

The Guardian

Annual Newsletter of the
Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Our Lady, Queen of the Apostles Parish
Fall 2025

“All the Darkness in the World Cannot Extinguish the Light of A Single Candle” -The Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi

With a grateful heart, I thank God for the kindness, love, and support that you all have given to me. I have completed my service as a Superior in the FIH Convent for the last 8 years. (The FIH Sisters have been here for 11 years.) After the first 3 years, I transferred to Indianapolis. A Superior's term is normally 3 years, but God asked me to serve in this role a little longer. Now, I am relieved and happy! Sr. Sheena Mary has been appointed as the new Superior of our Convent in Chillicothe. She is a wonderful Sister and Superior, and I am happy to support her.

It has been God's providence that I have been surrounded by so many generous hearts among our parishioners. Your generosity made us keep moving our mission not only here in Chillicothe and Piketon, but in many different parts of the world. God's loving hand was leading me everywhere. I am so grateful to all past and present priests, especially Msgr. Lane, Fr. John, Fr. Young, and Fr. Droll. They are all wonderful spiritual Fathers; I am thankful also to all staff and parishioners.

I'd like us to remember all the Spiritual areas of our service Fr. Hahn once entrusted to us: Veterans Affairs, Adena Cancer Center, Signature Nursing Home, Heartland Nursing Home, Traditions Nursing Home, Hopeton Village, Bristol Village, Piketon Nursing Home, The Pavilion in Waverly, and Scioto Trail in Lucasville. We are visiting and giving Communion to almost 40 residents on a weekly basis. We have almost 70 people on our list, and other Eucharistic ministers assist in serving.

We have started going to the Chillicothe Correctional Institute (CCI) with Fr. Droll and Dcn. Hauser every other Monday for Holy Mass and Rosary. We Sisters will be starting the Jeff Cavins' Bible Study in CCI starting in November. We have been doing RCIA/OCIA in the prison for the last 10 years, as well as various Bible Studies. The inmates are very grateful for the materials you parishioners have provided for them.

In October, I was blessed to visit India for a few weeks. Your generosity and kindness made this possible!

Once again, thank you for all of your support! I will continue to offer my prayers for you, your family, and your children every day.

Love and prayers in Christ,
Sr. Amelia Mary, FIH



***The Almighty has done great things for me, and Holy is His name.
- Luke 1:49***

To send mail to
Sr. Zephrina Mary:

Our Lady of Peace
20 E Dominion Blvd
Columbus, OH 43214

“Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that you have received - only what you have given.”
- St. Francis of Assisi



New Sister Guardian Campaign Kicks Off

— Jess Hamm

Thank you to those who are past and present Sister Guardians! Guardians provide financial support for the FIH Convent located in Chillicothe. We officially welcomed the order of Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary into our parish family in July 2014, and they have been a blessing to countless people ever since. Funding this campaign allows the Sisters to serve those in need and on the margins in Ross and Pike Counties, visit the hospitalized and homebound, minister to the imprisoned by leading weekly Bible studies, advocate for the Catholic Church at public evangelical events, help to pack boxes of shelf-stable food for our monthly distributions (and pray with those in need on distribution days), and perform many works of Mercy, as well as sacristan work and other duties at all three church sites of Our Lady, Queen of the Apostles Parish and Bishop Flaget School. The FIH Sisters also oversee the Infant of Prague Adoration Chapel, which is located at the rear entrance of the convent, to ensure the Adoration Chapel is secured and our Lord is never alone when exposed in the Monstrance.

The following is a rough estimate of the cost to cover 3 religious sisters per month, as well as an annual total. As these figures are not considered in the parish budget of operating expenses, having financial assistance from parishioners is crucial to ensure the continued presence of our beloved Sisters and support their mission and ministry.

Utilities per month: \$1,200 Salaries per month: \$3,120 Health Benefits per month: \$2,821

Total per month: \$7,141 Total per year: \$85,692

If you are not currently a Sister Guardian but interested in participating in the campaign, there are several options to offer support! Sister Guardians can make a three-year commitment of \$5,000; \$3,000; \$1,000 or another amount per year. Guardians can also make a one-time donation of any amount. Your generous contribution can be made through the parish website's online giving tab at <https://olqaparish.com/olqa-online-offertory> (be sure to choose "Sister Guardians" as your desired contribution fund in the drop down box) or by placing a marked envelope into the offertory basket at any of our churches at the weekend Masses.

