

# The Whitehall FRANCISCAN

The Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God

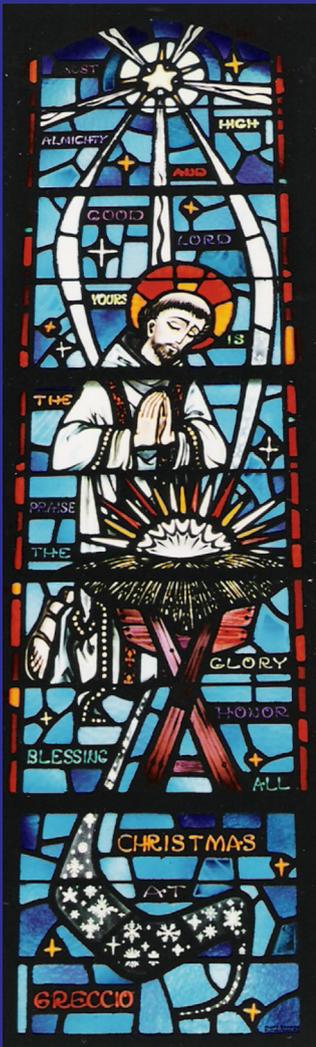


A light will  
shine on us  
this day, the  
Lord is born  
for us.

*~ Christmas Mass at Dawn,  
Entrance Antiphon*

# Christmas Celebrates Presence!

A message from General Minister Sister Joanne Brazinski, OSF



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The pre-Christmas season has a way of turning our attention to gift giving. The commercials, the sales, the hype leading up to the big day all seem to invite us to think about the best possible gifts for those who are special to us.

This issue of the *Whitehall Franciscan* celebrates persons who have received gifts and are using them for the good of others. The information about fifteen of our sisters being a Franciscan Presence at the Presbyterian SeniorCare facility in Oakmont celebrates the reality of *presence* as a gift. The story of Kate Fletcher and Hekima Place reminds us that one person does make a difference. The information about 2015 being the *Year of Consecrated Life* calls us to be mindful of the fact that there are different gifts, but given by the same Spirit, for the good of all (1 Cor 12).

*Presence* is celebrated at Christmas – it is a gift we are more aware of at this time of the year – we schedule time with family and friends, we have special moments to share our table, to reminisce and celebrate the desire to simply be with one another. Christmas is the celebration of presence; the celebration of a God who loves us and loves our world more than we can imagine. It is the celebration of the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us (Jn 1:14). The gift of the Incarnation is a doctrine too fantastic to be false. (1)

In his *Letter to the Faithful*, Francis of Assisi uses these words: “We are mothers of Christ when we bear him in our hearts and bodies (cf. 1Cor 6:20) with divine love and with pure and sincere consciences, and when we give birth to Christ through a holy life which should enlighten others because of our example (Mt 5:16).” (2)

This season invites us to reflect on how we are bearing Christ in our flesh, how we are being that presence of Christ wherever we are, how our attitudes and actions speak of Christ’s presence with us and within us.

Whatever your plans are for this special season, the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God invite you to be more aware of the incomprehensible gift of God-with-us, Emmanuel. Let us celebrate this GIFT!

1. Eric Doyle O.F.M., *Canterbury, England; Clergy Review*, 57:9 (1972): 864-5
2. Francis of Assisi, *Letter to the Faithful* 1:10

## Christmas at Greccio

Adapted from Thomas of Celano

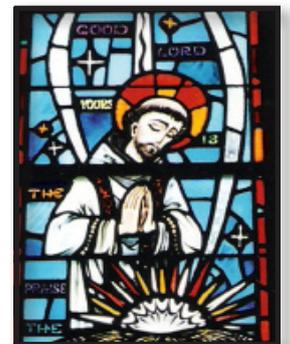


Eternally memorable is the Christmas at Greccio in 1223. Francis of Assisi, desiring to experience as closely as possible the first Christmas, inviting the people of the country to join in celebrating this most beautiful feast.

Carrying torches and candles, they made their way up the mountainside to a clearing where an ox and ass stood beside a hay-filled manger. Nearby, an altar was prepared and the Mass celebrated.

