Mission

FSPA
We are a community of vowed Franciscan women centered in Encharist, committed to being loving presence through prayer, witness and service.

Affiliation
We, Affiliates of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, are spiritual collaborators joined in sacred relationship, supporting one another to live the Gospel and transform our world.

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New Franciscan Way banners announce anniversary

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Sisters, affiliates, staff and friends paddle for breast cancer research

On July 6 FSPA and their partners in mission participated in Mayo Clinic Health System-Franciscan Healthcare’s inaugural Big Blue Dragon Boat Race on the Mississippi River in La Crosse, Wis. The FSPA crews, Franciscan Fliers (front) and Clare Crusiers (back), raced up the river for a good cause, breast cancer research at Franciscan Healthcare. Several FSPA joined the fun as spectators, offering a blessing during the event’s opening ceremony. Both crews paddled hard and the Franciscan Fliers earned a trophy for placing first in the Pearl Dragon Bracket.

Newly-planted tree at the Villa honors FSPA centenarian

Family and friends joined Sister Dolocrine Schier for the tree planting ceremony held on June 6 in honor of her 100th birthday. A Triumph Elm shade tree with strong branches and large, deep glossy green leaves was planted on the side lawn at Villa St. Joseph. Sister Dolocrine turned 100 on Jan. 1, 2013.

Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, their affiliates and prayer partners change the world.

Presence tells their stories.

FSPA risked boldly the future at General Assembly 2013

Can you see the lard light, the cycloon, the evolutionary menomence? Can you bathe in Christic cosmos? Can you dance chaordically? Can you look over the liminal edge? Can you ignite a heart exchange? Can you leave the “you” and join the “we”? Can you risk—risk boldly—the future? FSPA did—with overwhelming praise and joy—during the 2013 General Assembly. It transpired Monday through Wednesday, June 17-19, at Lunda Center, an open and airy conference facility on the campus of Western Technical College in downtown La Crosse, Wis. They resurfaced Thursday through Friday, June 20-21, at St. Rose Convent and Marycrest auditorium inside Mayo Clinic Health System-Franciscan Healthcare’s La Crosse campus. Throughout the week, over 200 sisters and affiliates gathered together. Others assembled in contemplation and prayer at St. Rose Convent and Villa St. Joseph. In heart and mind and spirit, they all joined hands at the precipice of Vision Quest. They had traveled there through four years of inner transformation, authentic relationships and awakening consciousness. They were welcomed by FSPA President Sister Linda Mershon, the assembly planning committee and Harvest Team along with facilitators Tennesse Woolf and Teresa Pousakley, keynote speaker Sister of Green Mountain Monastery Gail Worcelo and La Crosse theologian John McGuth. They danced and sang at the top of their lungs to an extraordinary composition written by Sister Rosemary Desmond: “Risk! Risk boldly! Risk boldly for the future!” Welcoming all Monday morning, Sister Linda retraced steps taken to navigate to assembly, celebrating great gains via Vision Quest and encouraging FSPA onward. “We find ourselves compelled not to rest here but to re-enter the creative process.” She pressed on with a question posed at a recent conference she’d attended, one that “was haunting me. ‘Why live this life if not on the liminal edge?’ That question led to a challenge: ‘If love for Christ is fundamentally equal to love for others then our call is to lean in together “chaordically”’—chaordic is defined as the combination of chaos and order that creates a co-existent congruency—a co-existent congruency that ‘was haunting me. ‘Why live this life if not on the liminal edge?’ That question led to a challenge: ‘If love for Christ is fundamentally equal to love for others then our call is to lean in together “chaordically”’—chaordic is defined as the combination of chaos and order that creates a co-existent congruency—a co-existent congruency that...”
**Harvest Prayer**

*In the Light of the Christic cosmos we make a heart exchange ... our community committed to connecting in creative unions leaning toward the evolutionary edge humbly chaordically bringing our mission forward in service of Gospel love.*

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**Continuing the harvest: what sisters and affiliates are boldly risking**

Each day at assembly, sisters and affiliates, with motivation from Sister Gail, Tennessee, Teresa and John, from prayer, dance and song, and from each other mapped ideas for the future. After three days of brainstorming and diagramming in rotating circles, FSPA and affiliates had written the ultimate manuscript of community vision. Their harvest reflects the creativity generated through this assembly process while reflecting what it is burning in their hearts for the sake of mission. And now it is the work of the sisters and affiliates to nourish the harvest—to tend to the ideas brought forward. The leadership team has asked that sisters and affiliates who plan to move forward with their harvest ideas keep the mission council-in-charge informed. The community, and this publication, will follow closely as this harvest unfolds.

