



NEWS

from the Northside

Quality of Life By The Way

by S. Mary Margaret McKenzie

When we told our summer intern, Juste, that we, meaning the whole community, were going for the day to one of our favorite get-away places to prayerfully consider our quality of life, she immediately responded, "You DO have quality of life!" Without hesitation she limned a litany of all the ways she has observed our quality of life. This is exactly what we did during the morning session based on our experience of the appreciative inquiry approach and the circle method for sharing. For our talking piece we passed the El Camino pilgrim shell, a gift from Heidi, one of our Residential Lay Community members. Our weeks of preparation for our day away had coincided with Heidi's walking the whole way to Santiago de Compostela.

We are indeed blessed by the quality of life that we do have, but we also went beyond our virtual Santiago de Compostela, on to the ocean of sharing our needs, expectations, and hopes to improve our quality of life. This led to our addressing the challenges we have set in the Strategic Process of our 2016-2019 planning.

These challenges hold guidance and nourishment for our community's life around being contemplative, relational, balanced, and protected in our well-being personally and communally, while affirming and promoting justice, advocating quality of life for all.



Resident Lay Community member Heidi Schleif with her pilgrim shell, sharing THE WAY with us.

With all our love we send you a virtual pilgrim shell, and with all our gratitude, we pray quality of life for you. We are in this together, walking THE WAY.



Aimee Fritsch caught "yarn bombing" our front railing and who also represented the Resident Lay Community at World Youth Day. She came home inspired by the reality of millions of young persons strengthened to live their faith.



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We are an urban monastic community. Please contact us for more information about our way of life.



Visitation Monastery
North Minneapolis



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This newsletter is available on our website. If you prefer the online format, please contact the Sisters at vmonastery@aol.com.



Friends from Turning Point and Ms. Bea's House helped make S. Karen's Jubilee Mass and Reception a great success!

During this jubilee year, let us allow God to surprise us. God never tires of throwing open the doors of his heart to repeat that God loves and wants to share love with us. —Pope Francis

JUBILEE 2016 | By S. Karen Mohan

I have always cherished my special connection to the Visitation Order's early beginnings through the vow date given to me in 1966 for my first profession: June 6. This is the same day as the founding of our Order in 1610.

As I received the Visitation cross in the simple pre-dawn ceremony in the Sisters' Choir that late Spring day, it felt to me that the Spirit's outpouring to our first Sisters was being offered to me. How grateful I was for that gift, even if I didn't know where it would take me! As we all know but must practice each day: faith commitments require love and trust. Wearing my silver cross still reminds me of the deep bond of love with my Visitation Sisters *then* and *now*, and of the charisma that has been entrusted to us.

How could I have known then that fifty years later, while I was giving thanks for my Visitation vocation, the Holy Spirit would offer an opportunity for the world to celebrate with me in a "Jubilee Year of Mercy"! This Spirit-led "jubilee" synchronicity became one of the great joys of my celebration: while I gave thanks for God's faithful love and mercy to *me*, Pope Francis was inviting *us* all to do the same!

My jubilee weekend – and summer – was filled with many signs of this mercy and care. In addition to my June celebration, our Federation Council offered me and our Federation president, Sister Susan Marie Kasprzak, a trip to Annecy, France, birthplace of our Order, for a workshop given by the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales in honor of the 400th anniversary of the publication of St. Francis de Sales' book, *The Treatise on the Love of God*. Sr. Susan Marie, a silver jubilarian, and my brother Michael, a Theology teacher at Visitation Academy who also participated in this workshop, celebrated "jubilee and delight" as we studied the *Treatise* with 50 others and walked in the footsteps of our Founders for this mid-July program in France. In a boat ride that we took on Lake Annecy, a sudden rainstorm produced not one but two rainbows! Perhaps they were jubilee gifts from Saints Jane and Francis!

To my friends, former students, neighbors and companions on the journey, I say "thank you" for your notes, cards, good wishes, remembrances, and presence with me at this "jubilee" moment of my life.

To my family, those who joined me in Minneapolis and those who were with me in spirit, you brought me so much joy and encouragement by your loving presence. I thank God especially for giving my Mom the good health to be with me on this day. Just before renewing my vows at my golden celebration, I invited Mom to join me and my community around Ascension's baptismal font in the sanctuary. Since she was the only one in the Church that day present at my Baptism, the sacramental initiation of all our faith commitments, I wanted her to be next to me as I renewed my vows.

To my Visitation Sisters in St. Louis whose lives of "Living Jesus" made following Jesus as a Sister attractive to me and helped me discern my life's calling, I offer you my prayer, gratitude, and love.

And to my Visitation Sisters of Minneapolis and our many lay companions, I delight in the way you give a fresh application to these words of Pope Francis for the Year of Mercy (*at left*):



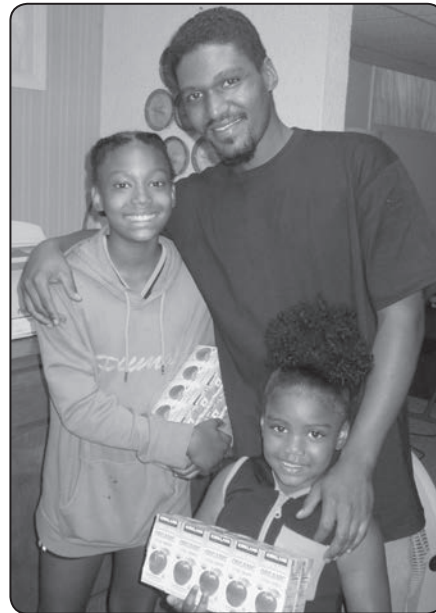
The summer began with our Vis seniors Urban Immersion Experience in late May. Each senior was paired with a sister for the Experience. Senior Rayna pictured here with her mentor and prayer partner S. Katherine.



Good friend Karen Westbrook came to celebrate S. Karen's Jubilee and blessed us all with her presence that first week of June.



Faithful volunteer Diana Bady helps out with National Night Out preparations.



Former "Windsock Kid" Wazeer returns with his daughters Destiny and Serenity for the family outing to Como Park in early August.



Good friends Will and Dave share encouragement and plan their next fishing trip over a summer meal with S. Mary Frances.



Summer Intern Juste from Lithuania with our neighbors during our National Night Out Block Party in August.



The Sisters hosted a lovely Quinceanara celebration in late June—Happy 15th, Jennifer!



Happy faces of kids and parents having a great day enjoying our Annual Family Day at Como Park this summer!

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"Let us always meet each other with a smile, for the smile is the beginning of love"

—St. Teresa of Calcutta



Summer photos! *See inside for more*



S. Mary Frances joined with Cookie Cart staff and friends in celebration of S. Jean Thuerauf and in dedication of their north Minneapolis bakery. S. Jean died this past summer.



During their annual week of service in north Minneapolis, Christ Power teens and leaders join with neighbor Jerome to clean up fallen trees at our monastery.



Austrian nurses on a short study exchange with nursing professor Hans DeReuter join us for the final Mass of the summer as everyone heads back to school!