



PRESENTATION DOORWAYS

offering hospitality to the world



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Your THOUGHTS & COMMENTS

We want your input. Please send or email
photos, stories and information about our
sisters, associates, former members, family
and friends, or any ideas which relate to the
aim of this publication. You may submit the
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Cover PHOTO

Left to right: Sisters Anne McCormick,
Ann Jackson, Damian O'Brien, Jeanette
McCarthy and Associate Barbara
Ressler share the light of Nano during a
Presentation Day celebration.

*The doorways represented on the cover are
snapshots of significant moments in the
Presentation history: (left to right) doorway of
the current motherhouse at 2360 Carter Road;
doorway of St. Vincent's Academy (now St.
Columbkille) in Dubuque in 1879; doorway of
Sacred Heart Chapel at the current motherhouse;
doorway of the former motherhouse at 1229
Mount Loretta which was built in 1909; and
doorway by which Mother Vincent Hennessy
left Mooncoin, Ireland, to begin the Dubuque
foundation in 1874.*

PRESENTATION DOORWAYS

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A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Openings

by JENNIFER RAUSCH, PBVM

The Miracle of the Sugar

The holiday season that we are now celebrating – these weeks marked by the “harvest abundance” of Thanksgiving, the “birthing of Divinity” at Christmas and our progression into new horizons of 2011... is a time that bids me to recall the miracles of my life. I refer to miracles not as theologically defined events which evidence supernatural power but as events of the heart.

My memory of the “Miracle of the Sugar” takes me back over 20 years to a soup kitchen in South Chicago where, as a team of five volunteers, we helped to serve breakfast and lunch each day for two weeks. Our guests were our sisters and brothers who lived on the street, slept under the bridges and searched out food one day at a time. Hot coffee was always on the menu, luckily in generous supply. But not so available was sugar for the coffee which was in great demand by our guests. On day three, it was clear that the sugar supply would be totally exhausted after lunch.

The next morning we arrived with our five pound bag of sugar from home and another 10 pounds purchased at a grocery store. Our shared morning prayer included a reference to the sparsity of sugar with an expressed dependence on God’s providence. The sugar at hand got us through breakfast. By mid-morning, a car pulled up and the open trunk revealed another 20 pounds perfectly timed for our noon guests. And then as we were finishing after lunch clean-up, the director of the food site made the announcement, “Our prayers are answered. The sugar is here.” We then began the task of re-locating one ton of sugar from a going-out-of-business bakery to the kitchen storeroom. You can imagine our giddy exuberance as we stacked bag after bag of sugar that would sweeten coffee for many, many days to come. Yes, it was a miracle of the sugar, but more importantly, a “miracle of our hearts” – hearts opened to live more rooted in trust and patience.

So, I wish for you a season of miracles. Perhaps you will experience a 10, to 20, to 2000 pound multiplication of sugar. Just as grace-filled would be a miracle of reconciliation between family members, a change of heart that replaces prejudice with compassion or a spirit of hospitality that sees the “other” as friend rather than stranger.

Then the true spirit of the season will be celebrated:

*And Lord, when it is time to say:
“This is the Christmas Day,
I pray that you will warmly be welcomed
in the Bethlehem of my heart,
giving birth in my newly opened places.”*

From *Fresh Bread* by Joyce Rupp, OSM

The blessings of this holy season to you and the ones you love. May many “miracles of the heart” be yours.



Our PURPOSE

The purpose of Presentation Doorways is to further the Gospel mission of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and our associates by sharing the news and views of the congregation with our benefactors, families and friends. Through this publication, we hope to share the charism of our congregation and invite others to become involved in our mission.

Our MISSION

We, the Sisters of the Presentation, are Catholic women who dedicate our lives to God through evangelization, prayer, service and hospitality. Our way of life is based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We share in the vision of our foundress, Nano Nagle, who dared to dream of a better world for the poor, sick and uneducated of Ireland. We commit ourselves to the empowerment of women and children. We reverence and celebrate all creation as gift. We commit ourselves to confronting injustice and working for peace.

As we continue to keep Nano’s dream alive, we are pleased to share our mission with you.