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**FSPA joins to celebrate as Sister Laura professes final vows**

“She has a strong connection to community life. She is an asset to our community and we welcome her.” Those words, shared by Sister Linda Mershon, welcomed sisters and friends gathered in Mary of the Angels Chapel on May 25 to receive Sister Laura Nettles into perpetual vows—one day short of six years since her first vow profession. And to Sister Laura, Sister Linda offered, “God’s dream for you is fulfilled this day.”

Sister Laura’s profession day was surrounded by the theme of “light.” The Gospel reading, Matthew 5:13-16, offered this: “... your light will shine before others ... they will see your good deeds.” Presider Father Conrad Targonski offered this enlightenment: “... the sky is the limit ... we are with you as you’re about to embrace this wonderful light.”

Representing Sister Laura’s local community, Mindful Hearts, Sisters Marlene Weisenbeck and Celeste Day offered a reflection. Sister Marlene read, “Your friend, St. Bonaventure, reminded you of ‘every good and perfect gift’ that comes from this God of eternal Light seeking fulfillment in the universe, in all God’s creation, in the worlds of the heavens, the earth, all humanity, truly in all of us, in you. In the Scripture readings which you have chosen, I believe you are acknowledging a personal charism of yours—that of being a light for the world.”

In closing, Sister Marlene enthusiastically proclaimed: “In gratitude for your light, your salt, your truth, your fearlessness, we say ‘Eucharisteo.’ Be empowered by the Holy Spirit! And may the Gospel narrative be big enough to fit your life.”

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**New affiliates**

St. Luke’s Medical Center. She then became director of nursing at St. Ann Center for Interprofessional Care and, thereafter, a staff nurse at Mercy Clinic East—Mercy Health System. Now retired in Eagle River, Wis., Ginger volunteers with “a passion for comforting the elderly” and being a loving presence for hospice-care patients at Ministry Eagle River Memorial Hospital. “All humanity is my brothers, my sisters,” she says.

As for her spiritual story, Ginger says she felt “a real disconnect” to the Catholic Church following the end of her first marriage (after which she married Charlie, her husband of 40 years). Now, with Sister Anita Bexar as her contact and fresh nourishment for her personal and faith life (“... something I’ve needed to fill a void for a long time”), she finds herself in a place of welcoming and peace. “I feel ready to take the next step.”

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**With the FSPA ring, Sister Celesta Day beholds the blessing of Sister Laura Nettles’ final vows.**

**New affiliates Peggy Jo Fulton, Ginger Gullan and Deb Cannon make their mark in Mary of the Angels Chapel.**
General assembly continued from page 1

partnership in which both elements are equal. It can go hand in hand as possibility and opportunity—taking the mystification from the FSPA equation and uniting it with clearly composed ministries, however daunting, for the future. “It’s what we’ve been doing all along,” began Sister Gail in her keynote address. “I’m here to hold you to the highest possibility.”

Sister Gail distinguished possibility in three striking images that “honor sisters and affiliates.” First, she saw the lard light of Vision Quest. “It’s a witness to the first fiery light of God … the urge of the divine.” Second, she used the metaphor of Vision Quest swirling into a cyclone. “Something new wants to emerge here. It takes the shape of life energy.” In her third depiction, the lard light is swept into the cyclone to form an evolutionary monstrosity. It’s “a powerful image at the center of FSPA, calling you to become it” and to reflect “… a God consciousness that is coherent and unitive. You now need the courage to take … a vertical leap into consciousness … a cosmology of separate-ness to one of unity. It will transform not only the congregation,” she asserted, “but the world.”

How do you collect the courage to choose change, “… to lean back and take on the consciousness of Christ?” Through, said Sister Gail, “spontaneous plunge … the presence of someone who is more awake than you … in a collective where the vortex pulls all singulars into depths together … with meditation.” And within what Sister Gail called “the we space … a mutual awakening. Christ is no longer an individual attainment.”

Throughout the week co-facilitators Tenneson and Teresa tenderly tugged FSPA hearts into that “we space,” into a collective risk and future intelligence. Tenneson invited all “to find another way to feel. We are gathered together as a community and the working belief for me is we can feel things together that we can’t alone.” Teresa spoke of reaching the “sweet spot … which we know can’t last forever.” She proposed the Two Loops Model—a social-system scale that allows the transition of “giving hospice to the old and supporting emergence of the new.” Intrinsically, it could be a riskier take on Theory U, the letting go and letting come, with more succinctness and purpose, with the added loop of illuminating the choice between the two. “It’s a way of exploring and navigating paradigm shift and imminent risk in FSPA ministries,” Teresa explained. Sisters and affiliates then gathered at the World Café—circles around tables with paper and markers at their disposal and the paradigm model and intentionality in mind—to explore community vision. Café conversations began to brew and overflow.

