

Meet **Jean and John Roach**. Jean has been an Associate since 1993. John recently joined the Associate program in 2012. Following is their story.

Relationships begin with a person-to-person contact. Our relationship with the Sisters of St. Francis started when our children were very young. Sister Eileen Bannon, who is the sister of our friends Joe and Joan Bannon, was the director of the Theater in the Round at the College of St. Francis. Sister Eileen would always make sure that our children and their friends got good seats, even if it meant they sat on the floor front and center! Later in the 1970s, I met Sister Albert Marie Papesh who was the Administrator at Our Lady of Angels. At that time, I was developing and teaching a nurses-assistant course at Salem Village in Joliet and we welcomed the nursing aides from OLA in our course. Sister Albert Marie and I became professional colleagues, and it is also when our life connection and friendship began. Sister Albert Marie began inviting me to various gatherings and meetings of the Sisters. I became involved in raising awareness and funds for the Sisters through my participation in the “520 Group,” the “Business and Professional Women’s Prayer breakfast series,” to the early days of the Annual “Fall Brunch” and “Evenings of Prayer.” I worked at many of these events and then John also joined in.



The Sisters have become an extension of our family. Sisters sang at our daughter’s wedding and even our granddaughters know the Sisters, attending “Christmas in July” sales, the Christmas Bazaar at OLA to helping at one of the Autumn Feast Events with decorations and clean-up.

In all the years of our relationship with the Sisters, there have been two things that have made an impact in our lives: the power of prayer (and of praying together) and working simply to “respond to the needs of our times through prayer, community and ministry.”