Sisters of the Presentation LEADERSHIP TEAM

Sister Jennifer Rausch, president

Sister Marge Healy, vice-president

Sister Beth Driscoll, councilor

Sister Leanne Welch, councilor



Tending to the Needs of Others

by MARILOU IRONS, PBVM

For the past eight years, Sister Lynn Mary Wagner has tended to the needs of many at the Dubuque Food Pantry where she takes great pride in serving others.

“Happy is she who has regard for the lowly and poor.” *Psalm 41* Jesus said the poor will be with us always. As his disciples and Nano Nagle’s daughters, each of us by our baptismal promises is called to be of service to the poor. Sister Lynn Mary Wagner, director of the Dubuque Food Pantry, takes this directive seriously. In her eighth year at the Jackson Street site, Sister is well versed in organizing volunteers, community workers, civic and religious groups, and her siblings and mother to assist with the collection and distribution of food for the poor of the neighborhood and tri-state area. Sister Lynn gladly welcomes every extra set of hands to keep the food pantry a vibrant center carrying out its mission to serve those in need.

Like Nano, Sister Lynn’s days are unpredictable. Being ready to sort canned goods with a Boy Scout troop, traveling to the local Hy-Vee bakery for items or to the Dyersville Locker to purchase meat are activities that engage Sister Lynn any day of the week. An ever-faithful crew of five to seven volunteers like Janet, Mary and Joe assist her in the daily and weekly preparation of baskets containing the essentials any family would need.

If not working with volunteers to repack bulk items into family-sized bundles, Sister Lynn Mary could accompany a community worker to St. Stephen Food Bank or to a local discount center purchasing food or hygiene products not currently available at the Jackson Street pantry. Other regular pantry volunteers like Sister Edna Ginta, OSF; Presentation Sisters Deborah Paige, Beth Driscoll and Sheila Ann Dougherty, and Associate Karla Berns enjoy the variety of tasks Sister Lynn plans for them and which all contribute to the smooth workings of the center.

Oprah often encourages her listeners to find their passion and live it. Through observation and conversations with Sister Lynn, it is easy to know being a key player at the local food pantry is a passion she shares and lives. Late October finds Sister Lynn gathering her cohorts together to tackle the overwhelming job of preparing 500 plus Christmas baskets for the needy in the area.

“The Christmas baskets are a huge challenge” reports Sister Lynn, “and only doable because so many groups increase their volunteerism at every level to orchestrate this Paul Bunyan-size labor of love.”

In mid-November many Presentation sisters and associates respond to Sister Lynn Mary’s e-mail to assist in registering families and filling the baskets with holiday goodies. Sister Lynn readily praises all her elves but in particular one Presentation associate group, Nano’s Nine, stands out for their perseverance with this project over the past six years. As this annual, massive project draws to an end in late December, everyone involved joins with one voice in praising God for all who care enough to participate in the Christmas basket preparations. The volunteers echo the psalmist by praying, “Happy are they who have regard for the lowly and the poor.”

“Besides the day-to-day operations of the pantry, another aspect of my responsibilities as director is researching and writing grants,” says Sister Lynn Mary. Grant applications to the Wahlert Foundation, FEMA and the Dubuque Racing Association are a few organizations from which Sister requests financial support in order to maintain or expand the food pantry’s outreach. Besides obtaining grants, Sister Lynn’s careful budgeting of resources allowed for the purchase of a much-needed van to transport food items to the pantry.

Generous individuals, corporations and local businesses organize non-perishable food drives that comprise the majority of the food pantry inventory. The Boy/Girl Scouts also conduct a city-wide collection each spring that amounts to thousands of pounds of food that volunteers utilize to restock the pantry shelves. “These ongoing donations and drives constitute the heart of the food pantry inventory,” says Sister Lynn Mary. “The Dubuque Food Pantry board and myself quickly acknowledge their gratitude to those many and varied donors who keep the pantry shelves filled.”

