

AFC 2015 Banquet Honorees

Blomstad OSF, Susan

Sisters of St Francis of Penance and Christian Charity – St. Francis Province

Susan has expressed an aesthetic moral vision through poetry, dramatic expression, calligraphy and ways she has used these gifts in relating to troubled people on the margins of our society.

Choi OSF, Sister Laetitia

Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration, Colorado Springs

Sister Laetitia Choi was born into a Korean family that loved to make music together. Laetitia is gifted with a beautiful voice. As a child and throughout her school years, hers was the voice routinely chosen to sing the solo parts in whatever program or concert was presented. At the age of 19 she joined Our Lady of Perpetual Help Convent in Seoul, Korea, where she soon learned to play the organ and piano. For 14 years she worked in a parish where she directed the choir and served both as principal and catechism teacher in the parish's Kindergarten School. She so loved children. Her dream was to come to the United States to study child psychology and learn the basics of Montessorri education in order to introduce the Montessorri approach to early childhood education in Korea. This dream never materialized, but she did come to the United States in 1978 when she transferred to the Colorado Spring's Province of the Sisters of Saint Francis of Perpetual Adoration. While struggling with the language barrier, she searched for her niche in this foreign land. She was soon drawn into ministry with the elderly and the Korean Catholic Community, first in Denver and then in Colorado Springs. Her kind, listening, and understanding heart soon became known to Korean Catholics who began calling her for personal and spiritual guidance, and to lead retreats, from across the country. Her "telephone ministry" has grown to become a significant portion of her daily life. About five years ago, Sister Laetitia happened to visit a Korean woman in her home, and this woman happened to be painting a picture. Watching the woman paint, suddenly touched Laetitia's soul and she asked herself—"Might I paint? Is God calling me to paint—and to perhaps use my painting as a way to bring light and color and vibrancy and beauty to the lives of those I serve?" Laetitia's gentle contemplative spirit was set afire at the thought of it! Her Korean friend introduced her to art classes which have empowered her to pursue her newly awakened passion—to enrich the lives of others through her painting!

da Silva OSF, Sister Eliana

Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God

Sister Eliana da Silva's 53 years of ministry reflects God's love, goodness and beauty. Presently, Sister Eliana serves as Co-Minister of Community Life, where she attends to the physical and spiritual needs of senior sisters. Embracing Franciscan life, Sister also cares for the motherhouse plants, coaxing blooms and beauty out of even the most temperamental plant species. Using her artistic gifts, Sister Eliana creates warm and hospitable spaces throughout the motherhouse with décor choices that complement the community's Franciscan spirituality and provide peaceful every day reminders of God's beauty. Sister's past ministries include supervising the care of infants at the Franciscan Child Day Care Center, hospice ministry, caring for the elderly and Alzheimer's patients, and pastoral ministry.

Derrick OSF, Sister Eileen

Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities

Music has long been a part of Sister Eileen Derrick's life. Skilled on piano, organ and alto flute, Sister Eileen uses her musical ability to bring people to God. In addition to teaching music in schools and in private lessons, Sister Eileen has ministered as a liturgical director for several parishes in Central New York. She believes that music can make scripture come alive for people and give deeper meaning to a phrase or word from the Gospel; she sees music's participatory nature as a way to draw worshippers into the liturgy. "I'm grateful that I've been given some of the tools that are needed to go into a parish and enliven and inspire people to respond to the word and the message of the Gospel and the community to which we are called," she said recently. Now Sister Eileen is embarking on a ministry in which she will use her God-given musical talent to help people who are suffering physically as well as spiritually – planning for people who are grieving at wakes and funerals; playing for those who are suffering; and playing for people transitioning to death. She is learning to play the harp because her research has shown that it is the musical instrument closest in reverberation to the human heart; courses that will lead to a certificate as a music for healing and transition practitioner teach her how to read hospital monitoring equipment as well as the patient's body language to determine the most appropriate type of music to play at any given time. Sister plans to continue playing liturgical music for parishes but she is eager to do what she can to aid the suffering in relaxing and hearing God's voice in the soothing sounds from her harp.

