

Staying Connected

Volume 22 - Issue 8

February 12, 2026

Sisters of St. Francis
of Mary Immaculate

The Third LCWR 100 Days of Prayer, Fasting and Advocacy

By Sr. Peggy Quinn

Last year we took part in the 2nd LCWR 100 Days of Prayer, Fasting and Advocacy. We signed up as a congregation for December 18, 2025, as our day of prayer. Sr. Karen Berry wrote a special prayer for us and a number of sisters or associates wrote letters that were hand delivered to our representatives in congress by the LCWR staff. We chose our own way to fast and then delivered food to a collection site across the street here at the office as our sign of advocacy.

The 3rd 100 Days of Prayer, Fasting and advocacy will be February 18 - June 7, 2026. We as a congregation again have signed up; we chose April 8, which is the day we are gathering at St. Pat's for prayer and a meal together. We will share this prayer with those who cannot join us via email. Our congregation name, along with about 200 others, will be listed as signing the letter that will be delivered in person to Congress. We will attach the flyer for the project in this mailing. This flyer shares how the over 1000 letters were received.

If Something Looks Different...

It's because it is! We experimenting with a color-theme change for *Staying Connected*. The burgundy color we've been using has been the main theme of our congregation stationery since the 1980s, when Rita Travis was asked to develop a new logo and look for our print materials. Do you remember the graphic of the shape of our congregation pin, but with burgundy pinstripes. Eventually we discontinued that "mark" in favor of just the name of the congregation in fonts designed in the early 2000s by graphic artist students and professor at USF. We kept the burgundy color.

But in the spirit of growth and change and just trying something new, we are offering a new color scheme for this era. The blue and green we've chosen are rooted in creation — the colors of skies and waters and growing things. We are hoping this look feels more organic, more natural and is something you can relate to. We will try it for a while and welcome your reaction, response, thoughts, etc.

Jeanne and Company

Jubilee and Summer Gathering

SAVE THE DATES!

Jubilee: Saturday, June 27, 2026

Summer Gathering: June 29, June 30, July 1



Algerian/Amazigh
Deaf
Bolivian
Lebanese
Afghan
Haitian
Chinese
Puerto Rican
Mexican
Brazilian
African American
Buddhist

You are Invited

SHARING CULTURES '26

A series of four monthly Zoom gatherings - 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm Central Time

With real people telling us what's special about their cultures!

Purpose: to better understand persons of cultures other than my own.

2026

Wednesday, February 25

Wednesday, March 25

Wednesday, April 22

Wednesday, May 27

TO REGISTER FOR ONE OR MORE, GET A ZOOM LINK

Email sarah.enz@sbcglobal.net

with **your name, email address and phone number.**

*May we have a deeper appreciation of people of all cultures
so we more fully grasp how each person can live to her/his full potential
and all of us can live well together.*

Sponsored by Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission (JPIC)
and Anti-Racism Committee (ARC)
of the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, Joliet Franciscans



Franciscan Human Trafficking Joint Committee



Facts about Illinois Human Trafficking Statistics

Gathered facts by Therese Griffin

Significant issue in Illinois, with the state consistently ranking among the top 10 nationwide for reported cases, according to data from the National Human Trafficking Hotline. The state is a major hub due to its central location, with high rates of both sex and labor trafficking, particularly in the Chicago area, though it is prevalent in suburban and rural areas as well.

Key Statistics (Recent Years)

Victim Demographics: Victims are overwhelmingly female (195 female vs. 28 males in 2021 data).

Underreporting: The reported numbers are believed to represent only a fraction of the actual cases, as many victims do not reach out for help or are not identified.

Types and Locations of Trafficking

Sex Trafficking (Most Common):

Approximately 76% of reported cases in Illinois are for sex trafficking.

Industry Breakdown: Common locations for exploitation include illicit massage businesses, hotel/motels, online ads, and residential brothels.

Labor Trafficking: Occurs in industries such as construction, domestic work, restaurant, and agriculture.

Policy and Law Enforcement

Improved Ranking: In 2025, Illinois made

significant progress in its response to trafficking, with Shared Hope International raising the state's grade from an "F" to an "A" (ranked 2nd in the U.S.) for its laws on supporting survivors.

State Action: The Illinois State Police (ISP) now require trafficking recognition training for all cadets.

Key Legislation: The Illinois Statewide Trauma-Informed Response to Human Trafficking Act (SB 2323) was passed to mandate better training and services for victims.

Trafficking of Minors: Research indicates that roughly one in three teens will be recruited by a pimp within 48 to 72 hours of running away from home, and the average age of entry into prostitution is 12–14 years old.

National Human Trafficking

Key Resources:

Hotline: Call 1-888-373-7888 or text 233733

Message from JPIC



REMINDER:

Valentine's Day is coming soon.