If you would like to become a Sister Guardian, please contact parish Business Manager Kaitlyn Meeker at the Our Lady, Queen of the Apostles Parish Office by calling 740-774-1407 ext 13 or email kmeeker@olqaparish.com. Our dear Sisters work tirelessly to meet the needs of our parishioners and the greater Ross-Pike community. Your support is greatly needed and appreciated.

We thank Sister Sheena, Sister Amelia, and Sister Leonard for their loving work for the Kingdom of God in Chillicothe and Waverly, and pray blessings over each of them and those served by their ministries over the course of this next campaign (and always!)

The Flower Girl

— Ann Hamm

Have you ever gazed upon the flowers on St. Peter's Church campus and thought how full and vibrant they look, or admired the beautiful floral touches throughout our parish churches? The reason may well be one loving and dedicated Sister who finds great fulfillment in caring for the beauty which God created. When she isn't tending her garden, you will often see our dear Sister Leonard out watering the flowers or arranging the floral arrangements to please the Lord. Sister is quite dedicated to this service, as it comes from her heart. She definitely has a green thumb!



A Habit of Joy: Sisters at Work in Parish and School

— Dr. Derya Rix, Bishop Flaget School Principal

If you happen to walk by St. Peter's Church in Chillicothe, you may notice the lush rose bushes or okra and eggplant plants heavy with fruit—signs of Sr. Leonard's green thumb. You might also find Sr. Amelia smiling down at a mischievous toddler or speaking with a complete stranger about mercy.

And if you step into Bishop Flaget School, you may be blessed to hear Sr. Sheena sharing with the students about God and His present and future saints. The presence of a religious sister in a Catholic school is a rare and beautiful gift. We are delighted to see her in her white habit, guiding the first graders and ensuring all goes smoothly during our all-school Masses.

Below are a few photos of Sr. Sheena as she shared the hope within her with our students. She celebrated their creations with joy as they spoke about being co-creators with the Lord. Not only are we privileged to be His adopted sons and daughters, but we also share in His creative power through art, music, science, and—even in this case—Legos.

Our students are truly blessed to have Sr. Sheena bring them truth and beauty, both in her teaching and in her witness.

Thank you, FIH Sisters, for brightening the life of our parish and our school!





Our Sisters Are Involved in So Many Things!

Whether Adoring the Blessed Sacrament, enjoying a Pancake Breakfast with parishioners, singing Christmas carols for nursing home residents, visiting with former priests, attending diocesan banquets where parishioners are honored, staff and/or parish-wide celebrations... they never rest! We are so blessed by their presence and hard work in our community.







Sister Leonard is an active member of the Secular Franciscan Order. She gives us Faith Formation at each monthly meeting. Her talks are very informative with a little humor that she adds. Thank you, dear Sister Leonard, for your dedication and support for us! And we've been blessed by both Sisters Leonard and Amelia joining for special events of food and fellowship
- Millie Tanner



The Sisters also participated at the 2025 Ross County fair booth, answering questions about the faith and handing out prayer cards and rosaries. Pope Leo even visited to support the Sisters in their efforts of evangelizing Ross County!



Sr. Sheena and Sr. Amelia visited the former pastor of Chillicothe and Waverly, Fr. Timothy Hayes, on the 40th Anniversary of his ordination on July 20, 2025.

What a joyful celebration!



How St. Francis of Assisi Converted the Murderous Robbers

— Sr. Leonard Mary

“Sinners are led back to God by holy meekness, better than by cruel scolding.” (St. Francis of Assisi)

Wishing to lead all men to salvation, the blessed Father Francis traveled through various provinces. Wherever he went, he always acquired a new family for the Lord because he was guided by the spirit of God. Here is a beautiful story of conversion.

Once St. Francis was going through Monte Casale, a village in the district of Borgo. At this time, there were in that area 3 famous robbers who committed many crimes. One day, those robbers came to the place of the friars, and they asked the guardian Brother Angelo to give them something to eat. The guardian answered, scolding them severely: “You robbers and cruel murderers, not only are you not ashamed of stealing from others the first of their labor, but in your audacity, you even dare to eat up the offerings which have been given to the servants of God. You respect no man, and you spurn God who created you. So go about your business and don’t you ever come back here.” Hearing this, they were angry and they went away highly indignant.