It is said that during the celebration the Child Jesus was seen asleep in the manger. As Francis reached for Him, the child awakened and smiled at the little man who loved Him so much.

Thus, through the ages, the crib continues to hold a special place of prominence during the Christmas season.



Stained Glass Window images from the Sisters’ Mary Immaculate Chapel; Pittsburgh, PA  
Designed by Nicholas Parrendo - Hunt Stained Glass Studios

# Sisters Move with Courage and Faith, Trusting in God's Providence

## Fifteen Senior Sisters Relocate to Presbyterian SeniorCare

Throughout their history, the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God have been challenged to be “sister,” to follow Jesus Christ and to witness the Providence of God. Their consecrated life as Franciscans has meant and continues to mean living the gospel, serving the People of God and being attentive to God’s Spirit at work within them.

As mentioned in previous *Whitehall Franciscan* issues, the sisters have been engaged in a strategic planning process centered about the changing health care needs of the sisters, congregational resources and stewardship of the sisters’ property.

General Minister Sister Joanne Brazinski stated, “We find ourselves faced with the same questions that many elderly in the U.S. are facing. Are we able to continue in our present location? What is the best use of our resources? How might we best care for our members?”

“The answers to these questions,” says Sister Joanne, “involved looking at community resources, the reality of the current situation and the setting of priorities.”

In mid-October, fifteen of our senior sisters from the motherhouse moved into personal care and skilled nursing communities at Presbyterian SeniorCare, located in Oakmont, PA, leaving twenty-one of our sisters to continue to live and work on our Whitehall campus and the surrounding area.

Sister Joanne continues, “Believing that God’s Providence continues to lead us, we were presented the potential to have the health care needs of our sisters taken care of at the Presbyterian SeniorCare facility.” One of the most significant factors about the decision to move these sisters to Presbyterian SeniorCare was that all of them are able to be together as they live their Franciscan gospel life in a new location. Also, it was important that the facility offers a continuum of care from personal care to skilled nursing care at one site. “Presbyterian SeniorCare met our criteria on every level and has proven to be a very collaborative partner,” says Sister Joanne.

Sister Joanne adds, “We have witnessed the courage and faith of our sisters in accepting this new direction, particularly by the sisters who will be missioned to personal care at Presbyterian SeniorCare. Difficult as it was, the move has given the sisters a new enthusiasm and a renewed sense of mission. The partnership with Presbyterian SeniorCare will help us provide for the long term needs of our elderly sisters, as well as allow us to focus on our legacy of mission and service.”

Presbyterian SeniorCare President Jim Pieffer commented, “As an organization that welcomes older adults from all walks of life and of many diverse backgrounds, we are dedicated to making the transition as smooth as possible as we welcome the sisters into their new homes with us.”

Importantly, Sister Joanne wants to assure the congregation’s many supporters that our sisters will continue to participate in the various ministries they are currently involved with, including pastoral care, counseling, child day care, and retreats, among others.

*Your prayers and support for our community are greatly appreciated. We will continue to keep our Whitehall Franciscan readers updated on the lives of ministry of our senior Sisters missioned to Presbyterian SeniorCare. If you have any questions, you may contact us at [info@osfprov.org](mailto:info@osfprov.org) or (412) 885-7232.*



*Top left - Sister Eliana da Silva assists Sister Lillian Yurkaitis as she begins her journey from the motherhouse to Presbyterian SeniorCare.*

*Top right - Sister Therese Marquis joyfully arrives at her new home.*

*Bottom left - Sharing a beautiful smile, Sister Irene Pacekonis arrives at Presbyterian SeniorCare accompanied by Pat Enscoe and Renee Stoltz from our nursing department.*

*Bottom right - Sister Dolorita Butkus receives a warm welcome from the staff at Presbyterian SeniorCare.*

# Autumn Gala 2014: Memorable Evening of Fun

Imagine a room filled with laughter, engaging conversation, fine fare and new and old friends alike. What you are envisioning captures the atmosphere of the 2104 Autumn Gala, held at the South Hills Country Club on October 2.

