



Franciscan Center for Social Concern
P.O. Box AR
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**St Bonaventure University, P.O. Box AR
St. Bonaventure, NY 14478**

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRANCISCAN CENTER FOR SOCIAL CONCERN AT ST. BONAVENTURE UNIVERSITY

www.sbu.edu/FCSC

November 2018



Furthering Francis



I'm Alice Miller Nation, and I am thrilled to be serving you as the director of the Franciscan Center for Social Concern here at St. Bonaventure University.

I come from the neighboring Diocese of Rochester, N. Y., where I served in various parish and, most recently, campus ministries for the past 32 years. Receiving the invitation to minister at St. Bonaventure was in some ways a call to come home and possibly full circle.

One of my earliest ministry positions was with Franciscans from the Assumption Province in Saginaw, Mich. During my years at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, I had wonderful Franciscan men and women who were mentors to a young woman beginning a life of ministry.

Coming to St. Bonaventure as the director of the FCSC brings together my passion for caring for those who live on the margins,

Shaping Lives

ministering at a faith-based institution, and engaging daily with young people who energize and invite me to be the woman God needs me to be for the world.

When I travel around from place to place, I am frequently asked about the faith of young people (often called Gen Z). Sometimes, I hear phrases like, "Young people don't have the same faith as their parents ... and definitely not their grandparents!" I often smile, nod my head and agree.

Yes, the faith of our current generation looks and feels very different than the faith of earlier generations. Faith and belief in God is much more grounded in gospel values, rooted in service and living each day with integrity.

I have discovered that young adults desire challenging and truthful mentors. They look to us to be honest about the injustices and struggles we face each day. They want to serve others and make service part of their lives, not simply something we do a few times a year.

Our current young adults look to us to nudge them towards the incarnation — the presence of God, alive and thriving in our world.

Many years ago, I met a man a bit older and wiser than myself ... and he is a Bona's

alum! He said, whenever his young adult children ask him to pray, hang out or serve others, he drops everything he is doing and joins them with enthusiasm. I adopted this "rule for life."

Sometimes, the ask is cleverly disguised and other times I feel I have "too much to do." I have discovered that, yes, my plans for the day will change, but my life will be much richer for the experience.

And so, I invite you and thank you for all you have done for the Franciscan Center for Social Concern in the past, and all you will do in the future.

Together, we are shaping young people who are committed to the Franciscan values we hold dear. Together, we offer light and hope to the world in which we live through our acts of service and compassion.

Thank you for your generosity. May each of us look for God's presence, alive and thriving in our midst.

Alice Miller Nation is the director of the Franciscan Center for Social Concern. She lives in Livonia, N.Y., with her husband, three children and their dog, appropriately named Bonnie.



Nicole Antonacci serves minestrone soup at the St. Francis Inn in Philadelphia.

As I sit here and look back on my experience at the St. Francis Inn, I realize that I could probably write about a lot of things.

I could talk about what it was like to serve

Break the Bubble

food to the homeless in one of the poorest areas of Philadelphia.

I could talk about the importance of “combating poverty in America,” and “loving thy neighbor.”

I could even trail off into a passionate letter about how “the poor need us,” so that everyone who reads this can nod their head in agreement and then sigh at the inevitable fate of the underprivileged portion of humanity.

But let’s be honest: If I wrote about any of these things, this would just be another “sad soup kitchen story” that doesn’t change anything. The truth is, I could tell you a million stories, but none compares to the ones that go untold at the St. Francis Inn.

You see, I believe this isn’t my story to tell. Instead, it is Susan’s — a mother of two who is homeless now, but once was an accountant at a successful firm.

And Matthew’s, who told Noreen that her hair looked beautiful — even though she was wearing a wig — because he knew that

she was losing it from chemotherapy.

And William’s, who everyone calls “The Mayor” because of the way that he smiles when he shakes your hand.

And Hoan’s, whose words were few, but who looked at you with eyes full of deep love and sincerity.

These are the stories that deserve to be heard. They are the stories that go untold far too often, from people of every background — backgrounds that are not much different than yours and mine. So the next time you find the opportunity, introduce yourself to someone who seems very different than yourself. You’ll never know what might come from asking someone their name.



