

Sisters of St. Joseph of the Third Order of St. Francis

*“Preach the Gospel at all times
and if necessary
use words.”*

St. Francis of Assisi

Divine light and the love of
Rev. Luke Pescinski and Bishop
Sebastian Messmer inspire the
Polish School Sisters of St.
Francis to give THEMSELVES
in response to question:

*“What will happen to the
children?”*



Rev. Luke Pescinski



Bishop Sebastian Messmer

Mother Mary Clara and Mother Mary Felicia accepted the call to form a new congregation.

July 1, 1901, the new congregation was named the Sisters of St. Joseph (under the patronage of St. Francis).



Mother Mary Clara



Mother Mary Felicia

May 20, 1902

The people of God
gather to celebrate
the dedication and
the laying of the
cornerstone of St.
Joseph Convent in
Stevens Point,
Wisconsin



By 1918, the sisters were teaching in 23 schools in Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio.

Over the next few years, the membership of the new Congregation grew to 419 and additional missions were added in the states of Missouri, Connecticut, Texas, and Pennsylvania.



In 1915, the cornerstone was
laid for the new
St. Joseph Academy
as a wing of the
Motherhouse in Stevens
Point, Wisconsin.

In 1922, the Academy was
accredited and opened.



In 1925, the name of the Congregation was changed to the
Order of the Sisters of St. Joseph



As the Silver Jubilee Year was celebrated in 1926, the sisters
were serving in 49 parish school in five states.

By 1936, the Congregation had a central government with Provinces located in Wisconsin, Ohio, and Illinois. A General Motherhouse and Novitiate was established in South Bend, Indiana in 1943-44.



Wisconsin



Cleveland



Bartlett



South Bend

The call to Health Care Ministry began in 1938 with the opening of River Pines Sanatorium outside of Stevens Point, Wisconsin.



Administration Building in 1938



New facility completed in 1963

Between 1945-1966, the health care
ministry expanded to include
community

hospitals in Ohio, Mississippi and
small rural hospitals and nursing
facilities in

Loop City, Nebraska,
Cheyenne Wells, Colorado,
River Falls, Wisconsin,
Wakefield, Michigan, and
Rice Lake, Wisconsin.





In 1945, the Congregation's name was officially changed to
Sisters of St. Joseph of the Third Order of St. Francis

This change was to comply with the 1931 draft of the Constitution where it was so named.

In 1951, the Congregation began to serve at St. Francis Mission School in Greenwood, Mississippi.

They taught in a two-room schoolhouse and lived in a temporary convent-home.



In 1962, the Congregation responded to the call of the Church to all religious congregations to send 10% of their membership to serve in Missions off the mainland of the United States.

Sisters were sent to serve in Puerto Rico and Peru.



Sisters are teaching in three Puerto Rican schools in 1962.



Sisters are called to serve the poor in Tahuantinsuyo, Peru.



The SSJ-TOSF presence continues in Peru.



1971- Sister Regina is missioned to Brazil and continues to serve there.



1981 – Sister Madge becomes a missionary in South Africa.



In the mid-1960s, Vatican II initiated a period of reflection and renewal for the Church and for all religious.

Our Congregation took the call of the Church seriously and initiated years of reflection and study on ways to adapt our community and apostolic life to the changing needs of the world and the Church.



“The whole body of Christ [we claim as] our rightful apostolate.”

1967 The Rice Lake Franciscan Sisters merged with the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Third Order of St. Francis and the 32 sisters became members of the Chicago Province.



In the years after Vatican II, the Sisters expanded their ministries to meet the growing demands of the Church and society.

Sisters now serve in direct ministry to those in need in many areas of the United States and beyond. Specialized ministries are developed by sisters to respond to unmet needs.

Some examples include:

- Housing alternatives
- Respite care
- Care for the developmentally challenged
- A learning institute for older adults