Have you mailed in your donation for this year's

One Heart Project? If so, thank you for your generosity.

January's mailing features the One Heart Projects and a form for mailing your donation or contact Sr. Peggy via email, text or phone by February 14th.

Presidents' Day Quiz

1. Who was the first president to live in the White House?

- A. George Washington
- B. John Adams
- C. Thomas Jefferson
- D. James Madison

2. The White House wasn't always known as the "White House." It was sometimes called the Executive Mansion, the President's House, and several other names. Which president officially named the building The White House?

- A. Grover Cleveland
- B. William Taft
- C. Ulysses Grant
- D. Theodore Roosevelt

3. Who was the first president to be born a US citizen?

- A. Andrew Jackson
- B. John Quincy Adams
- C. Martin Van Buren
- D. William Henry Harrison

4. How many children did George Washington have?

- A. 0
- B. 3
- C. 5
- D. 9

5. Which president spent the shortest amount of time in office?

- A. William Henry Harrison
- B. Chester A. Arthur
- C. C. Theodore Roosevelt
- D. D. Franklin D. Roosevelt

6. Which state has produced the most US presidents?

- A. Illinois
- B. Texas
- C. New York
- D. Virginia



7. In 1966, President Lyndon B. Johnson made what historic decision?

- A. He changed the term limits for U.S. senators.
- B. He appointed the first African-American cabinet member.
- C. He established the Federal Bureau of intelligence.
- D. He desegregated the U.S. military.

8. What kind of farm did President Jimmy Carter famously own before he became president?

- A. Corn
- B. Dairy
- C. Wheat
- D. Peanut

9. Which president was known by the Secret Service code name "Rawhide?" (Hint: His First Lady's code name was "Rainbow.")

- A. Franklin D. Roosevelt
- B. George W. Bush
- C. Ronald Reagan
- D. Barack Obama

10. Who was the only president to leave the White House and return for a second term four years later?

- A. Benjamin Harrison
- B. Grover Cleveland
- C. Franklin Pierce
- D. James Garfield

No PEEKING! Answers on page 7.

Find Your Passion for the New Year!

If you are interested in sustainability and working toward a greener environment, I encourage you to check out Earth Hero. This app contains information on the constantly changing field of climate change. Earth Hero contains suggestions for developing your own action goals.

Another area is information about different climate communities and if you are interested, how you can join them. Interested in what is going on in the world? There is the Earth Hero Newsletter with news, information and ideas on how we can all do our part.

There is much more available in this app, check it out! It is available in the App Store for Apple and on Google Play.



earthhero.org
<https://earthhero.org>

LSAP Subcommittee Goals 1,4

Janine Hicks

Pam Leddy

Carol Baranski

Sr. Jane Nienaber

Message from LSAP Goals 1, 4 Subcommittee



Consider asking your parish to subscribe through Catholic Climate Covenant/Creation Care Bulletin.

Creation Care Corner



"Let us pray that, inspired by St. Francis, we might experience our interdependence with all creatures who are loved by God and worthy of love and respect." - Pope Leo XIV

The Year of St. Francis – Simplicity

Pope Leo proclaimed a special Jubilee Year of St. Francis of Assisi on the occasion of the 800th anniversary of his death. St. Francis reminds us of the timeless value of poverty and simplicity. By renouncing wealth and social prestige, he showed that freedom of heart is born of detachment from material goods. For today's person, living in a world of consumerism, this is an extremely timely invitation to moderation, responsible use of goods, and placing God and neighbor above material possessions: it is a matter of "being" more than "having."

In our time, when faith can be reduced to emotions, his attitude encourages consistency between faith and daily life, and witness given through actions rather than only words or feelings. His life was a response to indifference and selfishness—problems just as evident today.

Attribution: Vatican News -Fr. Marek Weresa

JPIC Grant 2026

Is there a need for financial assistance for the brothers and sisters whom you serve through your volunteering or employment? Please reference the JPIC Grant letter in this mailing. The application can be found on our website under "February 12, 2026, Mailing" or can be requested by contacting Sr. Peggy Quinn by email, pquinn@jolietfranciscans.org or by phone, 815-735-5938.

Origins of *Valentine's Day*



St. Valentine wasn't just one person. Many people know that Valentine's Day is named after St. Valentine. But did you know there are actually two St. Valentines? Nobody knows for sure if the holiday originally celebrated St. Valentine of Rome or St. Valentine of Terni, both of whom were martyred. Legends say that St. Valentine of Rome was a priest who defied the Roman Emperor Claudius II's ban on soldiers getting married and continuing to marry couples in secret. Other stories say that he helped Christians escape Roman prisons and fell in love with the jailer's daughter, writing her a letter signed "From your Valentine."