In addition to her food pantry responsibilities, Sister Lynn Mary spends Thursday and Saturday mornings near the motherhouse ovens creating delicious sweets in the form of bars, breads and pies. On those two days she ensures that the Mount Loretto cookie jars and dessert table continually overflow with mouth-watering goodies. However, oven duty and the pantry do not consume all of Sister Lynn’s days. She balances her work with play and prayer. Early most days one finds her joining housemates, Sisters Marilyn Breen, Rita Cameron and Elizabeth Guilian sharing morning prayer prior to heading downtown to work. Most Wednesday evenings one can hear her laugh as she enjoys a card game with Sisters Annette Skyles, Francesca Presseller, Marian Sweeney, Pierre Kollasch or James Marie Gross to name a few. Since many of the card players are also bakers, Sister Lynn has a golden opportunity to swap recipes and sample their baking skills.



Her quiet, low-keyed disposition coupled with a dry sense of humor suits Sister Lynn as she continues to serve all who come to her in need. The task at hand may be to bake a loaf of homemade bread, to organize a food drive or deal the perfect hand of cards. Whatever the need, Sister Lynn Mary, like Nano will respond.

Top photo: Associate Susan Murphy takes orders for Christmas gift baskets. Bottom photo: Sister Lynn Mary Wagner and Janet Pfohl, pantry volunteer, stock the shelves at the food pantry.





Above photo: Glenn and Bernadyne Langer outside their home in Elm Grove, Wisconsin.
 Left photo: Gonzalo Segundo, former chief of the Naurenda community of Bolivia.



“Gracias” to Some Unmatchable Donors

by MAURA MCCARTHY, PBVM

Aren't God's ways a wonder to behold! Recently I had the joy of visiting my cousin, Glenn Langer and his wife Bernadyne at their home in Elm Grove, Wisconsin. We shared a delightful meal and visit, I slept in their lovely home and went with them to St. Mary's for Mass. After a great breakfast, Glenn drove me to Mount Loretto. Once more I became aware of how God, so manifest in our daily lives, makes a fascinating story.

I had always thought that I would have had to be totally obtuse to miss the palpable signs of the Providence of God during the 20 some years of accompaniment of the Guarani people of Southern Bolivia. One part of that story is that the call of the Presentation sisters to the Guarani people came in the same decade (the 1980s) as the Guarani's own initial stages of auto-liberation from their slavery to the land holders. During these years, the Guarani people were in dire need of some strong financial support to realize this dream of beginning their own fields, building their own schools (until the government got around to fulfilling its responsibility), building homes more fit for human habitation, purchasing tools, wire for fences, sending their children to middle schools and high school and obtaining land for their own agriculture and to raise animals.

This very necessary financial support came from donations from parishes, friends and Catholic financial institutions, but the biggest and best private donor for the Guarani cause was Glenn Langer and his wife Bernadyne. Glenn's father, Irwin Langer, was married to Jeannette Bohrer, a sister of my mother. That history goes way back!

Kathryn (Bohrer) McCarthy, my mother, was a young seamstress from Wexford, Iowa, living in Lansing, Iowa, in the late 1920s. Kathryn went to Milwaukee and found work altering clothes in an upscale ladies' dress shop and Jeannette went to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, right after graduation from Immaculate Conception High School in Lansing in 1926. She lived with her brother, Bill Bohrer, and his wife, Nellie Whalen, who were operating a restaurant together in Milwaukee. Jeannette went to business school in Milwaukee and soon began working as a secretary in the same city.

Kathryn Bohrer was dating my father, Morris McCarthy, who was farming near Waukon, Iowa, at the time, and the two were writing letters in hopes of marrying as soon as the economy would take an upswing from the Great Depression. A young man who had recently arrived from Lake Mills, Wisconsin, Irwin Langer, known to his friends as Irv, found work with an insurance company, and subsequently a roofing company. He was living in the same boarding house as my mother, Kathryn. The young people living at the boarding house, as well as the young people from the Milwaukee Bohrer family went on picnics and other events together. It was at one of these outings that Kathryn introduced her sister Jeannette to Irv. Jeannette and Irv began dating and were married in 1931. Their first born, Glenn Langer, studied business as a young man at the University of Wisconsin, did his military service and then, with his father, Irv, set in motion the founding of a new company which became known as Langer Roofing.