The evening began with friendly socializing and wandering among the basket raffle items. After introductory remarks by Sister Joanne Brazinski, General Minister, guests were treated to a superb meal prepared and served by the Club's staff. The South Hills Country Club was chosen as the site of the Gala this year since it was more centrally located and provided ample parking nearby for those in attendance.

The Gala serves several purposes. It is, first of all, an opportunity for friends and benefactors of the congregation to have a night of celebration and gratitude in the company of the Sisters. It is also an opportunity to honor the recipient of the San Damiano Award that pays tribute to an individual or organization for their support of the congregation through the years. As announced in the last *Whitehall Franciscan*, the 2014 recipient of this award is the St. Casimir Alumni Association for their continued friendship and dedicated support.

Proceeds for the Autumn Gala will be used to help support the Sisters' ministries as well as help defray the costs associated with the care of their senior members.

The Sisters would like to extend our gratitude to the Autumn Gala planning committee, as well as the St. Casimir Alumni Association and St. Francis Academy Alumnae Association for generously underwriting some of the event's major expenses. The Sisters are also very appreciative to those in attendance, our business sponsors, those who bought raffle tickets or donated prizes, and the volunteers who helped make the evening such a successful event.

*If you would like more information about attending our 2015 Autumn Gala, or how you can assist our efforts as a basket donor or sponsor, please contact Robyn Moeller in our Development Office at (412) 885-7232 or [info@osfprov.org](mailto:info@osfprov.org).*



# THANK YOU, AUTUMN GALA SPONSORS

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# 2015 to be Year for Consecrated Life



Cardinal Joao Braz de Aviz, the prefect for the Congregation of the Religious, proclaims, “Consecrated men and women are aware that besides recounting the great stories they have written in the past, they are called to write a no less beautiful and great story in the future.”

Within this background, Pope Francis has designated 2015 as the “Year for Consecrated Life.” The year began November 21, 2014, which was a special day of prayer dedicated for those living the religious life. The special year is to be an answer to suggestions made by many religious superiors, said Cardinal Braz de Aviz.

Consecrated men and women “can wake up the world” with their testimony of faith, holiness and hope the pope told members of the Union of Superiors in November, 2013. A church without religious sisters would be “unthinkable,”

Pope Francis said. “There is such a great need for their presence, which reinforces and renews the commitment to spreading the Gospel, Christian education, charity for the neediest, contemplative prayer, the human and spiritual formation of the young and families, and the commitment to justice and peace in the human family.” He added, “Those women who consecrate their lives to carrying forward the message of Jesus – they’re great!”

Cardinal Braz de Aviz also spoke about the 50-year old Vatican Council decree “Perfectae Caritatis” which has to do with religious life. “We are convinced that the council represented the breath of the Holy Spirit not only for the entire church, but in a particular way for consecrated life.” He added, “We are also convinced that in these 50 years, consecrated life has followed a fruitful path of renewal – certainly not without difficulties and struggles. In this year, we want to recognize and confess our weaknesses, but we also want to show the world with strength and joy the holiness and vitality that are present in consecrated life.”

The world’s 1.2 billion Catholics are particularly reliant on these individuals for day-to-day assistance, spiritual guidance, provision of the sacraments, and various other needs. Many more are reliant on those living religious vocations for food, shelter, medicine, education and other basic needs.

It is an intriguing fact that those who live the religious life, particularly monks and nuns, are among the happiest people on earth. Psychological studies have proven that they have a greater measure of life satisfaction and overall happiness when compared to the mainstream population at large.

## What is Religious Life?



Religious life is first and foremost a call to give one’s self as an unreserved gift to God in Jesus Christ. This complete giving of one’s self is symbolized in the living out of the evangelical vows of chastity, poverty and obedience, to the exclusion of all other primary life commitments. It is also a life that is usually lived out in community with others who have made the same life commitment.

While all religious communities share these same characteristics, each one is unique in terms of its charism or spirit, and the ways in which they are called to live out that spirit. Monastic communities minister through continual prayer for the people of God. Members of apostolic communities, while certainly called to a life of prayer, are also called to minister to the needs of the people of God in more direct ways.

