

Staying Connected

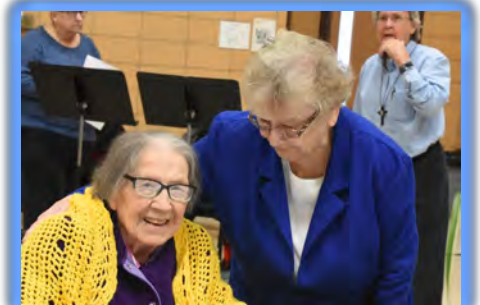
Volume 21 - Issue 7

January 9, 2025

Sisters of St. Francis
of Mary Immaculate



Feast of Mary Immaculate Celebration December 9, 2024



Photos by Sr. Marianne Saieg, OSF

What a wonderful celebration!

Message from JPIC

By Jane Nienaber, OSF

LSAP Goal 1:
Response to the Cry of the Earth

Goal 4:
Adoption of Simple Lifestyle

LSAP Goals 1,4 team will publish a Creation Care bulletin throughout 2025. Each month an action for Care of the Earth through sustainable practices will be available. Thanks to Catholic Climate Covenant which publishes Creation Care Corner in parish bulletins and especially to the Creation Care Team and Andy Panelli of St. Elizabeth Seton Parish.



Reflections with Black Elk-The Season of Winter

By Carol Mecko, OSF

LSAP Goal 6: Ecological Spirituality

Winter:

**the time of Waziah,
the name/personification of power and purification**

Black Elk did not pray for "warm and cozy comfort" in the direction of the North, but for spiritual cleansing. Winter reduces us "to survival level...a time for facing and balancing the dark emotions of inner turmoil - hatred and fear - putting them in their rightful place, in humility before Wakan-Tanka."

Creation Care Corner



*"... to defend the earth and
to safeguard water is to
protect life."*

— Pope Francis

WEEKLY STEWARDSHIP RECOMMENDATION:

Plastic waste is a huge and growing problem. Only 9% of the 9 billion tons of plastic produced has been recycled. There is very little demand for the plastic you do recycle. 40% of all plastic is designed to be used once and tossed. Plastic doesn't decompose easily and can last 100s of years. The waste clogs landfills and waterways, and poses hazards to animals and fish life. It breaks up into ever smaller microplastics getting into our air and food chain with unknown health effects.

What you can do:

- Say NO to single-use plastic. Carry your own cups, bags, to-go containers, utensils and forget the straws.
- Say NO to bottled water and pop. Carry refillables.
- Choose more biodegradable/recyclable materials like glass, paper, cardboard and metal instead of plastic... and then recycle those items.
- Avoid products with excessive packaging, excessive plastic packaging and parts. If it leaves behind plastic trash, try not to buy it.

Recycle what you can't refuse, reduce or reuse.



Continued on next page

FACING NORTH

Wise elderhood, saging knowledge to wisdom,
cool winds of my mind —

Waziah, Giant Power of the Earth, you are the guardian of health, the purifier of Earth and earth-people, making everything white with cleansing snows. Snowy Owl, help us to come to spiritual purification by balancing our dark emotions and excessive pride with Humility which is true spiritual pride: we are good, true, beautiful and loving beings. White Buffalo, teach us to walk the Black Road of life, not wallowing in a "list of woes" (negativity and "stinkin' thinkin'"), but in sacred steps on the Good Red Road in a "Litany of Joy and Gratitude." Ancestors and Elders, help us to "sage into aging" by taking the lessons and knowledge of life and saging them into wisdom. Snow crystals and crystal-people, teach us to purify our beings with the "crystal clarity" of winter. May we be open-hearted.

Save the Date

**Associate Relationship 50th
Anniversary
April 26, 2025**

University of St.
Francis Motherhouse
Come celebrate with
our sisters and
associates!



More information to follow

A Message from ARC

By Lois Prebil, OSF



BIRTHDAY OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

On Monday, January 20, 2025, we mark the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He was a spokesperson for nonviolent activism in the Civil Rights Movement.

