

# Franciscan Voices

*Living and Promoting Active Nonviolence and Peacemaking | March 2023*

## In Memoriam - Sister Beatrice Griffin

Sister Beatrice "Bea" Griffin, an educator and administrator, passed away December 6, 2022, at The Alverno in Clinton, IA.

Bea was born on October 27, 1927, in Bird Island, MN, the daughter of Gerald and Magdalene (Schwiderski) Griffin. She was baptized on October 30, 1927, at St. Mary Church in Bird Island. She had five brothers, Joseph, Francis, Gerald, Lawrence, and Raymond, and four sisters, Mary Ann, Rosalia, Eileen, and Kathleen.

She received her early schooling at St. Columbkille School in Varina, IA, and Sacred Heart School in Pocahontas, IA. She graduated from Alvernia High School, Chicago, IL, in 1945.

She entered the Sisters of St. Francis at Mount St. Clare Convent, Clinton, on September 8, 1946, and received the name Mary Therese Martin at her reception on June 16, 1947. She later resumed her baptismal name. She made her first profession on August 12, 1949, and perpetual profession on August 12, 1952. Her novitiate classmate was Sister Margaretha Weber.



**Sister Bea Griffin**  
1927 - 2022

*Griffin continued on page 2*

## Laudato Si' Action Plan Reflection

*by Jennifer Kryszak, Franciscan Peace Center Director of Strategic Planning*

In May, we will mark one year since the Clinton Franciscan Family approved the [2022 Laudato Si' Action Plan](#) (LSAP). This plan has inspired reflection on daily practices and promoted social action and advocacy.

Responding to the Cry of the Earth, the Clinton Franciscan Family assessed their single-use plastic usage, evaluated the carbon footprint of the vehicle fleet, and assessed the efficiency

of our solar panels. Attending to the Cry of the Poor, we advocated for permanent supportive housing, voting rights, passage of a no-first-use policy regarding nuclear weapons, and limiting presidential power to launch a nuclear attack.



**A 2022 Chevy Silverado 1500 replaces our previous truck that had the highest carbon footprint.**

We also educated ourselves and the public in areas of human trafficking, immigration, and racism, and held prayer vigils when executions were scheduled.

*LSAP continued on page 4*

## — Griffin continued... —

Sister Bea earned a B.A. in Education from San Diego College for Women, San Diego, CA; an M.A. in Education from George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, TN; and an M.A. in Religious Studies from Seattle University, Seattle, WA. She was life certified as a teacher and administrator in California.

Sister Bea's active ministry included both teaching and administration. She began her teaching career in Oak Lawn, IL, and spent most of her years in California where she taught at schools in Riverside, El Cajon, and Oildale. She served as principal at schools in Riverside, San Jacinto, and San Bernardino, CA, and Oak Lawn, IL.

She was a school evaluator for the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. She was widely recognized for her work in staff

development, building improvement, and economic development and was a sought-after consultant in diocesan school systems.

She returned to Clinton in 2004 and served as the Assistant Administrator of The Canticle for three years and as the Assisted Living Coordinator for ten years. Sister Bea found joy in visiting sisters at The Alverno and shopping for them as well as organizing social events and being a driver for sisters at The Canticle.

She is survived by several nieces and nephews and the Sisters of St. Francis with whom she shared life for 76 years. She was preceded in death by her parents; brothers, Joseph, Frank (Ella Mae), Gerald, Lawrence, and Raymond Griffin; and sisters, Mary Ann (Charles) Cashin, Rosalia (Sister Rose) Griffin OSF, Eileen (Bud) Walshon, and Kathleen (William) Muhr.

## — Lenten Events in Clinton —

A **Lenten Day of Reflection** will be held Saturday, March 4, at The Canticle from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with [Rev. Dr. Catherine Quehl-Engel](#) facilitating. Entitled "Release into God (into the Oneness You've Had All Along)," the session embraces Lent as a season of release and surrender for growing greater intimacy, relinquished trust, and reliance upon the Sacred dwelling so close as to be within and between us.

**Vespers**, or evening prayers, will take place each Sunday during Lent at 6:00 p.m. in the chapel of The Canticle. This year's overall theme is "Finding joy as we live the Gospel."

Hosted by the Justice & Peace Commission of Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace Catholic Church in Clinton, **Peace Soup** will be held on March 14, 21, and 28 at 6:00 p.m. in the parish hall, 1105 LaMetta Wynn Drive. Enjoy soup and bread followed by guest speakers on the theme, *The Integral Ecology of Laudato Si'*. Peace Soup is open to the public and attendees are encouraged to bring a bowl, spoon, and cup, if possible. Guest speakers are:

Tuesday, March 14	Dcn. Kent Ferris, OFS	Social Action & Catholic Charities Director, Diocese of Davenport
Tuesday, March 21	Tamra Jetter	Director, Vince Jetter Community Center, Clinton
Tuesday, March 28	Terri Scott & Mary Young Bear	Higher Education Director, Meskwaki Settlement School, Tama Textile Curator, Meskwaki Museum and Cultural Center, Tama





## — Franciscan Formation Retreat

Clinton Franciscan Sojourners and Associates participated in a virtual, ongoing Franciscan formation retreat in January. Entitled *“From Conflict to Connection: Transforming Relationships with Franciscan Practices,”* the four session retreat was facilitated by [Brent Anderson, M.Div.](#), of Healing Divisions.