*If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about religious life, a helpful online resource is [vocationnetwork.org](http://vocationnetwork.org).*

## INITIATIVES AND EVENTS

### FOR THE YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE.

- A meeting of young religious and novices, those who have professed temporary or final vows for less than ten years; a meeting for spiritual directors; an international theological conference on consecrated life dedicated to “Renewal of the Consecrated life in Light of the Council and Perspectives for the Future”; and an international exhibit on “Consecrated Life: The Gospel in Human History.”
- Every four months, throughout the year, the dicastery (a department in the Vatican) will publish a newsletter on themes related to consecrated life, the first of which will come out on February 2 of next year, entitled “Be Glad” and dedicated to the Magisterium of the Holy Father on consecrated life.
- In response to the Pope’s wishes, the Antonianum Pontifical University in Rome will host a symposium on the management of economic goods and capital by religious.
- A document is being prepared to deal with the life and mission of religious while another one will touch on the question of how consecrated manage goods in order to offer some guidelines and direction.

# The Gifts We Are Given

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ~ 1 Corinthians 12

## It originates with a charism, a gift.

The charism of a religious congregation refers to the distinct spirit that animates a religious community and gives it a particular character. The *Catholic Encyclopedia* describes a charism, in general, as any good gift that flows from God’s love to humans. The term has, however, a narrower meaning: the spiritual graces and qualifications granted to every Christian to perform his task in the Church.

The charism of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God is to trust in the Providence of God and to share God’s hospitality and love with all whom we encounter. Our mission flows directly from our charism as *we go to those to whom Providence sends us . . . to be instruments of justice and peace . . . and be signs of hope.* We do this by actively seeking ministry that brings about this justice and peace.

## Everyone has a charism.

We are all born with a charism – a gift from God’s Providence for us. This may take the form of kind-heartedness, caregiving, artistic or athletic talent, cultivating skills, leadership abilities, the written word or any ability that allows us to serve God.

## How will I use this gift?

*Each one of us whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.* ~1 Peter 4:10

God does not intend us to be the final recipients of the gift we receive. In living our daily lives, we all have the obligation to cultivate and use this gift, our charism, to the benefit of others, in service to God. By sharing our gift, we give it back to God, completing the circle.

## The gifts we are given, we are given to share.

Whether you are a Sister, clergy or layperson, using your gift for the good of the Church and God’s people through your words and actions is the true meaning of ministry.



Image: Mimi DiGregory

# Thank You, Kimberly Richards



Thanks to the generosity of Kimberly Richards, the actress who plays the “Sister” in *Late Nite Catechism: Sister Rolls the Dice*, and Pittsburgh’s City Theater, our congregation was presented with a donation for our retired members this past October.

*Late Nite Catechism* is a one-woman show where “Sister” Kimberly teaches an “adult catechism class” during which she singles out audience members to reprimand, grill, tease and reward. As such, she levies “fines” against them for tardiness, cheating, gum chewing and general unruly behavior. These proceeds are then donated to the “real” sisters in the community.

In addition to the fines, at the end of each performance, audience members are asked for donations that are then distributed among the various congregations in the Pittsburgh area.

Kimberly is a Pittsburgh native having attended local Catholic schools before graduating from Holy Name School in Oakland, CA. She says that some of her material is actually gleaned from conversations with her aunt, Sister Carleen Richards, a member of the Sisters of Divine Providence.

# Kate Fletcher Fulfills Life-Long Dream in Kenya

*From mid-July, our motherhouse has welcomed a special guest, Kate Fletcher, the founder of Hekima Place in Kenya. In early March of this year, Kate was involved in a head-on crash in Kenya wherein she sustained several broken bones in her right leg. Initially, a plate was inserted; however, she developed an infection and after heavy doses of antibiotics, the plate had to be removed. Coming home to Pittsburgh, she was admitted to Mercy Hospital, receiving another strong dose of antibiotics, followed by a number of surgeries, the last of which fixed an external brace on her damaged leg, along with 22 pins inserted from knee to ankle. After a period of convalescence in Manor Care Nursing Center, she was welcomed to continue her recovery here at our motherhouse. Unfortunately, on August 14, the day after her external brace was removed, Kate suffered a major setback when she fell and broke her pelvic bone, necessitating another long period of recovery that continues.*

**H**ow does one spend 65 years of her life in the United States and make the decision to find new purpose on the other side of the world? How does one blend into a new culture, master a new language and learn to find blessings shrouded by third-world injustices? Ask Kate Fletcher.

