

Province of Lemont- November 2018

Planning for the Province observance of the celebration of the Congregation's 150th began some time ago. The Provincial Council presented a list of tentative events with an invitation to all the Sisters to become part of the planning of these events. Sisters volunteered and preparations began.

The opening of the year of celebration was held here on September 10. The Sisters and our Associates gathered for a Eucharistic Liturgy during which the Scriptures and prayers recalled the goodness of God who calls us to follow Jesus in the way of Mother Margareta. Mass was celebrated by three Franciscan friars: Mr. Metod of the Slovenian Franciscans, Pastor at Anton Martin Slomsek Mission Church in Lemont; Fr. Jozo from Herzegovina, Custos of the Croatian Franciscans in Chicago; and Fr. Art, who ministers in Chicago. In addition four of our Sisters from the Mostar Province (three from Chicago and one from New York) were able to join us. After liturgy all shared an evening of food and community in Sinsky Hall of Alvernia Manor.

The next day, four Sisters began their travels to Maribor for the Congregational celebration on September 16. Sr. Patricia, Sr. Therese Ann, Sr. Lois and Sr. Susan were joined there by Sr. Jimene, who came from Grottaferrata. In turn, they joined the many other Sisters representing the various Provinces and Region whose lives are bound together in our Congregation.

On October 6, all the Sisters of our Province gathered for a Community Day focusing on the theme "Difficulties Often Lead Us to New Horizons." Recalling the risks Mother Margareta, St. Francis, and St. Clare had taken in the spirit of trust, the Sisters were led in prayer, song, silent and visual reflection, table discussion and group sharing which concluded with responses to what M. Margareta might say to us today. The presentation encouraged gratitude for the past, eagerness to do what is ours to do now, and openness to the risks we will need to take as we walk toward the future. Fr. Art celebrated Mass with us and various games and other enjoyable activities were shared. A photo of all the Sisters of the Province was also taken. The day then ended with the sharing of banana split sundaes, a typical American treat.

The next event will be on November 2 when Sisters will gather for an evening Memorial Service honoring our deceased Sisters from the entire Congregation. To highlight our spiritual heritage and our unity with the entire Congregation more events are being planned for the coming months as we mark this most special time and seek to continue what was begun by M. Margareta and those four Sisters who risked everything 150 years ago, trusting that God in His Providence would guide them.

Sr. Kathleen Vugrinovich