“The retreat was very well done. The principles Brent gave us were solid and have been proven to give good results,” expressed Sojourner Dick Roberts. Brent shared techniques for sparking conversation, leading effective dialogue, practicing sincere listening, managing conflict, and deepening Franciscan presence.

“Experiencing the retreat was helpful in continuing to strive for meaningful dialogue in conflict,” said Associate JoAnn Snodgrass. “I found the BASE pillars to be valuable tools in working toward being in ‘right relationship’ with

others.” The BASE pillars are:  
B - Breathe, Notice Reactions, Intention of Love Self and Others  
A - Assume and Affirm the Good  
S - Seek to Understand  
E - Engage with Compassion

JoAnn added, “The process helped me understand that while information and education have a part, the key to fruitful dialogue is first and foremost relationship. Self-knowledge, respect, and openness to others can be pathways to discovering common ground. While common ground may not always be achieved, for me, this process offers much hope in continuing the work of being in right relationship as our brother St. Francis taught and lived.”

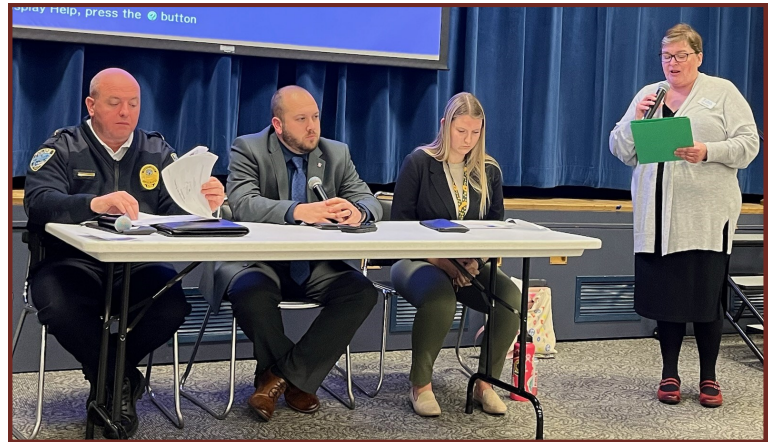


**B. Anderson**

## — Education Program on Human Trafficking

On January 25 — in recognition of National Human Trafficking Prevention Month — the Franciscan Peace Center collaborated with the Clinton Police Department, Living Peace 365, and Braking Traffik for a community education program focusing on the presence of human trafficking, particularly sex trafficking, in Clinton and the surrounding areas. The event also explored systemic issues that lead to trafficking and other violence.

Marsha Thrall, Franciscan Peace Center Director of Programming, moderated a two-part panel conversation that focused on the facts and statistics surrounding sex trafficking within the local area, the proactive measures that the Blackhawk Area Task Force is taking to serve victims of sex trafficking and quash the systemic violence that leads to sex trafficking, and how



**Marsha Thrall, right, with panelists James Ballauer, Josh Winter, and Ellie Lindmark.**

community members can take political action to encourage the enactment of legislation aimed at preventing sex trafficking within the state of Iowa.

James Ballauer, Clinton’s Deputy Chief of Police, provided data from the state of Iowa while

*Trafficking continued on page 5*

## — LSAP continued... —

Focusing on eco-spirituality, we learned more about this form of spirituality and prayed to mark the solstices and equinoxes.

As we complete goals within the LSAP, it is vital to reflect on why we made this commitment to and the reasons for our ongoing work in the areas of eco-spirituality, Cry of the Earth, and Cry of the Poor. *How are these disparate activities related? What values encourage us to remain committed to working for these goals?*

For the Clinton Franciscan Family, each goal brings with it a commitment to active nonviolence. The preface to the LSAP asserts, “In furtherance of our mission and commitment to active nonviolence, we will continually be guided by, and advocate for, nonviolence in all efforts to protect and heal the earth and all of creation in our journey to a *Laudato Si'* future.”

This nonviolence is not merely an attempt to stop or prevent violence; rather, active nonviolence is a spirituality or way of life that calls us to proper relationship with others and ourselves. Significantly, active nonviolence acknowledges the interdependence of all of creation. Humanity is not separate from the environment, and our treatment of the natural world directly affects humanity, especially the most vulnerable.

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis reflected on St. Francis of Assisi to draw the connection

between the recognition of interdependence and nonviolence. Recalling Francis’ habit of calling creatures “brother” and “sister,” Pope Francis wrote, “If we approach nature and the environment without this openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs. By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously.” (*Laudato Si'* 11)

Recognizing our connection to other aspects of creation encourages us to respond with care, to acknowledge our responsibility for ensuring that all of creation can thrive. Moreover, this care is rooted in nonviolence as we recognize our relation to creation as fellow creatures, not masters.

