



# Flowing From His Side



*Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George*

*Making the merciful love of Christ visible to the poor, sick, and needy of every condition.*

**Winter 2012**

- A great love for God,**
- A great love for each other,**
- An unselfish, understanding, sympathetic love**
- For all the sick, poor entrusted to our care.**
- In the service of God**
- Nothing shall be too much, nothing too hard.**

Our five pioneering Sisters left their homeland in Germany 88 years ago and came to America with this prayer in their hearts. In obedience to our Superior General, Mother M. Chysostoma, they set sail for America to begin a mission in the United States. Our Provincial House, St. Francis Convent, in Alton, Illinois, is the result of their leap of faith to venture into a foreign land with very little to begin their mission. Their great act of love attracted many women to join us and, through this response, we were able to meet many other requests the Bishops have made in their dioceses throughout the United States.

Our Constitutions state: "The origin and source of every apostolate is Christ. Because of this, the fruitfulness of our apostolate depends on our living union with Christ Who said: 'He who lives in Me and I in him will produce abundantly, for apart from Me you can do nothing' (Jn. 15:5)." The vine that was planted by our foundress, Mother M. Anselma, in Germany has stretched across the ocean. Here we would be entrusted to care for it and watch it spread throughout the land.

On March 7, 1953, our Novitiate was established in Alton. The women who worked alongside our Sisters at Saint Anthony's Hospital and at Mother of Good

Counsel Home were drawn to religious life by the example of our German Sisters. It was a perfect match between our American culture and the German traditions. The rich German heritage brought stability to our American Sisters who balanced prayer and work while serving the sick and the poor.

The Provincial House is the cyclic life of the Province. This is where women come who are called to our Community. They receive the formation to grow and deepen their relationship with Christ. "To make His merciful love visible" is the charism they offer to those whom they serve. Sisters serving the local Alton community in health care, education, and day care reside in this convent. The Sisters living here serve their Sisters' daily needs. At least once or twice a year, all the Sisters throughout the Province come to the Provincial House to renew their spiritual life through retreats and to participate in Community activities. Our Provincial House is the closest place we claim as home on earth, for it is our beginning and our end on this journey with Jesus.

Our Sisters return to St. Francis Convent after many years of service or because of illness. They keep watch with our Lord in our Adoration Chapel many hours a day. Part of their daily schedule is to pray for the Church, our Congregation, the world, and vocations. They help with hidden tasks in the kitchen and refectory with their selfless acts of love. Their hidden lives are an inspiration to all of us as they anticipate the prize that awaits them at the end of their race. We gather in the Chapel where they are waked at the end of their life, when God comes to take them to their heavenly home.



*"Be a holocaust before God. To fulfill the Will of God you entered the convent."*

*~ Mother M. Anselma*



# Flowing From His Side

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR MOTHER

Dear Families and Friends of our Sisters,

*Pax et Bonum!* In this winter issue of *Flowing from His Side*, we are featuring articles on all of the apostolates performed by our Sisters that go on within our Provincial House. These ministries include positions in the secretarial and financial areas, areas of the kitchen, housekeeping and infirmary, and assignments as formation directors and Adoration Sisters.

Our foundress, Mother M. Anselma herself, performed most of these tasks. She had a high value for love of work. As a young Sister, her first duty was caring for the sick as a visiting nurse, 19<sup>th</sup> century style, and then as a teacher. Later, during her first years as Reverend Mother, she often stepped in to help with work in the convent. She aided the Sisters in the laundry, the kitchen, the ironing room, the garden or wherever her assistance was needed.

Mother M. Anselma encouraged all her Sisters to comport themselves in a simple, natural manner. With her own example she led the way. She was learned and graceful, but she believed that she did not know enough about how everything could be done, and that it was, therefore, better to stay in the background. This simple, humble, and industrious spirit was the foundation upon which she built our Congregation.

In whatever apostolate a Sister was assigned, Mother M. Anselma believed she should be simple, humble, and faithful in her duties. This was "the surest way to heaven," she said.

The Sisters and I wish you a Blessed and Holy New Year 2012. We are grateful to each one of you who so faithfully support our Congregation's charism and apostolic work, especially with your prayers.