Kate's journey began in September, 2003, when, upon the death of her husband, Pittsburgh South Hills' dentist Dr. Leonard Fletcher, she gave away her belongings, and traveled 7,000 miles to Kenya to fulfill a life-long dream. Here, she volunteered at an AIDS orphanage called Nyumbani's Children's Home, located in the village of Karen. As Kate came to understand the needs of Kenya's orphans, she decided to establish a new undertaking, a home for girls, not for those suffering from AIDS, but those who had experienced a loss of both parents. Female children became her primary concern as girls aren't offered the same opportunities to grow and be self-sustaining as boys in most of Africa.

In 2005, Kate joined forces with a Kenyan couple from whom she rented three houses in a quiet neighborhood. That site became Hekima Place (the Arabic word for "wisdom") where Kate began to house orphaned girls and provide for their schooling. "I chose the name 'Hekima' to focus on education and positive things," says Kate. "I hope that education can enlarge their world." Initially, Kate returned to Pittsburgh and raised \$30,000 to help cover expenses.

On one occasion, Kate described a Hekima resident, a 5-year old who used to sleep on the floor in a corner of a bar. The woman who brought her said, "I know there's no hope for me, but can you help this little girl?"



## Hekima Place Today



Thanks to the support of donors in the United States, as well as individuals, churches and organizations in Canada, Europe and Kenya, construction of a new permanent home for students and staff was completed in December, 2010. It consists of six cottages and a dining hall along with a significant amount of land for gardening. With this steady funding, Hekima has grown from educating 10 girls in its humble beginnings to caring for 75 today.

Hekima girls live in the cottages with a staff "mum." They help with the cleaning and dishes, enjoy singing and dancing and attending church services offered. Education is at the core of empowerment for the girls. They attend community elementary and secondary schools throughout the region. Study support is provided by staff and volunteers from around the world

who travel to Hekima Place to share their time, talents and love for the girls. Willing hands repair broken utilities, labor in the gardens, teach computer skills, assist with homework, join the girls in soccer, wipe away tears and help ease mental and physical pain. Kate points out that volunteers are always needed.

Hekima Place also recognizes the importance of the girls maintaining ties with extended families. Three times a year, each girl has the opportunity to return to the family of a grandparent, elder sibling, or auntie to renew ties, remember lost parents, forge family bonds for the future and renew her identity in tribe and family.

Although Hekima Place is a happy, lively environment, there is a seriousness of purpose that is palpable among the girls who, when they become teens, commit to a covenant promising not to drink alcohol or home brews, take drugs, smoke cigarettes, steal, lie or engage in sexual activity. This is the practical application of Hekima Place's core values of integrity, prudence, wisdom and compassion.



**Continued on pg. 9**

## Kate Fletcher Fulfills Life-Long Dream in Kenya (Continued from pg. 8)

As for the triumphs, we introduce a young Hekima girl, Grace, and her two younger sisters. Their mother died in 2005 and the three youngsters had nowhere to go. Fortunately, the girls were taken to Hekima Place to live and attend school. Grace completed primary and high school and is now a second-year student at a local university. She has been grateful for not going to bed hungry, for not worrying where she would sleep, for clean clothes and for the care her sisters are receiving.

Describing the current status, Kate tells us, "We have 11 in university now, living independently; 20 in boarding school; 40 in St. James School in Kiserian and four at home. Shantel is six months old and the newest."

Kate Fletcher's background includes a B.S. in Education from Duquesne University and a Masters in Public Health from the University of Pittsburgh. She taught in primary grades for 15 years, was an adjunct professor in Sociology at Duquesne for 20 years and managed nursing and convalescent homes in the Pittsburgh region before beginning her work in Kenya. In 2009, she was honored with the Duquesne Alumni Association's "Mind, Heart and Spirit Award" in recognition of her commitment to the five pillars of Duquesne's mission: academic excellence, moral and spiritual values, ecumenism, service and world concern.