Glenn and Bernadyne were engaged to be married in 1955, the very year that I was about to enter the Sisters of the Presentation. I was so impressed by the obvious love of this newly engaged couple from Milwaukee, who gathered with all of the Bohrer relatives at Rockwell, Iowa, for the 25th jubilee of Father Raymond Bohrer, another member of the eight Bohrers. Glenn and Bernadyne were married in 1956, the same year that Irwin Langer and his son Glenn founded the new company. The company grew over the years, employing well over 100 persons. Langer Roofing now has a third generation Langer continuing to promote its motto: "Honest hard work for a fair and reasonable price." Glenn and Bernadyne's son, Mark, with Glenn and other family members, carry on this Langer tradition.


Sister Peggy Ryan, OP, and I were able to attend Glenn and Bernadyne's golden wedding anniversary in the summer of 2006, with their wonderful family and dozens of Bohrer relatives. Glenn and Bernadyne, "the unmatchable donors" of the sisters and their team, made possible many Guarani dreams: education, housing for hundreds of Guarani families, purchase of agricultural, wood and pasture lands, and the emergency health ministry. I suspect that Bernadyne greatly influenced the decision that she and Glenn would so strongly support the Presentation Guarani mission. As the Guarani would say: "Yasoropai, Glenn and Bernadyne," or "May God reward you."



Students and teachers of 2003 are pictured at one of the many proud 8th grade graduations at Naurenda, Bolivia.

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Left to right: Above photo: back row: Penny Dalsing, Betty Michels, Linda Brown; front row: Amanda Kirk, Sheila Anton, Judy Hefel. Right photo: Kathleen Hochrein



Amazing Women of Service and Faith

by ELIZABETH GUILIANI, PBVM

Effort is its own reward.
We are here to do,
and through doing to learn;
and through learning to know;
and through knowing to experience wonder;
and through wonder to attain wisdom;
and through simplicity to give attention;
and through attention
to see what needs to be done...

BEN HEI HEI in *Wisdom of the Jewish Sages*
by Rabbi Rami M. Shapiro

When reflecting on the words by Rabbi Shapiro, it reminded me of our beloved housekeeping staff who walk among us here at Mount Loretto.

Recently, I had the opportunity to work alongside the housekeeping staff in completing the annual cleaning of our chapel. I was deeply touched, not only by the masterful way they approached their work but by the reverence shown as they made their way in and through our sacred space. I realized very quickly that cleaning the chapel was not just part of their job but their vocation. These gifted women exemplify the Catholic social teaching regarding the “Dignity of Work,” reminding all “that work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God’s creation.” Our housekeeping staff are amazing women of faith who work tirelessly to help us maintain our home that we share with our families, friends and the world.

The staff works closely with the sisters to assure that Mount Loretto is a home of warmth and hospitality. Not only is our home bright and shiny, but the smiling faces of the staff light up the rooms by their very presence as they enter to begin each day. Exchanges of greetings can be heard as they engage the sisters in light-hearted conversations and at

times seeking prayers and counsel for their needs and the needs of their loved ones. This relational way of being is heartwarming and is manifested throughout our home on a daily basis.

Staff are committed to Nano Nagle’s mission. This is noted not only in their work, but is also demonstrated through their engagement in offering solutions they have researched and implemented. These solutions have been found to be economical and aid in our pledge to earth sustainability.

Sisters are more than willing to share words of gratitude about the housekeeping staff. Sister James Marie Gross shares, “They feel like family to me – always so cheerful even when I know they must be dead tired.”

Sister Dolores Zieser expresses, “Our housekeepers are an important part of our community. They show genuine concern for each of the sisters.”

Sister Lynn Marie Fangman adds, “I am so impressed by the many ways our housekeeping staff tend to the ‘little needs and requests’ of our senior sisters. We are fortunate to have these women walking with us, living our charism and providing for our mission.”

There is a Zen saying, “No seed ever sees the flower.” Anyone involved in compassionate service eventually learns this truth. The Mount Loretto housekeeping staff has learned this lesson extremely well!

Every issue will tell you a little bit about the life of Nano Nagle, the woman behind the lantern and the women who follow in her footsteps.