Falbe OSF, Sister Mary Ann

Hospital Sisters of St. Francis

Sister MaryAnn Falbe, OSF, has, for many years, been the creative artistic "go-to" person in our community for any celebratory event or feast day. She has excellent taste with a strong Franciscan flavor of simplicity to all she does. No matter what role she has in ministry, she continues to inspire others to prayer and action by her deeply spiritual expressions of beauty that are very fitting for the occasion. She has a gift of clear and inspiring expression in composing and fitting together the group prayers that our sisters pray together on special occasions, e.g., Jubilee, Christmas, Easter, etc. She not only is able to create a beautiful atmosphere herself, but she recognizes and assists others in drawing out their hidden talents. She often teaches others some of her learnings and enables them to use talents they didn't realize they had. She is always eager to learn new forms of expression of beauty, especially from among our international congregational members.

Gerke FSPA, Sister Malinda

Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration

*Sister Malinda Gerke is a fine example of reflecting the beauty and goodness of God through artistic expression. Although she expresses this art through many different avenues, she is especially known for playing the harp, something she taught herself to do. Not only does she play our antique harp at community gatherings, she regularly plays for the sick and dying at both city hospitals, and has produced a number of harp music CD's, bringing healing and comfort through music. Sister Malinda authored a small book of stories of healing and an accompanying CD, appropriately entitled *Instrument of Peace*. She often states: "This is God's work; I am only the instrument." Sister Marlene Weisenbeck, former FSPA President, reflects this about Sister Malinda in the prologue: "We observe how her musical presence connects the prose and the passions of life, soothing its most difficult moments and providing epiphanies for the imagination. She possesses an ardor for wholeness that beckons one toward the divine that is at the center of all being." Sister Malinda Gerke has truly become an instrument of peace.*

Golden osf, Caroline

Sisters of St. Francis of Penance & Christian Charity, Stella Niagara

Sister Caroline Golden first became interested in Art Therapy after seeing the positive effects of art on people who are homeless, as well as those who have been through the hurt of divorce, loss or grief. She obtained her certification so that she could begin arts in medicine activities in a health care setting, even though she already held a B.A. in Art Education and an M.A. in Religious Education. Her “Art Kart” takes her to approximately 80 patients each month in the Comprehensive Treatment Unit at University of Miami Health System, where she is part of the Integrative Medicine program of the Sylvester Cancer Center. The goal is for the program to help them deal with the emotional and spiritual conflicts that come with a cancer diagnosis. She also works in the children’s unit where the children and their families benefit from the art program. In addition, children and families have art meditation activities, which is a mindfulness program to help them to calm down and cope with life threatening illnesses. They enjoy the arts immensely. Comments from patients and management include, “The Arts in Medicine program brings me joy in the midst of a dreadful day,” “Caroline is very caring...and helps get you into a calm, spiritual feeling, which is so important in this disease, ” and “Sister Caroline has been invaluable in spreading the message of hope and healing through art.” Sister Caroline believes that doing art touches ones soul which touches the soul of the divine.

Goolish OSF, Sister Jo

School Sisters of St. Francis

Sister Jo Goolish, a member of the United States Province of the School Sisters of St. Francis whose headquarters is in Pittsburgh PA, is our honoree for the following reasons: Sister Jo has used her talents to express God’s beauty in designing the “Canticle of Creatures” on beautiful notecards; the Goodness of God is seen in an eight foot San Damiano Cross that she painted for our chapel; she has been designing the community Christmas cards for many years, each one expressing another facet of the mystery of the Incarnation; she has captured the scripture themes and created many centerpieces for community meetings each year. Sister Jo teaches art at St. Gerard’s High School in San Antonio, Texas, a school in one of the poorest sections of the city. With her guidance, the art pieces of these students have brought many awards to them and to their school. She has been asked to provide art pieces done by the children for school conventions, grand openings of historic sites of the city and special civic functions Sister Jo has a gift of bringing out the best in children who are in need of love and affirmation.

