



SYLVANIA
FRANCISCAN
VILLAGE

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In This Issue

[Franciscan Tidbits](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Restocking the Shelves](#)

[Shared Reading Experience](#)

[Interviews with Sylvania Franciscans](#)

Franciscan Tidbits



By Sister Joan Jurski

Clare of Assisi

Today seems to be the day of the woman.

Many stories of women, positive and negative, are in the news. A woman of the twelfth century, Clare of Assisi could easily be part of these headlines. Clare grew up a woman of privilege whose heart was clothed in compassion, simplicity and a disregard for those things that spoke of wealth and privilege.



At the Heart of Community

At the heart of every community is the unique gift of each individual member. In the case of the Sylvania Franciscan Village, these

members include the Sisters of St. Francis and their sponsored ministries - Lourdes University, Rosary Care Center/Our Lady of Grace, Convent Park, Sophia Center and Bethany House.

Each month the office of the Sylvania Franciscan Village works to pool together the gifts of these members and to use them for what is the heartbeat of the Franciscan spirit - service to God through service to others.

This month, that spirit is witnessed in the 7th Annual Have A Heart Restock Drive. We gather hundreds of small personal care items like

toothpaste, shampoo and toilet paper to help restock the shelves of six local food pantries.



In March, we celebrate National Catholic Sisters Week. Lourdes University students, faculty and staff, SOSF Employees and Associates honor our Sylvania Franciscan Sisters' lives of service with a fun lunch date that becomes the highlight of everyone's month.

Through each collaboration, it is these often simple but heartfelt gifts of time and talent shared by the members of the Sylvania Franciscan Village that allows us to grow, experience and share the joy of the Sylvania Franciscan spirit.

In the spirit of St. Valentine, may you experience the blessings of love God has for each of us.

She lived a quiet spiritual life despite her surroundings. After hearing a sermon by Francis, she was determined to pursue her desire to live a life of poverty dedicated to a spiritual existence. She was able to do this despite obstacles created by society and The Church. Her goal was to write a Rule of Life, which included the "privilege of poverty" for women, and was unheard of at that time. She battled with the Pope most of her life for this privilege. In 1253, after a lifetime of persistence, the Pope approved her Rule of Life, two days before her death. St. Clare's images on campus, even St. Clare Hall, which is named for her, remind us of a woman of strength and beauty.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Check out upcoming lectures, classes, special events, volunteer opportunities and more.

[CLICK HERE FOR THE SFV CALENDAR](#)

SYLVANIA FRANCISCAN VILLAGE MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania, Ohio

Lourdes University

Sylvania Franciscan Ministries

Sophia Lloyd
Director, Sylvania Franciscan Village

Have a Heart Restock Drive is a Community Effort



The Lourdes University Women's Softball Team volunteers each year for the Have A Heart Restock Drive.

With the help of the community, businesses and schools, the annual Sylvania Have a Heart Restock drive collects hundreds of personal care items and distributes them to six local outreach pantries.

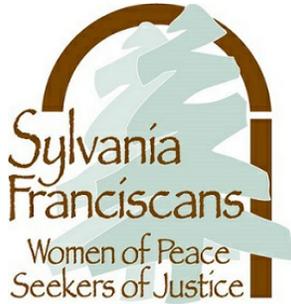
This [Sylvania Franciscan Village](#) (SFV) outreach service initiative began in 2012 as a way to use our collective energies to give back to the community. A committee was formed with a cross-section of representation from the Sylvania Franciscans and their many ministries.

Sisters of St. Francis who volunteered at the [Sylvania Area Family Service](#), [Helping Hands of St. Louis Soup Kitchen](#) and their own ministry, [Bethany House](#), were able to identify a need these local organizations shared.

State food assistance vouchers cannot be used for many personal care items such as toilet paper, shampoo and laundry detergent, and some of these household staples are costly purchases.

"Personal care items are always in great demand and we unfortunately have to distribute them on a limited basis," says Dottie Segur, Social Service Coordinator at Sylvania Area Family Services.

Using the pooled resources of the Sylvania Franciscan Village, the Have a Heart Restock Drive was born. Collection boxes are placed around Lourdes University campus, Sylvania schools and businesses, while local media is rallied to promote the



[Sisters of St. Francis](#)



[Lourdes University Calendar](#)



[All Good Things Art & Gifts](#)



[Bethany House](#)



[Sophia Center](#)

event. At the end of the drive, the hard work of dividing the goods becomes team work with the help of the Lourdes University Women's Softball team, under the direction of their coach JoAnn Gordon.

