



La Verna E-Vision

Be the Bridge to Fraternal Life

Volume 7

2021 summer edition

Minister's Message



Jeff Gumz, OFS
La Verna Region Minister

My brothers and sisters in St. Francis,

As I write these brief notes for our upcoming newsletter, it seems that I am flooded with negative messages each day: a surge in coronavirus deaths as a

result of the Delta variant, deepening divisions in our Catholic Church and our country, and the continuous increase in misinformation on social media. It can be very discouraging. During these times of tension, I am so grateful for our OFS Rule to help guide my Catholic faith. "Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon. Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, they should strive to bring joy and hope to others" (OFS Rule #19).

One piece of news that brightened my day arrived in my email inbox with the announcement that Donna Hollis, OFS, is the recipient of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Award for 2021:

Donna has always been a servant leader and true "Franciscan peacemaker." As a member of the National Ecumenical committee she brings St. Francis' message of Peace and Love to our

brothers and sisters of other faith traditions. She has served in various leadership positions at the local, Regional and National levels of the OFS. She is extremely humble and unassuming while demonstrating a

courageous heart for those less fortunate such as the recent immigrants to our country. She lives a simple and detached lifestyle. An original follower of John Michael Talbot, Donna has maintained a Franciscan spirit of Peace ever since. Her interpretive dances speak volumes. Donna was instrumental in bringing the efforts of the Holy Cross Retreat

Center in Mesilla Park, NM to the attention of Secular

Franciscans all over the country. With the support and

encouragement of her local

bishop National Councilor Donna

Hollis, OFS and local fraternities in the area work directly with refugees in Las Cruces, NM through "Project Oak Tree."



Donna Hollis, OFS
2021 JPIC Award Recipient

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Donna is the "Franciscan" heart behind this project. Read more about Donna Hollins and the Oaktree project providing hospitality to refugees, please click on the link here: <https://rcdlc.org/oaktree>.

Congratulations to Donna and thanks for brightening my day!

Chapter of Elections

On June 26, 2021 at St. Mary of the Angels Catholic Church in Green Bay, the La Verna Region held it's Chapter of Elections. This year's Chapter was a hybrid, part in person and part using Zoom, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Results of the 2021 La Verna Region Chapter of Elections were:

- Minister: Jeff Gumz, OFS
- Vice Minister: Sharon Dale, OFS
- Secretary: Susan Bashynski, OFS
- Treasurer: Bob Henning, OFS
- Councilor: Nora Kessel, OFS
- Councilor: Art Montgomery, OFS
- Councilor: Charlie Neuman, OFS
- Councilor: Roxanne Miner, OFS

Congratulations to all of our newly-elected members of the Regional Executive Council (REC). I am truly looking forward to working with our new REC. I want to thank everyone who helped make our Chapter of Elections a success. I have heard many positive comments from those who attended in person. I also want to thank the outgoing members of the REC (Peter Bekkers, Kathy Sutliff, JoAnn Boss, Teri Doughty, Bob Crane and Nick Crane) for their service to our Region.

On Saturday, August 7, 2021 the new REC members met with the outgoing REC members in Green Bay. After discussing some business items, we broke out into work groups. The former members were able to work with and mentor the newly elected members of the REC. For example, Kathy Sutliff, OFS, had time to work with Sue Bashynski, OFS, and answer her questions concerning the secretary responsibilities.

The REC plans on meeting at Marywood Spirituality Center from October 22-24, 2021 to plan out our upcoming year. We have a lot of work to do, after postponing so many local fraternity elections and visitations. Please keep your REC in your prayers. We will strive to animate Franciscan spirituality throughout the region.

Also, please continue to pray for an end to the coronavirus pandemic throughout the world. I am sure many of you, just like me, are feeling pandemic fatigue at this point. May everyone follow the example of Popes Francis and Benedict and receive the COVID-19 vaccine so that this pandemic can be defeated.

