



2019 Year in Review

Felician Sisters of North America

From Our Provincial Minister



Dear Friend in Christ,

In 2009, God's providence guided us to new "frontiers of need" and allowed his will to be done through us with the unification of the eight North American provinces into Our Lady of Hope Province. We thank him for making us instruments of his divine will and providing us with the resources and support we need to continue to minister to his most vulnerable people.

As we reflect on 2019, we are reminded that we do not accomplish anything alone. Your prayers and support, in all of the forms it takes, are the sustenance which fuels our ministries. Without them, our Sisters would not be able to make themselves so totally available to those in need. Your care for us translates into the care we can give to others, and for that we are grateful.

Today, Felician Sisters of North America serve in ministries across the U.S. and in Canada and Haiti, and everywhere we serve, we seek to accompany those in need. In our many roles as educators, spiritual leaders, health care providers, caretakers, social workers, counselors, communicators, advocates and more, we walk in solidarity with our neighbors, being truly "present" to them.

With faith and hope, we are eager to move forward in our mission to "cooperate with Christ in the spiritual renewal of the world," and with your support we will continue to serve where we are needed.

This publication is meant to share just a glimpse of our ministries and preview what's on the horizon.

Yours in Mary, Our Lady of Hope,

Sister Mary Christopher Moore, CSSF
Provincial Minister

I wish I could multiply myself a thousand times and travel to all parts of the world bringing God's love and mercy to all people.

— Blessed Mary Angela Truszkowska

Celebrating Our 10th Anniversary

Reorganization Unites and Strengthens

The date Nov. 21 holds great significance for the Felician Sisters. They were founded in Poland on Nov. 21, 1855, and on the same day in 1874, the first five Felician Sisters to serve in North America arrived at their new home in Polonia, Wisconsin. Once in North America, their charism and ministries spread into eight provinces throughout the continent.

More than a century later, on Nov. 21, 2009, the Felician Sisters made the bold move to unite their eight provinces across North America into Our Lady of Hope Province. This allowed for a pooling of resources — the most important of which was the Sisters themselves and their desire to follow the directive of Felician Foundress Blessed Mary Angela to "serve where you are needed."

When Fr. Dabrowski reached out to the Felician Sisters for help ministering to the growing immigrant population of his parish in Wisconsin, five brave women stepped forward and left their home in Poland to answer the call, and with each new call, the Felician Sisters extend and evolve their ministries to meet the needs of the time.

With the unification of the provinces under one governing body, more Sisters have found themselves free to minister in "total availability" to the most vulnerable of society. Currently, the Sisters are launching several new initiatives, including Deo Gratias Ministries in inner-city Detroit and the Our Lady of Grace Affordable Housing Community in Newark, Delaware. In addition, some of their current ministries, such

as the Blessed Angela Spirituality Center in Pomona, California, and St. Felix Centre in Toronto, Canada, are expanding to meet the needs of victims of human trafficking, migrant families and those who are homeless.

In a time when there is so much need, the Sisters continue to listen to the cries of the poor and respond. In doing so, they have been innovative, creative and sometimes even counter-cultural. They continue to serve immigrant families, on the border and in U.S. detention centers. They not only minister to the marginalized and those living in poverty; they live among them. In the spirit of St. Francis, they go where no one else will go, bringing compassionate service to those society would seemingly prefer to forget.



With host Tamron Hall (front center) are (from left to right): Sisters Desiré Anne-Marie Findlay, CSSF; Elizabeth McGill, IHM; Rachel Lauritsen, FMA; and Boram Lee, FMA.

You can read more about Sr. Desiré on our website or on her blog, Religious Life for Beginners, at sistalogue.blogspot.com.

Millennial Felician Sister Shares her Vocation Journey

On September 17, Sister Desiré Anne-Marie Findlay appeared on the nationally syndicated Tamron Hall Show as a member of a panel of young women discussing society's misconceptions about religious life. She and the three sisters who joined her talked about the reality of their vocations and offered assurance that young women continue to be called to vowed religious life.

Sister Desiré, who professed her perpetual vows in the Felician Sisters in July of 2019, said, "I could have gone anywhere or done anything, but the Lord knew my heart and knew this would allow me to flourish in exciting and unexpected ways."

