



A Newsletter from the
Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist,
Meriden, CT

Life Lines



LIFELINES
SPRING, 2017

Our mission is to restore a sense of the sacred in a world that knows the rupture between the sacred and the secular. We are called to be a Franciscan Body of Hope personally, professionally, and spiritually prepared to respond creatively "to the questions posed today by the anxieties and the urgent needs of the human heart" (Vita Consecrata, 81).

"I ask that we look into our own hearts, search out those constrictions that hinder great-heartedness, and open our hearts to the greater world around us."

(April 9, 2000) Mother Rosemae Pender, F.S.E., Foundress, Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist

Embracing the Future

The story of the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist begins with the request from the Second Vatican Council to religious communities to return to the spirit of their founders. Two exceptional women responded to this call.

In 1973 Mother Rosemae Pender, Foundress, and Mother Shaun Vergauwen, Co-Foundress, along with others from the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration of La Crosse, Wisconsin, became the first Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist. These Sisters wanted a strong community life, centered on prayer and common apostolates. Mother Rosemae and Mother Shaun led the Community to renew religious life in the Church.

Mother Rosemae and Mother Shaun served as Mother General and Vicar General from the Community's beginning until 2005. At that time, Mother Shaun Vergauwen was elected Mother General and Mother Miriam Seiferman was elected Vicar General.



Mother Shaun Vergauwen, a licensed marriage and family therapist, founded the Franciscan Life Center, Meriden, Connecticut, in 1974. The Franciscan Life Center is a non-profit mental health center licensed by the State of Connecticut. The Franciscan Life Center Network has grown into an international network of eleven centers serving the particular needs of the people in each location.

The Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist is an order of religious women dedicated to the sacredness of human life from conception to natural death. They live the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience to Christ and His Church. Women from all over the United States, Italy (3), the Philippines (3), Canada (1) and Kenya (1) have answered Christ's call to become Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist. The Community is blessed to have 15 young women in various stages of formation.

On June 26, 2016, Mother Rosemae passed away unexpectedly during the Mass for her 75th jubilee. Mother Rosemae will always be remembered as the rock of the Foundation. Her love of and dedication to the Church, her wisdom and perception, and her care for individuals' particular needs are some of her special qualities.

The Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist are embracing the future in faith and hope as Mother Rosemae lived her life.

Deb Federico, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist joins the staff of the Franciscan Life Center

Deb Federico chose to become a therapist to help people. Her experience volunteering with the Big Sister Program in her home town was an educational, humbling and gratifying experience and had a significant impact on her decision to become a therapist.

Deb finds many rewarding aspects of her work. She loves "helping clients understand how past experiences can affect what they do and feel today." Deb stated, "We are all wounded. As a therapist, I help my clients deal with their woundedness."

Deb and Anthony Federico, married for 36 years, have five adult children and one granddaughter. After raising her family, Deb enrolled in Albertus Magnus College in New Haven to complete her B.S. Degree in Human Services and went on to Southern Connecticut State University, in New Haven, where

she obtained her Masters in Marriage and Family Therapy. Throughout her studies she has been working at Yale University as a coordinator in the psychology department. Deb passed her Marriage and Family licensure exam in 2016.

Faith has always been a big part of Deb's life. She believes God led her to work at the Franciscan Life Center and added that she feels very blessed to be a member of the staff.

Deb's future aspirations include working with engaged couples. She believes there is a real need to better prepare young people for the vocation of marriage.



Mother Shaun Vergauwen Awarded Honorary Doctorate

Mother Shaun Vergauwen, F.S.E., Mother General, was honored by Holy Apostles College and Seminary, Cromwell, Connecticut, at its commencement ceremony on Saturday, May 6, 2017. The college awarded Mother Shaun an honorary doctorate. The Very Reverend Douglas Mosey, CSB, President-Rector, read aloud the decree citing Mother Shaun's accomplishments in founding, with Mother Rosemae Pender, F.S.E., the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist. The decree acknowledged their carrying out a creative vision for religious life in fulfillment of the call of Vatican II for renewal of religious life.



