



Development Office

December 2020

Dear Family & Friends,

A secure retirement is every worker's dream. We, the Sisters of St. Francis, have taken steps to provide our aging Sisters with a worry-free retirement by making cost-effective choices and being good stewards of our resources. Additionally, it is with the loyal support of our donors that we are able to provide a simple, comfortable retirement while sustaining community life and ministry.

Retirement takes many shapes with the Clinton Franciscans, especially now during the pandemic. "Retirement has proved to be an enriching culmination of my ministry as a Franciscan. Now more than ever, I am able to live the challenge of balancing the active and contemplative aspects of our Franciscan vocation," said Sister Marjorie Wisor. "I have more than adequate time for prayer, both individual and communal," she added.



Marjorie Wisor

Some Sisters choose to slow down a bit as they age or choose a less strenuous occupation. Often times, health issues require the Sisters to make the change to retirement. We currently have 35 retired Sisters in our congregation making up 73% of our membership.

The majority of our Sisters, though, feel as if they are not really retired because they remain so active and engaged. The Sisters will never set aside their work of prayer and service to others. "Clay work to promote peace and justice has become a new ministry for me in my retirement," stated Sister Phyllis Morris. "My latest project is to promote equality by standing with African Americans in their struggle for justice through the Black Lives Matter movement. To date, I have made 235 BLM ceramic pendants that our families and friends, in addition to the Clinton Franciscan Family, are wearing to promote this aspect of justice."



Phyllis Morris

Many of our retired Sisters may not be in the public eye as much as they once were, but they are just as much involved. They contribute a wealth of experience and wisdom to all they encounter. When previously able to gather in-person, they were the first to attend celebrations, workshops, retreats, and meetings with family and friends. Sister Ida Green, who resides near Chicago, shared, "One thing I had done that I didn't have time to do when in full-time ministry was take part in peaceful protests, such as those with Southsiders for Peace in their demonstrations against treatment of immigrants at the border."



Ida Green

Our retired Sisters are vital to our mission of living and promoting active nonviolence and peacemaking. They contribute through their deep spiritual lives, involvement with advocacy activities, and volunteerism. For example, Sister Martinelle Bonnell assists every Thursday with the Franciscan Peace Center's *Share Our Sandwiches* program to help feed those in need. "I enjoy our project of packing sack lunches. We do 50-70 depending on the time of month. I can just imagine how individuals look forward to getting the lunch and, hopefully, enjoying it," she said.



Martinelle Bonnell

Educational and spiritual opportunities, mostly held virtually, are also popular among the retired Sisters. "I have been able to take part in a 21-Day Equity Challenge, which is a tremendous resource on racism," replied Sister Jeanne d'Arc Untz. "It has enriched my understanding so as to become a more peaceful, nonviolent person. This has helped me stay focused on our mission during the pandemic," she added.



Jeanne d'Arc Untz

Several Sisters spent their summer months beautifying our flower gardens, and growing and harvesting in our garden and orchard. Some even have container gardens to tend. Fresh fruits and vegetables are used in The Canticle kitchen year round thanks to the preserving of apples, rhubarb, tomatoes, and many other vegetables.

"Since my retirement, I have had the opportunity to read for pleasure and I take full advantage of that," said Sister Theresa Judge. "I have also begun a very fulfilling prison ministry with one delightful gentleman. It gives me and him something productive to do during the pandemic when our travel options are limited. We both enjoy our conversations about politics and racial issues, and it has been an educational experience for me. I thank God every day for bringing him into my life."



Theresa Judge

Please know how grateful we are for your love and support of our retired Sisters. You have continually shown gratitude towards these religious women by your generous support to the Sisters' Retirement Fund. Your gift ensures that we can continue offering resources and services to our Sisters so they can have quality care and a secure, comfortable retirement.

We ask you to prayerfully consider helping us provide for the health care and living expenses of those Sisters who are retired from full-time ministry.

Your tax-deductible gift is greatly appreciated!

Love and blessings to you and your family during this Christmas season from the Sisters of St. Francis!

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