Sister Desiré was also featured in a video series by *America* magazine called #BeyondtheHabit, in which she discussed her fears that she would have to give up some of who she

was to become a sister, including her life-long love of dance. To her surprise, instead of giving up dance, she watched it transform into a meaningful form of prayer and celebration of the Lord.

As the Vocation Outreach Coordinator for the province, Sister Desiré meets many young women who are discerning a vocation as a sister. "If I am being called," she said, "then God is still calling."



You can now find us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest. We are also livestreaming to share special events with audiences around the world. Our most recent livestream reached nearly 3,000 people, including audiences in Brazil, Dubai, Italy, Poland and throughout the U.S.

Sign up to receive our monthly electronic newsletter at www.feliciansistersna.org.



Felician Sisters of North America
April 5, 2019

In 1992 Sisters M. Johnna Ciezobka and M. Susanne Dziedzic arrived in Kingstree, SC, to begin a mission on behalf of the Felician Sisters. They chose to live in the neighborhood they would serve so as to be totally available to the people, and heeded the advice of two Sisters who told them, "Fall in love with the people and the people will call forth from you what they need." Within three days there were five children on the back porch of the convent doing homework, and so began the ministry that would come to be known as the Felician Center.

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Our Lady of Hope Province

Ministries and 2019 highlights across the continent

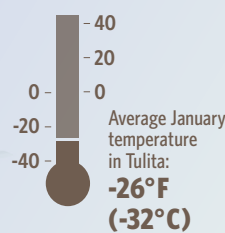
- = Felician Ministry
- = Felician Ministry Highlighted in 2019
- = Felician Ministry to Watch in 2020 (see back page for descriptions)

Tulita, Canada

Tulita has not had a residential priest for 20 years. A priest only visits **every 5 weeks**.

First Volunteers Arrive in Tulita

Felician Mission: Tulita in the Northwest Territories of Canada, recently welcomed two long-term Felician Volunteers in Mission. Alongside Sr. Celeste Goulet, they will minister to the Slavey people of the Dene group, a First Nations people indigenous to the region.



A continent full of ministries all began with **5** pioneering sisters in 1874.

Heritage Center Groundbreaking

On May 19, Madonna University broke ground on their Welcome Center that will house the Felician Sisters of North America Heritage Center and Archives. As part of the hub of the University, the Heritage Center will allow students, staff and visitors to learn about and be inspired by the work (past and present) of the Felician Sisters.



An estimated **10,000** people experience homelessness in Toronto — comparable to 11,000 displaced by Hurricane Katrina.



Felician Centre Provides Safe Haven for People and Pets

PAWS (Pets Accommodating Wishes and Support) was established by St. Felix Centre to allow guests to stay with and get care for their pets, who provide them with much-needed companionship and comfort.



40.3 million victims of human trafficking exist globally. **25%** are children, **75%** are women and girls, **81%** are trapped in forced labor.



Blessed Mary Angela Spirituality Center Expands Services

The Blessed Mary Angela Spirituality Center, a Felician ministry that serves the homeless and those living in poverty in Pomona, CA, has expanded its scope by partnering with Ending the Game. This collaborative initiative of the LA District Attorney's Office, Pomona Municipal Court Judges, Pomona Police Department, Purpose Church and the Felician Sisters works to provide resources for victims of human trafficking.



Felician Youth Leadership Conference Expands its Reach

Since 2014 **Seeds of Hope**, has been empowering young women to be servant leaders by providing guidance and mentorship.

Participants collaborate with their peers from across the continent, including Canada and Mexico, and successful professional women to tackle issues about which they are passionate.



Program Expanded to Welcome Immigrants

Mooncrest Neighborhood Programs (MNP) expanded outreach services in response to the influx of families from Central America. Many immigrant families arrive with only the clothes on their backs. Assisting families in navigating the immigration and settlement process is just one of the vital services provided. MNP outreach connects families with vital support organizations throughout the Pittsburgh area. MNP also recognized the need



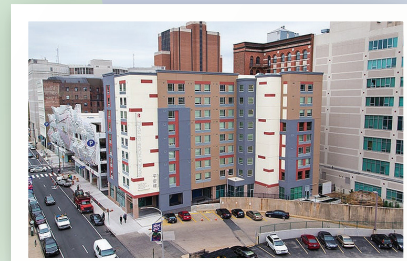
for adult English as a Second Language support and partnered with Literacy Pittsburgh to host courses onsite.