Hauber OSF, Mary

Sisters of St. Francis of Dubuque

Mary Hauber, OSF, a professional musician, has brought beauty and the fine arts to people of all ages. She taught over 51 years as a classroom music teacher and she gave private piano lessons to both children and adults. After receiving a ministry grant, she gave FREE lessons to those who could not afford them. Some families “paid it forward” by donating money so the next generation of children could develop their musical skills. Her relationship with her students went far beyond the 30 minute piano lesson. Students supported each other in Sister Mary’s peaceful studio and grew in confidence in all areas of their lives. She is also a composer of children’s music which is published by Alfred Music Co. Mary has created mandalas for 26 years. After studying this art, she now teaches a class for the retired Sisters at Mount St. Francis in Dubuque, IA.

Hook OSF, Sr Kathleen

Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart

Sister Kathleen Hook is the honoree for the Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart. Sr. Kathleen is a talented musician and composer. Her music reflects her love of creation and her love of the Franciscan way of life. She leads her Tau singers in such a way that they put a song in everyone's heart. Prayer and praise are the heart of her music and all the events she creatively prepares from choir practice to liturgies. She shares her skill with music and prayer with the elderly and those with disabilities providing dinners, songs and warm hospitality. She empowers all with the message of her songs and the welcome of her heart. Congratulations, Sr. Kathleen!

Huecker SFP, Sister Paula

Franciscan Sisters of the Poor

Sr. Paula Huecker exemplifies the Conference theme of "Responding to God's Love." A generous artist who sews and paints, she uses her talents to design clothing that fits and serves the Sisters and she paints to enhance the Sisters' living environment. Two years ago she helped establish the Magnificat Unit that provides focused attention on our Sisters who need extra care. As the Unit's Community Minister, she tends to the spiritual and physical needs of Sisters. To create better cohesion among the Unit's staff, she designed a Magnificat Unit logo and embroidered the logo on staff uniforms. When not busy tending to her Sisters, Sr. Paula assists the Congregation with photographing and videotaping various meetings and Assemblies. For fun, Sr. Paula hunts garage sales to find treasures to share with others. By responding to God's love, Sr. Paula brings power to the powerless.

Jacobs OSF, Carmel

Sisters of St. Francis, Clinton IA

Sister Carmel Jacobs, a Sister of St. Francis, Clinton, Iowa, was nominated by her sisters to be honored at the 2015 Franciscan Federation Conference. Sister Carmel reflects the theme of this year's conference, Responding to God's Love: A Franciscan Moral Vision, both through her artistic talent and through her efforts to empower the powerless. A native of Clinton, Iowa, Sr. Carmel is the eldest of 11 children in the Jacobs family. When she entered the Sisters of St. Francis she brought with her a gentle, humble spirit and an aptitude for art. During her early years of ministry, she reflected the beauty and goodness of God as an elementary teacher and as an art instructor at the former Mount St. Clare College. For many years since leaving academia, she has ministered to the homeless and families in need of assistance, bringing God's love to the people served at St. Vincent de Paul Society in Phoenix, Arizona. There is seldom a Clinton Franciscan celebration, be it feast day, jubilee, chapter, or funeral that is not touched by Carmel's spirit. Her logos and graphics grace newsletters, programs, and prayer services. Her artistic touches are evident in the environment of meeting rooms and in the flower arrangements on dinner tables. Even when Sr. Carmel is not with us physically, her artistic works inevitably are. Besides the graphics for which she is so well known, she has also worked in pottery and produced larger works of art. She has an eye for beauty that others sometimes miss, and she conveys it through her artistic expression and through her humble service to those on the margins of society. Her logo of the Circle of Gift above is a perfect expression of her response to God's love and the way she shares the Franciscan moral vision through her gifts. We are pleased to honor her with this year's Franciscan Federation Award!



