

Staying Connected

Volume 22 - Issue 2

August 14, 2025

Sisters of St. Francis
of Mary Immaculate

160th Anniversary

On Saturday, August 9, 2025, the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate (Joliet Franciscans) celebrated the 160 year anniversary of their founding. Most Revend Ronald A. Hicks, Bishop of Joliet, was the president of the morning Mass. Following was a delicious brunch. The ceremony took place at the Motherhouse campus of the University of St. Francis. It was truly a wonderful and joyous occasion. The following photos tell the story!



Bishop Hicks



Sister Jeanne Bessette



**Fr. Carl Markelz and
Ines Kutlesa**



**Sisters René Simonelic and
Sharon Frederick**



**Scale model of Mother
Alfred Moes first Joliet
residence**



Our Carmelite Friends

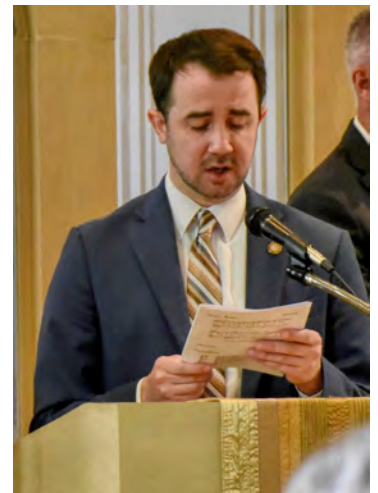
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Choir Members: Sisters Sue Bruno, Mary Rose Lieb, Jeanne Bessette, Roberta Naegele and Peggy Quinn



Pianist: Tony Berardi



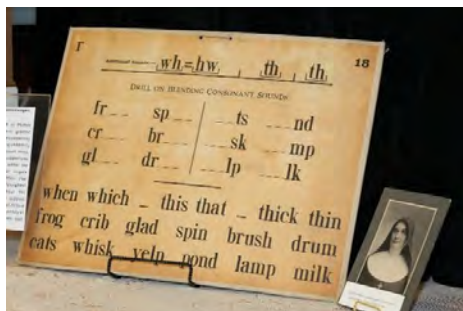
Cantor: Michael Poradek



Artifacts: Education Documents, Our Lady of Aparecida Statue, Our Lady of Angels Mosaic, Congregation Documents, Mother Alfred Moes Statue



Rachel La Porte, Violin, Carlo Isabelli, Trumpet



Photos by: David Dowell and Sister Marianne Saieg, OSF



Sr. Leomarie Luecke pointing to her name in the Congregation's original analogue database!





160 Years

**Acting Justly
Loving Tenderly
Walking Humbly**



Carmelite Feast Day at St. Pat's



Sr. Anthony and the Carmelite Sisters of St. Patrick's Residence really enjoyed their feast day, July 16. The flowers and candy were sent by the Joliet Franciscan Sisters.



Sr. Anthony Veilleux, (in photo above) Director of Mission Integration at St. Patrick's Residence, Naperville, and friends enjoying the treats!





The Carmelites enjoy partying just as much as the Franciscans!! Pizza, wine and beer were enjoyed by all. All of our Joliet Franciscan Sister residents were welcomed by Sr. Anthony and her team.

It sure looks like they were all having a wonderful time celebrating the Carmelite feast day!



Franciscan Human Trafficking Joint Committee



Submitted by: Associate Therese Griffin

**Franciscan Joint Committee with the
University of St. Francis
Dan Knapp University of St. Francis
Social Work Program Director**

"Elevating Risk, Empowering Communities: Insights and Actions Against Human Trafficking"

Our Human Trafficking Committee centered on strengthening community responses to human trafficking. Hosted by the Joint Committee of Franciscan Sisters and University of St. Francis Faculty, this meeting gathered input from a detective from the Joliet Police Department. Our session furthered understanding and practical strategies needed to address human trafficking, and renewed interest in elevating the risk for traffickers and facilitators of this problem.

Understanding Trafficking

The detective opened the meeting with a detailed overview of trafficking operations, emphasizing that both sex and labor trafficking are driven by a profitable, organized global system. While a vast majority of global trafficking involves sexual exploitation, the additional percentage of trafficking is attributed to labor trafficking and remains underreported and misunderstood. The committee raised

questions about the often-cited statistics, calling for more localized data and deeper public education.

Changing the Narrative

A key theme emerged from the meeting, low risk for traffickers influences their actions. Committee members considered the extent in which shifting this risk dynamic, whether through policy, enforcement, and public accountability, could deter future crimes. In this conversation, the role of hotels and legal professionals were reviewed. Are establishments where trafficking occurs simply absolved from this problem despite trafficking occurring on their site? Or can policy or other actions compel them to take responsibility? If such an endeavor is undertaken, policy reforms, accountability measures, and training requirements can be costly.

