



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.

Spring 2011

From the very beginning, our Congregation has been involved in education. In 1857, our Foundress, Mother M. Anselma, was sent to Thuine, Germany, to care for the poor and the sick children who were suffering from epidemics and the lack of essentials. She and the other Sisters found themselves surrounded by great need, and they spent themselves in caring for the people and educating the children in the tiny village.

Our Congregation grew from its humble beginnings, and when our Sisters were first sent to the United States in 1923, they began their mission in St. Louis, Missouri caring for the children at Father Dunne's Boys' Home. In 1925, they moved to Alton, Illinois, where they focused on providing healthcare to the people of the area. Sister M. Annunciate was the first Sister to work in education again. She taught at Rosary High School in St. Louis for a few years in the 1960's following her arrival from Germany.

After many years, we opened St. Francis Day Care Center in Alton, Illinois on March 3, 1980, and a year later our Sisters started teaching at St. Patrick's Elementary School in Alton. It was there that our work in education in the U.S. began in earnest.



Sister M. Margaret and fourth grade student at St. Catherine School in Tulsa, Oklahoma

"Teach the children that there is no heaven for the poor alone and for the rich alone, but poor and rich are together in heaven." Mother M. Anselma



Our Sisters, parish priests, and some students from St. Matthew School in Champaign, Illinois

Since the early 1980's, our teaching apostolate has spread so that we now have 29 Sisters working in 14 Catholic Schools in eight states.

In 1982, several Sisters began a long tradition of teaching "summer programs" in Villa Ridge, Missouri, and other areas. Every summer, Sisters are sent to different parishes for a week or two at a time to join in parish life and catechize the children through Bible stories, songs, art, drama, and teachings. This summer, our Sisters will teach in 17 programs throughout the United States.

We hope to imitate the selfless example of our Mother M. Anselma who wrote: "I will work zealously to teach the children what they need for school and also daily life. With the help of God, we will succeed in educating the children."



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A MESSAGE FROM OUR MOTHER

Dear Families and Friends of our Sisters,

Pax et Bonum! In this issue, we are featuring articles on our teaching apostolate. Education has been an essential dimension of our mission from the time of Mother M. Anselma, our Foundress. As her daughters, we continue the call to make Christ's Merciful Love visible in the classroom.

Today, our Sisters instruct youth of all ages: pre-school, elementary school, high school, and university level. We read in *Vita Consecrata* (96) that education "is one of the most precious gifts which consecrated persons today can offer to young people, instructing them in a way that is full of love." It is important to us to impart cultural and religious training to young people as well as to preserve a Catholic identity in complete fidelity to the Church's magisterium in the schools where we teach.

Throughout the history of the United States, there has been a rich heritage of teaching traditions. Sisters of many Congregations have inspired many of their students to serve the Church as priests and religious. Personally, it was a teaching Sister who asked me when I was four years old what I wanted to do with my life. My answer to her was to become "a Sister and a teacher." And from that time until the day I entered religious life, I kept in mind her inspired question and invitation.

May our Lord, Master and Teacher, bestow upon you abundant Easter graces!

In the joy of Jesus and Mary,

Mother M. Regina Pacis, FSGM

Mother M. Regina Pacis, FSGM
Provincial Superior



(Above) Sister Maria Cordis greeting her kindergartners

(Right) Sister M. Jacinta with her students at a bowling alley during their "Fun Day" for Catholic Schools Week



Sister M. Jacinta, Sister M. Margaret, and Sister Maria Cordis in front of our St. George Convent

St. George Convent ~ Tulsa, Oklahoma
(Founded October 1984)
Sister Maria Cordis (Kindergarten) and Sister M. Margaret (4th grade) at St. Catherine Catholic School (since 1984) and Sister M. Jacinta (4th grade) teaching at Holy Family Cathedral School (since 2009)
www.saintcatherine.schools.officelive.com;
www.holyfamilycathedralschool.com



St. Francis Day Care Center ~ Alton, Illinois (founded March 3, 1980)
<http://www.altonfranciscans.org/apostolatepages/childcare.htm>

