

## Religious Say *Thank You*

Your generosity to SOAR! makes a real difference in the lives of aging Sisters, Brothers and Priests. Here are a few of the many thank you notes we received in response to grants awarded in 2016:

"As the former Superior General of the Josephites, I am now retired to St. Joseph Manor, Baltimore. I suffer with health problems, unable to get around like the old days. Thank SOAR! for the new modern updated bed. It is so much easier now that all the control switches work. "

*Very Rev. John L. Filleppelli, S.S.J.*

*Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart*

"These Sisters have spent a lifetime caring for the less fortunate and now must rely on the generosity of others for their support. God bless you for your support and know that we will keep you and your benefactors in our prayers."

*Sister Maria Bartos, OSF*

*Bernardine Franciscan Sisters*

"Through your generosity our elder Sisters, who find it difficult to share in community activities, can now safely maneuver through life's necessities with dignity and comfort."

*Sister Judith Murphy, OSB*

*Benedictine Sisters of Chicago*

"Many thanks for the 'grab bars' that were installed in my bathroom recently. They will be a great reassurance for me when I need them. At my age (84) my balance is not the best always and this will help me. May God bless your generosity!"

*Sister Jean Canara, OSF*

*Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities*

Each and every day, aging religious and their congregations gratefully remember SOAR! donors in their prayers. Thank you for being a light to our aging religious!



A grant to the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters in 2016 renovated 50-year-old bathrooms at St. Joseph Villa in Reading, Pennsylvania and gave the Sisters greater safety, independence and dignity.



Lift chairs like this one used by Sister Mary Lois, OP, of the Dominican Sisters of Peace, give our aging women and men religious a greater sense of safety, and make it easier them to enjoy activities such as reading, watching TV, and engaging with other members of the community.



Dear  
Friends  
of  
SOAR!

Is it me, or does the world seem to be moving faster than ever? Important news stories are shared in one minute sound bites. Ads run mere seconds. Some of my favorite television programs move through story lines so quickly that it's hard to keep up. I find myself thinking, "Wait a minute, what just happened?" Even the cherry blossoms in Washington, DC are in a rush to bloom. Why can't we all just slow down?

Once a year, I like to slow down and visit some of the retired religious you help with your support of SOAR! In January, I traveled to New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. Each congregation varied in size and charism, but all offered warm hospitality. The Sisters' joyful spirit and commitment to serve energizes me. Sisters in their 80s teach English to immigrants; Sisters in their 70s drive other Sisters to doctor appointments; and Sisters in their 90s serve as receptionists. These Sisters are not slowing down! Your support of SOAR! gives them the extra help they need – a stair lift, handrails in the long hallways, a sound system in the chapel – so they can continue to live (and work!) among their community of Sisters.

At every convent, the Sisters always asked to be remembered to you, our faithful benefactors. Your goodness is imprinted in their hearts. Your support means so much to our aging religious. It is my happy responsibility to let you know how sincerely your goodness is appreciated.

In gratitude,

*S. Kathleen Lunsmann, IHM*

Sister Kathleen Lunsmann, IHM  
President

# Sharing Our Stories

## William and Kathy Lex

*"A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination. But when you add to that a literate tongue or pen, then you have something very special."*


-Nelson Mandela

Kathy and I, both products of the outstanding Catholic school system in the United States, believe that we were blessed with teachers who espoused this three-pronged philosophy. I attended St. Peter the Apostle School in Philadelphia which was staffed by the School Sisters of Notre Dame, followed by high school at Roman Catholic, an all-boys high school. At that time about half the teachers were Priests. Kathy attended St. Bonaventure School in Philadelphia and was educated by the Sisters of St. Francis from Glen Riddle, Pennsylvania. During her high school years at Cardinal Dougherty, Kathy was taught by numerous religious orders of Sisters.