In the joy of Jesus and Mary,

*Mother M. Regina Pacis, FSGM*

Mother M. Regina Pacis, FSGM  
Provincial Superior



Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George  
1 Franciscan Way, Alton, IL 62002-9020  
Phone: 618.463.2750 Fax: 618.465.5064  
[www.altonfranciscans.org](http://www.altonfranciscans.org)



Vocations Office  
Sister M. Consolata Crews, FSGM  
E-mail: [vocations@altonfranciscans.org](mailto:vocations@altonfranciscans.org)  
Office: 618.463.2757

Office of Mission Advancement  
Sister M. Stephania Newell, FSGM  
E-mail: [oma@altonfranciscans.org](mailto:oma@altonfranciscans.org)  
Office: 618.474.6193

*We offer our gratitude and prayers for the Serra Club of Madison County, Illinois and the Knights of Columbus who have generously contributed toward the cost of our publications.*



## DREAMS DO COME TRUE

by Sister M. Anne

Our religious Community had a **DREAM** to build a Chapel in which Adoration of the exposed Blessed Sacrament could take place every day, and where everyone could join our Sisters in prayer and adoration before our Eucharistic Lord. On May 6, 1983, our dream became a reality, when our San Damiano Adoration Chapel was dedicated and opened in Alton, Illinois.

Bishop Joseph A. McNicholas, the late Bishop of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois, and our Community had another **DREAM** to establish the Legion of One Thousand, a spiritual organization of members who resolve to spend at least a few minutes each week in prayer at our Adoration Chapel.

Our dream of having 1,000 visits each week remains our hope.

My work in the Adoration Chapel is much like Saint Anne's hidden role with the Holy Family. Working from my wheelchair, in my office under the Adoration Chapel, I coordinate all the Adoration Hours to assure that two people are praying before Jesus. This is a joy for me because I schedule Adoration Hours by telephone with many faithful lay people who have joined our Sisters in prayer before our Eucharistic Lord.

I have heard many stories from the Legion members of how God has blessed them and their families. One example is an elderly woman who recently called me. She has had an Adoration Hour every Thursday morning for the past 25 years. She was sad because she must now give up her Adoration Hour due to poor health. After I thanked her for her many years of faithful prayer, she said she was the one to thank our Community because our Adoration Chapel is a source of peace where her prayers have been answered and many blessings have come to her family.

I also have a **DREAM**. My dream is to meet the many lay people who come to pray in our Adoration Chapel. I know that my dream will come true, both on earth and in heaven.



Our Sacristan, Sister M. Isabella, replaces the vigil lights.



Sister M. Anne in her office

### THE LEGION OF ONE THOUSAND

+ Daily remembrance in the prayers of the

Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George in their Adoration Chapel

+ Special remembrance in the Sisters' daily Mass

+ A share in the weekly visits of all the other Legion members

*Weekly visits may be made at the time most convenient for the individual member  
from 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.*

+ A promise of God's blessings for you and your family

+ Many other spiritual favors

For more information to become a member of the Legion of One Thousand  
contact Sister M. Anne:

618-463-2761

or

[advancement@altonfranciscans.org](mailto:advancement@altonfranciscans.org)



A Legion member and Sister  
in Adoration

## SUPERIORS AS SERVANTS

by Sister M. Christine

St. Francis said that the Superior should be the servant of everyone. This is how I see my role as Superior of St. Francis Convent. I love the opportunities to serve the Sisters in a variety of ways.

At Mass each morning, I pray for all of the Sisters here, and I ask God to enable me to give to each one what He wishes her to receive. My day includes interacting with our Sisters and convent employees, assigning cars, providing transportation to doctors' appointments, shopping for needed supplies, and whatever else the day may bring.

Since this is our Provincial House, many Sisters gather here throughout the year for retreats, vacations, Superiors' meetings, and end-of-the-year Recollection Days. My goal is to make them feel warmly welcomed and at home.

I am blessed to have the help of an energetic Sister M. Bernadette to get rooms ready and keep our large convent clean. One of the many advantages of being here at the Provincial House is that of meeting the Sisters' families. I always enjoy meeting the many visitors and guests who come.

Our foundress, Mother M. Anselma, said that we should "always be ready in obedience to go wherever God calls us." I frequently hear "His voice" when my beeper sounds! Throughout the day, I like to reflect on Mother Teresa of Calcutta's words: "The fruit of faith is love, and the fruit of love is service."