Peace and Joy!
Jeff



Vision Statement of the La Verna Region, OFS

We, the Secular Franciscans of the La Verna Region, commit ourselves to our Order on all its levels by faithfully following our Rule and the charism of Sts. Francis and Clare to see the face of God in all creation through dynamic formation, profound spirituality and joyful vocation. "...To see the face of God in all creation through dynamic formation, profound spirituality and joyful vocation"

The La Verna Region of the Secular Franciscan Order in the USA consists of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. The region's geographical area is divided into three districts: Southeast, Central, Fox Valley. The *La Verna E-Vision* newsletter is published three times a year, is a communication vehicle with the La Verna Region, and presents information that relates to the Secular Franciscan Order way of life.

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For further information about the La Verna Region and the Secular Franciscan Order, please go to the internet site: www.lavernasecularfranciscans.com

The La Verna Regional Executive Council

The REC is here to help your Fraternity in any way possible. Do not hesitate to email or call any member of the REC with a concern you may have. REC council members:

Minister - Jeff Gumz, OFS -
jagumz@gmail.com 920-393-9087
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La Verna Region - JPIC News by Sharon Dale



Sharon Dale, OFS
La Verna Region Vice Minister

As your newly- elected Vice-Minister, I am happy to also assume the responsibility of JPIC Animator for our LaVerna Region. Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC), encompasses

family, work, ecology, peace and justice, and encourages the living of our Rule as related to the apostolic activities from the point of view of who we are, Secular Franciscans.

In the Beatitudes, Jesus declares that those are blessed who hunger and thirst for justice (Mt 5:6). Equally blessed are the peacemakers (Mt 5:9). Jesus also indicates what is important in Christian life: “Seek first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness” (Mt 6:33). Jesus Himself sought first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and showed hunger and thirst for justice and was persecuted because of it. He Himself is the source, the giver and the cause of peace. As Franciscans we are called like St. Francis to rebuild the Church—restoring it to a place that is just and reconciled.

In reviewing our fraternity Annual Reports over the last two years, I’ve found that we continue our mission of bringing Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel. COVID limited some activities for sure, but many fraternities have found ways of continuing help to the less fortunate, ways to promote pro-life issues and ways to care for the environment. Following are a few of the activities our fraternities are continuing our charism.

One fraternity’s Compassion group continues to minister to those less fortunate with electric bills, past due rent payments, clothing for children and food by working closely with Caritas who ministers in their area. Another fraternity runs and hosts a Sobriety Café, an outreach program for recovering addicts.

Our fraternities have continued to donate hygiene products to local shelters, to work at food pantries and prepare dinner boxes for distribution for the less fortunate.



Some fraternities Walk-for-Life, visit the sick and the homebound. In addition, fraternities financially support poor families in India via Franciscan Family Apostolate; they read and discuss encyclicals such as *Laudato Si* and *Fratelli Tutti* by Pope Francis.

It’s amazing to see the Holy Spirit working in our local fraternities. Let us continue our mission of reaching out to others and caring for our environment.

It is my hope to invite representatives from our fraternities to give us a deeper insight into their apostolic works at a future La Verna Region District Gatherings.

God bless you all.

The Family Of Jesus, A Path To Follow

by Fr. Herman Rodriguez, TOR



OFS International Spiritual Assistants (left to right) - Fr. Pedro Zitha, OFM, Fr. Alfred Parambakathu, OFM Conv., Fr. Francis Bongajum, OFM Cap., Fr. Herman Rodriguez, TOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

There are many realities the Church teaches us today based on the reflections of Pope Francis. We should note that we are not going to address all the challenges of the current family here but we will stop to contemplate some aspects of it considering the experience of the Family of Nazareth. In this very special year dedicated to Saint Joseph we want to share the tenderness and love of the Family of Nazareth.

See

In the last fifty years, families have undergone a drastic transformation. In many places, large numbers of marriages end in divorce. Free union [cohabitation] is increasingly common and more and more children are born to unmarried couples. Adoption and parenting by same-sex couples is becoming increasingly normal. Faced with this reality, as a starting point, we can speak in fraternity about the following questions.