Perhaps with perception of that model Sisters Cecilia Corcoran, Eileen McKenzie and affiliate Emily Dykman shared the essential movements they perceived in risking boldy for the community. “This assembly is about surrender,” said Sister Cecilia. “Our world as we know it is crumbling … at our feet. We are powerful … we are asked to abandon ourselves to love,” she said, “to risk everything.”

Sister Eileen spoke in awareness of risking dynamic reversal from “the smaller to the attention of growth … in appreciation with each other, not taking each other for granted as sisters, affiliates and prayer partners. Our work of living intimately with difference is our call … we will be challenged to give witness to Franciscan values of minority and poverty. The risk we are calling ourselves to is not a one-time deal,” she implored, “it’s a way of life.” And in that alternative lifestyle “our challenge is to move beyond the safeness of this community…” said affiliate Emily Dykman. The Viterbo University professor shared that “many students come into the classroom angry, confused and scared.” In growing numbers, “people can’t find a place to belong in our church. The essential movement I see for us as sisters and affiliates … is to become and act as leaven for the church and the world.”

And so they rose and communed again—not as sets of sisters and affiliates but as partners in ministry—embracing, discerning and kneading many, many components of ministry directives until they formed “good news statements,” infinitive liminality and ultimate denouement that will come to feed the universal community.

Tasting and then reflecting the theological good news of each day, John called everyone to prayer and, on Wednesday morning, to the Gospel of Luke 24: 13-25, to hazardous bumps in the road to Emmaus. “Even Jesus, in his risen state, couldn’t reach everyone in ministry … we have to downsize or right size … find grace,” he said, “on the margins.” He’d documented disparage in the room for FSPA professed beyond 50 years of religious life. “Don’t be afraid of age … when do hearts start burning within? Luke is specific: When the day is almost done.”

It was with collective confidence after Wednesday ended and Thursday began that sisters and affiliates, having kept courageously off the edge, carried torches burning bright to Mary of the Angels Chapel. No one could sit with stillness waiting for assembly synthesizers and what had translated from “we should” to “we will.” Sisters Marlene Weisenbeck, Kristin Peters, Marla Lang, Eileen McKenzie and Marie Kyle with affiliate Linda Kerrigan floated, it seemed, upon the altar, giving music and motion to FSPA, in all its risks, into the future.
Harvesting 2013 General Assembly: on the evolutionary edge,

... WE will jump off edges ... standing on the margins the Jesus way
-Sister Julia Walsh, FSPA
Energy Fruit Harvest

... I am the word spoken by him heard by her ...
-Sister Eileen McKenzie
June 19, 2013

Top from left Sister Linda Mershon and affiliate Rosalie Hooper Thomas; affiliate Carole Butz; Sister Karen Lueck, affiliates Laura Brown and Judy Crompton; Sisters Louise Marie Guralski and Fran Yanisch; Sister Kathy Stuttgen and John McHugh; Sister Marian Bauer; Sisters Arlene Melder and Jolynn Brebm; Sister Delores Claire DuCharme; Sister Clarone Brill, affiliate Lucille Pedretti and Sister Katie Mitchell; Sister Rosemary Desmond; Sister Marlene Weber; Sister Sarah Hennessey; Sister Pauline Wittry; Sister Irene Nieland; Sisters Donna Mae Venteicher and Marianna Ableidinger; affiliate Bonnie White; affiliate Don Fidler, Sister Delmarie Gibney, Sister Jean Moore; Sister Theresa Keller
we connect in creative unions and make a heart exchange

... let yourself take the leap into deepening your faith ... 
Sister Kathy Roberg, Vowed Religious Life

Top from left, affiliate Ann Fox; Sister Maria Friedman and Tenneson Woolf; affiliates Mary Louise Thompson and Jane Finucane; affiliate Joyce Heil and Sister Eileen Neumann; Sister Celesta Day; Sister Catherine Kaiser; Sister Pat Gordon; notes on harvest board; Sister Jacinta Jackson; Sister Charlotte Seubert; Sister Joanne Moeller; Sister Cecilia Corcoran; affiliate Edna Whalen; Sister Fran Ferder; Sister Rita Fene ny; affiliate Scott Baeseman and Sister Beth Saner; Sister Marla Lang as Mother Aemiliana; Sister Laurice Heybl; Sister Ruth Berra, affiliate Peg Schumacher, Sisters Lucille Winnike and Joann Gebling

Photos courtesy of Communications Staff, Sisters Carolyn and Roselyn Heil, Jean Moore, Arlene Melder, Nina Shephard and Michelle Frazier

... our work is with people ...
Tenneson Woolf, assembly facilitator, FSPA General Assembly 2013
New affiliates make their mark in Mary of the Angels Chapel

The FSPA affiliation program has recently grown by three. We are pleased to share their fresh Franciscan fellowship with you.