Our discussion sparked additional reflections:

- Can lawyers be ethically engaged to help recognize and report trafficking?
- Should the committee develop training resources for legal professionals?
- Would legislative changes, paired with funding, encourage more proactive reporting?
- Could professionals with a state-endorsed professional degree be mandated to report trafficking as they would mandate reporting for abuse?

There was consensus that greater public awareness, training and consequences for passive enablers are essential to transforming the low-risk environment that traffickers currently exploit. The detective offered further insights into how juvenile sexual exploitation cases are handled.

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Key practices include:

- Involving DCFS and placing the child in protective custody before law enforcement intervenes.
- Utilizing emergency forensic interviews via child advocacy centers.
- Gathering corroborative digital evidence (phones, social media, etc.) to support victim testimony.

The detective also acknowledged a common concern raised by committee members: victims and their advocates often feel dismissed by first responders. While patrol officers receive basic training, the committee emphasized the need for trauma-informed, culturally competent, and continuous education.

The committee explored options for:

- Enhancing officer training on trafficking recognition.
- Engaging officers during their pre-shift roll calls with awareness materials.
- Addressing the skepticism or hesitance sometimes seen in initial police responses.

Prevention

Discussions turned to early prevention strategies. One harrowing point: children's lack in autonomy makes it difficult for them to communicate abuse. In schools and homes, children must be taught the correct terminology and safety protocols. Yet, parental resistance



persists.

Committee members shared strategies to overcome this barrier:

- Leveraging peer reporting, such as tattling, as a protective mechanism.
- Encouraging parents to monitor smartphone apps and digital behaviors more proactively.
- Educating parents about hidden app features, like Snapchat's "My Eyes Only," which can conceal risky content from view.

This reinforced the importance of reaching both children and parents through education, starting early and reinforcing often.

Immigration Sensitivities

The committee discussed potential risks associated with reporting to federal agencies like Homeland Security, particularly for undocumented immigrants. Some feared that contact with federal systems could lead to deportation, which could deter both victims and bystanders from reporting crimes.

Committee members suggested clarifying:

- The operational authority of the National Human Trafficking Hotline
- The ability of victims to access legal protection.

Looking Ahead

The Committee expressed gratitude for the deep engagement from law enforcement, university faculty, and community advocates. In the spirit of collaboration, *if you see something, say something* was reiterated as a guiding principle. The committee remains hopeful that with ongoing education, policy reform, and community vigilance, the culture of silence can be broken—and the risk to traffickers raised significantly. **"Our silence protects perpetrators; our awareness empowers victims."**



National Senior Citizens Day – August 21, 2025

By the time you're eighty years old you've learned everything. You only have to remember it. ~ George Burns

On August 21, National Senior Citizens Day recognizes the achievements of the more mature representatives of our nation. The day provides an opportunity to show our appreciation for their dedication, accomplishments, and services they give throughout their lives.

According to the 2017 census, 47 million seniors live in the United States. By 2060, that number will nearly double. Their wealth of knowledge, skill, and experience offer so much to the next generation. As technologies advance, these are the people who've experienced each step of change. Not only have they contributed to it, but they understand first hand the benefits and the drawbacks. They know life without the advancements that exist today.

Our senior citizens are pioneers of science, medicine, psychology, civil rights and so much more. Their valuable contributions to our communities create better places to live. They deserve the respect and dignity their achievements earn them. The day encourages supporting senior citizens to live their lives to the fullest and as independently as possible.



Some famous Seniors...

- **Benjamin Franklin:** In his late 70s, invented **bifocals**, which combine lenses for near and far vision into a single frame. Franklin continued to serve in public service until he was 82.
- **Albert Einstein:** While famous for his early work on relativity, he continued to make contributions later in life. At 59, he published his findings on **quantum entanglement**, which is now his most cited work.
- **Walter Hunt:** He patented the **safety pin** at age 53.
- **Andrew Beard:** Born into slavery, he later became a successful farmer and inventor. At age 50, he invented the "**Jenny Coupler**," an automatic railway car coupler credited with saving countless lives and limbs of railroad workers.
- **John B. Goodenough:** He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry at age 97 for his contributions to the **development of lithium-ion batteries**.
- **John Glenn:** At the age of 77, he became the **oldest person to go to space**.
- **Laura Ingalls Wilder:** She published her first book, *Little House in the Big Woods*, at the age of 64 and continued to write the rest of the series, which became American children's classics and a popular TV series.
- **Susan B. Anthony:** She formed the **International Woman Suffrage Alliance** when she was past 80 years old.
- **Grandma Moses (Anna Mary Robertson Moses):** She didn't start painting until age 76 due to arthritis, but went on to produce thousands of paintings over 25 years.
- **Yuichiro Miura:** At age 80, he became the **oldest person to reach the top of Mount Everest**.
- **Mohr Keet:** This WWII veteran became the **world's oldest bungee jumper** at 96 years old, having started jumping at age 88.

