come, share in the gift that Assisi Heights can be for you!

Visit our website at www.rochesterfranciscan.org to:

- **view upcoming events**
- **learn more about spiritual direction, or**
- **request a prayer.**

*[*View our calendar of events for September 17, October 15, November 19 and December 17, 2014.](#)*