The Lady of the Lantern

NANO Lives



by JOAN LICKTEIG, PBVM

Mother Mary Aloysius (Margaret) Waring, Superior 1898-1901

Because of the founding story, most Presentation sisters claim familiarity with the names Mother Patricia and Mother Josephine. But what about Mother Aloysius?

Margaret Waring, a member of the first class of postulants entered in 1877. This first class, numbering seven, had four Dubuque girls, including Margaret. They were, likewise, the first American entrants, all of Irish parentage.

Margaret, received as Sister Mary Aloysius, had been professed only five months when Mother Vincent died. Nevertheless, Bishop Hennessy appointed her as assistant to Mother Patricia, the first leader of the community following Mother Vincent’s death. Mother Aloysius served in this capacity for 15 years. When Mother Josephine was elected superior of the congregation, Mother Aloysius, once again, served as assistant.

In 1898, at the time of the second election of a congregational leader, no one was elected after the third ballot, so Archbishop Hennessy appointed Mother Aloysius to lead the community. This fourth superior, having completed her three-year term, contributed a total of 21 consecutive years in community leadership.

Mother Aloysius was known best for her exceptional teaching ability and her excellent educational leadership. Sister Mary Rosalia Plamondon (*Annals of the Sisters of the Presentation*) states, “Mother Aloysius was a born teacher, a trained teacher and a hard working teacher. All her interests centered around the school and children.” In 1879, at the opening of the West Hill school, (later St. Vincent/St. Columbkille), Mother Aloysius became the first “director.” She served in this position for 19 years until she was appointed to govern the community.

As the superior of the community, Mother Aloysius erected a school building separate from the convent in 1898. That same year she arranged for the first general retreat for the sisters. It was during her term that the community observed its silver jubilee in 1899. Twelve postulants entered during her three-year term of office, some of whom had been her pupils.

Following her years of community leadership, Mother Aloysius returned to teaching. She was one of five sisters who opened the school in Whittimore, Iowa. A year later she went to Lawler, Iowa, where she was, once again, in charge of the school. She remained there until her death on October 17, 1906, following an illness of only one week.

The shining example of commitment and steadfastness in ministry, modeled in the life of Mother Aloysius, is reminiscent of many Presentation ministers, past and present.



Associates Help Us Grow

by KARLA BERNES, ASSOCIATE CO-DIRECTOR

During the community gathering this past July, the sisters were asked to write how associates change the Presentation community and help them grow. These are some of the responses:

“Associates come with new insights, visions, experiences, depth of prayer and a willingness to be a part of us. They energize us, give us new perspectives and a fresh look at things.”

Sister Carmen Hernandez

“Their excitement about Nano’s story renews my own commitment to carrying Nano’s lantern and walking ‘one pace beyond.’”

Sister Diana Blong

“Associates challenge us, energize us, affirm us, support us and bring a gift of spirituality to us.”

Sister Raeleen Sweeney

“By their sharing, their enthusiasm, their desire to be involved, their delight in Nano’s life; they keep us real! We are more because of them.”

Sister Joan Lickteig

With the sisters, associates are companions in prayer and partners in mission. Nano Nagle’s charisma, spirituality and mission motivate their daily lives. Associates identify with the mission statement of the Sisters of the Presentation which states, “We are called to evangelize, offering hope and love to a broken world by incarnating the hospitality of God, confronting injustice and working for peace.”

Presentation associates bond with the sisters and one another in various ways: faith sharing, prayer, evangelization, service and hospitality. Many of the associates come together with sisters monthly. Some are very active in volunteer service projects and ministries of the sisters such as tutoring, working in area food pantries, preparing and serving meals at local shelters, collecting money and supplies for poor families and helping flood victims. Other associates take the Presentation charism to their workplace each day as they serve in their own ministries.

This past summer, a special volunteer project was undertaken by a group of associates and sisters in the cleaning of the Presentation sisters’ grave markers at Mount Olivet Cemetery. Many tombstones were covered with algae and moss and the lettering was unreadable. With the help of several power washers, the work began. It was most gratifying to see the finished project and many emotions were expressed by the workers.

