

## **Franciscan Sisters of Mary: Current Presence in the St. Louis Archdiocese**

The Franciscan Sisters of Mary continue to carry out their mission “to be the presence of the loving, serving, compassionate, healing Jesus” with special focus on “compassionate care of creation in collaboration with others.” Their legacy of presence and compassion is carried on in the hospitals and health care facilities of SSM Health, as well as the other ministries the Sisters have founded.

The FSM live out concern for creation through personal commitment and advocacy, but also through mission-related philanthropy and impact investments that support entrepreneurs and organizations that embody FSM compassionate care of creation. These groups promote climate mitigation, reforestation, sustainable farming, clean water, renewable energy, recycling, and food security, among other efforts. In 2014, FSM fully divested from companies that harvest and refine fossil fuels, and has since encouraged other Catholic and faith-based organizations to follow Pope Francis’s guidance in *Landato Si’*.

In 1998 the FSM collaborated with four other congregations of women religious to establish The Sarah Community, offering independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing care for laypeople and women religious. The Sarah Community serves as the retirement home for the congregation.

While the FSM continue to maintain a strong, vigorous presence in the St. Louis area, the number of sisters has diminished. Since 2013 the Franciscan Sisters of Mary have been engaged with the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood of O’Fallon, Missouri (CPPS) to create a structure allowing each congregation to maintain its own identity and yet collaborate on governance and management issues. The congregations expect to initiate Collaborative Governance within a year or two; the underlying structures have already been put in place.

The Franciscan Sisters of Mary continue courageously to live out their call in compassionate presence to others.

(April 2021)