1. What factors are triggering these changes in the family structure?

2. How does communication take place in our families? What are we communicating?

Judge

From our Christian worldview we are called to look at this situation with serenity and work for the vitality of our families. Problems, difficulties, times of crisis can befall us but our faith and our values invite us to look further. We share the reflection of Pope Francis, who proposes the Family of Nazareth to us as the model towards which we are called and should always return. The Pope told us: The liturgy invites us to contemplate the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

Second Point

The evil one makes us see and condemn our frailty, whereas the Spirit brings it to light with tender love. Tenderness is the best way to touch the frailty within us.

Family of Jesus, continued on page 6

Joseph saw Jesus grow daily “in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favor” (Lk 2:52). As the Lord had done with Israel, so Joseph did with Jesus: he taught him to walk, taking him by the hand; he was for him like a father who raises an infant to his cheeks, bending down to him and feeding him (cf. Hos 11:3-4).

In Joseph, Jesus saw the tender love of God: “As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him” (Ps 103:13). In the synagogue, during the praying of the Psalms, Joseph would surely have heard again and again that the God of Israel is a God of tender love,[11] who is good to all, whose “compassion is over all that he has made” (Ps 145:9).

Third Point

Gospel passage invites families to welcome the light of hope that comes from the home of Nazareth, in which Jesus’ childhood unfolded in joy. Jesus, says St Luke, “increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man” (2:52). The nuclear family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph is for each

believer and especially for families an authentic school of the Gospel. Here we admire the fulfilment of the divine plan to make the family a special community of life and love. Here we learn that every Christian nuclear family is called to be a “domestic church”, to make the Gospel virtues shine and become a leaven of good in society. The classic traits of the Holy Family are: reflection and prayer, mutual understanding and respect, and a spirit of sacrifice, work and solidarity.



Act

Consider sharing responses with your family or fraternity on the following questions: a. What values does Pope Francis invite us to incorporate and keep working on in our families? b. What could we do as a fraternity to support and accompany families in our community?

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH

Hail, protector [and guardian] of the Redeemer
and spouse of the Virgin Mary.
To you, God entrusted his Son,
Mary placed her trust in you,
with you, Christ was forged as a man.
Oh blessed Joseph,
show yourself as father to us also
and guide us on life’s path.
Grant us grace, mercy and courage,
and defend us from all evil. Amen

Editor’s note: This article may be read in its entirety in the June 2021 *Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis* Consilium Internationale FAMILY COMMISSION newsletter, written by Fr. Hernán Eguzquiza, TOR.

What does Franciscan charism have to offer to a world of chaos and complexity?

Speaker, theologian, and author, Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF shares her thoughtful insights on the life of St. Francis and why contemplation is necessary to follow his path in the 21st century. In her Youtube link titled *Franciscan Spirituality*, Sr. Delio speaks briefly on the spiritual perspectives of St. Francis, John Duns Scotus, St. Bonaventure, and Teilhard de Chardin. For example, Sr. Delio explains why Teilhard de Chardin said that the physical energy of the universe is motivated by love, and that the whole universe is orientated toward the fullness of Christ.

Sr. Delio is a Franciscan Sister of Washington, DC and holds the Josephine C. Connelly Endowed Chair in Theology at Villanova University. She is the recipient of a Templeton Course in Science and Religion award and author of many books including *The Unbearable Wholeness of Being*, which

won the 2014 Silver Nautilus Awards and a Catholic Press Association Book Award. She has presented talks at Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee and as keynote speaker at the OFS National Quinntinell meeting held in Skokie, IL.



Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF

Please click on the Youtube website link below and watch Sr. Ilia Delio's talk on Franciscan Spirituality and how it may be applied within today's culture. The entire video time runs for 15:36.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5Yn5T6tiM8>



Formation in Review and in Forward Motion!

by JoAnn Boss, OFS

One of my first memories of working on the La Verna Regional level was with the then REC Formation Director Jean Platz, OFS. Jean served for many years, and along with Lester Bach, OFM Cap, put together the La Verna Regional Formation Manual in 2008.

I remember one meeting where Jean gave a dynamic formation presentation at a 2009 district gathering workshop on Holiness. During her talk, I was busy standing behind her scribing on the flip chart the participants call out words which reflected HOLINESS. Here are some of the words I managed to copy down on paper: *relationship, prayerful,*

companion, kind, patient, like God, simple, love, humble, forgiving. This spontaneous "word splash" from the group still holds true about HOLINESS.



