

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Spirit of Sister Thea Bowman connects Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration and Juanita Sims Doty Foundation *Relationship will work to empower black youth***

La Crosse, Wis./Jackson, Miss. - In November 2018 on their way to the Diocese of Jackson, Mississippi, for the opening of Sister Thea Bowman's cause for canonization, Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration Marla Lang, Helen Elsbernd and Eileen McKenzie had a chance encounter with Dr. Karla McCullough, the executive director for [Juanita Sims Doty Foundation](#) (JSDF). That chance encounter at the airport led to the beginning of a relationship that today has resulted in a \$600,000 FSPA investment in JSDF's mission to disrupt the dehumanization cycle and empower black youth.

Together, this partnership will disrupt the dehumanization and racialized trauma of people of color at a systems level through communication, social justice, service and healing. JSDF will continue its work of mentoring youths of color, particularly Black youth, with an emphasis on service, justice and racial healing and expand its mission in community engagement and areas of racial inequity.

We will disrupt systems by mentoring youth groups.

- developing curriculum.
- hosting community awareness workshops.
- conducting research to identify best practices and solutions to inform policies and programming to build racial understanding and equity.
- partnering with organizations and agencies that serve people of color to implement the best practices and solutions to disrupt dehumanization and racialized trauma.

We are moved to act now. The year 2018 called the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration to declare a Revolution of Goodness by unveiling our white privilege. The year 2020 was one of ongoing civil unrest. The time to engage in further disruption is now. The ultimate goal is to have every person live in an anti-racist world where oppression of any person does not exist. And while this project is initially focused in the state of Mississippi, the program elements are now replicable in time and space, especially since virtual meetings are now more prevalent than ever.

#### **About the FSPA initiative to seed a legacy**

***The FSPA and JSDF collaboration is the result of an internal FSPA initiative, Seeding a Legacy***

Seeding a Legacy's goal is to invest (seed) the funds received from the [transaction with Mayo Clinic into collaboration](#)—into making something good happen. All sisters were eligible to present a Seeding a Legacy proposal to the internal committee for consideration. Criteria included:

- Four or more sisters determine a project for funding
- The Franciscan value of “relationship” must be operative.
- Address broad global/national or local concerns.
- Recipient must be a non-profit organization.

### **About FSPA**

Based in La Crosse, Wisconsin, Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration are women religious engaged in furthering the work of the Catholic church and the Gospel. Their partners in ministry, including affiliates and prayer partners, join them in service of God's mission. The sisters work in the United States and internationally in varied ministries, collaborating to minister in areas of greatest need, living the Gospel through contemplation and action.

### **About the Juanita Sims Doty Foundation**

Located in Jackson, Mississippi, JSDF was founded in 2010 to improve individual lives through community engagement, outreach and advocacy.

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Media note:

#### **Collaborators/Contacts for story**

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