*Editor's note: Donations for Hekima Place are accepted by Kathy English, Treasurer-Hekima Place; 407 Morrison Drive; Pittsburgh, PA 15216. Gifts can also be made online at [www.hekimaplace.org](http://www.hekimaplace.org).*



### Bless this House

The custom of blessing homes at the New Year, or more specifically on the feast of the Epiphany, is part of Church history. Families make blessings as simple or intricate as they like, asking God's blessing on their home and on all who live there and those who visit. It is an invitation for Jesus to be a daily guest in our home, our comings and goings, our conversations, our work and play, our joys and sorrows.

20+C+M+B+15

One blessing tradition is "chalking the door" or the door step. In the Old Testament, the Israelites marked their doors with the blood of the lamb on the night of the Passover to ensure that the angel of death would pass them by. Deuteronomy 6: 4-6, 9 says, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart . . . and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

This New Year, we can take a piece of chalk, mark 20+C+M+B+15 above our front door saying, "The three Wise Men, Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar, followed the star of God's Son who became human two thousand and fifteen years ago. Christ, bless this house and all who inhabit it. Remain with us throughout the New Year. Amen."

We use chalk as it is a common element from the earth, used by teachers in instruction and by children in recreation. Further, chalk will not permanently mar the dwelling. As its image fades from view over time, those who participated in its original inscription will remember it and the purpose for which it was intended. In doing so, they may rededicate themselves to that purpose.

## February Ca\$h Raffle

Drawing Based on the 3 Digit Evening PA Lottery

\$10 per chance

**\$70 Daily Winners in February EXCEPT:**

**\$500 GRAND PRIZE on Friday, February 14th**

**\$200 Every Sunday in February**

**\$100 Every Saturday in February**

### DAILY BONUS

**\$20 paid to Number Before, Number After & Reverse**

(Example: If 243 was drawn on a weekday, 243 would win \$70 and 242, 244 and 342 would each win \$20.)

**To purchase a raffle ticket, please call  
Sister Mary Ann at (412) 885-7403.**

*All proceeds benefit the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God*

## In Prayerful Memory



### Sister Theodora Shadis, OSF

**Born: July 26, 1918**

**Entered our community: July 14, 1935**

**Returned to God: October 9, 2014**

Sister M. Theodora Shadis, OSF, a Sister of St. Francis of the Providence of God for 79 years, passed away on October 9, 2014, at the age of 96. Sister Theodora was born and raised in the eastern Pennsylvania community of Mahanoy City, the middle of five children. She spent her early years at St. Joseph Parish School, where she was taught by sisters from our congregation, before moving to Pittsburgh in 1932 to attend St. Francis Academy. Here, she made known her desire to enter the community, in her words, “eagerly awaiting the bonnet of postulancy.” Sister once told how typhoid fever struck her group right after first profession, but that all 21 sisters survived in what she said was considered a miracle by doctors at the time.

Sister Theodora’s first assignment was at St. George Parish in Cleveland, the beginning of a 50-year teaching ministry. Among her many assignments were schools in Amsterdam, NY, Hartford, CT, Grand Rapids, MI, Philadelphia and Los Angeles. Here, she and four other of our sisters opened a school for poor Mexican children, an experience she described as ‘enriching.’ Sister’s longest tenure was at St. Casimir’s School in Pittsburgh.

Sister Theodora’s exceptional interest in her students is well documented. She not only taught them but was often aware of their personal problems and counseled many by spending time with them, to lend a helping hand or “bend her ear” a bit. Perhaps the greatest testament to her teaching ministry is she continued to stay in touch with, and was beloved by, many former students long after they graduated.

Sister Theodora earned her Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Education from Duquesne University.

From the day of her retirement in active teaching, Sister put her artistic talents to work as coordinator of the community’s craft program, which included managing our gift shop and preparing for the highly anticipated annual craft show.

Sister Theodora’s favorite Scripture passage was, “Behold, I am with you until the end of time.” She joyfully summed up her life as a woman religious, “Every day of my life as a Franciscan sister is a gift I try to share with everyone I meet along the way.”