Mother Shaun Vergauwen, F.S.E. addresses the graduates, faculty and friends of Holy Apostles College and Seminary upon being awarded an honorary doctorate at the commencement services.

Franciscan Life Center Welcomes New Staff

The Franciscan Life Center proudly welcomes Marilyn Carey, MFT; Angela Rosson, LPC; Odalys Padron, MFT; and Ken Armstrong, MSW, shown with Executive Director, Sister Barbara Johnson, F.S.E., LMFT.



The Vocation Story of Sister Regina Cochran, F.S.E.

Sister Regina, born and raised in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, graduated from a Baptist high school where she learned what it meant to follow Christ. After graduation she attended Louisiana State University and was a practice player with the Lady Tigers basketball team. During college her faith was nurtured by attending different non-denominational churches.

For eight consecutive summers Sister Regina worked at Camp Kahdalea in Brevard, North Carolina. Sister Regina enjoyed mountain biking while completing her Bachelor's Degree in Business and Outdoor Education.

While working at the camp, Sister Regina met young Catholic adults. She saw them alive with their faith. As these friendships developed Sister Regina realized God was leading her to enter the Catholic Church. "On July 4, 1999, I found my true freedom in the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church," said Sister Regina.

After her conversion to Catholicism, two of Sister Regina's closest friends entered consecrated life which made her aware of the possible vocation. "However, I was such a young Catholic that it was not time for me to realize that call. A few years later I wanted to know what God wanted from me so I promised God I would go to Mass everyday for Lent. When it was over, I was still not clear. I prayed, 'Please show me the Community you have in mind for me.'"

When Sister Regina met the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist through a woman whom she had worked with at Camp Kahdalea, she was "attracted to the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist because of their deep relationships with each other and with those they serve. They wore a habit and were faithful to the Church's teachings. I began to pray that God would open the door if it was what He wanted. After my first visit to the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist,

I prayed, 'God, I do not know if you are calling me to religious life but, if you are, let this be the community.'"

Other aspects of the Community's life which attracted Sister Regina were attending daily Mass and meals together. "The Community was very active and each Sister had a profession."



"The discovery of my call to religious life did not contain too many magical moments. God spoke to me in ordinary ways through people I trusted. As my relationship grew with the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist, I realized God was calling me to be a part of this beautiful community and I desired to say yes to serve Christ in His Church. In following God's will for my life I am able to accomplish the dreams that have always been deep within me." Sister Regina added, "In the spirit of Saint Francis, we desire to bring a deep awareness of the beauty and integrity in each person we encounter."

Sister Regina earned a Master's Degree in Dogmatic Theology from Holy Apostles College and Seminary, in Cromwell, Connecticut, and made her final vows as a Franciscan Sister of the Eucharist on September 4, 2016. She taught high school religion for the Archdiocese of Hartford and is now working full time as the assistant vocation director for the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist. "Life is always full of new adventures when we follow God's will," stated Sister Regina.

Franciscan Sports Banquet and Silent Auction

Benefitting Franciscan Life Center
and Franciscan Home Care and Hospice Care

Join us for another great evening of outstanding honorees and silent auction items including a signed Tom Brady jersey and a 2016 Ryder Cup tee flag signed by U.S. Golf Team. This year's event will be held at the Aqua Turf Club, Plantsville, Connecticut, on Tuesday, June 6, 2017, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Honorees include:



SAINT FRANCIS AWARD

Donald "Dee" Rowe

Advisor to Athletics, University of Connecticut



SAINT CLARE AWARD

Suzy Whaley

Vice-President, PGA



JIM CALHOUN COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Michael Cavanaugh

Head Coach, Men's Ice Hockey,
University of Connecticut



DEAN OF SPORTS AWARD

Rich Coppola

Sports Director, Fox 61

SPECIAL RECOGNITION
Athletes, Special Olympics Connecticut
Sacred Heart High School
Boys' Basketball Team, Waterbury, CT

MOTHER SHAUN APPRECIATION AWARD
Rodney and Janice Reynolds

Call 203-237-8084 or visit flcenter.org for more information about sponsorship opportunities and tickets.

