

SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS, CLINTON, IOWA

ST. FRANCIS DE PAULA NEWSLETTER

March 2024

Comments from Alumnae

from Sue (Baumbach) Young, Class of 1956

I really enjoyed reading the last newsletter, especially about St. Francis de Paula. A year ago, I went on a cruise from Venice to Rome. On a stop in Palermo, Sicily, I visited the Cathedral and discovered a side altar dedicated to St. Francis. (photo at right)



from MaryAnne (Andrick) Sigel, Class of 1953

The newsletter is always enjoyable to read. The recollection of Barbara O'Connor, class of 1947, was very entertaining! Don't remember the time element of the subject she spoke about as I was a graduate of the class of 1953, but the subject of Father Trainer brought back fond memories of Father and sisters who taught there.

The picture of Sisters Scholastica and Anna Clare also brought back memories. Sister Anna Clare was a happy-go-lucky type of nun, she was delightful to be around! Sister Scholastica, who taught 8th grade, was a lovable, caring nun. She opened doors for us we never knew! I loved being in her class for all the teaching she provided us. I still have fond memories of her and never have forgotten her!

Women Religious Archives Collaborative

As religious congregations grow smaller, many are exploring possibilities of collaborative archives to keep the mission, charism, and history of sisters alive.

As part of this nationwide effort, the Sisters of St. Francis have joined the Women Religious Archives Collaborative (WRAC) based out of Cleveland, Ohio.

With 29 current participating congregations, WRAC is working on the creation of a regional space — a "Heritage Center" located in Cleveland's Central neighborhood on the outskirts of the city's downtown to serve as a



resource center for religious congregations.

It will offer researchers a centralized hub to study the records of numerous congregations in one

location. In addition, the

building will include space for exhibits and programs to engage with the public about women religious. The Sisters of St. Francis will send its archival material to this location for permanent storage.

Additionally, WRAC is planning to link with other regional centers (Boston College, Santa

WRAC continued on page 4

— *Class Photographs* —

from Carol Siciliano-Gierman, Class of 1960

While visiting my relatives over the holidays, my niece was cleaning out and I was the “trash bin” of sorts! These class photos include my sister, Mary Siciliano, who was in 3rd grade and 5th-8th grades respectively.

► *St. Francis de Paula 3rd Grade
1936-1937 School Year*



◄ *Grades 5-8, April 1939.
Mary Siciliano circled in front,
third from left.*

► *St. Francis de Paula 7th Grade
October 1940*



We pray for the repose of the souls of:



Helen (Sagmeister) Cunningham — October 19, 2023

Helen was the daughter of Frank and Elizabeth Sagmeister. She was a member of the St. Francis de Paula Class of 1949. She married Michael Cunningham, who preceded her in death. Helen retired from the former Bethlehem Steel after 31 years of service. She enjoyed reading and going out to eat with her friends. Helen is survived by her nieces, nephews, and cousins.



Dorothy A. Donovan — September 11, 2023

Dorothy was born on June 8, 1936, the daughter of Edward and Mary Donovan. She spent most of her life caring for the sick in her role as a registered nurse, much of that time at Massachusetts General Hospital. She completed her career and retired as a nurse manager. Dorothy remained connected to the Sisters of St. Francis and was an Associate member, and then Sojourner, for many years. Her passions in life were her career and her faith. She was preceded in death by her parents and brother, Edward. She is survived by her brothers, John and Richard.



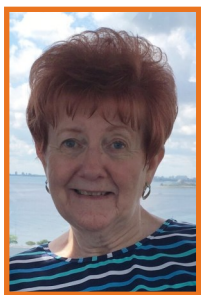
Marian (Hellmann) Panny — January 4, 2023

Marian was born October 20, 1929, the daughter of George and Tillie Hellmann. She married Joseph Panny in 1955 and they had three children, David, Michael, and Joanne. Marian enjoyed playing cards and going square dancing. She was a good cook. She loved to watch Jeopardy while sitting in her La-Z-Boy recliner.



Joan (Basil) Cosco — May 3, 2022

Joan was born June 12, 1935. She was a member of the St. Francis de Paula Class of 1949. Her siblings were Mary, James, Tony, and her beloved twin, Jean. Joan married Louis "Louie" Cosco and they had four children, Jean, Russell, Toni, and Luke.



Janet (Butler) Barham — October 26, 2021

Janet was born July 24, 1943, the daughter of Charles and Emily Butler and sister of Anita. She was a member of the St. Francis de Paula Class of 1957. She married John Barham and they had one daughter, Bridget. Janet loved mathematics, especially geometry, and kept her mind sharp with brain teasers, sudoku, and fiercely competitive battles of Tenzi, Spot-It, and Uno with loved ones. She taught for 21 years at Elizabeth Seton High School and then 25 years at St. Laurence High School where she transitioned from teacher to treasurer to assistant principal. Janet was well-known for her love of St. Patrick's Day — her annual parties were legendary!

— WRAC Continued... —

Clare University, and the Heritage and Research Center at St. Mary's College) to create a national network of archives under one "virtual roof." It will have a coordinated approach to support the management and long-term preservation of archives of women religious.

The Sisters of St. Francis have welcomed an archival response team to Clinton on two occasions in 2023. The archival response team is a group that travels to do labor intensive work within a short period of time. The collaborative effort allows the team members to share expertise as they organize the collection and create an electronic finding aid to assist the congregation now and in the future.

The Sisters of St. Francis archives contains invaluable records showing the remarkable impact our sisters have had in the communities they've served for the past 158 years, including archival material from St. Francis de Paula. It is critical to ensure archival collections from religious congregations like the Sisters of St. Francis are safeguarded for the long term.

The invitation at right from WRAC explains how you can support the construction of the state-of-the-art, \$22 million center to secure the archival collections of Catholic sisters.



Architect's rendering of the new WRAC facility

**"If we don't tell our own stories,
no one else will."**

- Mira Nair, Filmmaker

Every story needs a storyteller. Who better to tell the stories of Catholic sisters in America than these women themselves? Within the archives of congregations of Catholic sisters are stories that must be told...told in their own voices.

The Women Religious Archives Collaborative will establish a permanent heritage center in Cleveland, Ohio, for the archives of congregations of Catholic sisters. Through interactive programming and historical research, the heritage center will continue to tell important stories of sisters who built the Catholic Church in America and impacted society in countless ways.

Religious communities have an urgent need for a heritage center for these reasons as the number of sisters decrease: lack of space as congregations move into smaller facilities; lack of professionally trained archivists; merged provinces or consolidated congregations; congregations completing their missions.

You are invited to join us in supporting these sisters. They need real, practical, feasible assistance. You can help them just as they helped all of you in classrooms, hospital rooms, orphanages, or women's shelters. You can help them in honor of their mission work on the American Western frontier, or their advocacy for justice and civil rights in America's cities.

They were there for us. We are now here for them. WRAC will serve those who served us.

Help write the next chapter by donating toward the WRAC Heritage Center. Give online at www.archivescollaborative.org/donate or mail a gift to Women Religious Archives Collaborative, 2475 E. 22nd Street, Cleveland, OH 44115.