Aid Secured for Construction of Francis House

St. Ignatius Nursing and Rehab Center has secured low-income housing tax credits to aid in the construction of Francis House. This new addition to the campus of St. Ignatius will house 60 apartments for adults who require personal care services. The design of the new homes is derived from the "Small House" model of care, where groups of 10 residents live together and

share meals and other activities. Each resident will occupy their own private living unit, with a bedroom and full bathroom, but they will share common areas, such as the living room, dining room, parlor and sunroom.



Hundreds of migrants are lost or left for dead in border deserts yearly.

Felician Sisters' Support of Águilas del Desierto (Eagles of the Desert) led to **27** live rescues, and **12** remains recovered in 2019

Read *Eagles in the Desert* on the back page

Convent Welcomes Legal Asylum Seekers

Once released from government centers, asylum seekers find themselves desperate for the most basic needs, such as food, water and temporary shelter, or assistance to travel to their sponsoring families and legal representation.

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Convent partnered with Catholic Charities to provide temporary housing to asylum seekers who had entered the country legally, were processed at the border and had families sponsoring their entry into this country.



71% of extremely low-income renter households are severely burdened, spending more than half of their income on rent and utilities.

Our Lady of Grace Village Affordable Housing Opens

Once the site of a Felician-run orphanage, the Our Lady of Grace property in Newark, DE, is now home to an affordable housing complex. Upon completion, this property will house a 60-unit rental community serving households with incomes at or below 60% of the area median income.

Twelve units will be handicapped accessible and six have been designated for special populations, including persons with disabilities. Felician Sisters will also live in the community, serving their neighbors in a ministry of presence.



Felician Center Distributes Over 200 Pairs of Shoes

A "New Shoe Festival" for adults, launched on October 4. Sister Susanne Dziedzic, Director said, "Wouldn't the barefoot Francis be pleased?" She added, "More than \$12,000 was raised so we can buy new shoes with comfort, supports and arches, too. Many folks have hurting backs and feet, and cheap shoes do not address this health issue." She explained that, in the South, dressing up for church on Sundays is very important and men especially need "church" shoes or they just won't go. Other folks come for shoes for burials, funerals and job interviews.



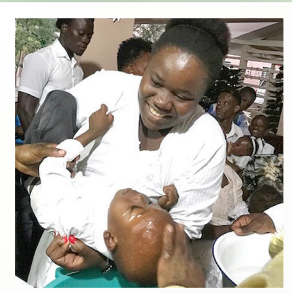
When most Haitians earn less than **\$2 per day** — access to sacraments is unattainable. Survival is the priority.

Felicians Sponsored and Prepared Six Children for Baptism

Thanks in part to the financial and formative support of the Felician Sisters, six children were welcomed into the Catholic faith through the Sacrament of Baptism on the vigil of the Feast of the Holy Family.

Many Haitian mothers who wish to have their children baptized are unable to do so for many reasons, including poverty. When they seek help at Felician Mission: Haiti, the Sisters do their best to provide these mothers with the sacramental preparation, fees and clothing they need.

Recognizing that Baptism is the first of the Sacraments and the foundation of all Christian life, the Sisters felt blessed to be part of such a special occasion, saying, "This was truly a moment of joy allowing us to remember that Baptism makes us missionaries in the world, each one according to his or her own vocation, so that the world may believe and be transformed."



"Give aid to all without exception; your vocation obliges you not to exclude anyone, for everyone is our neighbor."

— Blessed Mary Angela Truszkowska

Our ministries are asked to uphold the **FIVE CORE VALUES** that are hallmarks of our Felician culture and identity:

Respect for Human Dignity
exhibited by a reverence for and commitment to promoting and protecting the dignity of all persons;

Compassion
characterized by an empathetic consciousness toward others expressed in caring service;

Transformation
characterized by an open heart and mind, leading to continuous improvement of all involved in our ministry;

Solidarity with the Poor
ensuring that the needs of the poor and vulnerable are met through advocacy and action;

Justice and Peace
forging right relationships, recreating a sustainable environment, promoting the common good — all in the pursuit of peace.