50 Years of Service

Franciscan Home Care is celebrating 30 years as a full-service home health care agency this April

"There is no place like home!" – And there is no place like home when you are recovering from surgery or illness, or if you need health care support at end of life. Franciscan Home Care and Hospice Care was founded by the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist to provide these services. Franciscan Home Care, established in 1987, celebrates its 30th anniversary during this year. Sister Suzanne Gross, FSE, has served as the Administrator and did the foundational work with Sister Marcia Ternes, FSE, LCSW, who served as the licensed social worker. Sister Marcia had been doing home health care since the early 1970s. Today, the staff of 70 includes nurses, social workers, physical, speech and occupational therapists, and home health aides. Daily the agency serves more than 200 patients of all denominations, creeds, and socio-economic status *In the Spirit of Gentle Compassion*.

Celebrating 20 Years of Hospice Care

Franciscan Hospice Care, a program of Franciscan Home Care and Hospice Care, is celebrating 20 years of providing care to persons at the end of life. The agency strives to meet the spiritual and emotional needs of persons and to help them prepare for the final moments of earthly life and to ready them for eternal life. A team of caregivers, including nurses, social workers, pastoral care persons, a physician, a pharmacist, and hospice volunteers, support the dying person and the family in this process.

*Life is eternal
and Love is immortal
and death is only a horizon.
And a horizon is nothing more
Than the limit of our sight.*

-Bede Jarrett, OP

Franciscan Home Care and Hospice Care is a faith-based home care and hospice care agency founded and directed by the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist. As the only Catholic home health care and hospice care agency in the State of Connecticut, Franciscan Home Care and Hospice Care believes in the uniqueness of each person and the sacredness of each human life.



Franciscan Home Care and Hospice Care Management Team – pictured above in the back row are Anna Kurtoglu, RN, Nursing Supervisor; Laura Borrelli, Hospice Director; Christopher LaRiviere, Executive Director, Franciscan Ever There Care; Sister Mary Richards, F.S.E., Finance Manager; Kathleen Dietle, Therapy Supervisor; seated in the front row are Rosemary Mysatyukow, IT Supervisor; Sister Suzanne Gross, F.S.E., Administrator, Franciscan Home Care and Hospice Care; Marie Laffin, RN, Clinical Director; and Gretchen Rossi, Community Education Director.

Missing from photo is Sister Catherine Mary Clarke, F.S.E., LCSW

Franciscan Home Care and Hospice Care Thinks BIG and LOUD!

Franciscan Home Care and Hospice Care has implemented a relatively new therapy program based on the Lee Silverman voice treatment program. LSVT Big and LSVT Loud helps individuals with Parkinson's Disease and other neurological disorders improve mobility and speech. Physical and Occupational Therapists on staff have been certified in both LSVT Loud and LSVT Big. The LSVT program has been scientifically studied for over 20 years and has proven to be successful. Both therapeutic treatments are administered in the home by the staff. LSVT Big addresses the unique movement impairments for people with neurological disorders and LSVT Loud improves vocal loudness and voice quality.

If you or a loved one suffers from a neurological disorder and would like a free consultation, please call Franciscan Home Care and Hospice Care at 203-238-1441. You may also visit www.franciscanhc.org for more information.



Michele Rini, O.T., from Franciscan Home Care and Hospice Care on a patient visit.

The John Lateran Center: A House of Formation

The John Lateran Center on Allen Avenue in Meriden has been undergoing a physical transformation for the past 16 months - an addition to the home for the young women entering the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist. The addition will provide a place for them to pray, meet and share meals together.

The formation of each Sister takes place at the John Lateran Center where the young women learn the traditions and customs of the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist. Formation helps each Sister find her place within the Franciscan Community. The potential to live as a woman given to God through the Community is realized and brought forth during formation.



Each woman begins to express her own charism under the guidance of the Community. Over time, each Sister lives more fully the principles, charism, and mission of the Community.

