



NOJOSHING

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Notes

♥ Hats and Scarves Knitted With Love ♥

There is nothing like receiving a knitted hat and scarf set to keep you warm during the winter. Led by Activity Director Kim Brewer, a group of Sisters in Elizabeth Hall have been gathering for the past few months to learn how to knit scarves and hats.

Sisters Mary Hau, Lenore Steilen, Mary Jerome Lacy, and Eleanor Riordon use a loom to knit, while Sister Bernice Mertens is picking up knitting with a needle after many years away from the craft. Sister Rose Kordick is especially grateful for the opportunity to exercise her hands with the loom. Kim created a special threading tool for her, as her dexterity is not as good as it used to be. “I am just thrilled to be able to do this,” she said. “It’s wonderful!”

As they knit, they chat among themselves, grateful to be spending time together. It is clear that the Sisters are very proud of their work.

In December 2022, 26 sets of colorful hats and scarves were delivered to Capuchin Community Services’ House of Peace in Milwaukee, Wis., by Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation Animators Jill and Steven Haberman. The House of Peace provides food and clothing to those who are homeless and disenfranchised.



The Sisters’ timing was perfect, as Father Mike Bertram, OFM Cap, ministry director, wrote in his fall appeal letter: “Thousands of people don’t have enough to eat. Some don’t have warm clothes to protect themselves as the weather turns from cool to cold.”

The love that went into these hats and scarves will be warmth to those who receive them.

(l to r) Sisters Mary Hau, Eleanor Riordon, Recreation Director Kim Brewer, Sisters Rose Kordick and Lenore Steilen bless the sets of scarves and hats that they knitted for the House of Peace.



It Takes Many Hands to Make Popular Holiday Goodies

The ovens were heated, the mixing bowls were brimming with ingredients, and the kitchen was alive with activity as Sisters and volunteers worked together on October 15, 2022, to make their signature holiday fruitcakes for the Christmas season. The bakers prepared 300 1-lb. fruitcakes, and 150 2-lb. loaves. (If you do the math, that equals 600 lbs. of fruitcake deliciousness!). Over a dozen bakers joined forces to make the cakes from scratch from a recipe that is well guarded from year to year. The recipe, which is for 100 lbs. of fruitcake, is from the old Karp's bakery supply house in Milwaukee, Wis., and includes cherries, walnuts, pineapple, raisins, brandied emulsion and Rhumba rum, and lots of butter and eggs.

In addition to the fruitcake, the Sisters were busy making other bakery items to be sold at their Holiday Boutique that was held on December 10, 2022. From Sister Lenore Steilen's popular pecan fingers, to the beautiful cookie assortment boxed for the holidays, to plump pumpkin, apple, and pecan pies, the Sisters kept the ovens very busy.

There was no doubt that the fruits of the Sisters' labors brought Christmas joy to many holiday gatherings.



Cookie bakers (l to r) Sisters Margaret Klotz, Lenore Steilen, Kathleen Denevan make pecan fingers.



An Abundance of Food for Homeless Sanctuary

As an act of Advent charity, St. Francis Convent staff, Associates, and Sisters, participated in a food drive to benefit the MacCanon Brown Homeless Sanctuary. Residents of Canticle and Juniper Courts (senior residences on the convent grounds) also joined the effort.

Using a suggested list of most-requested, culturally appropriate foods, people provided generous donations of Spam, Vienna sausages, canned chicken and tuna, beef stew, Glory greens, mac 'n cheese, SpaghettiO's, Cheerios, and bathroom tissue -- enough to fill an entire car!

Sister MacCanon ministers to people at risk of homelessness in what is termed a "food desert" in Milwaukee's 53206 zip code. Each Tuesday and Thursday morning, over 100 people line up to receive food, clothing, and hygiene items for their families. Sister strives to provide nutritious foods to support healthy immune systems and counter the lead poisoning that is present in the neighborhood's water supply.

The food was delivered in time for Tuesday distribution on December 13, 2022. It was greatly appreciated by Sister and her staff of volunteers.

A Tree Graced with Natural Ornaments

This year's beautiful Christmas tree in the St. Francis Convent Town Square was a testament to the creativity and hard work of the retired Sisters who created the ornaments, and to Larry Willkomm, environment coordinator for the congregation.

The tree was unique with its simple and elegant display of ornaments and garland created entirely from the bounty of the convent gardens, orchards, and grounds. Each ornament was crafted by hand from natural elements such as corn husks, lunaria, Chinese lantern plants, dried hydrangea blossoms, star gourds, dried apple slices, strawberry popcorn, pinecones, and strings of hot peppers. The crowning touch was a colorful artistic mix of branches and twigs of white and red.

Many of the ornaments took the shape of a star; others formed objects such as angels made from corn husks and milk pods. The tree was a work of art by the tedious work of the retired Sisters who volunteered to create each piece by hand. The ornaments reflected the Franciscan value of reverence for all of creation. The simple elegance of the tree shouted the beauty of nature and all she has to offer.



Sister Mary Jerome painted wings for the angel ornaments.



Sister Rosalynn works on the lunaria to form flower-shaped ornaments.



Sister Genevieve working on the flower garland.



The following Sisters volunteered to create ornaments: Sisters Rosalynn Dzikonski, Mary Jerome Lacy, Margaret Klotz, Richelle Ranallo, Jodene Wydeven, Kathleen Denevan, Jean Mariani, Genevieve Van Driel, and Barbara Barry. Activity Director Kim Brewer also assisted.

The tree reflected the first line of the opening stanza of Melchior Franck's beloved Christmas song: "O Christmas Tree, O Christmas tree, How lovely are your branches."



Sister Kathleen with apple garland.



Remembering Our Loved Ones

During November 2022, donor prayer requests for their deceased loved ones were given a special place of honor at St. Francis Convent. Along with those mentioned in the Book of Life, they were remembered in the prayers of the Sisters as they gathered for Mass.

Bequests With Gratitude to

Rose Galdenzi	Kathryn Fallon	Agnes Enoch	Marie Smoky
Robert Wurm	Frances Kobe	Charlotte Stemke	Bernice Sabo
Arlene Cooper	John Hand	John McQuade	James Capone
Rosemary Rayman	Gerald Wolf	Leander Nickel	George Blattner
Margaret Ward	Mary Bodas	Erica Oberst	Angelia Misner
Julia Houston	Mary Davis	Alice Essling	Patricia Cianciolo
Pauline Cianciolo	Georgine Bapat	Charles Sarahan	George Castle
Phillip Frieze	Margaret Stahalek	E. McCormick	Caryl Doherty
Anna Costello	Rosalind Raleigh	Dorothy Holtzman	

December 31, 2019 – November 30, 2022---Total: \$1, 323, 558.63



Donate to our *Sharing Our Blessings* campaign today and your gift **will be matched, dollar-for-dollar** by two very special friends of the Sisters — The Molitor Foundation and We Energies Foundation— now through May 28, 2023. Your \$25 gift will be worth \$50 and \$100 gift worth \$200.

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