Message from LSAP Goals 1, 4 Subcommittee

If your parish or organization wishes to receive weekly bulletins, google Catholic Climate Covenant/Creation Care Corner Bulletin.



Associate Dolores Gross sends her heartfelt thank you to all! The many cards, emails and gifts that were sent in honor of her 25 years as an associate were a great surprise and a joyful blessing.

Creation Care Corner

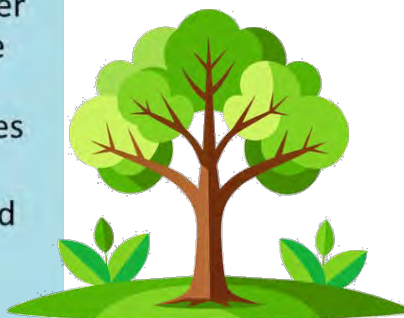


"...the world we have received also belongs to those who will follow us".
— Pope Francis

Act to reduce paper waste during the Season of Creation.

The Season of Creation is September 1st to October 4th. It is a time to reflect on our relationship with the environment, how we live, and how our lifestyles impact the natural world, humans and other creatures inhabiting it.

40% of the world's commercially cut timber is used for paper. This endangers natural habitats and depletes water resources. Since it's inexpensive to print, we do it without thinking. Try to go paperless: think about what you print, your bank statements, the paper towels you use, and the junk mail you haven't opted out of. There are many areas where each of us can help to lessen paper production. Paper is recyclable. Recycle paper at home and office, and buy recycled paper products.



Poetry Corner

I Shall Sing to the Lord a New Song

By Ruth H. Sohn

*I stand at the sea and turn
To face the desert stretching endless and
still
My eyes are dazzled the sky brilliant blue
Sunburnt sands unyielding white.
My hands turn to dove wings.
My arms reach for the sky
I want to sing the song rising in me
I stop
Where are the words?
I stop
Where is the melody?
In a moment of panic my eyes go blind.
Can I take a stop without knowing a
destination?
Will I falter, will I fall, will the ground sink
away from under me?
The song still unformed – How can I sing?
To take the first step – to sing a new song –*

*Is to close one's eyes and dive into
unknown waters,
For a moment knowing nothing risking all –
But then to discover
The waters are friendly the ground is firm.
And the song – the song rises again.
Out of my mouth come words lifting the
wind.
And I hear for the first time the song
That has been in my heart silent unknown
even to me.*

August Sun

by Robert Duncan

One of the most prominent features of August is the hot, glaring sun, and this is perfectly captured in the poem "August Sun" by Robert Duncan. In this poem, Duncan explores the impact of the sun's heat on both nature ("the green fields wilted down") and himself ("of all hidden things, I sing, waiting"). If you've ever spent a hot summer day by the fan, longing for cooler temperatures in the evening, you'll identify with Duncan's desire "for evening's grace."

*"God of the idle heat, in this glaring road
you dominate all.
And over the green fields wilted down
under your blaze, these
thirsty unruly plants grow a jungle
domesticity
to protect their fruit.
Of all hidden things, I sing, waiting
for evening's grace."*



Recipe Corner:

Carrot and Zucchini Bars

Ingredients

1 1/2 cups all purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
2 eggs, slightly beaten
1 1/2 cups shredded carrot
1 cup shredded zucchini
3/4 cup packed brown sugar
1/2 cup raisins
1/2 cup chopped walnuts
1/2 cup cooking oil
3/4 cup honey
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 recipe Citrus-Cream Cheese Frosting

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large bowl combine flour, baking powder, ginger and baking soda. In another large bowl stir together eggs, carrot, zucchini, brown sugar, raisins, walnuts, oil, honey and vanilla. Add carrot mixture, stirring until combined. Spread batter in an ungreased 13x9x2 inch baking pan.

2. Bake about 25 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Frost with Citrus-Cream Cheese Frosting.

Citrus-Cream Cheese Frosting

In a bowl, beat one eight ounce package softened cream cheese and one cup powdered sugar with an electric mixer on medium speed until fluffy. Stir in one teaspoon finely shredded lemon peel.



Facebook Prayer Authors

August	Sr. Mary Frances Seeley
September	Sr. Karen Berry
November	Sr. Rosemary Huzl
December	Sr. Marianne Saieg

If you would like to volunteer for October 2025, or any time next year to be a Facebook Prayer Author, please contact Karen Garifo at kgarifo@jolietfranciscans.org.

Thank You!

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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