Sisters' Treatment Home
For severely disabled children
Two Rivers, WI



Harvest House
Learning Institute for
Adults
South Bend, IN



Chiara House- Respite Home
For Developmental Adults
South Bend, IN



East Bay Services to the Developmentally
Disabled- Concord, CA



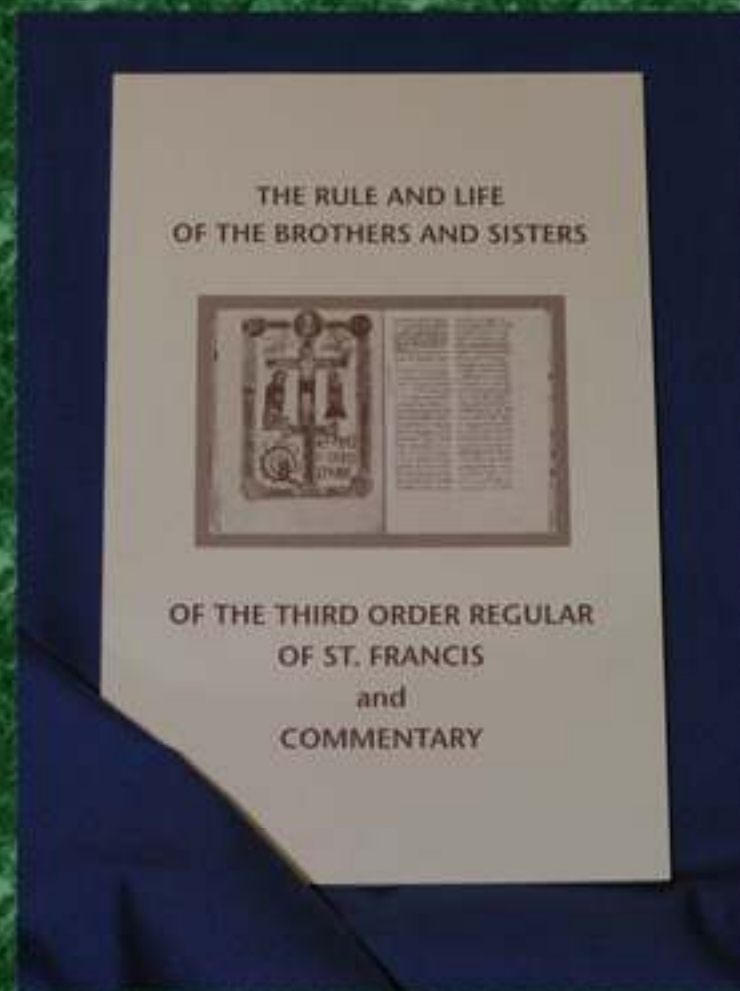
Heart to Heart Ministry to the Elderly
And Disabled- Appleton, WI

1984 A seven year process called *Congregational Unity* is undertaken with a view to grounding the Congregation more deeply in our Franciscan tradition and re-creating our structures to better reflect both this tradition and our inherent unity.



TOUCHING OUR ROOTS
enables sisters to
re-embrace the
Franciscan spirit.

Building upon the initial
draft of
Go to My Brethren that was
published,
*The Rule and Life of the
Brothers
and Sisters of the Third
Order
Regular of St. Francis* was
formally approved and
promulgated in 1983.