Sister M. Christina assisting her students during their art class



“St. Francis Day Care Center is an amazing place, and my husband and I feel truly blessed that Nicholas has had the opportunity to attend. We are extremely proud of the gentle and caring child he has become, and we attribute it to the care and guidance he has received from the Sisters and staff at St. Francis Day Care Center. He loves coming to school every day.” (Nancy and Al Sanders)

Postulant Samantha teaching some children about shapes and colors



Sister M. Eucharia and the children with building blocks in the gym during recess



(Left to right below): Susan Starbuck (11); Missy Schonasky (18); Linda Stone (16); Cindy Curry (18)



Years of Service to God’s Children

Thank you Staff of St. Francis Day Care for your dedication and love for God’s children!

(Front row): Carmen Shaw (19); Wanda Lovett (14); Ruth Ann Boucher (17); Pat Farley (17); Postulant Samantha Goodson (7 months); and Sister M. Eucharia (2)

(Back row): Sister M. Christina (10); Sister M. Martha (6); Vanessa Lovett (14); and Sharon Cannon (27)



Sisters and some long-time staff members of St. Francis Day Care

“Our family has been very blessed to have many experiences with the Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George. Our educational experiences began when I was a child going to St. Patrick’s in Alton, IL. I had the privilege of being taught by Sister M. Ruth, Sister M. Petra, and Sister M. Bernard. Their caring and compassion for students not only on an academic level, but on a spiritual level, too, made it very comforting at school. Then, years later to have our two children, Andrew and Jillian, experience the Sisters of St. Francis beginning at St. Francis Day Care has been a great joy. There was no other facility to which we would entrust the well-being of our children. The care they received from the Sisters and other staff at the day care is exceptional. It made me very happy to see that the genuine compassion shown to me 30 years ago is still the same today as we witnessed it with Andrew and Jillian. The children stayed at St. Francis for pre-school where they received an exceptional education preparing them for kindergarten. Words can’t express our gratitude to all the Sisters who touched Andrew’s and Jillian’s lives during their time at St. Francis from the start with Sister M. Theresita through our departure with Sister M. Martha. Thank you to each and every one of you!” (Brad and Diane Nelson)

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Mary, Queen of the Universe Convent ~ Champaign, Illinois (founded August 1995)
 Sister M. Veronica (2nd grade), Sister Mary George (Music), and Sister M. Vianney (5th Grade)
 teaching at St. Matthew Catholic School ~ www.stmatt.net/School



Sister M. Veronica with her second grade class



Sister M. Vianney teaching math to a group of her fifth grade students



Reflection on Education from Sister Mary George
 "The education that I hope to bring to the students is one that reveals the beauty of joy and love. One of the teachers commented to me, 'You know something is wrong in the world, when the Sisters are no longer joyful!' They see in us how true happiness and joy can be found in our relationship with God, through our witness of joyful fidelity."

*"Joy is very important in the education and training of children."
 Mother M. Anselma*



Sister Mary George with two students in band class



St. Anselm Convent ~ Rock Island, Illinois (founded August 1991)
 Sister M. Ruth (Business, Computers, and Spanish), Sister Maria Regina (Religion and Math),
 and Sister M. Michael (Religion) teaching at Alleman Catholic High School
www.allemanhighschool.org

St. Sixtus Convent ~ Hastings, Nebraska (founded August 1992)
 Sister M. Hedwig (Principal) and Sister M. Francesca (Librarian)
 at St. Michael Catholic Elementary School
 Sister M. Immaculata (Religion and English) teaching at
 St. Cecilia Catholic School ~ www.hastingscatholicsschools.org

St. Michael Convent ~ Springfield, Illinois (founded December 2001)
 Sister M. Martin (Religion) teaching at St. Aloysius Catholic School
www.saintaloyus.org

Mater Dei Convent ~ Wildwood, Missouri (founded September 1998)
 Sister M. Margaretta (Middle School Religion) and Sister M. Catherine (5th grade)
 teaching at St. Alban Roe Catholic School
www.stalbanroe.org/site/School