**Deb Cannon**
Affiliation “is where I belong,” says covenant affiliate Deb Cannon. “It’s really that simple.”

Yet for the resident of North Liberty, Iowa, being at home in her life wasn’t always that simple. Twenty years into a career in corporate information technology management (after achieving a bachelor’s degree in industrial technology from the University of Houston, Texas), Deb said she felt burned out, lost in mystical limbo and damaged by condescending medical and spiritual counsel. “Francis was all about Mother Earth, being here and not in the air. After those experiences I felt very much not here.”

She was then introduced to someone who was simply supportive. “Sister Lucille Winnike was the first person who didn’t demean my mystification. She brought about in me an innate sense of belonging to and living out Franciscan values” that eventually led Deb to the study of spiritual direction.

Deb’s discoveries unearthed first a path to simplistic resolution, and then to Assisi, Italy. She recalls feeling “the same spirit present there” that she’d discovered at FSPA-sponsored spirituality centers. “I knew the connection to be genuine and true.”

Now, her values simplified and clear, Deb feels at home in her life, ministries, activities and family. She works full time as a practitioner of spiritual direction and energy medicine, loves the arts of quilting, knitting and embroidery (“anything with a needle and thread”) and with Jim, her husband of 23 years, has two stepsons and two grandchildren. Her contact is affiliate Kathy Broghammer. With all facets of her life aligned Deb knows with simplicity where she and her spirituality belong. “The world,” she says, “is my church.”

**Peggy Jo Fulton**
One sister and two experiences in community confirmed new covenant affiliate Peggy Jo Fulton’s commitment to FSPA. “I was invited to join the program by Sister Lorraine Forster (now Peggy Jo’s contact),” and inspired to carry out its ministry during the 2013 General Assembly and affiliate live-in. “This was my first exposure to La Crosse and all the wonderful things that you do,” she says.

Sister Lorraine’s invitation to affiliation was first delivered to Peggy Jo in Las Vegas, Nev, where they both currently live. The inspiration to accept it came, perhaps, from a desire to travel further than her parish role as eucharistic minister and job assisting people in need (as a representative of Medicare programs throughout the state) were taking her.

With two degrees, a bachelor’s in home economics and a master’s in consumer education (from Howard University in Washington, D.C.), Peggy Jo also served in Los Angeles, Calif., as a manager of employee development for an aerospace and security system corporation, for 24 years.

By accepting Sister Lorraine’s invitation and receiving assembly and live-in inspiration, Peggy Jo says she’s received spiritual connection and conviction through FSPA affiliation. Her time in La Crosse “has reinforced my belief that the church will change.” And with “God walking among us,” asserts Peggy Jo, “we can make a difference.”

**Ginger Gullan**
Ginger Gullan’s chance encounters led her to FSPA and covenant affiliation. While attending meetings at Marywood Franciscan Spirituality Center in Arbor Vitae, Wis., “I kept bumping into Sister Marla Lang. The rest,” says Ginger “is history.”

Ginger’s professional past has been a ministry of health care. She achieved associate degrees in both science and nursing and is certified in chemotherapy administration. As a staff nurse, Ginger provided doctor-assisted care at Rockford, Illinois’ Swedish-American Hospital and also Milwaukee, Wisconsin’s Aurora Affiliate Peggy Jo Fulton with Sister Lucy Ann Meyer
Affiliate Ginger Gullan with Sister Anita Beskar

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Harvest Prayer

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New affiliates continued from page 6

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Sister Laura Nettles recites her vows before FSPA, family and friends gathered in Mary of the Angels Chapel.

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Several FSPA joined the fun as spectators, offering a blessing during the event’s opening ceremony. Both crews paddled hard and the Franciscan Fliers earned a trophy for placing first in the Pearl Dragon Bracket.

About dragon boat racing: “Equal parts sporting event and spectacle, dragon boat racing is a team sport that has its roots in ancient China. In the last 25 years, dragon boating has been revitalized, and is one of the fastest-growing water sports in the world.” To learn more, visit http://riverfestivalacrosse.com/big-blue/.

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And let sisters and affiliates lean in together “chaordically!” invited Sister Gail. Chaordic is defined as the combination of chaos and order that creates a co-existent congruency—a

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