



Greetings

From the Community Minister



St. Francis Community Thanks You

Dear Friends,

"There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens." (Eccles. 3:1) Now is the time for the Sisters of St. Francis to look over the past year with hearts filled with deep gratitude as we recall the many blessings God has bestowed on us. Our Franciscan way of life and ministries have been immensely enriched by the gift of love, prayer, volunteerism, and financial support which you and all our benefactors have shared with us. Our gratitude to you will, as always, be made manifest in our continuing prayer for you, your loved ones and all your needs.

As you read this issue of our magazine, you will see that your legacy lives on . . . in the inspirational programs held at St. Francis Spirituality Center. It is with Franciscan hospitality and joy that we are pleased to share our Center with those seeking a sacred space for renewal, retreats, and meetings.

. . . at the Franciscan Earth Literacy Center through the programs that teach students and adults ways they can care for creation, protect the environment, and incorporate sustainable living practices in their daily lives.

. . . as you support the mission of the Sisters as "we continue the mission of Jesus wherever we serve, adhering to the words which inspired Mother Francis and Father Bihn: . . . whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did to me." (Mt. 25:40)

We are so grateful to you for all the ways you are leaving a lasting imprint in the minds and hearts of our brothers and sisters. Together let us embrace the future with hope as we partner in making a difference in the lives of those we serve.

With hearts filled with gratitude,

Sister Joanne Lammers

Sister Joanne Lammers
Community Minister

We strive for accuracy

We have tried to present an accurate listing of contributors to the Sisters of St. Francis, St. Francis Community, St. Francis Spirituality Center and the Franciscan Earth Literacy Center from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023. Please accept our apologies if we have omitted your name, and be sure to inform us of any errors at mission@tiffinfranciscans.org or by calling **419-447-0435, extension 131**.



SISTERS OF
St. Francis

The magazine is published three times a year for friends of the Sisters of St. Francis Community by the Mission Advancement Office of the Sisters of St. Francis. Reader responses may be submitted to Sr. Rozanne Swope, Director of Mission Advancement, at rswope@tiffinfranciscans.org.

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St. Francis Community Ministries

St. Francis Spirituality Center

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Franciscan Earth Literacy Center

Board Chairperson: Robin Gorrell

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Tiffin, OH 44883
419.447.0435
www.sfctiffin.org

Publisher: Sr. Rozanne Swope

Editor/Photographer: Andria Marquis

Layout/Design: Linda Williams

On the Cover: Four "Pop-Up" Summer Camps were offered at FELC thanks to our partners: Environmental Educator Jon Long with the O.S.S. Solid Waste Management District (Recycling Theme) and National Center for Water Quality Research (Water Theme) with Jakob Boehler of Heidelberg University, "Strong is the New Pretty" (Creativity & Photography) with Jen Burns of Rustic Flair & Brush, "Farm to Table Fun with Food" with Gardener Robin and "Exploring OSU's Mobile STEM Lab" with Seneca County 4-H Educator Katie Cole. Pictured: Jakob Boehler and camp participants.

Summary of 2023 Donation Income

Sisters of St. Francis

General Fund/Outreach	\$ 582,956
Support for Retired Sisters	\$ 202,700
Booneville, KY Mission	\$ 10,847
Cuernavaca, Mexico Mission	\$ 178,677
El Salvador Mission	\$ 1,759
Mission Appeals	\$ 50,631
Padua Center	\$ 25,000
Peacemaking	\$ 6,425
Project Hope	\$ 39,190
Restricted Donations	\$ 40,258

St. Francis Spirituality Center

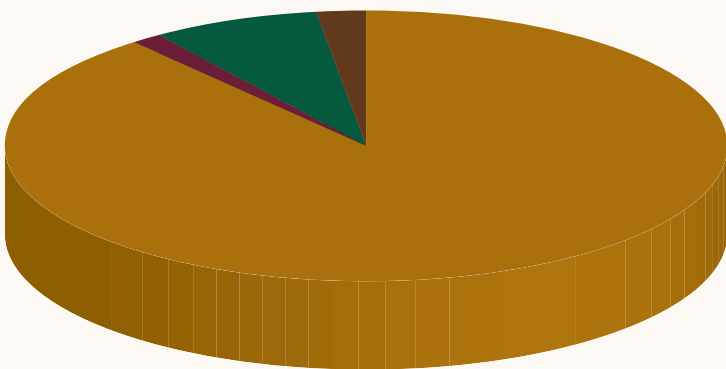
General Donations	\$ 10,928
Restricted Donations	\$ 6,600