Associate Darla Budden said that when she drove into the cemetery, a calm and peaceful feeling settled over her. She states, “My most sincere admiration for the sisters was even more intensified when I stood by Mother Vincent’s marker. I was so humbled to be in the cemetery where so many of Nano’s followers are laid to rest.”



As the names and dates became more visible on the markers, I realized the time span between Nano’s life and the present day was not far removed. I felt a sense of pride and respect to know Nano’s mission is still being carried out.”

Associate Deb McClimon

Associate Karen Freiburger considered it a privilege to help with this project and thought of how strong and dedicated the sisters were and how many lives they touched in the last 136 years.

“As the names and dates became more visible on the markers, I realized the time span between Nano’s life and the present day was not far removed. I felt a sense of pride and respect to know Nano’s mission is still being carried out,” states Associate Deb McClimon.

Associate Delynn Fangman shares that she would say a prayer for the sisters whose tombstones she cleaned and thanked God for providing each of them strength in her ministry.

Sister Dolores Zieser shares how special it was to see the 1880 tombstone of Mother Vincent Hennessy after it was cleaned. She stated, “I kept returning to it and thanking Mother Vincent for her courage in coming from Ireland and starting our Dubuque congregation.”

Other sisters and associates who helped in this project were Sisters Lynn Marie Fangman, Margaret Anne Kramer, Lynn Mary Wagner and associates Kate Kleeman, Mary Drees, Sue Murphy, Dora Serna and Karla Bernes.

The flame of Nano’s lantern is still burning brightly as associates answer the call to ministry. They help the Presentation community grow!



Left to right: top photo: Associate Marlene Hagemann and Sister Sheila Ann Dougherty help serve dinner at the Hope House in Dubuque. Bottom photo: Associate Dora Serna power washes the grave markers of Presentation sisters.

No Matter How You Say It

by MARILOU IRONS, PBVM

Gracias, danke, merci, thank you or grazie all mean the same. Thus, no matter what language or how one expresses thanks, appreciation for another’s presence or assistance is the point. As the Year of the Priest began, the Northern Lights associate group wanted to thank their pastors and priest-brothers for the years of service to their parishes and families. In addition to a simple thank you note to each priest, the associate group decided to host a special evening meal as a small token of their appreciation.

Delicious hors d’oeuvres started the evening as friends became reacquainted or met for the first time at Associate Claudette Hill’s home in Cedar Falls, Iowa. Each Northern Light associate provided a dish which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Among the guests were Fathers Ev Hemann, St. Patrick in Cedar Falls, Iowa; Ken Glazer, St. Stephen the Witness in Cedar Falls; Don Plamondon from Winthrop, Iowa; Msgr. Lyle Wilgenbusch from Waterloo, Iowa; Dan Knepper from St. Anthony in Dubuque, Iowa (cousin of associate Lois Loughren); and Mel Hemann, St. Patrick in Cedar Falls.

Often in the life of a pastor, other obligations prevent him from participating in various social engagements. Since several area priests were unable to attend the November gathering, another event was scheduled in mid-May. In attendance at the next appreciation social were Fathers John Gossman, St. Joseph in Marion/Mt. Vernon, Iowa (brother of the host, Claudette Hill); Paul McManus, Covenant Hospital Chaplain in Waterloo; Jim Starbuck, St. Patrick in Cedar Falls; Dick Kuhn, St. John in Peosta, Iowa (brother of Sister Jeanine Kuhn) and Mel Hemann. A wonderful meal prepared by the associates and peppered with great conversation and storytelling filled the May event. As the group began to disperse, Father Kuhn commented that the evening was very enjoyable and relaxing. Some gathered as strangers but all left as friends.

As a group, we want to express a special thank you to Dave and Leone Simpson, sister and brother-in-law of associate Claudette Hill, who helped us entertain. Lastly, we wish to thank all priests for their dedication to parish life but especially to priests known by any of the Presentation sisters and associates. The Northern Lights group is composed of Ann Nicklaus-Schmelzer, Lois Loughren, Claudette Hill, Karen Kurtt, Sisters Lois Thilgen, Michelle Gallagher, Jeanine Kuhn and Marilou Irons.