Mater Redemptoris Convent and House of Formation
 La Crosse, Wisconsin (founded August 2000)
 Sisters teach Religion at Aquinas Catholic High School
www.aquinasatholicsschools.org/aquinashs



Father Schweiger and Sister M. Hedwig



Sister M. Immaculata with a student



Sister M. Margaretta and Sister M. Catherine



OUR SISTERS IN THE MIDWEST



St. Mary's Catholic Schools (since 1988) ~ Alton, Illinois
Sister Marie-Therese (Music), Sister M. Elise (3rd grade), Sister M. Mercedes
(Spanish and Religion at the Middle School), and Sister M. Teresa (Religion grades 2-5)
www.smsalton.com



(Left to Right above) Sister M. Elise, Sister M. Redempta,
Sister M. Teresa, Sister M. Mercedes,
and Sister Marie-Therese



Sister M. Elise helping her third grade
students during class



Sister Marie-Therese instructing some first grade
students on rhythms in Music

“Most recently Sister M. Mercedes launched a new school webpage filled with resources to help the school families ‘Journey with Jesus’ during Lent. It has been a tremendous blessing to our family, and every week the kids look forward to playing the ‘new game’ which reinforces the theme/meditation for the week. My children are not only learning their faith, but they are embracing their faith because of the creative, enthusiastic, and interesting way that Sister M. Mercedes teaches. My kids describe her as ‘hilarious’, ‘awesome’, and ‘the best ever’. I just describe her as a ‘gift from God’”.

(From Melissa Woulfe, mother of children
attending St. Mary’s Middle School)

“It is our family’s pleasure and blessing to have the teaching Sisters of St. Francis in our lives. It’s a serious challenge to raise children in today’s society, and even more so for working parents. We entrust our children to St. Mary’s School because, frankly, we can’t do the job as well on our own. The Sisters at St. Mary’s have enhanced our children’s faith and education. Their devotion and knowledge are such a gift to the school. The Sisters teach explicitly and by example, and each one shares her individual talents generously with the children. We know that we are fortunate to have so many Sisters touch our family, and we send our sincere gratitude and love to the Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George for your vocations in our local community.” (From the Kane family)



Sister M. Redempta explaining a Science lesson to her students



Saints Peter and Paul Catholic School
Alton, Illinois (since 2006)
Sister M. Redempta (Science and Religion)
www.spppscho.com



OUR SISTERS OUT EAST

St. Elizabeth Convent ~ Somerset, New Jersey (Founded 1987)
Sister M. Gabriela (History and Spanish), Sister M. Benedicta (Science),
and Sister M. Karolyn (Religion) teaching at Cardinal McCarrick/St. Mary's
High School ~ South Amboy, New Jersey ~ www.cardinalmccarrick.com

If You Build It, They Will Come

by Sister M. Benedicta, FSGM

“AKA – if you feed them... Teaching Science in New Jersey is a great joy. Seven years ago, I asked a few students if they wanted to start a Science Club. I observed that they had great potential, but not many activities were designed to encourage and explore their academic interests. All the years I was in youth group helped to create an atmosphere where students could feel accepted and, of course, be fed. High school can be difficult, so I am excited to reach out to some students who do not ‘fit in’ or do not know where to start to figure out who they are. I find that their journey continues even years after high school. I thank God for the opportunity to share my faith, the adventure of Science, and show how these two worlds are not in conflict.”



Sister M. Benedicta presenting awards to the winners of the Soap Boat Races

“When I was a freshman, I didn’t do much. As I grew to know the Sisters better my sophomore year, I joined Music Ministry. This experience has led me to become more active in my faith here and in my church.” (Elois DeJesus is one of four children. His family is originally from the Dominican Republic.)