Jean Platz, La Verna Region formation director, presenting her talk on Holiness at the Fox Valley 2009 District Gathering held at St. Mary School in Menasha, WI

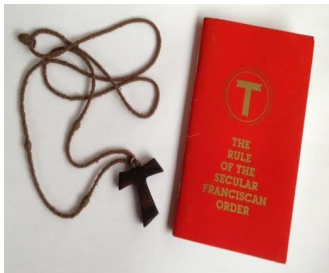
Formation - continued on page 8

The group's word splash may be summed up as **"dynamic,"** which is akin to **holiness**, in that *dynamic* is the action and motivation of holiness that is felt, seen, and alive. Franciscan formation is about "dynamic" formation as the REC Vision Statement proclaims.

Dynamics becomes an important part of our path in our 2021 OFS "journey of renewal" and beyond. As Fr. Frank Corradi, OFS, our newly-appointed REC Formation Director, steps into the role, our Vision does not change. Fr. Frank is also a member of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity located in Chippewa Falls.

Our mission and ministry, that is our Franciscan path and work ahead will change and adapt for changing times, but our Rule adapts us to life's changing times.

This year as we celebrate the 800th year Anniversary of our OFS Rule 1221 to 2021, let us be more dynamic than ever in keeping the Vision of meaningful growth in Franciscan LIFE.



"Dynamic " conversion that is energetic, an "being" in motion, effective action. It even has a musical quality about it – a music connotation of changing variation in sounds – soft, loud, increasing or decreasing volume, and many more variations to put the language of love in our emotions. A definition for dynamic is also – "humble and creative."

St. Francis, in his Canticle to Creation was truly dynamic in his Italian poem to creation...a prophet of ecology observing & honoring the wisdom of the earth, respecting all things in nature and in humanity.

Formation is composed of lesson plans with essential elements and Franciscan characteristics. But to make it come **alive and dynamic!** There is structure to formation, this is true. And, yes, to make it come alive creatively with "prophetic creativity" for moving hearts for wonder and love, bringing others to discern and conversion, this is the heart and soul of formation. Dynamic formation is a process of developing and evolving into the "Christ light."

Pope Francis encourages us to "be creative about the future" and, as we apply prophetic creativity as noted by our OFS National Minister Jan Parker, ... *"we would grow closer to God and to each other. We would engage more deeply in our vocation. We would experience a more intense commitment with unconditional participation."*

This is what "dynamic formation" looks like, feels like, tastes like and is like! Profound spirituality and joyful vocation are an outcome, a by-product of the Pentecost of Being in dynamic formation.

Recall the shout words describing Holiness the 2009 district gathering during Jean's presentation, the oneness with those participant's presence, the movement of the Spirit in their hearts as they named their lived experience; we shared our witnessing of holiness. That witnessing of the Spirit keeps me forming in the Franciscan way of life.

Now it is time for me to hand off the mission and ministry to Fr. Frank but not the Vision. The Vision belongs to all of us. I am looking forward to the next chapters of my Franciscan way and together our call to Holiness!

Please welcome Fr. Frank Corradi with that "dynamic" Franciscan spirit of hospitality and holiness! Peace and all good.

LaVerna Region Treasurer's Report July 2021

The overall status of the Region's finances is Green.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Checking account balance is \$37,930.53 broken out as follows:

Regular Checking = \$ 27,821.99 (\$1662.00 gain from investment act)

To be deposited = \$ 237.50

Retreat Subsidy Fund = \$4,642.08 (\$804.00 gain from investment act)

Education/Training Fund = \$4,866.46 (\$998.00 JDSG remaining) (\$804.00 gain from investment act)

Fair Share Fund =
\$600.00

Near-term 2021 bills – Marywood, est
\$1,800.00

Chapter = \$ 1,951.37 -so far

FAIR SHARE STATUS REPORT

1st Quarter 2021 Fair Share receipts = \$4,480.00 (18 Fraternities)

2nd Quarter 2021 Fair Share receipts = \$4,081.25 (16 Fraternities)

2nd Quarter 2021 Fair Share still due = \$443.75 (2 Fraternities)

3rd Quarter 2021 Fair Share receipts = \$1800.00 (9 Fraternities)

3rd Quarter 2021 Fair Share still due = \$2606.25 (9 Fraternities)

Both funds have seen significant gains.