Lewandowski CSSF, Sister Mary Francis

Congregation of the Sisters of St. Felix (Felician Sisters of North America)

Sister Mary Francis Lewandowski is the Director of Internal Communications for the Felician Sisters of North America and Felician Publications and Studio Arts in Livonia, Michigan. Through her ministry she disseminates pertinent information to community members, and uses her gift of artistic expression as she designs program booklets for provincial and congregational chapters and assemblies, prepares and publishes cards, monographs and books and creates settings for major functions. She currently is coordinating a ministry of presence project in the city of Detroit. After visiting Felician missions in Kenya, Brazil and Haiti, Sister Francis created a photo display to foster awareness of the people, their living conditions and the challenges poverty poses for them. In Jacmel, Haiti, in 2013 and 2014, Sister Francis conducted week-long art classes for youth. These students self-organized into “The Felician Artists of Haiti” and continue to use what they have learned to produce art pieces, placemats, coasters and trays to sell and are learning basic business practices they can use for future employment. This endeavor is one way to “bring power to the powerless” and hope for the future!

Morton SSJ-TOSF, Sr. Cecilia Marie

Sisters of St. Joseph of the Third Order of St. Francis

Sister Cecilia Marie Morton has been chosen as this year’s Franciscan honoree because of her untiring witness to the values of social justice and racial equality among the African American community in Detroit. She worked for many years at St. Bernard Parish in Detroit. She has been an active member of the National Black Sisters’ Conference. Sr. Cecilia Marie is currently involved in the Rites of Passage Program and programs dealing with the Black experience. Her use of art and poetry is an integral part of her work and her spirituality. As we celebrate 50 years since Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s march to Selma, we are proud to celebrate 54 years of Sr. Cecilia Marie’s life with the Sisters of St. Joseph-TOSF.

Omlor OSF, Sister Jane Frances

Sisters of St. Francis, Tiffin OH

Sister Jane Frances Omlor is an environmental educator, potter, and teacher in Tiffin, Ohio. Whether she is teaching a pottery class to children or adults, creating something unique on her potter’s wheel, drawing, creating a ceramic mural, working on an art project of her own, or simply doodling her creativity bursts forth. Her liveliness and energy is evident in her various masterpieces – especially her creation of the San Damiano Cross. What is a natural gift for her she generously shares and passes on to others. Sister Jane Frances has a skill for helping others find the “artist” within as they “create something beautiful.” Over the years her art has reflected the beauty and goodness of God. It is filled with images of creation and leads the observer more deeply into the mystery of God and nature. Through her artistic expression she is able to put a depth in her art that is far beyond what the object itself provides, truly enchanting the spiritual. Sister Jane Frances is actively involved and connected with CROSSWAEH, a local Community-Based Correctional Center. Many non-violent offenders perform community service under her supervision. They attest to the fact that Sister Jane Frances brings “power to the powerless.”

Peake OSF, Sister Kateri

Bernardine Franciscan Sisters

Sister Kateri Peake reflects the beauty and goodness of God by faithfully using her many gifts and talents in very creative ways. Her academic background includes a BA in English; an MA in History; and an MA in Administration. Sister Kateri Peake taught on the elementary, secondary and collegiate levels. In addition, she was principal of La Reine High School which received the U.S. Department of Education and NCEA recognition as an Exemplary School in 1985. She graciously accepted the position of Province Minister in 2001-2006 and is presently

Administrator of the Bernardine Franciscan's Motherhouse in Reading PA. Sister Kateri Peake has a wonderful facility to sculpture the English language into masterful images. Likewise, the ambiance of the Motherhouse is enhanced by her artistic touch in the dining room, hallways and chapel. This creates a beautiful and welcoming environment to the many diverse people who use our Conference Center, Chapel, and other areas within the building. Her life radiates an artistic expression of God's signature in all that she is and does for the people of God. Therefore, it is with much love, admiration, and gratitude that the Congregational Leadership of the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters is proud to nominate Sister Kateri Peake as the Honoree for 2015.