Where there is need
Felicians Respond





How Can You Help?

Pray. Keep us in your prayers. We also invite you to send us your prayer requests.

Volunteer. Our Felician *Volunteers in Mission* program offers short and long-term volunteer placement in ministries throughout our Province.

Share. Help us spread the mission by sharing this publication with a friend, relative, parish or organization.

Donate. All our ministries would not be possible without the prayers, support and financial assistance of our benefactors. If you would like to make a gift to the FSNA, please consider donating online at feliciansistersna.org/give.

Checks made payable to the **Felician Sisters of North America** can be mailed to: **Office of Development, Felician Sisters of North America, 871 Mercer Road, Beaver Falls, PA 15010.**

To learn more, visit our website at feliciansistersna.org or contact Marcia Wallander at 724-384-5303 or mwallander@feliciansisters.org.

We are blessed by your continued interest in and support of our mission and ministries.



On the Cover: Detail of the stained glass windows created by Sr. Mary Ann Therese Kelly, CSSF, for the chapel at the Felician Sisters of North America Provincial House in Beaver Falls, PA.

Eagles of the Desert



Eight years ago, Ely Ortiz received a phone call from his brother and cousin. Severely dehydrated and exhausted, they had been left behind in the deserts of Arizona. Ely phoned several organizations, but no one was able to come to their aid. Frustrated and helpless, he had to give up — he never heard from them again.

Five months later, Ely recovered their remains, and his own life was changed forever. He began Águilas del Desierto (Eagles of the Desert) to be a resource for other families whose loved ones had gone missing.

At first, they were only able to send out a search party once a month. They mostly found and buried the bodies of migrants who succumbed to the desert, placing a simple white cross at their grave as a reminder that every life matters. Their dream, however, was to operate as a search and rescue team.

Smugglers often tell migrants it's only a two-day walk once they get to the U.S. In fact it is a 10- to 12-day walk — 120 miles with temperatures often in excess of 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37 degrees Celsius). The Felician Sisters know this story well.



Just as the Felician Sisters arrived in Polonia, Wisconsin, in 1874 to serve the Polish immigrants – who could not speak the language and were often ostracized as outsiders – so do they now respond with compassion to those seeking asylum in the U.S.

They have ministered to the poor and homeless of Pomona, California, for 11 years through the Blessed Mary Angela Spirituality Center. Many of those they serve are migrants who survived a trip across the border. Many are homeless and have used their life savings to come to the U.S., and now they have nothing.

After learning of the Águilas del Desierto, our Sisters' hearts were shaken. Wanting to help, the Sisters began making crosses for the search teams, but they wanted to do more.

In 2019, the Águilas received more than 6,500 calls for help. They don't yet have the resources to answer them all, but when they can, they send out search parties and/or facilitate communication between families, "coyotes" and authorities.

Recently, the Sisters volunteered for a search in the Ocotillo desert for the body of a 19-year-old young man. Within two hours, they found a human skull, part of a body and a child's shoe still containing some of her foot. Again, they wanted to do more.

Thanks in part to support from the Felician Sisters, the Águilas helped rescue 27 migrants alive in the deserts of Arizona last year. They also recovered the remains of 12 individuals who didn't survive the trip, giving their loved ones much-needed closure.

The Águilas collaborates with U.S. Border Patrol, BORSTAR (Border Patrol Search, Trauma, and Rescue Unit), Consulate of Mexico, Consulate of Guatemala, Consulate of El Salvador, Consulate of Honduras and Eduardo Human Rights Channels of Texas. For more information, visit aguilasdeldesiertoinc.org.



What to Watch in 2020



Look for these ministries on the map inside.

The Felician Sisters of North America are launching a monthly e-newsletter called Living the Mission featuring news from around the province. Join our mailing list at www.feliciansistersna.org.

Deo Gratias Ministries in inner-city Detroit, MI, include a community garden and an evangelization café. Plans for a ministry serving victims of human trafficking are also in the works.

The Sisters at **Felician Mission: Haiti** are exploring ways to empower Haitian women through job training. They have already begun collecting sewing machines to open a sewing school.