Franciscan Earth Literacy Center

General Donations	\$ 20,700
Restricted and Sponsor Donations	\$ 75,135

St. Francis Community

TOTAL REVENUE \$ 1,279,997



■ Sisters of St. Francis	\$1,138,444
■ St. Francis Spirituality Center	\$ 17,528
■ Franciscan Earth Literacy Center	\$ 95,835
■ St. Francis Community	\$ 28,190



With Hearts filled with Gratitude

We are grateful to **you**, our benefactors, for the many ways our Franciscan way of life and ministries have been enriched by your gifts of love, prayer, volunteerism, and financial support during this past year.

We are very blest to have all of you in our lives and ministries. We ask God to shower you with many blessings as you impact the lives of those in need and make a difference in our world.

Thank you for making a difference in the lives of God's people. We remember you with special gratitude in our daily prayers and ministry.

Thank you for being Partners in Mission!

Sisters of St. Francis
St. Francis Spirituality Center
Franciscan Earth Literacy Center

**Our Corporate and Event
Sponsors contributed to
the success of our
Fundraising Events.**

**We raised \$59,613
from these events.**

**Franciscan Earth Literacy Center's Gala
St. Francis Spirituality Center's Xmas 365
St. Francis Community's Mardi Gras
benefiting:**

Sisters of St. Francis
St. Francis Senior Ministries
Franciscan Earth Literacy Center
St. Francis Spirituality Center



SISTERS OF St. Francis

The following donors made contributions to the Sisters of St. Francis between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023.

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Congratulations Mark Levans!

A Community Service Award is given annually by St. Francis Community during Charism Week which is celebrated during the first week of October. The award is given to a person or business in Tiffin or the surrounding area who has shared with St. Francis Community their gift of generosity with sincerity of intention and a charitable, heartfelt spirit. Nothing is expected in return for their generosity. This charism is a sharing in the Heart of Teresa of Calcutta and her ministry.

In 2023 the award was presented to Mark Levans, Owner of MLAD Graphic Design Services, LLC. Mark currently serves as a Board of Trustees member for the Franciscan Earth Literacy Center. He has previously served in a similar capacity for St. Francis Spirituality Center. He is always willing to help sponsor campus fundraisers, volunteers to work at various events and often takes part in the Memorial Day Craft Show with his handmade pottery items. Mark not only donates his time, but often signage, banners, posters for events, and much more.

Mark's connection to the Sisters of St. Francis dates back to the early 1900's. His grandfather, Chester Lewandowski, was orphaned



Mark is presented the 2023 Community Service Award during Charism Week by Community Minister Sr. Joanne Lammers.

along with his three siblings in the Toledo. A Polish priest brought Chester and his brother Edward to the St. Francis Orphanage in 1914. "Rumor has it that the sisters changed his grandfather's name to Chester Levans. Eventually the children were separated and Chester lived in New Washington, Ohio. "Every time I am walking around on the St. Francis Campus I feel my grandfather's presence knowing he walked on the same grounds. He lived in the dorms, worked on the farm and told me stories about how he milked the cows," explained Mark. He added, "St. Francis Convent plays a big part in the history in Tiffin and my history. There is a strong Catholic faith that resonated with me because I am Catholic. I am so impressed with the sisters as they continue to serve the Lord."

"All at St. Francis Community are so grateful for Mark's longstanding and generous partnership. He's been a *Point of Light* over the years, especially for the Franciscan Earth Literacy Center and St. Francis Spirituality Center," said Sister Joanne Lammers, Community Minister.

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Over the years, supporters like you have selflessly given their time, talent and assets to support the Sisters' mission. Each contribution has allowed us to sustain a growing level of support that secures our long-term stability.