The Formation House provides a secure, enclosed space which is integral for the Sisters to grow. Formation is comprised of stages – Postulancy, Novitiate, Temporary Profession, and Perpetual Profession. With each subsequent step, the Sister learns more about the Community in a radical way of life, counter cultural to the ways of the world.

The formation process, like the building project, can seem long. This process of formation is a beautiful gift to the Sister, to the Community, and to the Church. As with a building process, formation begins with taking a risk and accepting the surprises of the end result. As it unfolds, the beauty begins to be revealed.

Mark Your Calendar with These Exciting Events:

32nd Annual Franciscan Sports Banquet and Silent Auction

Tuesday, June 6, 2017, 5:30 pm to 9:30 pm

Tickets are \$65.00.

Aqua Turf Club, Plantsville, CT

Summer Enrichment Program for Children

Session 1 – Monday, June 26 – Friday, June 30, 2017

Session 2 – Monday, July 24 – Friday, July 28, 2017

9:30 am until 3:00 pm, Cost is \$180.00 per child.

Campus of the Franciscan Life Center, Meriden, CT

The Franciscan Life Center's land-based summer experiences for children between the ages of 6 and 12 are held on the campus of the Franciscan Life Center. Activities include confidence and team building games, survival skills, creek and stream exploration, service project, sports, crafts and campfire bread making. Applications can be found at flcenter.org.



Franciscan Life Center Summer Youth Leadership Program

Monday, June 26 – Friday, June 30, 2017

9:30 am until 3:00 pm, Cost is \$250.00 per child

Campus of the Franciscan Life Center, Meriden, CT

The Franciscan Life Center is offering a leadership training program for young people ages 13 and 14. This exciting week-long program involves experiential and interactive learning. The participants will

experience low and high outdoor challenge course activities, as well as participate in group discussions and team building exercises. Areas of focus will include communication skills, teamwork, problem-solving and building self-esteem. Applications can be found at flcenter.org.

22nd Annual Franciscan Golf Classic

Monday, August 21, 2017

Shotgun at 11:00 am, Cost per golfer is \$175.00.

Tunxis Plantation Golf Club, Farmington, CT

Join us and play at the beautiful Tunxis Plantation. Greens fees, lunch and dinner are included in the golfer fee. The raffle, which includes a wonderful selection of gifts and foursomes to golf clubs, is held during the dinner. Sponsorship opportunities and registration forms can be found at flcenter.org.

Touched by Mercy

Saturday, September 30, 2017

Chiara Center Seminar Room, Chiara Center

Campus of the Franciscan Life Center, Meriden, CT

A workshop for persons who have been affected by the suicide of a loved one.

Presented by Sister Colleen Ann Nagle, F.S.E., M.A., LPC, Director of the Franciscan Life Process Center, Lowell, Michigan.

Theology of the Body: Love and Relationships

Saturday, November 4, 2017, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm and

Sunday, November 5, 2017, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Cost is \$65.00 per person, for both days, lunch is included.

Chiara Center Seminar Room, Chiara Center

Campus of the Franciscan Life Center

A retreat for married and engaged couples, single adults, students, priests and religious. Presented by the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist and members of the lay faithful.

Franciscan Life Center Network, Inc. dba
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Advisory Board - 25 Years of Mutual Collaboration

The Franciscan Advisory Board began meeting 25 years ago to support and promote the mission of the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist through their programs of counseling, education, care of the sick and end of life services. The board is comprised of 12 locally based professional men and women; two of whom have been on the board since the beginning.



Pictured above (from left to right): Annie Gray, Dick Leary, Sister Mary Elizabeth Endee, F.S.E., Sister Mary Richards, F.S.E., Sister Suzanne Gross, F.S.E., Sister Barbara Johnson, F.S.E., Susan Grenier, Jennifer Barry, Jay Festa, Cecelia Petrowski, James DeMaio, Leanne Harvey, Carolyn Vanacore, Colleen Mrowka, and Bob Wirz. Missing from the photo is Francis Barillaro.