Rome. Lupercalia was dedicated to the Roman god of agriculture, Faunus, and the founders of Rome, Romulus and Remus. It was celebrated with animal sacrifices and gently slapping women and crop fields with goat hides dipped in blood, which was thought to help fertility.

In the 1300s, it officially became a holiday associated with love. The origins of Valentine's Day are murky. But it is thought to have been made a holiday in the fifth century when Pope Gelasius outlawed the celebration of Lupercalia. It wasn't until much later that it became associated with romance. In the Middle Ages, it was believed that February 14 was the start of birds' mating season. Chaucer cemented the connection between Valentine's Day, birds and romance with his 1375 poem "Parliament of Fowles," writing, "For this was on Seynt Valentynes day, / Whan every foul cometh ther to chese his make." The rest, as they say, is history!



Valentine's Day has its roots in an ancient Pagan festival. Valentine's Day also has pagan roots alongside its connection to St. Valentine. It may have originated in Lupercalia, a festival of fertility celebrated on February 15 in ancient

Cupid has roots in Greek mythology. Watch out around Valentine's Day, or else you may be struck by Cupid's arrow. According to [Time](#), the ubiquitous cherub can be traced back to 700 B.C. In Ancient Greece, Eros, the Greek god of love, was depicted as a handsome young man and had the power to make people fall madly in love. Over time, he was adopted by the Romans and became known as Cupid, his image changing to the little boy with the bow and arrow.

Because of his love-inspiring powers, he became linked to Valentine's Day by the turn of the 19th century.



National Blueberry Muffin Day ~ February 20

On February 20th, National Muffin Day serves up a delicious celebration packed with flavor and options, too!

Bakeries offer these single-serving quick breads in several sizes. From mini bite-sized muffins and jumbo ones to the favored muffin tops, they also offer a varied nutritional value. Depending on the ingredients, a muffin can be high in fat and calories. However, substituting whole grains, changing a few other ingredients, and limiting the serving size can increase the nutritional quality of a muffin.

Baking with fresh fruits and berries brings a brightness to muffins. It also keeps them from becoming dry as they bake. One of America's favorite muffins is the blueberry muffin. Another way to add flavor and texture is by mixing in nuts and oats. Bakers often have bits of chocolate and bananas that need to be used. Mixing them into the muffin batter will keep your muffin eaters happy in the morning, too!

HOW TO OBSERVE NATIONAL MUFFIN DAY

- ♦ Bake up a batch of your favorite muffins.
- ♦ Share your favorite muffin recipes.
- ♦ Try a new muffin recipe like one of these:
Apple Cinnamon Muffin Plain Muffins
Spinach Cheddar Muffins
- ♦ Running short on time? Stop by your favorite bakery and pick up a half dozen to share.
- ♦ Be sure to give a shout-out to the baker to let them know how much you appreciate their service.
- ♦ And use #NationalMuffinDay to post on social media.

See Blueberry Muffin Recipe on page 8!



Quiz Answers:

1. B. John Adams
2. D. Theodore Roosevelt
3. C. Martin Van Buren
4. A. 0
5. A. William Henry Harrison
6. D. Virginia
7. B. He appointed the first African-American cabinet member.
8. D. Peanut
9. C. Ronald Reagan
10. B. Grover Cleveland



Recipe Corner: Blueberry Muffins

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup butter
1 cup sugar
2 large eggs
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup milk
2 1/2 cups blueberries

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Lightly grease muffin tin or line with paper muffin cups. In a medium bowl, beat together softened butter and sugar until creamy. Add one egg at a time, mixing well.

Stir in baking powder, salt, and vanilla. Incorporate flour and milk alternately, stirring just enough to combine making sure to scrape the sides and bottom of the bowl.

Mash 1/2 cup of blueberries. Add all the blueberries to the batter. Mix gently just dispersing the berries throughout the mixture.

Distribute the batter evenly into the muffin tins. Bake at 375 degrees for 30 minutes or until they are golden brown. A toothpick inserted into the center of the muffin should come out clean. Remove from oven and let rest on a cooling rack.

GLAZE:

Mix confectioners' sugar, lemon zest and lemon juice in a small bowl.

Drizzle over semi-cooled muffins.

Sprinkle lightly with granular sugar.



Facebook Prayer Authors

February	Sr. Marianne Saieg
March	Sr. Karen Berry
April	LSAP Sub-committee Goals 1, 4

Volunteers needed for later in 2026 to be a Facebook Prayer Author!

Please contact Karen Garifo at
kgarifo@jolietfranciscans.org.

Thank You!

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Published by:

Sisters of St. Francis
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Staying Connected is prepared by Renée Cipriani.

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

Next issue of *Staying Connected*: March 12, 2026

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