In summary, my most important task is being here for the Sisters.



Sister M. Christine at work in her office

## LANGUAGE OF LOVE IN OUR DOMESTIC AND SECRETARIAL APOSTOLATES

by Sister Marysia



*There is a unique rhythm of life within the walls of St. Francis Convent in Alton, Illinois. Christ, the center of our lives, gives us the Liturgy to direct our lives each day. We begin every morning by receiving His Body and Blood at Mass. Then we are sent out to bring His love to others.*

*As a Sister who works in our convent kitchen, I am called to bring His mercy to those who are also set apart to do the same, my Sisters. The simple household tasks we, in domestic work, undertake each day have new meaning when seen in light of the loving gaze of our Spouse. Preparing a meal, setting a table, typing notes, taking messages, or mopping a floor, out of love, can remind us and the Sisters we serve that every little thing we do in His presence is an act of "daring to hope" in the eternal inheritance we have been promised, in the light of our consecration.*

Below left to right: Sister Marietta and Sister Marysia cook and take care of our Sisters' dining room.



Right: Our Housekeeper, Sister M. Bernadette, making our convent clean and welcoming for our Sisters



*"The surest way to heaven is to be simple, humble, and faithful in your duties."*

*~ Mother M. Anselma*

## WORKING IN THE INFIRMARY

by Sister M. Magdalene

Working as a nursing Sister in St. Francis Convent Infirmary is an apostolate that allows me to serve God as "a servant of the servants." It embodies both the corporal and spiritual works of mercy and the opportunity for what is essential, prayer. As our Franciscan charism calls us forth to bring His mercy to others, I acknowledge that for whatever mercy I have shown, God has shown me immensely more.

Primarily the service I render to our Congregation is the often unseen service to our aged and chronically ill Sisters. In many ways, I have the opportunity to demonstrate my love for God.

I depend on the example and prayers of our Blessed Mother who said, "Do whatever He tells you" (Jn. 2:5). This is her timeless formula for sanctity. May we who bear the inscription of God's mercy within our hearts dispense it always to others in imitation of Mary, Mother of Mercy.



**Our faithful  
"prayer warriors":  
Left to right:  
Sister M. Julia,  
Sister M. Henrietta,  
Sister M. Wencesla, and  
Sister M. Josephine**



**Our Adoration Chapel Sisters' fingers are busy  
praying for the needs of the Church,  
our Congregation, and our world.**



**Our Librarian, Sister M. Jacoba,  
keeping our books in order**



**Sister M. Wencesla helps Sister Marysia in the  
kitchen chopping vegetables, breads,  
and whatever else the Lord sends her way!**



**Left to right:  
Our Provincialate secretaries,  
Sister M. Isidoris and Sister Ann Marie**



**Our Infirmary, Sister M. Magdalene, takes  
Sister M. Josephine's blood pressure.**

# VOCATIONS TO OUR AMERICAN PROVINCE AND FORMATION

by Sister M. Agnes



**Our Formation Team: (left to right)**  
**Sister M. Consolata (Vocation Director);**  
**Sister M. Kateri (Junior Director);**  
**Sister M. Agnes (Postulant Director);**  
**Sister M. Alexandra (Novice Director)**

Formation is the beautiful journey of a young woman, responding to the call of God in her life, to become a Sister of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George. The first part of this process begins when a young woman, drawn to our community, makes initial contact with our Vocation Director. It is the task of the Vocation Director to accompany a young woman spiritually as she discerns God's call in her life. After a time of prayerful discernment with the Vocation Director, a young woman may apply to enter our Congregation and begin the formal formation process as a postulant.

As a postulant, the young woman lives in our Provincial House in Alton and is under the direction of the Postulant Director. During this first year of formation, the postulant is introduced into religious life, studies the Catholic faith and the spirituality of our Congregation, and continues to deepen her relationship with Christ. At the completion of this year, the postulant becomes a novice, receiving a new name (chosen in collaboration with the Provincial Superior), the habit and white veil. During the two-year Novitiate, the novice is under the direction of the Novice Director. The novice spends her first year at our Provincial House in Alton, deepening her prayer life and studying the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. After this first year is completed, the novice goes "on mission" for six months, living and working with our Professed Sisters and integrating what she has been learning in the Novitiate. After this time of mission, the novice returns to the Novitiate in Alton to complete her preparation for First Profession of Vows.