We have so many reasons for which to be grateful to Sisters, Brothers and Priests who have devoted their lives to minister in schools, hospitals and social organizations. Both Kathy and I are particularly grateful to the dedicated religious women and men who ministered in the field of Catholic education. Because of their service, we benefitted from a tuition-free education. Throughout our lives, we have quoted many words of wisdom from our teachers who faithfully and lovingly instilled our Catholic faith into our hearts and lives. These religious educators provided the key foundations for a responsible adulthood through their teaching and example of solid values and strong moral principles, making certain that we had a good head and a literate tongue, but even more importantly, a good heart.

We recognize that many of our teachers may be gone, and that those who are not are quite elderly. They mirror the many Priests, Brothers and Sisters throughout the United States who have dedicated their lives




 From left are John and Bernadette Brokers, Bill and Kathy Lex and Sister Kathleen Lunsmann, IHM at a SOAR! donor reception in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania in October 2016.


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 Genevieve Murphy, right, standing with Cathy Quinn and Vic Irwin, hosted a SOAR! donor reception in Boca Raton, Florida in February 2017.



 The Knights of Columbus Family of Man Council #7566 hosted a charity breakfast benefitting SOAR! at Saint John Neumann Catholic Community in Reston, Virginia in March 2017.

# Save the Date

## SOAR! AWARDS

CELEBRATING RELIGIOUS LIFE

*Join SOAR! and Help Benefit Aging and Infirm Religious at Our 2017 Events:*

**MAY 20, 2017**

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

**SEPTEMBER 28, 2017**

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

**NOVEMBER 3, 2017**

WASHINGTON, DC

For details, call or e-mail Maggie Cerise, special events coordinator, at (202) 529-7627 or [mcerise@soar-usa.org](mailto:mcerise@soar-usa.org). You can also visit our website at [www.soar-usa.org/events](http://www.soar-usa.org/events) for more information.

to the service of God's people and who are now at an age where physical work is no longer possible and prayer ministry has become their way of continuing to serve. Because of their hard work, these aging religious should be able to enjoy a comfortable and peaceful retirement. They earned it.

We recognize SOAR! as a dynamic organization helping hundreds of religious communities meet the retirement needs of their members through our help. Our support of SOAR! is our way of saying "Thank You" to our teachers and to all religious for what we have been given. Why do we support SOAR!? How could we not???

William and Kathy Lex

*Bill is president of an insurance brokerage company. His wife, Kathy, is a registered nurse at a Chester County women's medical practice. They live in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.*



If you would like to share a story about how religious have nurtured you and why you support SOAR!, call (202) 529-7627 and speak with Eleanor La Prade or drop us a note at [info@soar-usa.org](mailto:info@soar-usa.org).



## FAITHFUL FRIENDS

You can be part of a special group of our most committed supporters – join our *Faithful Friends* monthly giving program! Monthly donors provide a source of consistent support, help keep down SOAR!'s administrative costs, and eliminate the need for you to write checks or look for stamps.

**It's as simple as 1-2-3 to join!**

1. **Decide** what amount you'd like to give (minimum \$5) by check, credit or debit card and if you'd like your gift to be received on the 1st or 15th of the month.
2. **Enroll** online at <https://donate.soar-usa.org/> or by calling the SOAR! office at (202) 529-7627.
3. **Rest assured** in the knowledge that your monthly support means that our aging religious can count on your faithfulness to help them live safely and with dignity.

As one of our *Faithful Friends* says, "This is a great way for me to honor the religious men and women who've helped me. And because I can give SOAR! a specific amount each month, I've actually been able to increase my total yearly giving. That makes me feel good!"

Please know that you can make changes to your giving at any time by calling the SOAR! office at (202) 529-7627. Thank you for being a *Faithful Friend*!

**Please remember SOAR! in your will or estate plans. Our legal title is Support Our Aging Religious, Inc. Our federal tax ID number is 52-1485481.**

**To review SOAR!'s Legacy Brochure, please visit: [www.soar-usa.org](http://www.soar-usa.org) or call us at (202) 529-7627. Please let us know if you are planning or have made the commitment to leave SOAR! in your estate plans.**

**A CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION SERVING ELDERLY SISTERS, BROTHERS AND PRIESTS SINCE 1986.**



The purpose of this newsletter is to communicate the mission and needs of SOAR! and to express our gratitude to our donors.

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