In the coming months, the LSAP Committee will complete their analysis on meeting our goals for the 2022 LSAP and discern the future direction of this undertaking. How are we called to respond to this call to a *Laudato Si'* future? How can we continue to grow in solidarity with the Earth, creation, and all of humanity? While we can choose to respond in diverse ways, active nonviolence will remain the center of our commitment and shape our response.

## — The “Center” Podcast —

Stream the latest episodes of [The “Center”](#) podcast on our website or any major podcast platform, including Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and Google Podcasts. Featured guests in February represented the Social Justice Committee of St. Ann’s Catholic Church, a predominantly African American congregation in the East Baltimore Midway neighborhood leading the call for the canonization of six African American Catholics. The two March episodes will introduce the Franciscan Peace Center staff (March 9) and explore the work of Sister Janet Ryan along with Olivia Hurst at Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation in Chicago (March 23).



## — Movies That Matter —

The Franciscan Peace Center hosts “Movies That Matter” bi-monthly on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. at The Canticle, 841 13th Ave N in Clinton. Reservations are required; please RSVP to [Marsha Thrall](#) or call 563-242-7611.

***Inequality For All*** features Robert Reich as he demonstrates how the widening income gap has a devastating impact on the American economy. The film is an intimate portrait of a man whose lifelong goal remains protecting those who are unable to protect themselves. Through his singular perspective, Reich explains how the massive consolidation of wealth by a precious few threatens the viability of the American workforce and the foundation of democracy itself.

***Trafficked in America*** investigates how a group of teenagers from Guatemala were forced to work against their will at an Ohio egg farm, and how their case illuminates the problem of labor trafficking in America.



March 8

*Inequality for All*

March 22

*Trafficked in America*

6:30 p.m.

The Canticle

*Reservations Required*

## — Trafficking continued... —

Corporal Josh Winter discussed his involvement with the Blackhawk Area Task Force, including ongoing efforts to eliminate sex trafficking at its root cause. Ellie Lindmark, of Braking Traffick, shed light on the case of [Pieper Lewis](#), an Iowa teenager who was convicted of killing the man who her trafficker sold her to, resulting in deferred sentencing and an order from the state to pay the family of her “victim” \$150,000 in restitution in accordance with state law. Lindmark also spoke about the Safe Harbor Law passage which has been held up in the Iowa Senate since March 2022.

Following the panel discussion, attendees watched a screening of the film, *Pushout*, a documentary modeled from the book titled *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in*

*Schools* written by Monique Morris, EdD. The act of pushout is a series of procedures that target Black girls in K-12 schools, imposing punitive action on Black girls at a rate of four times their white peers. A striking point made within the documentary highlights how Black girls who are pushed out of their education can often be forced into the streets, into “the life,” and ultimately victimized and denied the opportunity that education is supposed to provide.

Following the screening, many in attendance asked questions about the ways they can help stop the violence created by both sex trafficking and pushout policies.

If you’d like to learn more about pushout and legislation currently being considered to end the practice in K-12 schools, click [HERE](#).



# Catholic Sisters Week March 8-14

Catholic Sisters Week, celebrated March 8-14, shines a light on the spirituality, mission, and ministries of women religious.

This year, in alignment with the Laudato Si' Action Platform,



congregations are challenged by LCWR Region 8 to **refuse to use any single-use plastic beverage bottles** (water, soda, juice, tea, etc.). This commitment to a common action highlights LCWR's resolution on the intersection of racism, migration, and climate change.

What does refusing to use plastic beverage bottles have to do with racism, migration, and climate change? LCWR Region 8 offers the following two corporations by way of example. *They are not the only ones to consider!*

## Racism

Coca Cola is the largest seller of soda and its name is often linked with building production facilities in poor neighborhoods, resulting in:

- 1) unfair labor practices, lower pay, fewer promotions, and poor performance evaluations,
- 2) groundwater depletion,
- 3) pollution of local water ways, and
- 4) plastic pollution: litter, as well as microplastic pollution in our oceans, soils, bodies.

Nestlé often chooses poor neighborhoods or countries for their water sources:

- Taking over local water sources (streams or aquifers).
- Depleting local water sources that are often non-renewable (aquifers will not refill).

- Prohibiting natives from using their own drinking sources, requiring them to purchase their own water back in plastic bottles.

## Migration

People are forced to relocate due to:

- Loss of drinking water.
- Unfair labor practices.
- Pollution of water, air, land.

## Climate change

The burning of fossil fuels is the number one cause of the climate crisis. As fossil fuel companies see the growth in renewable energy, their focus has turned to the production of plastic — a fossil fuel product — to maintain revenues.

- Continues to require the extraction of oil (most oil is now produced from fracking, which has a host of ecological problems).
- More oil is needed for the increased production of plastic.
- Microplastics are major water, air, soil pollutants.
- Microplastics are found in the bodies of plants and animals, including humans.

## *Join us in the challenge!*

*Refuse to use any single-use plastic beverage bottles from March 8 to 14!*

Follow our [Facebook](#) page for daily informational posts.

Photo by Mali Maeder on Pexels



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