Coretta Scott King established The Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Inc. in 1968 to preserve the legacy and her husband's dream of nonviolent social change. The strategic theme for 2025 of The King Center is "Mission Possible: Protecting Freedom, Justice, and Democracy in the Spirit of Nonviolence365" as a sustainable solution to injustice and violence in our world. Nonviolence365 is a training which provides insight into Dr. King's strategy to prepare people across the globe to embrace nonviolence as a lifestyle and as a vehicle for social change. King's four basic steps to a nonviolent campaign are: (1) Collection of the facts to determine whether injustices are alive; (2) Negotiation; (3) Self-purification; and (4) Direct action.

Learn more about The King Center at thekingcenter.org.



Joint Franciscans Joliet/Frankfort

Submitted: Associate Therese Griffin



Human Trafficking Prevention Month
January is Human Trafficking Prevention Month. The Alliance to End Human Trafficking is honoring this month in several ways. The biggest, of course, is our annual conference, Pathways to Prevention, February 5-7 in Baltimore, which leads right into **the feast of our patron saint, Josephine Bakhita, on February 8th** when we will participate with USIG Talitha Kum partner networks in the **International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking.** And of course, **don't forget to wear blue on January 11th**, our National Human Trafficking Awareness Day.



From Alliance Katie Boller
Gosewisch Executive Director:

Thank you for a beautiful 2024 - working with the Alliance, its staff, members, and partners is a privilege. I do not forget who we work for—those who have survived this crime and those who we hope never endure it. It is in that hope that we keep moving forward. I am thankful every day for this privilege, and I look forward to what 2025 will bring as we move forward—every day closer to ending human trafficking. Happy New Year!

Dear God,

During this season of giving, we pray for Your guidance to protect the dignity and freedom of all people. Grant healing and hope to those impacted by human trafficking and bless our efforts to end exploitation. May we reflect Your love and justice in all we do. Amen.



Jubilee 2025



The Jubilee Year will offer the faithful opportunities to participate in various jubilee events at the Vatican and in their own dioceses. The great tradition of opening the Holy Door began when Pope Francis opened the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica on December 24, 2024. Other holy doors have been opened at the Rome basilicas of St. John Lateran, St. Mary Major and St. Paul Outside the Walls. For pilgrims who cannot travel to Rome, bishops around the world are expected to designate their cathedrals or a popular Catholic shrine as special places of prayer for Holy Year pilgrims, offering opportunities for reconciliation, indulgences and other events intended to strengthen and revive faith.

More information on Jubilee 2025 can be found at:
<https://www.usccb.org/jubilee2025>

January Trivia

- 500 copies of the novel Frankenstein by Mary Shelley and The Modern Prometheus were published anonymously in London.
- Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863.
- The first New Year's ball drop in New York City started in 1908.
- In 1946, the first United States Computer was built in Pennsylvania at the Moore School of Engineering.
- The History Channel was launched in 1995.
- The plum blossom is the Chinese floral emblem of January
- The month of January is named after Janus, the Roman god that has two heads, one to look backward and one to look forward towards the New Year.
- In 1890, the Rose Parade started in Pasadena, California. Today the parade is broadcast in more than 100 countries.
- January was excluded from the Roman calendar which only had 10 months.
- The 31st day of January was added to the month by Julius Caesar.
- In 1959, Alaska became the 49th state of the United States
- Ellis Island opened on January 1st, 1892 allowing more than 20 million immigrants to enter the United States.



January 16 — National Religious Freedom Day

Each year, National Religious Freedom Day commemorates the day the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom was signed on January 16, 1786. Each year, by Presidential Proclamation, January 16th is declared Religious Freedom Day. Thomas Jefferson's landmark statute became the basis for Congressman Fisher Ames' establishment clause of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..."

The First Freedom Center in Richmond, Virginia, commemorates this day by holding an annual First Freedom Award banquet. The statute guarantees the fundamental freedom to openly practice one's faith without fear of being harassed, jailed, or killed. Additionally, under the statute, each person may freely change their religion without retribution. In the United States, people of different faiths have equal rights to practice their religion.