Madonna University in Livonia, MI, is partnering with the Grand Rapids-based Hope Network to open a Center for Autism that will include applied behavior analysis (ABA) services, a type of therapy for children on the autism spectrum to help improve specific skills like communication and reading.

Felician Village in Manitowoc, WI, is introducing Felician Village at Home, a membership program offering regular check-ins with individuals living alone in Manitowoc County.

Villa St. Francis in Milwaukee, WI, is making enhancements to Angela's Crossing, a residential memory care program for individuals with dementia.

Angela Hospice in Livonia, MI, will add three new grief support programs for children and adults in the community who are struggling to cope with loss: Suicide Loss Support Group, Music Therapy for Kids and Parents Who Have Lost a Child.

Felician University in Lodi, NJ, has received a \$100,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), to launch "Prism Paterson," a new Interdisciplinary Humanities Program offering courses focusing on the literature, music, art and photography of Paterson, NJ.

FELICIAN MINISTRIES IN NORTH AMERICA

We are the Felician Sisters of North America and are proud to share the following groups of ministries that we sponsor, co-sponsor or support through the presence of our sisters. To support or to learn more about our ministries, visit our website at feliciansistersna.org/ministries.

EDUCATION AND CHILD CARE

Early Childhood

Enfield Montessori School
Enfield, CT

Felician Children's Center
Jackson, MI

Montessori Center of Our Lady
Livonia, MI

Sister Celeste
Child Development Centre
Tulita, Northwest Territories, Canada

St. Joseph Academy
Milwaukee, WI

St. Mary Child Care Center
Livonia, MI

High Schools

Immaculate Conception
High School
Lodi, NJ

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart
High School
Coraopolis, PA

Holy Name of Mary College School
Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

Colleges and Universities

Felician University
Lodi, NJ

Madonna University
Livonia, MI

Villa Maria College
Buffalo, NY

AT-RISK YOUTH PROGRAMS

Mooncrest
Neighborhood Programs
Coraopolis, PA

United Stand Family Center
Chicago, IL

ENRICHMENT AND OUTREACH PROGRAMMING

Jericho House
Ontario, Canada

Maryville Retreat Center
Holly, MI

Seeds of Hope Felician Youth
Leadership Conference
Holly, MI

MINISTRY TO THE MARGINALIZED AND THOSE LIVING IN POVERTY

Blessed Mary Angela
Spirituality Center
Pomona, CA

Deo Gratias Ministries
Detroit, MI

Felician Center
Kingstree, SC

Our Lady of Grace Village
Newark, DE

St. Felix Centre
Toronto, Canada

St. Felix Pantry
Rio Rancho, NM

CARE FOR THE ELDERLY AND INFIRM

Angela Hospice Home Care
Livonia, MI

Felician Adult Day Center
Enfield, CT

Felician Village
Manitowoc, WI

Good Samaritan Hospital
Mount Vernon, IL

Marywood Nursing Care Center
Livonia, MI

Response to Love Center
Buffalo, NY

Senior Clergy Village
Livonia, MI

St. Anne Home
Greensburg, PA

St. Francis Residence
Enfield, CT

St. Ignatius Nursing & Rehab Facility
Philadelphia, PA

St. Mary's Hospital
Centralia, IL

Villa St. Francis
Milwaukee, WI

MINISTRY TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

McGuire Memorial
New Brighton, PA

MISSION MINISTRY

Felician Mission: Haiti
Jacmel, Haiti

Felician Mission: Tulita
Tulita, Northwest Territories, Canada

PASTORAL MINISTRY

As an evangelical community of consecrated women religious, we commit ourselves to the universal mission of the Church. We are diocesan vocation directors, case workers, counselors and youth ministers. We serve on diocesan marriage tribunals, organize retreats, direct youth leadership programs, help facilitate social services and work on diocesan newspapers. We serve as pastoral associates and in pastoral ministries, helping to prepare for liturgical celebrations, leading sacramental preparation classes, leading adult faith formation classes and making hospital and home visits.

Felician Sisters of North America 2019 Year in Review Published by Sister Mary Christopher Moore, CSSF, Provincial Minister, Our Lady of Hope Province

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MISSION: As Felician Sisters we are called by God to cooperate with Christ in the spiritual renewal of the world.