### Sister Valerie Ann Grigal OSF

**Born: October 26, 1914**

**Entered our community: December 8, 1936**

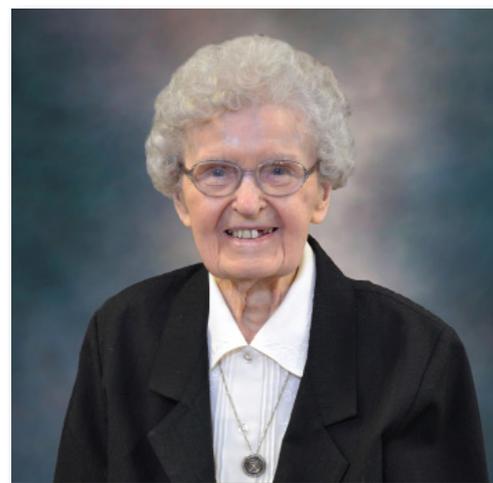
**Returned to God: October 9, 2014**

Sister Valerie Ann Grigal, OSF, a Sister of St. Francis of the Providence of God for 78 years, returned to Our Lord on October 9, 2014, a mere two weeks short of her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. A native of Elizabeth, NJ, and the middle of five children, she was taught by our sisters at her home parish, Saints Peter and Paul. Prior to entering the community, she worked as a live-in nanny and a sales clerk. While still a teenager, she developed a serious lung infection and was given six months to live. She once described how she asked for God’s healing power and offered her life in God’s service. Not long after recuperating, she kept her promise and entered the congregation in 1936.

Though her ministry was not always visible to outsiders, Sister Valerie Ann led a full Franciscan life of service to others that took her from St. Anthony’s Parish in Detroit as a housekeeper to Panama City, FL, as a pastoral minister and many points in between. Her life of service to her companion sisters as a dietician and housekeeper, of service to others as a pastoral minister and of service to the Church as a sacristan in our motherhouse chapel is well known.

These many and varied roles took Sister Valerie Ann to St. Anthony Parish (Detroit), St. Joseph College (Hays, KS), St. Joseph Parish (Dubois, PA) Transfiguration Parish (Maspeth, NY), St. Joseph Hospital (Alton, IL), Holy Trinity Parish (Moon Run, PA), St. Dominic Parish (Panama City FL), Mt. St. Peter Parish (New Kensington, PA) and St. Francis Parish (Danbury, CT). She perhaps is best remembered for her ministry at our congregation’s hospital, Good Samaritan, in Mt. Vernon, IL, having served there a combined 35 years, in dietary and in spiritual care.

Even after her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, Sister Valerie Ann was active in the motherhouse craft room and gift shop until entering the Ministry of Prayer in 2010. Sister Valerie Ann asked that these words be a part of her wake service: *I am glad I am a Franciscan. Each day is a revelation of what I still need to do . . . still need to begin to do . . . in order to follow Jesus as closely as Francis did.*



# Franciscan Spirit and Life Center

3605 McRoberts Road • Pittsburgh, PA 15234-2314  
(412) 881-9207 or [fslc@osfprov.org](mailto:fslc@osfprov.org)  
[www.osfprov.org/fslc.asp](http://www.osfprov.org/fslc.asp)

## The Center is Available for Meetings, Retreats or Programs

The Franciscan Spirit and Life Center is located on the grounds of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God campus in Pittsburgh, PA. The Center's facilities, its warm hospitality and peaceful surroundings make it an ideal site for:

- ♦ Retreats
- ♦ Meetings
- ♦ Conferences
- ♦ Seminars
- ♦ In-Service days
- ♦ Adult Education Programs
- ♦ Days and Evenings of Recollection

Our Facility includes:

- ♦ Wireless Internet Access.
- ♦ The option of having meals prepared by staff or catered. By special arrangement, you can also choose to prepare your own meals in our on-site kitchen.
- ♦ Single and double bedrooms furnished with bed linens and towels. We can accommodate up to 25 persons.