Sister M. Karolyn and
Sister M. Benedicta
with two students

Sisters and students at the March for Life in
Washington DC - January 2011



Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio (teaching/studying since 1988) ~ Sister M. Johanna (teaches Catechetics), Sister M. Theresita (spiritual director), Sister M. Talitha, Sister Mary Jude, and Sister M. Dolorosa (Nursing majors), and Sister M. Clementia (Accounting major) ~ www.franciscan.edu



Sister M. Clementia with her Auditing class

Sister M. Theresita with a student for spiritual direction in the Campus Life Office



Left to right: Sister M. Dolorosa, Sister M. Johanna, Sister M. Clementia, Sister M. Theresita, Sister Mary Jude, Sister M. Talitha

Sister M. Talitha with a classmate during a practice assessment in the Nursing department



(Left to right) Sister M. Bridget, Sister M. Antonia, Sister M. Christiana, and Sister M. Petra



Sister M. Johanna teaching a Catechetics class

John Paul II Convent ~ Kansas City, KS (Founded 2005)
 Sister M. Petra (4th grade religion) teaching at Holy Spirit School in Overland Park, Kansas ~ www.hsschool.eduk12.net
 Sister M. Bridget (History) teaching at St. James Academy in Lenexa, Kansas ~ www.sjakeepingfaith.org
 Sister M. Christiana and Sister M. Antonia (Education majors) at Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas
www.benedictine.edu

“The Franciscan Sisters are among the happiest people I have ever known. They absolutely "shine" among us at Benedictine from their love of God, dedication to their teaching mission, and service to others. I wish I had a Franciscan sister in every course I teach because they enliven our discussions and ground our focus on things that really matter. I have observed several of these sisters teaching in our Catholic partnership schools. Their classrooms are focused on learning and most importantly examples of Jesus' message to love one another. The Franciscan Sisters are a rare gift to their fellow teachers and students.”
 (Dr. Dianna Henderson)



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

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oma@altonfranciscans.org

Office of Vocations
(618) 463-2757
vocations@altonfranciscans.org
www.altonfranciscans.org

Return Service Requested

Divine Mercy Prayer and Lectures

When: Saturday, April 30, 2011
Where: Saint Anthony's Health Center ~ Alton, IL
Time: 9:00 am Holy Mass and concluding at 2:30 pm with the Divine Mercy Chaplet
Cost: \$10 includes continental breakfast and lunch
Come and join the Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George for a day of prayer and spiritual enrichment. Listen to talks by Monsignor Kenneth Steffen, Father Shawn Monahan, Father Noah Waldman, and the Sisters. Registration is limited—call today: 618-465-2264

Our Sisters in Education from East to West across the United States



- ✠ St. Michael Elementary and St. Cecilia Catholic Schools, Hastings, NE
- ✠ St. Catherine and Holy Family Cathedral Schools, Tulsa, OK
- ✠ St. James Academy, Lenexa, KS and Benedictine College, Atchison, KS
- ✠ Holy Spirit Catholic School, Overland Park, KS
- ✠ St. Alban Roe Catholic School, Wildwood, MO
- ✠ St. Mary's and Saints Peter & Paul Catholic Schools, Alton, IL
- ✠ St. Francis Day Care Center, Alton, IL
- ✠ St. Aloysius School, Springfield, IL ;
- ✠ Alleman Catholic High School, Rock Island, IL
- ✠ St. Matthew Catholic School, Champaign, IL
- ✠ Aquinas Catholic High School, La Crosse, WI
- ✠ Franciscan University of Steubenville, Steubenville, OH
- ✠ Cardinal McCarrick/St. Mary's High School, South Amboy, NJ



**The Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George are grateful for all donations.
Your generous gift will help to support our Sisters' mission in many ways.**

Enclosed is my check made payable to: **Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George**

\$50 \$100 \$200 \$500 \$1,000 \$5,000

Other: _____

Send completed form to:
Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George
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1 Franciscan Way | P.O. Box 9020
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Do you know a Sister of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George? Yes No

If yes, who? _____

Please contact us at 618-474-6193 or oma@altonfranciscans.org for more information. To learn more about the Sisters, visit our website at www.altonfranciscans.org.

Gifts to the Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Thank you and may God bless you for your generosity!

Prayer Requests

(To be remembered at Holy Mass in our Provincial House Chapel)

I know others who are interested in your Community.

Please add them to your mailing list:

(For more entries, please email us at: oma@altonfranciscans.org)

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