Around the world, religious restrictions continue to rise. For more than a decade, Pew Research Center has been tracking global patterns in restrictions on religion – whether imposed by governments or by individuals or social groups. (<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/feature/religious-restrictions-around-the-world/>)

According to Pew research, legislation, attitudes, and policies are rising globally in the last decade. Even those countries usually considered restrictive are increasing their limitations. When looking at countries with the most equality, they too show a change in policies and attitudes toward religious freedom. Religious freedom is a global concern, not only a national one.



HOW TO OBSERVE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM DAY

While recognizing the U.S. commemoration, take a broader look. Learn more about religious freedom in the United States and around the world.

- Watch *First Freedom* on PBS.
- Learn about other faiths.
- Practice your own faith.
- Participate in an interfaith event such as the one mentioned on [Share America](#).
- Read about other faiths and their experiences in the United States.

Some of the World's Religions

Hinduism

Considered by many to be the world's oldest religion, Hinduism is a combination of many Indian religious traditions that originated in Vedic beliefs around 1500 BCE.

Buddhism

Originating in India 2,500 years ago, Buddhism is one of the world's largest religions. Buddhists believe in reincarnation and that following the teachings of Buddha can lead to an enlightened state called nirvana.

Islam

A monotheistic religion that follows the teachings of the prophet Muhammad, who is believed to be a messenger of Allah (God).

Christianity

An Abrahamic monotheistic religion that teaches that Jesus Christ was the Son of God and was raised from the dead.

Judaism

One of the world's oldest monotheistic religions, Judaism originated in the Middle East over 3,500 years ago. Jews believe that God chose the Jewish people to serve as an example of ethical behavior and holiness to the world.

Taoism

Taoism is connected to the philosopher Lao Tzu, who wrote the main book of Taoism, the Tao Te Ching, around 500 BCE. Taoists believe in spiritual immortality and that humans and animals should live in balance with the Tao, or the universe.

Shinto

Shinto is a polytheistic religion that has incorporated elements from other religions, such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism.

Confucianism

Confucianism is often characterized as a system of social and ethical philosophy rather than a religion.

Sikhism

Founded in Punjab, North India, in 1469 by Guru Nanak Dev Ji, Sikhism is one of the world's youngest religions.



Recipe Corner:

Melting Sweet Potatoes

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 pounds uniformly sized medium sweet potatoes (4 to 5), peeled if desired and cut crosswise into 1-inch-thick rounds
- 1 tablespoon coarsely chopped fresh rosemary leaves (from about 3 sprigs)
- 1 cup low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed

Directions

- Heat the oven to 500°F.
- Stir 2 tablespoons melted unsalted butter, 2 tablespoons olive oil, 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt, and 1/2 teaspoon black pepper together in a large bowl until combined. Add 2 pounds cut sweet potatoes (peeled if desired) and 1 tablespoon coarsely chopped fresh rosemary leaves, and toss well to coat.
- Transfer the potatoes cut-side up to a 9x13-inch metal baking pan (avoid glass, as it could shatter) or rimmed baking sheet (quarter sheet pan) and arrange in a single layer. Drizzle any remaining butter mixture over the potatoes.
- Remove the pan from the oven. Carefully pour 1 cup low-sodium vegetable broth into the pan and add 4 peeled and smashed garlic cloves. Return to the oven and roast until the potatoes are very tender and most of the broth is absorbed, about 15 minutes.
- Roast until the sweet potatoes easily release from the pan with tongs and the bottoms are light golden-brown, about 15 minutes. Flip the rounds and roast until the bottoms and tops are deep golden-brown, about 15 minutes more.



Facebook Prayer Authors

January	Karen Garifo
February	Sister Karen Berry
March	Sister Marianne Saieg

Staying Connected

Published by:

Sisters of St. Francis
of Mary Immaculate

1433 Essington Road
Joliet, IL 60435-2873
Phone: 815-725-8735
www.jolietfranciscans.org

Staying Connected is prepared by Renée Cipriani.

***Printing deadline for each issue is one week
before the issue date.***

Next issue of *Staying Connected*: February 6, 2025

If you would like to submit an item for *Staying Connected*, or if something you have requested to be published is inadvertently omitted, please e-mail Sister René Simonelic at rsimonelic@jolietfranciscans.org or Renée Cipriani at rcipriani@jolietfranciscans.org