This year donations will be sorted on Friday, February 9 in the Franciscan Center and delivered to the following local outreach pantries:

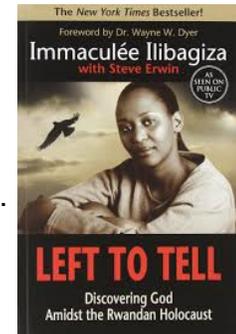
Helping Hands of St. Louis, Claver House, Our Lady of Lourdes Soup Kitchen, Sylvania Area Family Services, Bethany House, and, new this year, [US Together](#).

Please donate! The Have a Heart Restock Drive lasts through February 8 and every contribution helps. For a complete listing of donation locations, [click here](#). For more information, contact Elizabeth Reiter at 419-824-3515.

The Community that Reads Together, Dines Together

Welcome to the book group that meets just once a year.

Dinner and a Book was designed seven years ago to bring people from the community together with two common denominators: everyone has read the same book and everyone enjoys a good dinner. Reading material invariably is selected because it adheres to the Sylvania Franciscan values of social justice.



This year's featured story is "Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust," by Immaculée Ilibagiza. Past subjects include a maximum security prison inmate who became a published poet, the chronicle of a Honduran boy who made his way across all obstacles to find his mother, and "Tattoos of the Heart," a collection of essays written by Gregory Boyle on his work in a neighborhood filled with terrifying gang violence.

Participant Lori Douglas has attended the event every year. As a member of three book clubs, she values this venue particularly for its diversity. "I like that I get out of my comfort zone and get to discuss a book that I probably wouldn't have picked out for myself," Lori says.

"Dinner and a Book brings together people of all ages

and from all walks of life to discuss topics that are often controversial. Nevertheless, I've always felt that it was okay to say what I thought and that it was a very non-judgmental group," she explains.

Regular attendee Lera Doneghy agrees. "The people are just so diverse, economically as well, which means that the ideas everyone shared were so different. Everyone was coming from their own place, which makes the conversation more interesting," she says.

Bringing such a diverse group together has the advantage of sometimes finding an expert among your readers. After reading last year's book about maximum security prison inmates, participant Sister Joy Barker was able to contribute her unique perspective gained from her volunteer ministry at the Milan Prison.

"This year's book takes me into unfamiliar territory," Sister Joy says. "I enjoy being part of an event that expands our understanding of each other and subjects that might be new to us."

Connecting Students with the Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania



Jenna Rodriguez's interview with artist Sister Jane Mary Sorosiak will be sent to the SOSF archives at the end of the semester.

Lourdes University students spent part of this semester sitting down with Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania (SOSF) and listening to their history as Sisters.

Three classrooms are documenting the oral histories

of 29 Sisters. Their findings and reflections on the experience will be submitted for credit and then sent to the SOSF archives, along with video of some of the interviews.

Susan Shelangoskie, Professor and Chair of the English Department, was delighted when Sophia Lloyd, Director of the Sylvania Franciscan Village, approached her with the idea. She invited Associate Professor Shawna Rushford-Spence and Adjunct Instructor Lynda Hoffman to also participate.

"We wanted to collect the oral histories of our Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania," Sophia explains. "I thought it would be ideal to give students the opportunity to form a connection with some of our Sisters and interview them."

This semester, a cross section of Sylvania Franciscans were chosen based on age and ministry. Students were provided a roster of the Sisters with brief biographies and asked to select one to interview.

Questions ranged from their experience in ministry, comparisons in community life over the years, any memories of foundress Mother Adelaide, and reflections on how each Sister feels she impacted the communities in which she served.

"Sister Ann Francis (Klimkowski) is extremely knowledgeable and it was really enjoyable to get to talk to her," Composition II student Sam Kinderman says. "My interview partner and I were so impressed with the non-profits she started in the community, in addition to being the President of Lourdes University."

"My students all found the experience very positive. They really enjoyed meeting these Sisters. They are planning to take their finished papers back to show the Sister they interviewed and they're looking forward to seeing them again," says Lynda Hoffman, Composition II Instructor.

"Something that all of the students noticed," Lynda adds, "is how each Sister expressed such a sense of joy in having made the choice to be a Sylvania Franciscan."

Interviews are ongoing throughout the semester with plans to continue collecting all of the Sisters' oral histories in future semesters.