Phillips, Rita Joan

Franciscan Sisters of Allegany Associate

We are happy to announce that Rita Joan Phillips, Associate of the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany, has been chosen as this year's Franciscan Federation Honoree. Rita is someone who reflects the beauty and goodness of God through her artistic expression of music and through this has brought, and continues to bring, "power to the powerless." As a former member of the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany. Rita was selfless in her giving of her musical talent and created an atmosphere of such joy and enthusiasm that even the walls seemed to resound with praise. Although called out of the congregation, Rita never lost her Allegany spirit and began sharing her musical talent in her parish where she formed a choir. Her humility and transparency drew other laity who shared the same spirit. Out of this grew a greater desire to reconnect with the Allegany Franciscans, and soon an Associate group was formed in Calabash, NC. These Associates, under the leadership of Rita Joan, committed themselves to pray for peace and to partner with the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany to implement their 2012 Chapter Initiatives. They also witness publicly against the death penalty and human trafficking and have an ongoing ministry to prisoners. Thank you for your commitment and influence, Rita, and CONGRATULATIONS!

Radke OSF, Sister Mary Francis Clare

Franciscan Sisters of Chicago

Sister Mary Francis Clare Radke, OSF, is a Franciscan Sister of Chicago who reflects the beauty and goodness of God through the artistic expression of liturgical environment design. Working with architects and artists she has played a key role in the construction and furnishings of numerous chapels in our eldercare facilities across the Midwest and in Texas. These inspiring places of worship empower those seniors who may no longer be articulate to give silent praise and find abundant peace in these uplifting spaces. Not stopping at the initial design, Sister Francis Clare continues to refresh the chapel space at the Motherhouse with fresh flowers and decorations aligned with the liturgical year. These reflect her beliefs: "I love beauty. It's important that the environment is relaxing, prayerful, and can lead to contemplation. I feel like I have a gift that should be shared." And untold numbers have been blessed by her sharing.

Reid smic, Sr. Margaret

Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

Through the years Margaret has lived the beauty and goodness of God both by her very approach to life and by the very real artistic creativity she has brought to those around her. She consistently enlivened her physical environment by creative arrangements and decorations celebrating the beauty and peace of life itself. Over the years of her ministry she created this environment as teacher in kindergarten classes, in the many different communities in which she has lived and in nursing homes where she served as geriatric nurse for many years. Gifted with a beautiful singing

voice, she willingly kept us on key whether at community meetings, celebrations of life or funeral liturgies giving the rest of us the confidence to easily follow her lead. The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception honor Margaret with this award because of this beauty and goodness she reflects in her person, her simplicity and genuine living for others out of her loving connection with all of God's creation that speaks to this year's theme of the Federation – *Responding to God's Love, A Franciscan Moral Vision*.

Saiege OSF, Marianne

Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate

Sister Marianne Saiege reflects the beauty and goodness of God through her artistic expression. Marianne sees and expresses Earth's mystery and beauty in every medium in which she works: photography, writing, power point reflections, poetry, space design, or prayer/photo cards. Through her eyes God's wonder is seen in all life and her pieces reflect the Franciscan spiritual life integrating daily life and the Gospel; Assisi and the life of Francis and Clare are highlights of her work. She uses light and color, shadow and space in ways that awaken the wonder in us. Marianne's artistic gifts are shared with retreatants, directees, congregations, deacons and lay ministers and parishes. She has work published in the *Spiritual Journal*, *Alive Now*; *Presence: An International Journal of Spiritual Direction*; and in a Meditation book, *Seeding Your Soul: Six Considerations for Spiritual Growth*; and has sold and presented her work widely. The second criteria of bringing power to the poor and powerless through artistic expression comes alive in Marianne as well. She has used her photography to raise awareness of the poor and powerless in Power Point meditations, a brochure for the Care Fair with photos from the Jail ministry, and photo presentations so that people with low vision that can view photographs on their reading machines. Marianne's artistic expressions make the simple extraordinary.