Nicole Antonacci volunteered on BREAKtheBubble’s fall trip to the St. Francis Inn in Philadelphia. She graduated with her B.A. in psychology in May 2018 and will complete her M.B.A. in May 2019. She is from Syracuse, N.Y.



SBU students help with a delivery at the Olean Food Pantry. (Students from left to right: Nathaniel Parish, Ashley Shultz, Jack Steger, Kurt Martone, Alyssa Levac, Anastasia Smith, Michaela Ryan)



Andrew Wawro prepares spaghetti for guests at The Warming House.

Offering What We Have

The Franciscan Center for Social Concern (FCSC) is an organization of opportunity — opportunity to be selfless, to serve, to make others smile.

One of the most precious opportunities the FCSC offers is fostering the personal growth and development skills of students. Behind the scenes of our beloved service and outreach ministries a team of graduate students works to sustain these programs while navigating the challenges of funding, development and remaining true to our core Franciscan values.

A year ago, I was working in University Ministries as an unpaid intern, picking up the occasional writing and editing job from our former FCSC director. When spring



Students serve a hearty meal to guests at The Warming House in Olean, NY.” (Students from left to right: Kaylyn Foody, Kaylee Brabham, Sarah Rose Costello, Abigail Collura)

semester came, I knew I would be applying to be a minister-in-residence, but I was also hoping to get a paid graduate position on campus.

As luck would have it, the FCSC needed a grants writer, someone adept at collecting information, asking questions, transforming personal narratives into useful marketing tools, seeking truth and clarity — they needed a storyteller. They needed a Jandoli School of Communication graduate.

The nature of life and nonprofits is constant change. With the high turnover rate of student coordinators and the new positions being formed and filled, the FCSC is no stranger to turmoil, but the beauty of our organization is our ability to adapt. Surprise deadlines, steep learning curves, hard truths and sudden loss don’t halt us in our tracks, they propel us forward.

I asked one of the students who visits our offices frequently what makes the FCSC so special and she said, “I can just come here and relax. It’s an inviting place and there’s always someone smiling — it’s like a breath of fresh air.”

I nearly laughed out loud.

Having spent my day creating marketing materials that I knew would need to go back to the drawing board and drafting

narratives that I knew would need revision is frustrating at times. It seems as if the work is never done.

But then I took a breath of that fresh air and realized that the best thing about the FCSC is we don’t wear our struggles, we wear our successes.

The FCSC is an organization of opportunity. For me it has been an opportunity to learn how to conduct myself with grace and good humor, how to be that breath of fresh air, when things inevitably stray from the plan.



M.K. Killen is the grants assistant for the Franciscan Center for Social Concern. She graduated with her B.A. in Journalism and Mass Communication in May 2018 and will complete her M.B.A. in May 2019. She is from Branchport, N.Y.

#GivingTuesdayatBonas

The Franciscan Center for Social Concern (FCSC) has been working closely with St. Bonaventure University’s Advancement and Communications offices to develop creative and new fundraising initiatives to support the FCSC and its subsidiary departments.

This November, the FCSC team is working with an undergraduate marketing class and a team in Advancement to create a successful online fundraising campaign for Giving Tuesday.

Giving Tuesday is a national day of charity held the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, this year celebrated on Nov. 27. Giving Tuesday was created in response to the aggressive consumerism found in the days immediately after Thanksgiving, such as Black Friday and Cyber Monday.

Our #GivingTuesdayatBonas campaign will go live online Nov. 1 at www.sbu.edu/givingtuesdayatbonas. Throughout the month, we will use social media to feature five beloved ministries of the FCSC with content geared toward every member of our St. Bonaventure community.

By donating to the FCSC, you support programs like the Warming House, the oldest student-run soup kitchen in the country; Bona Buddies, the largest youth-mentoring program in Cattaraugus County; Silver Wolves, a companionship program for elderly people; SBU@SPCA, students volunteering their time with animals; BREAKtheBubble, service-learning retreats for students; and Farm to Table, a chance for students to live in community each summer and participate in the food cycle from harvest to hospitality.

