

# Reflection

*Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate*  
Joliet, IL

**Jubilee 2026**

By: Sr. Margaret Guider, OSF — June 27, 2026

Over the course of my life with the Joliet Franciscans, going all the way back to my years as an aspirant, the three Jubilarians whom we celebrate today, have been a source of inspiration. Each one, in her own way, has been an exemplar, of a famous quotation from the Brazilian writer, Clarice Lispector,

*"A vida e sempre possível, reinventada."*

Life is always possible, reinvented!

(Looking out at all of us gathered in this chapel this morning, I suspect I am not the only person who feels this way.)

Though I will refrain from recounting all of the ways I have learned from you what it means to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, Francis and Clare, and Mother Alfred, I will simply say, it is with deep gratitude, that I thank you for the invitation to break open the Word of God with you and for you on this special day.

For those of you who may be unfamiliar with our Jubilee customs, it is important to know that every year, the theme of Jubilee is different. Every year, it is the theme that gives expression to the very foundation of the Jubilarians way of being – in the congregation, in the church and in the world.

So, before I continue, I invite each of you now to pick up your worship booklets And take a moment to reflect on what you see—and how the image of Francis helps you to understand more deeply what "being called to live the Gospel" has meant for our Sisters, Lucille, Margaret and Patricia.

Speaking to the three of you, this is what I see and understand more deeply:

**To live the Gospel ...** has been – and continues to be the Franciscan challenge each one of you has embraced with courage and compassion.

**To live the Gospel ...**

has been – and continues to be the vow that each one of you has made, always striving to fulfill.

**To live the Gospel ...**

has been – and continues to be the hope that somehow you have managed to sustain, in the best times and in the most difficult of times. As we continue our celebration of this very special liturgy and very special day, let us recall the words of St. Francis who reminds us all: "Who we are before God, this we are and nothing more."

As we witness you, Lou, Margaret and Pat, Standing before God today, know that our hearts are full of joy, gratitude and love, For who you have been, for who you are today and who you will continue to be In your response to the call to live the Gospel.

**To live the Gospel...**

has been - and continues to be, the pathway to experiencing - deep down in your hearts the unfolding mystery of God's love and the fullness of joy,

And ultimately,

**To live the Gospel** is the very mission God has entrusted to your care ... the mission which brings you to this moment in which you find yourselves today as Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate.

Though you have travelled very diverse paths - as have your treasured classmates and all of this year's jubilarians who have gone before you in faith - these paths have led you - and will continue to lead you to a graced convergence of God's own design.

And now, speaking to everyone here in St. Joseph's Chapel and online: The readings and the psalm selected for today's Jubilee liturgy are truly gifts of the Holy Spirit - but I also would like to suggest that they also are gifts, carefully chosen by our three Jubilarians *for us*.

Indeed, the scriptural passages they have gifted us provide us with four key questions and a number of insights drawn from a 195 years of their Franciscan lives and commitments.

The questions are:

1. With what shall we come before the Lord?"
2. How do we become blessed?"
3. What is love? and
4. What does it mean to share in the mission of Christ?"

#### *Gift #1*

In the reading from the Prophet Micah, the question that is posed is this:  
"With what shall I come before the Lord?" And the insights we are gifted with are these: "We know what the Lord requires-  
Act justly. Love tenderly. Walk humbly."

#### *Gift #2*

Implicit in Psalm 128 is another question: "How does we become blessed?"  
Once again, we are gifted with important insights:

"Love God. Follow God. Seek God."

#### *Gift #3*

"What is love?"

Again, we gifted with many insights - multifaceted examples of what love is and what love is not. And we are reminded, that no matter what happens in life, faith, hope and love remain - and love is the most important of all.

#### *And finally, Gift #4*

"What does it mean to share in the mission of Christ?"

The insights we are given are these:

It means doing the work that God gave us to do and being who we are called to be. It means remembering that we have come from God and we are returning to God.

It means remembering that we have been sent. It means remembering to whom we belong and ever mindful of the People of God entrusted to our care.

It means being steadfast in our prayer to God and our prayers for others.

It means giving glory to God through our lives and witness.

It means being in the world and being there for others so they may come to know the power of love is stronger than the power of death. It means believing that united with

Christ, we are drawn into the heart of God –  
and that one day we all will know the  
fullness of joy in God's presence.

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