**Our Postulants: (left to right)**  
**Marilis Pineiro and Lauren Kissel**



**Our Novices: (left to right)**  
**Sister M. Lucy, Sister Karol Marie,**  
**Sister Mary Francis, Sister Cordia Marie,**  
**Sister Teresa Maria, Sister M. Caterina**

temporary vows, the young Sister, known as a "Junior" is under the direction of the Junior Director who continues to guide the young Sister in her formation for the next three to seven years. At Final Profession, the young Sister then has the privilege of giving her life completely to Christ forever through her consecration.

Although this step concludes the time of initial formation, formation is truly a life-long process as each Sister strives to be formed continually by Christ.

At First Profession of Vows, the novice makes her vows for a year at a time, renewing them each year until she is invited to make Final Vows in our Congregation. During this time under



**Our 25 Junior Professed Sisters**



## OFFICE OF MISSION ADVANCEMENT

### STEWARDS IN SUPPORTING OUR MISSION

by *Sister M. Stephania*

God created each of us out of love and gives His gift of life. This life is not our own, but is to be shared with others. As Scripture says, "As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Peter 4:10). To be good stewards, we must recognize God's call and allow His grace to transform our lives to reflect His love in an active way.

Since 1925, when our Sisters arrived in Alton, Illinois, we have been stewards in serving God and His Church in a variety of ways. Many families and friends join us as stewards of God's grace by sharing our mission in working with us and supporting our Community's apostolic projects, especially in our Saint Anthony's Health Center and St. Francis Day Care Center in Alton, Illinois, and our Mother of Good Counsel Home in St. Louis, Missouri. In fact, at Saint Anthony's, we call those who work with and beside us "mission partners," as they learn and share in our charism and mission "to make Christ's merciful love visible to the poor, sick, and needy of every condition."

Our Office of Mission Advancement invites others to be stewards in supporting our mission. The Office provides many opportunities for the friends and families of our Sisters to learn more about our Congregation, to support our apostolic work carried out in the name of the Church throughout the world, and to visit our Sisters where we serve. Among the activities of the Office of Mission Advancement is the production and publication of this "Flowing From His Side" newsletter which highlights the religious life and apostolic work of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George. In addition, this past year, the Office sponsored "Days of Reflection" in the Spring and Fall, and a Mother-Daughter Retreat at St. Francis Convent in Alton, Illinois.



**Our Office of Mission Advancement Team: (back left to right)  
Sister M. Stephania, Sister M. Mikela, Sister M. Kateri  
Front: Sister M. Anne**

Those in the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois and in the Archdiocese of St. Louis in Missouri were invited to pray and visit with our Sisters and to learn more about our Sisters.

We pray that in sharing our publications and providing opportunities for others to get to know our Sisters, more people are inspired to become stewards in supporting our Sisters. We include each of our families, friends, and benefactors in our daily prayers at Holy Mass and in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament in our San Damiano Adoration Chapel in Alton, Illinois.



**Above: Prayer and Reflection Day participants  
enjoying a homemade lunch**

**Right: Mothers and daughters participating in  
one of many activities of the Mother—Daughter  
Retreat in November 2011**





**SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF THE MARTYR ST. GEORGE  
PROVINCE ST. ELIZABETH**

Non Profit Org  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
St. Louis, MO  
Permit # 2540

**St. Francis Convent**  
1 Franciscan Way  
P.O. Box 9020  
Alton, IL 62002-9020

*If you have a change of address  
or want to be removed from our  
mailing list, please contact us .  
Thank you and may God bless you!*

**Office of Mission Advancement**  
(618) 474-6193  
[oma@altonfranciscans.org](mailto:oma@altonfranciscans.org)

*Return Service Requested*

**Our Congregation makes Christ's merciful love visible in nine countries throughout the world.  
Please pray for the Sisters of our Congregation as *we keep you in our prayers* at Holy Mass each day.**

**1869 ~ Thuine, Germany    1875 ~ The Netherlands    1920 ~ Japan    1923 ~ United States of America  
1932 ~ Indonesia    1972 ~ Brazil    2001 ~ Albania    2005 ~ Italy    2011 ~ Cuba**