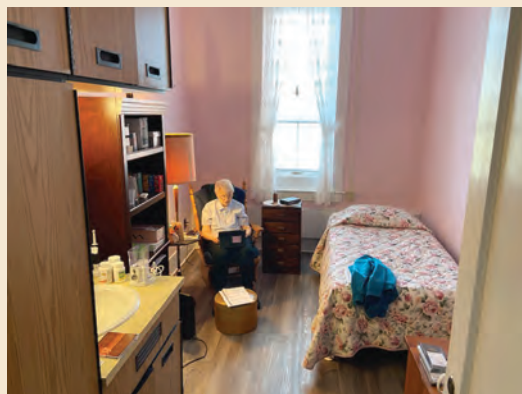
If you feel strongly about our charitable work and would like to join with other supporters who share your values, we hope you'll consider becoming a member of the St. Francis Legacy Circle.

If you have already planned a gift to support the ministries of the Sisters of St. Francis, please let us know so that we can properly welcome you into the St. Francis Legacy Circle.

E-mail Sister Rozanne Swope at mission@tiffinfranciscans.org to learn about various planned giving options and for information on how to join St. Francis Legacy Circle.

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SOAR Grant Provides Upgrades for Sisters



A grant from Support Our Aging Religious (SOAR!) was used to renovate the convent residential floor/wing that now houses 15 Sisters receiving light assisted living. Additionally, a grant was received for an Inductive Hearing Loop System in our chapel that will enhance the use of hearing aids.

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Changing lives one blanket at a time...



Sisters and campus residents aka "Blanket Angels" gathered this winter at St. Francis Spirituality Center to make fleece blankets for local children in foster care. This program, known as "My Very Own Blanket," is a national program based out of Westerville, Ohio. To learn more about this project and how you can help visit www.myveryownblanket.org.

Unexpected Blessings

God has such a wonderful way of sending surprises our way; we only have to open our eyes and hearts and wait for them to come. Usually the best surprises come when we least expect them. Recently, Sisters Angie Keil and Marge Eilerman shared one of their unexpected blessings.

These sisters have been serving the poor throughout Owsley County in Kentucky since 1984. In the fall of 2022, the Lexington Diocese received a unique gift from a family that has frequently visited Holy Family Catholic Church in Booneville, Kentucky where the sisters currently serve.

According to Sister Angie, the gift was in the form of a building located next door to their trailer and church. "It was previously a furniture store and the owner, Willie, bought it with the intent to transform it into a restaurant. He installed new windows and doors. He also replaced the roof. Suddenly, Willie died. Willie's family donated the building to us for the good of the Owsley County community," explained Sister Angie. We call it Willie's Copper Top, after the previous owner, because it has a copper roof," she added.



“ Our renovations are 90% finished. Hopefully, Willie’s Copper Top will serve our homeless population and anyone in need of a hot meal and fellowship. ”

- SISTER ANGIE KEIL

Surprises, like these, teach us that life is unpredictable, and there is always someone out there who is willing to lend a hand. We invite each of you to join us, especially during this Lenten season, to look for the surprises that God sends your way.



There are many ways to stay connected with us!

Visit www.sfctiffin.org, where you can find upcoming events, watch videos, and learn more about our campus ministries through our websites.

If you are interested in receiving our new e-newsletter, send us your email address at mission@tiffinfranciscans.org or call us at **419-447-0435, ext. 132**.

Thank You!

We are deeply grateful for all of the donors listed in this report. Your gifts make it possible for us to carry out the mission of the Gospel in the world today.



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For additional information see our website <http://tiffinfranciscans.org/plan-a-gift-2/>

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- Replacement of needed equipment
- Space and time away for people struggling with faith and life issues to experience peace, serenity, and clarity
- Faith formation through virtual and in-person group learning and retreats
- Family enrichment opportunities

Answering the Call to Serve

In the words of Rich Traunero, "There is a true spirit of friendship and hospitality on the Campus of the Sisters of St. Francis," said Rich. Being involved with St. Francis Spirituality Center and the Sisters of St. Francis, in general, has deepened my faith in God and humanity. Rich Traunero is a fourth-generation Tiffinite. His great-grandfather emigrated from Italy to Tiffin in 1882.

For 25 years, Rich has been a big part of the St. Francis Community. It all began one day when Sister Paulette Schroeder asked him to join what was then, the St. Joseph Renewal and Retreat Center, as a board member, back in the late 1990's. Believe it or not, he has been faithfully serving as a committee/board member ever since. "At first, I was on the Advisory Board. Later, when there was a restructuring the name was changed to St. Francis Spirituality Center. Soon after, the Advisory Board and Development Committee were

merged into one as the Development Committee of St. Francis Spirituality Center," explained Rich. He currently serves as Vice-Chair of the committee. "I have seen a lot of changes and met many challenges over the years. However, the people on the committee and their devotion to all things spiritual keep me motivated. I firmly feel the Center is moving in the right direction, and has been for a long time now," he added.

