

Kathleen Schneider Will Receive Women of Faith Award October 15, 2003

Kathleen Schneider reflects the kind of service the Gospel demands, reaching out to the poor and marginalized, those lost in the cracks and who are needy in so many ways. "When I asked her if I could recommend her for the Women of Faith Award, she said, 'Not if it's an award for ME...only if it would help inspire the faith of others!'" said Sister Margaret Bosch, SDS.

Sister Margaret came to know Kathleen and her husband, Dr. George Schneider, while parishioners at St. Pius X Parish in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. The couple founded the Greater Milwaukee Free Clinic, 9330 W. Lincoln Avenue in West Allis, Wisconsin, in 1995. Today, Kathleen is the clinic's executive director and Dr. Schneider is the clinic's volunteer medical director.

She has donated thousands of service hours to maintain and supply the privately-funded, all-volunteer facility. The clinic's mission is to help the uninsured and underinsured. The clinic has provided over \$2.5 million in free services and medications. Kathleen is the first to credit the doctors, volunteers and staff who are partners with her in this ministry.

"Our patients come from all over the Milwaukee area. Many are working full or part-time jobs with no insurance. They are all ages, races and nationalities. Over the years, we have seen our patients face serious issues. Many live on the edge and are not able to pay for the medicines they need. Our goal is to help them obtain the best possible health care we can," she explained.



Dr. George and Kathleen Schneider are the co-founders of the Greater Milwaukee Free Clinic in West Allis, Wisconsin. The clinic serves those who cannot afford private health insurance.

The clinic is open each Tuesday and Thursday evening. She added that the clinic also helps connect the patients to programs such as Badger Care and the General Assistance Medical Program (GAMP). "I am so proud of the patient care we offer. We have the most wonderful group of ninety volunteers—45 are physicians and we also have a support staff of nurses and receptionists. This clinic could not exist without these people and our donors."

Pharmaceutical companies also contribute substantially. "They contribute drug samples and are some of the silent heroes of our clinic," Kathleen emphasized.

"This work is rewarding and energizing. Even the doctors and volunteers say that after working - elsewhere all day, they come to the clinic and get an energy boost," she added.

The ministry faces financial challenges continually. Kathleen is the chief fundraiser as well. There is no government funding, but area churches and West Allis Memorial Hospital Radiology and Pathology Departments all donate services and/or provide volunteers. "Money is our biggest challenge, but God takes care of us each month. This whole effort is related to our faith. Life is a prayer and this is our faith in action. This clinic could not happen without our volunteers and donors," the director said.

Kathleen has also been a dedicated parish and community volunteer. She has led St. Pius's Christian Formation Commission. In addition, she has successfully chaired the Channel 10/36 auctions. Because of her faith life and efforts, thousands of people have been helped.

"God's love is here in the world, but it is through us that other people experience it," she said.