Schafer OSF, S. Lynn

Wheaton Franciscans

S. Lynn Schafer is one of our artists who expresses her incarnational spirituality through her gift of woodcarving. In the wood that she is drawn to, she is able to discern the spirit of the wood and then bring out its beauty in varied and unexpected ways like a tree stump becoming a lovely Native American Woman guarding our land. Today Lynn devotes time to carving wooden flutes which create beauty within beauty. Lynn was part of the team that created the Peace Path on our motherhouse property. Her carved wooden peace poles in many languages, reflect her Franciscan spirit and offer hope and encouragement to the numerous patients, employees and members of the Community who use the Path for reflection and peace. In addition, Lynn joins her voice with others in a Threshold Choir that gives comfort and "power" to those who are often powerless and neglected – the sick, the forgotten and the dying. In genuine openness of heart she is willing to give of herself to our sisters who need to be in residential care outside of the motherhouse at Resurrection Life Center. This is part of the beauty of her service to all of us.

Schimminger FSSJ, Sister Lynne Anne Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph

Some individuals have an intrinsic sixth sense --an ability to see, feel, and create that which is not apparent to another. Sister Lynne Anne has this sixth sense. With her keen mind's eye and personal reflection, she has generously shared the beauty of her artistic gifts in a variety of ways. Sister Lynne Anne describes her gift as a "hobby" that she has enjoyed using and sharing throughout her years of ministries as teacher, principal, committee member, congregational leader and, currently, Development Director. Her skills flow over

into the civic community especially at the Historical Society of the Tonawandas where she has provided repairs and touch-ups of assorted displays. She has developed artistic techniques that now include sketching, painting, watercolor, graphic design, photography, and framing. Sister Lynne Anne is the volunteer overseer of our congregational art collection. With sister's attention to detail, season, celebration and location, she arranges the changing of public displays throughout the Motherhouse. With Sister Lynne Anne around it is important to be attentive to what the current pictures may be. On occasion, she is known to present-- in her very quiet manner-- the simple question of, "Have you noticed anything different in one of the hallways lately?" Through this 'hobby' of Sister Lynne Anne's, we have received a wealth of prayerful visuals. Over the years, she has created meaningful ambiances for congregational logos, gatherings, and special events. There are printed programs for celebrations that carry her pictorial insights and reflections on particular themes. Sister lovingly created a series of note cards that reflect the virtues of our foundress, Mother Colette Hilbert, with an invitation into the mystery of God. Sister has shared her artistic perceptions beyond our Congregation. Her gift is presented to us in our Franciscan Morning and Evening Praise on pages 1 and 1324. This May, as we celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life, Sister Lynne Anne will be participating in an art show featuring the Art Work of Men and Women Religious of the Diocese of Buffalo. For many years, sister has provided visual concepts to accompany Lenten and Advent calendars that are shared with sisters, family members, employees, board members, guests, and visitors to our Motherhouse.

Slavin OSF, Sister Ann Marie

Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia

The Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia are pleased to announce Sister Ann Marie Slavin, OSF, as our 2015 Franciscan Federation Honoree. Sister Ann Marie reflects the "beauty and goodness of God through artistic expression" and is one who brings "power to the powerless." She has been described as a "first-class poet" whose works enhance the lives of many. Whether through our congregational publications, her blog, Facebook, our e-news, etc., her poetry touches hearts far and wide. As an editor, she creates beauty by the words she inserts into pieces and the suggestions she makes. In addition, she continually places the Sisters of St. Francis in the public eye in a very inviting way. Sister Ann Marie sees the beauty in all people. Her writings and presence often advocate for those who have no voice. She is the contact for our community's Advocacy Committee in regard to the death penalty. In spite of anything people have done, Ann sees the beauty of the God-life in them; on occasion she has kept vigil far into the night at prisons where someone is to be put to death. Her willingness to humbly serve where she can is always accompanied by a smile. Congratulations, Sister Ann Marie!

Sorosiak OSF, Sister Jane Mary

Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania OH

Sister Jane Mary Sorosiak, a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania Ohio for over 50 years, has a contemplative Franciscan heart that shows through her ceramic murals that serve as a source of meditation to all who see them. The ceramic murals on buildings throughout our campus center on Francis and Clare of Assisi, Scripture, and prayer. They mirror her spirit of reverence for all creation while proclaiming praise to our God. Images of Jesus call you into his presence through his perceptive, loving gaze. Sister Jane Mary has completed more than 100 commissioned pieces on display in California, New York, Virginia, Texas, Michigan and Ohio. They range from the Stations of the Cross in Mt.