When asked which programs he feels are most compelling, Rich answered, "Any program that involves youth and their faith is important. Keeping our youth engaged in our community is vital. The Day Away programs can be very beneficial to those needing just that, 'A Day Away'."

"My wife, Andrea, and I are fortunate to have been blessed in our lives. We feel a desire to give back and to help those who need help. St. Francis Community is one avenue we use to channel our desire to help. Supporting our local organizations that do so much to help our local citizens is very important to us."

"Andrea and I have owned and operated Traunero Funeral Home and Crematory for over 25 years, and we derive great satisfaction from serving the families in need who call upon us," said Rich. Additionally, Rich is a long-time Board of Trustee for the Kiwanis Manor of Tiffin, a long-time active member of the Tiffin Kiwanis Club, and a member of St. Mary Catholic Church. He is also a private pilot and flies charitable missions for Lifeline Pilots and Pilots N Paws in his free time.



Rich and Andrea Traunero

St. Francis Community is grateful for the impact you have had on St. Francis Spirituality Center and the Tiffin Community. Thank you for partnering with us as together we carry out the Mission of the Sisters of St. Francis.

“My wife, Andrea, and I are fortunate to have been blessed in our lives. We feel a desire to give back and to help those who need help. St. Francis Community is one avenue we use to channel our desire to help. Supporting our local organizations that do so much to help our local citizens is very important to us.”

- RICH TRAUNERO



Congratulations Rich Traunero on 25 years of service to St. Francis Spirituality Center as a committee/board member! We appreciate your support and dedication to our ministry!



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- Assistance for low-income families, providing need-based scholarships to "Pop-Up" camps and youth educational program fees
- Expert speakers for STEM demonstrations
- STEM equipment for Pop-Up Camps, Science Days and school around programs and training
- Freestanding four-season greenhouse and accessories
- Installation of the Outside Water Bottle Refilling Station
- Food, bedding, and supplies for educational demonstration animals
- Material assistance for public events such as Non-Scary Fall Night Hike and Cookies with Santa
- New John Deere farm-utility vehicle for hauling plants, compost and equipment out to the gardens
- Staff training and professional development
- Six adult educational garden related programs led by Sister Rita Wienken, organic farmer
- Funding for new fencing around raised eight new garden beds and raccoon barrier around corn crop area/fence for the Seeds of Hope Farm from the Betty Jane Memorial Fund
- Eight "Seeds of Joy" cooking classes were offered in collaboration with Ralph's Joy of Living

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Four "Pop-Up" Camps were made possible thanks to our generous partners. Pictured: Participants in "Strong is the New Pretty" camp.



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— St. Francis of Assisi



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Pictured are Sr. Shirley Shafraneck, Erin DeVine and Clinton Kimmet.

FELC's Seeds of Hope Farm agricultural program for individuals with developmental disabilities is so grateful to the Rotary District 6600, the Tiffin Rotary Club, and a small group of caring donors for providing a brand new John Deere Gator in the spring of 2023! This new farm utility vehicle enables staff to haul plants, compost, and equipment out to the gardens and to navigate the sometimes rough terrain.



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Congratulations Wilma Farmer

On January 15, St. Francis Campus resident, Wilma Farmer, received the Peacemaker Award during the Martin Luther King Day community celebration at Faith United Methodist Church in Tiffin. Some Sisters of St. Francis attended the event.

Wilma, age 96, inspires sisters and others with her service to the community. She delivers meals to residents at St. Francis Home and serves on the Mission Committee at the UCC Church. She can be seen frequently standing at the corner by the Seneca County Joint Justice Center on Friday afternoons raising her signs that focus on current social issues.

Sister Judy Leibengood presented Wilma with her award, sharing that “Wilma’s kind generosity and hospitality are surely obvious.”



Pictured (L to R): Sr. Judy Leibengood, Sr. Leanne Kerschner, Sr. Ellen Lamberjack, Sr. Edna Michel, Wilma Farmer, Sr. Margaret Slowick, Sr. Janet Hay, Sr. Linda Scheckelhoff, Sr. Jane Omlor and Sr. Theresa Kehres.