That same day, St. Francis came back to the place, carrying a sack of bread and a little jug of wine which he had begged with his companions. When the guardian told how he had driven the robbers away, St. Francis scolded him severely, saying, “You acted in a cruel way, because sinners are led back to God by holy meekness better than by cruel scolding. For our master Jesus Christ, whose Gospel we have promised to observe, says that the doctor is not needed by those who are well, but by the sick, and ‘I have come to call not the just but sinners to penance.’ So since you acted against charity and against the example of Jesus Christ, I order you under the holy obedience to take right now this sack of bread and jug of wine which I begged. Go and look carefully for those robbers over the mountains and valleys until you find them, and offer them all this bread and wine for me. And then kneel down before them and humbly accuse yourself of your sin of cruelty. Then ask them in my name not to do those evil things anymore, but to fear God and not to offend their neighbors. And if they do so, I promise them that I will supply them with provisions for their needs and I will give them food and drink all the time. And when you have humbly told them, come back here.”

While the guardian went to carry out St. Francis’ order, the saint began to pray and begged the Lord to soften the hearts of the robbers and convert them to repentance.

The obedient guardian found them and gave the bread and wine, and said what St. Francis had commanded. And it pleased God that while the robbers were eating the gifts which St. Francis had sent them, they began to say to one another: “What terrible tortures are waiting in hell for us who are such miserable and unhappy men! For we go around not merely beating, robbing, and wounding our neighbors, but also killing them! And yet we feel no fear of God or remorse of conscience over those horrible crimes and murders that we commit. Those friars really are saints of God. Let us go to St. Francis and if he gives us hope that we can obtain mercy from God for our great sins, let us do whatever he commands us, so that we may free our souls from the punishment of hell.”

And so they went in haste to St. Francis and said to him, “Father, because of our great sins, we do not believe we can obtain mercy from God, but if you have confidence that God will have mercy on us, we are ready to do penance with you and obey you in whatever you command us.”

Then St. Francis made them welcome with kindness and holy affection and gave them assurance that they would win God’s mercy. As the result of his instructions, the three robbers renounced the world and the devil and his works, and St. Francis received them into the Order. They began to do great penance, and remained faithful to him in mind and deed until the end of their lives.

Let us also become the humble instruments of peace, who bring many people to God by our meekness. St. Francis of Assisi, pray for us. (Little Flowers of St. Francis)



Feeding Both Body and Soul

— Ann and Jess Hamm

Sister Sheena has joined in the fun of packing food boxes for families in need! She jumped into packing without hesitation, as she learned about the monthly drive-thru food distribution hosted by the Knights of Columbus Council #15793 and Friends Ministry “Food For Families,” which occurs on the third Saturday of every month. She seemed to enjoy the packing process and said she would like to continue to help the cause. Food For Families is blessed to have her assistance and helpful spirit!

Sister Amelia and Sister Leonard have also been very active in this ministry over the last year! In addition to packing boxes, the two take turns every other month, offering prayer on distribution days, feeding those in need not only physically, but spiritually. We love having our Sisters’ support!

A Prayer to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Immaculate Heart of Mary, my Mother, I come to you in childlike prayer. I earnestly desire that all the people of the world may be brought back to the humble knowledge and love of the Sacred Heart of your dear Son. I pray, dear Mother of my God, that the wonderful beauty and purity of your own Immaculate Heart may so win our souls that we may detest all sin and dedicate our lives to the honor and glory of the God who created us.

You revealed the secrets of your own sad heart at Fatima and begged for penance, prayer, and conversion of the world to God. What more can I do than unite my heart to yours in this great yearning? What can I add but the fervent prayer that all the world may listen to your pleading?

I give my heart to you, my heavenly Queen, and in confidence I leave to you what is best for me in answer to my prayer for love and reparation.

Immaculate Heart of the Mother of my God, I implore through your powerful intercession, the conversion of the hearts of men, complete victory over sin, and the return of the peace which you have promised. Amen



Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much
Seek to be consoled, as to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved, as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