Carmel Church in Temperance, Michigan, and a Cycle of Life Monument for the Knights of Columbus in Fishkill, New York to a lobby mural for St. Joseph Hospital in Bryan, Texas and the Baptismal Font in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel on the Motherhouse grounds in Sylvania, Ohio. Her love of God and deep spirituality shine through all that she does. Sister Jane Mary patiently guides the core of volunteers who work with her, encouraging them to recognize the talents they possess and to share those talents with others. Through her art work, Sister Jane Mary responds to God's love which flows from her spirit into each piece of art that she creates. "It is a peaceful process through which I can channel my love of God," said Sister Jane Mary. "I believe that art appeals to the spiritual in each of us and should be uplifting. My vocation to religious life has afforded me the opportunity to use my talents in this direction." She is truly a Franciscan woman who celebrates the love of our God.

Welscher OSF, Kathleen

Sisters of St. Francis, Rochester MN

Kathleen Welscher, OSF, is a true Franciscan who reflects the beauty and goodness of God through artistic expression – poetry, writing, tatting, crocheting, flower arranging, are just a few of her many gifts. A kind, gentle spirit full of compassion and creativity, Sister Kathleen gives her full attention to those she interacts with, making them feel important. Living with humility and simplicity, Sister Kathleen finds beauty in all of creation – if she hears a bird's song, it will fill her with a spirit of prayer and gratitude for such a beautiful gift from God. She serves as the Sacristan at Assisi Height, preparing the Chapel for celebrations, seasons, feast days and funerals. On feast days, she finds an icon to represent the Saint, bringing the liturgy and scripture to visual life. During the change of seasons, she gathers ideas and earthy materials to express her vision artistically. Her heart is as big as her creative nature – she has sent monthly gifts of her handiwork to the novices. She shared cards, crocheted dishtowels and even crocheted hens on plastic eggs to bring a sense of anticipation of rebirth to the novices. Her creative talents extend to dainty works of art created through tatting. Sister Kathleen embellishes note cards with tiny flowers and birds created from thread. Delicate as they are, they represent her attention to the smallest details. These note cards, along with her other creations, are donated for sale in the Assisi Heights Gift shop to share this beauty with others. Another gift exhibited by Sister Kathleen is that of writing. She shares this gift with those around her – whether it be poems she shares with the Sisters, or children's books she writes for family members. In her preparations for funerals of the Sisters, Kathleen selects a special rose to place near the casket or photo of that Sister. Her decision in color is based upon her knowledge of the personality of that Sister. She makes it a point to greet the family members, thanking them for the gift of the life of the Sister. And, with the flower arrangements delivered from funerals in the city, she repurposes them into fragrant bouquets for the Sisters residing in health care, and strategically places other flowers throughout the house to bring joy to all. Sister Kathleen, you are a precious gift to the Sisters of Saint Francis, and we thank you.

Werner OSF, Sister Mary Louise

Sisters of St. Francis Oldenburg IN

The Sisters of St. Francis, Oldenburg, Indiana are pleased to present **Sister Mary Louise Werner** as our 2015 Franciscan Federation Honoree. Throughout her sixty-three years as an Oldenburg Franciscan, Sister Mary Louise has responded to God's love in faithfulness, joy and appreciation for all God's gifts with a gentle and quiet manner. Her love of creation is colorfully displayed in many flower gardens beautifying our convent grounds and shrines, in her graceful floral arrangements that adorn our chapel sanctuary, our dining room tables and other areas throughout the motherhouse. Mary Louise's artistic talents and serene spirit provide beautiful, prayerful environments where others can find peace, beauty and enjoyment with God and/or with one another. She has also served the community as teacher, seamstress, cook and baker nurturing others in body, mind and spirit. When complimented on the beauty of her gardens and floral bouquets she says, "I didn't make the

flowers, God did. It's for everyone to enjoy and see the beauty of God." Through her own unique, creative spirit, Sister Mary Louise reveals the Spirit of the Creator.