## THE HERMITAGES

Peace, Reflection and Renewal

\$20 per day

\$38 overnight

\$250 per week

*Small additional fee for Hermitage #2 w/fireplace*

## SPIRITUAL DIRECTION (by Appointment)

Sister Joanne Brazinski, OSF (412) 885-7409

Sister J. Lora Dambroski, OSF (412) 885-7408

Sister Althea Anne Spencer, OSF (412) 885-7406

Sister Carolyn Bodenschatz, CSJ (412) 819-0135

## COUNSELING - INDIVIDUAL & COUPLES

Sister Nancy Langhart, OSF (412) 882-9911

## THERAPEUTIC MASSAGE

Sister Althea Anne Spencer, OSF (412) 885-7406

## FEATURED PROGRAMS

### Connecting Women's Wisdom

Sunday, March 22, 2015

8:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Sisters of St. Francis Motherhouse Lecture Hall  
3603 McRoberts Rd. • Pittsburgh, PA 15234

Take time to focus more clearly, breathe more deeply and live more mindfully. Designed for women of all ages and backgrounds, *Connecting Woman's Wisdom* includes a liturgy service in Mary Immaculate Chapel followed by brunch with the Sisters and a program featuring group sharing, quiet reflective time and a program relevant to woman today.

Space is limited to 50 guests, and registration is required.

**FREE-WILL Program.** All gifts are greatly appreciated.

To register, or for more information,  
please contact Sister Althea Anne Spencer at  
**(412) 885-7406** or [saaspencher@osfprov.org](mailto:saaspencher@osfprov.org)  
no later than **Monday, March 2.**

## Tai Chi

With Gurney Bolster, MA, Dance Therapy

Certified Tai Chi Instructor and Movement Analyst

Tai Chi focuses on gentle, flowing movement and centered relaxed posture. Regular practice of Tai Chi has been shown to:

- ♦ Improve Balance, Gait & Coordination
- ♦ Increase Muscle Strength
- ♦ Improve Focus & Concentration
- ♦ Prevent Falls-Reduce Stress
- ♦ Lower Blood Pressure Improve Overall Psychological Health

Gurney teaches a form of **Tai Chi endorsed by the Arthritis Foundation** as a safe exercise that may diminish pain and prevent falls. Satisfied clients include adults 50+, persons with chronic pain, those working sedentary jobs and others seeking a more healthy and active life.

### Monday Evenings

January 12 - March 9

Continuing Class: 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Introductory Class: 7:15 PM - 8:15 PM

Cost: \$72.<sup>00</sup>

### Wednesday Afternoons

January 14 - March 11

Introductory Class: 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Continuing Class: 2:15 PM - 3:15 PM

Cost: \$72.<sup>00</sup>

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3605 McRoberts Rd. • Pittsburgh, PA 15234

To register or for more information, please contact Mimi DiGregory  
at **412-881-9207** or [mdigregory@osfprov.org](mailto:mdigregory@osfprov.org).



*Sisters of Saint Francis of the Providence of God*  
Confidently, Joyfully, We Go Forward!

3603 McRoberts Road • Pittsburgh, PA 15234-2314

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CHILDCARE IS IN OUR HEARTS AND  
CHILDREN ARE THE HEART OF OUR CENTER!

(412) 882-5085

[fdcc@osfprov.org](mailto:fdcc@osfprov.org)

[www.osfprov.org/fdcc.asp](http://www.osfprov.org/fdcc.asp)

The Franciscan Child Day Care Center (FCDCC) has provided a child-centered environment for over 30 years. Our secure center is a *Keystone STARS* facility. We care for **infants, toddlers and preschoolers**, as well as provide care for **school age children** in our **Before and After Care Program** and **Summer Program**.

Full and part time care plans are available.

UNITED WAY CODE: 3485

**Labels For Education Participant**



[LabelsForEducation.com](http://LabelsForEducation.com)

## SOUP TAKE OUT



**Price:** \$5 per quart (includes 2 rolls)

**To Order:** Please call (412) 885-7232 by the Deadline

**Pick up:** 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM

3603 McRoberts Rd. \* Pittsburgh, PA 15234

### JANUARY MENU

**Pick-up:** Wednesday, January 21

**Order Deadline:** Thursday, January 15

**Choices:** Wedding, Ham & Bean & Chili

### FEBRUARY MENU (ASH WEDNESDAY)

**Pick-up:** Wednesday, February 18

**Order Deadline:** Thursday, February 12

**Choices:** Vegetable Lentil & Haluski  
& Wedding

*All proceeds benefit the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God*