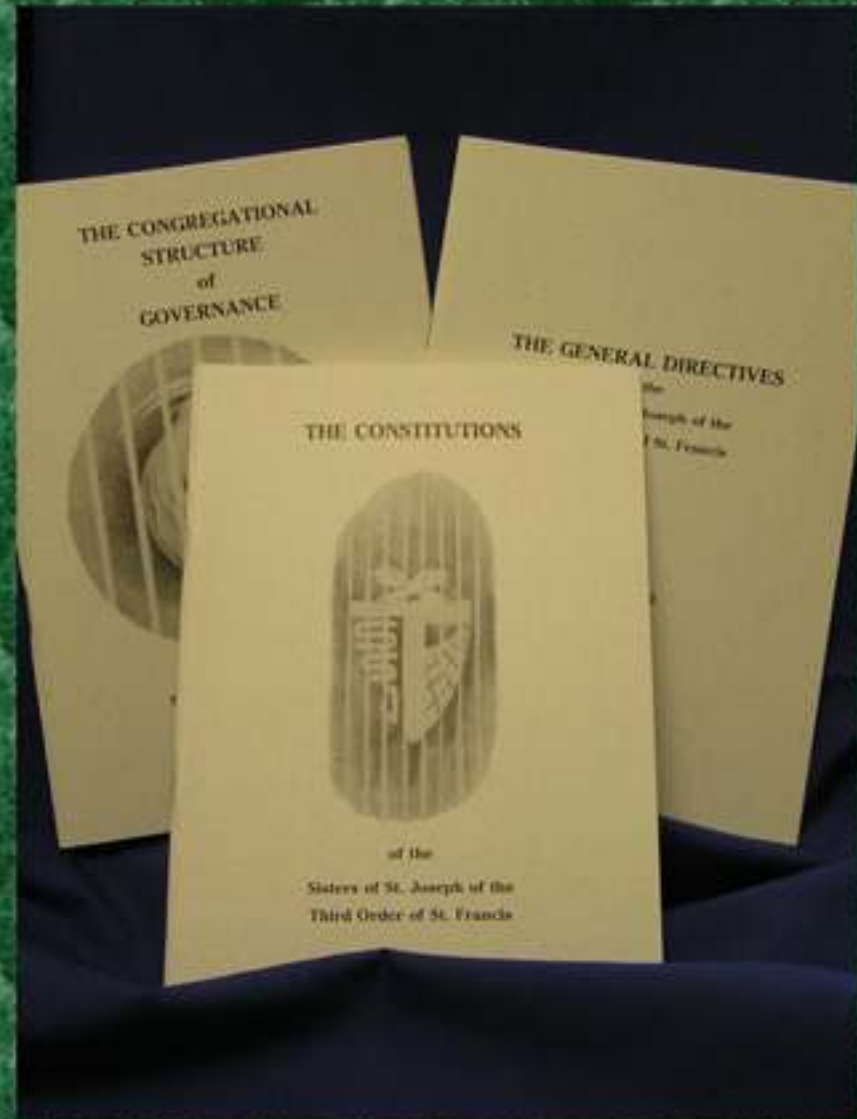


Gathering '87 - The
Congregation celebrated and
solemnized the growing sense of
our identity as one Congregation
united in the
Franciscan spirit.

The windchimes created by
Sister Marylou Wojtusik as a
symbol of the music that
celebrated our diversity were
enshrined at the Motherhouse in
Stevens Point, Wisconsin.



1990 Following more than twenty years of shared reflection and decision making the member-authored *Constitution and General Directives* were approved by the Ecclestatic Office for Religious in Rome.



Jubilate Deo! 1901-2001
Celebrating our *Fitting Response*
in the past, the present, and into
the future!



The people of God continue to call us to the sacred mission to which we have pledged ourselves.

“In gentle compassion, we open our hearts, our lives, and our homes to all, but especially to those who are poor.”



Sister Dorothy- Facilitator
Chicago, Illinois



Sister Ernestine and quilting group
Puerto Rico



Sister Rose- Nursing Home Chaplain
Arcadia, Wisconsin



Sister Betty- Hospital Chaplain
Marymount Hospital
Garfield Heights, Ohio



Sister Paulette- Prayer Leader
Pleasanton, Nebraska



Sister Margaret- Hospital Chaplain
Eau Claire, Wisconsin



Sister Helen- Hospice Volunteer
Detroit, Michigan

Sister Peter Mary- Volunteer
Womankind
Cleveland, Ohio





Sister Debra- Education
Oshkosh, Wisconsin



Sister Claudine- Principal
Rice Lake, Wisconsin



Sister Alice- Principal Chicago, Illinois



Sister Rosemary- Education DeLaSalle-Lourdes H.S.
Chicago, Illinois



Sister Shirley- Choir Director from Detroit, MI
Giving a concert in Rome, Italy



Sister Mary Ann- Pastoral Minister
Plover, Wisconsin



Sister Francis Therese- Spiritual Director
Cleveland, Ohio



Sister Debra Ann- Vocation Minister
Marshfield, Wisconsin



Sister Patrice
Parish Ministry
Custer, Wisconsin



Sister Dorothy- Peace and Justice Ministry
Chicago, Illinois

Sister Barbara-Prison Health Care
Johnson City, Tennessee





Sisters Music Group- Stevens Point, Wisconsin



Senior sisters help with the pre-school program
Garfield Heights, OH



Sister Henrietta and some of the Wisconsin
SSJ-TOSF Associates: Lois Lawler,
Elizabeth & Jim Mascali, Katy Riley, and
Isabelle Stelmahoske.



Active Retired Sisters





Employee Party 2009
St. Joseph Motherhouse, Stevens Point, WI



Missionary Sisters Josephine and Regina come
Home and visit sisters at Bartlett, Illinois



Sister Madelyn serves as sacristan at St.
Joseph Motherhouse in Stevens Point, WI



Sister Linda
St. Ben's Health Care for the Poor
Milwaukee, WI



Sister Sandy
Health Care to the Poor
Cleveland, Ohio



Coat of Arms
adopted February 21, 1944
designed by Sister Mary
Theobald



Current Congregational Symbol

*Before you O Lord,
our lives*

*What good a life,
if not*

*found in your life,
O Lord!*