



FRANCISCAN Prints



Sisters of St. Francis of the Immaculate Conception • *“A Caring, Praying Presence”* • West Peoria, Illinois
Immaculate Conception Convent: 309-674-6168 / Development Office: 309-675-2005 **SPRING/SUMMER 2020**

Unprecedented

This term was the one word headline of the March 29th issue of the *Catholic Post*, our diocesan newspaper. I think this one word describes the reality for most of us in the last two and a half months. The focus of the *Post* article was the closing of churches and the cessation of the celebration of the sacraments. We all know too well the unprecedented losses we have experienced in so many aspects of our lives. The two words that were most often expressed both by us and for us were “healthy and safe.” When speaking to friends and family, we expressed our hope for their health and safety, and they, in turn, asked about the health and safety of our Sisters.

But with further reflection on that term of *unprecedented*, I believe we can also use the term *unprecedented* to describe some of the blessings that have come from the experiences of the last two and a half months. We hear from many of their growing appreciation of their churches and the realization of having taken for granted the benefits received from the bonds shared with their church community. The restoration of the ability to receive the Eucharist has been a huge blessing for so many who may have

allowed the privilege of the Eucharist to become routine. And how many families have grown closer and learned to appreciate each other during stay-at-home times? Essential workers have been recognized for their efforts, and many signs of appreciation have been shared with them. This is just a small sampling of the blessings we have received during these unprecedented times. I invite you to do your own reflection on the blessings received.

I conclude my remarks with a short prayer written by Liturgist Steven R. Janco:

O God, our rock of safety and our shelter in stormy times, listen to our cries and calm our fears. Help us to persevere through these difficult days with renewed faith, with trust in your compassionate care, and with patience to hold on until a better day dawns. We pray through Christ our Lord.



Sister Kathleen Ann Mourisse
Sister Kathleen Ann Mourisse, President

Meditation Moment

Spiritual Communion

by Sister Jacqueline Schroeder



How has the Spirit of God been working in you during the past couple of months?

The prayer of “Spiritual Communion” never really meant anything to me. Each day my sorrow and anguish deepened. By Holy Saturday my heart broke into little pieces. Since I could not give in to anger on this holiest of nights, the only thing left to me was to surrender all the pain to God. It was in that moment that Christ rose in my heart and the prayer of Spiritual Communion became the most powerful experience of Unity with – not only the Person of Jesus Christ – but with His entire Body here on earth as well as in Heaven and those suffering in purgatory. I experienced utterly profound solidarity with the other billion people who were also being denied Eucharist at this time. God is so good! ... and the suffering that we endure – when we endure it with Him – is always transformed and Life always rises from death.

How has the Spirit of God been working in you during the past couple of months?



Our Jubilarian



Sister Ann Regina Hughes, OSF - 60 years

Sister Ann Regina Hughes OSF celebrates 60 years of consecrated life. Religious take vows of chastity, poverty and obedience, and their jubilee is an occasion for celebrating God's faithfulness in helping them live these vows.

Sister earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English / History from St. Ambrose University, Davenport, Iowa, and a Master of Arts in Not for Profit Administration from the University of Notre Dame. Sister Ann Regina made her initial profession of vows on August 12, 1958, and her perpetual profession on August 12, 1960.

She began her career teaching students in Metamora, Canton, Moline and Normal. Sister Ann Regina was a Co-Administrator at St. Joseph's Home in Springfield, IL. and is Treasurer of her religious community.

In reflecting on her years of service, she was asked what she wished everyone knew about her vocation: "A Pure Gift. I visited our Motherhouse with a friend who was entering and simply felt a pull to the community. I had planned to go into nursing but followed God's 'pull' and entered our community. I had our Sisters in grade school and felt at home."

Another important aspect of celebrating a jubilee is reflecting on what has brought her the most joy. "Learning and working in the community with our Sisters. We share our prayer life, our ministry, our daily living, and I am enriched by this sharing. Sharing daily life, deep sorrows, joys and many fun times has deepened my spiritual life and brought me great joy and peace."

In 60 years what has changed: "EVERYTHING! The world has changed in so many ways since I entered community. Community has also changed, but the basics remain in both. In community our vows, our call to community, our prayer life, and our on-going call to serve where we are most needed remain as when I first joined our Sisters."

May we share together in the blessings God offers all those He has called.

"Sprucing Up" Around the Convent Grounds



St. Anthony Plot - mulched by Carmody Services. Lilies and grasses donated and planted by Kathy and Angela Vollmer.



The hosta beds are the fruits of Sister Anna Marie Flanigan's efforts.

Statues on the grounds were freshly painted this summer by Sisters Kathleen Ann and Jean Marie.





How Sweet It Is



And How Sweet It Was!
Thanks to all for making our fundraising evening a big success!

Dinner Auction February 29, 2020



Sister Subha Clare was stationed at the Wine Pull.



Sister Jacqueline shows how the Star Quilt is draped over the recipient's shoulders to symbolize protection through life's journey.

Fun was had by all!





Immaculate Conception Kindergarten Graduating Class and Pre-school
Kindergarten teacher - Sister Mary Ruth Coopman - Taken May 24, 1947.
Photo courtesy of Sheila (O'Donoghue) Flaherty – center front, white dress,
sitting next to her future husband, Terry, in the suspenders.

Pray as the Sisters Pray

A MORNING PRAYER

Lord Jesus,
You held out a hand of mercy
to so many who sought Your help.
Take hold of my hand this day
and bless all my undertakings
and all with whom I come in contact.
Grant me the strength and courage
to greet each new day
with hope, love and joy.
Keep me close to You
that I may find comfort and peace
in the nearness
of Your unfailing love.
Amen.

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- Adult Literacy
- Care of the Elderly
- Cursillo
- Youth Ministry
- Diaconate Formation Program
- Hospital Chaplaincy
- Internal Ministry - Formation and Vocation
- Marriage Tribunal
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- Spiritual Direction



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 Jim and Andrea Wygle
 Yellow Brick Creative Studio
 - Mariam Briggs



PrintWorthy...

Our 2019 Ornament,
"There Is A Peace" is still available
for \$35 + \$5 shipping.



Sister Paula and Sister Mary Elaine
selling ornaments at Blessed Sacrament
Parish last fall.

Our 2020 Ornament is in the works!



The generator purchased with the help of our donors
in our 2019 Annual Appeal
for the Sisters' Emergency and Safety Plan



New windows and door for the Literacy Room,
replacing the original stained glass windows and
the original door that were all deteriorating.

Remember special occasions and honor friends and loved ones with a memorial or honorarium gift to the Sisters of St. Francis of the Immaculate Conception. For a special bequest in your will, please talk with your legal advisor. We thank God, as we thank you, for your support, whether spiritual or financial. Prayer is our best and deepest expression of gratitude.