

Reflections for Jubilee 2020

Today we honor eleven women who, through their call to be Oldenburg Franciscans, are privileged to serve God with wise hearts which have led them to discover the Pearl of Great Price.

God invites every person ever born to the privilege of service. There are thousands if not millions of ways to answer that call to serve. These eleven women chose to serve by building a foundation first as a Sister of St. Francis. Think for a moment about what would be missing in our Community if even one of them had chosen a different path. How many people would not have a knowledge of God because one of our Jubilarians wasn't there to nurture the seed? How many of us would be lesser individuals if even one of our Jubilarians had taken a different route? I can answer that one – ALL of us and EACH of us would experience life differently than we do if even ONE of these women hadn't shared life with us.

Jubilarians, you all can remember the search for wisdom in your professional lives. Those degrees you worked on endlessly, the workshops to put you a step ahead, the certifications to move you to a higher level. All of these things have dates on them, verifying when you attained that wisdom. When did you attain Solomon's wisdom, the wisdom of the heart? Heart wisdom is not something learned in school. We learn it as we journey through life. You are STILL learning it. Seeking heart wisdom is asking to see the world as God sees it. You have made a life commitment to search for heart wisdom, and the rest of us are here today to celebrate the progress you have made and the example you have set.

How many pearls of great price have you found in your life, only to discover that circumstances arose to show you that it wasn't a real treasure? Not every loaf of bread will rise, not every field that's sown will produce a yield. That's what makes the search for the pearl so exciting – when we discover plastic pearls instead of the real thing, our hearts surge ahead, knowing the pearl is still out there. We can't afford to overlook the hidden treasure in two very significant places: ourselves and the person next to us. There is more to you than you have discovered, and more to the other than meets the eye.

Today we congratulate eleven women who have been privileged to serve, who are committed to grow in heart wisdom, who delight in the search for the Pearl of Great Price. On this most unusual of Jubilee Days, may I assure you eleven women that you are treasured pearls for this Franciscan Community. May you continue to shine for us as you always have, in true wisdom and understanding hearts.