The General Fund is currently at 159% of the current budget.

Respectfully submitted by Bob Henning, OFS - LaVerna, Regional Treasurer

La Verna Regional Fraternity OFS
STATEMENT OF REVENUE & EXPENSE
FOR PERIODS ENDED DEC 31, 2021 and 2020

	THIS YEAR Y. T. D. 2021	Budget 8 months period 2021	Budget Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)	Approved Last Year Actual 2020	Approved 2020 Budget 22 Jun 2019	Approved Amended 2021 Budget 27 Jun 2020
BEGINNING BALANCES:						
REGULAR CHECKING -----	25,938.89			10,079.07		
RETREAT SUBSIDY FUND -----	3,838.08			3,838.08		
EDUCATION/TRAINING FUND -----	4,062.46			4,062.46		
RETREAT/EDUCATION ENDOWMENT FD ---	25,000.00			25,000.00		
CUSTODIAL FUND -----	25,547.00			25,547.00		
CASH ON HAND -----	0.00			0.00		
FAIR SHARE FUND -----	600.00			500.00		
TOTAL CASH ON HAND & IN BANKS -	84,986.43			69,026.61		
REVENUE:						
DONATIONS -----	525.90	564.38	(38.48)	916.20	4,515.00	4,515.00
FAIR SHARE FUND -----	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00
INT. RETREAT ENDOWMENT FUND	804.00	87.50	716.50	0.00	708.00	700.00
INTEREST EDUCATION FUND	804.00	87.50	716.50	0.00	708.00	700.00
SPECIAL MEMORIALS -----	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
CHAPTER -----	0.00	208.00	(208.00)	0.00	1,664.00	1,664.00
FAIR SHARE -- 356 + 24 @ 80-40	10,298.75	3,685.00	6,613.75	28,030.00	29,440.00	29,480.00
SA WRKSP -----	0.00	190.63	(190.63)	0.00	1,525.00	1,525.00
INTEREST CUSTODIAL FUND -----	1,662.00	175.00	1,487.00	0.00	1,464.00	1,400.00
MISC & FORMATION WS INCOME -----	0.00	2.50	(2.50)	0.00	0.00	20.00
TOTAL REVENUE -----	14,094.65	5,000.51	9,094.14	29,046.20	40,024.00	40,004.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS -----	99,081.08			98,072.81		
EXPENSES:						
STIPENDS & EXPENSES -----	975.00	375.00	(600.00)	1,300.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
RENT INCLUDING EQUIPMENT -----	507.50	62.50	(445.00)	500.00	500.00	500.00
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES -----	0.00	-	0.00	139.00	50.00	0.00
EDUCATION/TRAINING -----	0.00	475.00	475.00	1,400.00	3,585.00	3,800.00
MEETING ROOM & FACILITIES -----	335.00	25.00	(310.00)	0.00	200.00	200.00
OFFICE SUPPLIES -----	0.00	75.00	75.00	0.00	500.00	600.00
DONATIONS -----	0.00	312.50	312.50	1,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00
ADMINISTRATIVE EXP -----	207.28	45.00	(162.28)	773.03	364.00	360.00
NEWSLETTER -----	0.00	75.00	75.00	0.00	600.00	600.00
TRAVEL EXP & EXPENSES -----	50.90	1,226.97	1,176.07	750.35	9,983.72	9,815.72
FAIR SHARE TO OFS-USA -- 368@17 ---	6,239.00	811.75	(5,427.25)	6,494.00	6,477.00	6,494.00
ANNUAL CHAPTER -----	0.00	750.00	750.00	0.00	5,800.00	6,000.00
VISITATION / ELECTION -----	1,951.37	312.50	(1,638.87)	0.00	2,500.00	2,500.00
RETREAT SUBSIDY -----	100.00	72.50	(27.50)	200.00	580.00	580.00
FAIR SHARE FUND	0.00	-	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
SA WRKSP -----	0.00	371.38	371.38	0.00	1,997.00	2,971.00
MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE -----	0.00	6.25	6.25	0.00	500.00	50.00
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS -----	10,366.05	4,996.35	(5,369.70)	13,056.38	39,136.72	39,970.72
GAIN OR (LOSS) FOR PERIOD ---	3,728.60	4.16	3,724.44	15,989.82	887.28	33.28
ENDING BALANCE -----	88,715.03			85,016.43		
CURRENT BALANCES:						
REGULAR CHECKING -----	27,821.99	159%		25938.89		
RETREAT SUBSIDY FUND -----	4,642.08			3838.08		
EDUCATION/TRAINING FUND -----	4,866.46			4062.46		
RETREAT / EDUCATION CATHOLIC FUND *--	25,000.00			25000.00		
CUSTODIAL FUND INVESTMENT (JC)-----	25,547.00			25547.00		
CASH ON HAND -----	237.50			0.00		
FAIR SHARE FUND -----	600.00			600.00		
TOTAL CASH ON HAND & IN BANKS --	88,715.03			85016.43		
CUSTODIAL FUND(5263)-JC bequest + St Pascal Baylon gift as of 6/30/21, last 12 mo = +29.76% Gain / (loss)	34,383.64	5% \$	1,719.18	31951.54		
CATHOLIC FOUNDATION FUND (5205) as of 6/30/21	8,836.64			6404.54		
* St Francis of Assisi + Anonymous + REC	33,271.52	5% \$	1,663.58	30917.86		
Last 12 mo +29.76% Gain / (Loss)	8,271.52			5917.86		
Bob Henning, OFS, TREASURER	08/06/21					

Outstanding
Checks
102.79

Explore St. Francis with Ellen

Southeastern Wisconsin Portiuncula fraternity formation director, Ellen Jennings, OFS will be presenting an educational course on the life of St. Francis. With Ellen's gentle Franciscan humor and formation teaching experience, she has titled her course, "St. Francis of Assisi – from Party Animal to Saint." Ellen will present historical stories about St. Francis that explains his life and spiritual contributions. Find out the rich background of St. Francis who is much more than the saint for the environment, animal lovers, or simply the "peace saint."

Ellen's class will be held each Monday from 10:00 a.m. - 10:50 a.m., beginning September 13 and, by "coincidence," the final session is on the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi, October 4. Fee: \$20.



Ellen Jennings is formation director with Portiuncula Fraternity in Franklin, WI.

Each class will be held at the Center for Enrichment (formally the Mother House of the School Sisters of St. Francis) located at 94th and W. Howard Ave. in Greenfield. Registration begins August 19 by contacting Kristy Beyer, program manager, at (414) 546-7990 or email kbeyer@clementmanor.org.

Obituary



Lillian D. Jakes, OFS - OSF - April 8, 1928 - March 6, 2021

RACINE - Lillian D. Jakes, age 92, passed away peacefully Saturday March 6, 2021 at Timber Oaks Assisted Living Center in Union Grove, WI.

Lillian was born in Cleveland, OH, daughter of the late Joseph John Jakes and Anna Frances (nee: Holecek) Jakes. Her parents were born, married and began their family in Cleveland where her father Joseph J. Jakes operated the

Custom Tailor Store for thirty years.

Lillian received Bachelor degrees from Ursuline College (Liberal Arts) Cleveland; Chicago DePaul University (Medical Technology); and the University of Washington (Business Administration) Seattle. She worked as a high school math teacher for 11 years, a medical technologist four years, and a bank accounting clerk, 11 years. She resided in

Springfield, IL 15 years as Sister Leonard, OSF in the community of the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis. Llian moved to Racine in 2006 where she became a member of St. Paschal Baylon fraternity. In her later years she enjoyed traveling, researching her Czech heritage and weaving.

Lillian had wished to extend her gratitude to all who had been companions on her life journey.