Sister Michelle Gallagher enjoys the conversation of Fathers Ev Hemann (left) and Dan Knepper (right) during a gathering to honor them for their service.

WOMEN & Spirit

CATHOLIC SISTERS IN AMERICA



The Story of Catholic Sisters in America

Women & Spirit Exhibit

In February 2011, the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium and Clarke University will honor the legacy of religious women by hosting "Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America," a traveling exhibition featuring the untold stories of the innovative, action-oriented women who played such a significant role in shaping the nation's social and cultural landscape.

"As a Smithsonian affiliate, we are pleased to bring such a powerful, high-caliber national exhibit to the Dubuque area," says Jerry Enzler, executive director of the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium and the Dubuque County Historical Society. "This exhibit continues to broaden the many ways in which we bring historical perspective to those in the Dubuque area and the entire Midwest."

Nationally, "Women & Spirit" is a project of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR). LCWR is an association of leaders of congregations of Catholic women religious in the United States. The organization represents about 95 percent of the women

religious in the United States. In addition to the national exhibit, regional congregations of sisters will present a local history component that highlights the significant connection between the congregations' missions and the people of the area.

"Today, Upper Mississippi River Valley sisters continue to work ceaselessly to bring justice, hope and peace to all of God's creation, from here at home to the ends of the globe," says Sister Jennifer Rausch. "From offering prayer to digging wells and providing spiritual retreats to helping write legislation to address such issues as human trafficking, the sisters continue to do what they always have done: they respond to the need that is greatest."

Catholic sisters throughout the United States have been key drivers of education, healthcare and more during the country's history. First arriving on America's shores almost 300 years ago, Catholic sisters altruistically built and led schools, hospitals, orphanages, homeless shelters, colleges and other enduring social institutions that have continued to serve millions of Americans in the intervening years. As nurses, teachers, and social workers, sisters entered professional ranks decades earlier than most other women. Their work provided blueprints for the nation's educational and healthcare systems that continue to serve millions of Americans from all walks of life.

"Women & Spirit" focuses on sisters' achievements in working with communities they have served. The exhibit brings to light hundreds of unsung heroines and documents a vital and significant perspective on American history. Catholic sisters' stories of everyday courage, self-sufficiency, sacrifice and service resonate deeply with us today.

"Few people are aware of the tales of the brave women who came to this country to help immigrants assimilate into the fabric of America," says Jane Burke, SSND, executive director of LCWR. "Their heroic presence during many of the formative periods of our nation is an important part of American history and the legacy of the sisters."

Exhibit visitors of all ages will discover the pivotal presence of these very self-determined women at many of our nation's dramatic turning points from the Civil War, the Depression and the Civil Rights Movement, through Hurricane Katrina. The untold stories will be recounted through rare, unseen artifacts, vivid first-person accounts, photographs and both modern and archival video. John Allen, senior Vatican analyst for CNN, says, "The 'Women & Spirit' exhibit brings to life the story of religious sisters in the United States. Against all odds, these largely anonymous women changed the country."

So mark your calendars to discover a world few have seen but millions have shared.

*The exhibit will run from
February 18-May 22, 2011*



For More Information

ADMISSION PRICES

Adult/Senior Group Rates

Adults: \$12.50/person

Seniors: \$11.50/person

All group visits require 20 or more people and offer two complimentary passes (driver/tour escort). Advance reservations needed by calling Group Sales Manager. Tours are self-guided.

**Contact: Nate Breitsprecker, 563.557.9545 ext 214
or nbreitsprecker@rivermuseum.com**

Student Group Rates

Students: Starting @ \$6/per student

Adults: \$11.50/person

Group specific tours can be customized to fit any individual student group (both guided and self-guided tours available). Minimum of 15 students needed for group rate; one complimentary adult pass per 15 students.

**Contact: Melissa Wersinger, 563.557.9545 ext 213
or mwersinger@rivermuseum.com**

Admission is a two-day pass which includes access to the whole museum. The National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium is handicapped accessible. The museum is located at 350 East 3rd Street, Dubuque, Iowa 52001. You can also visit www.rivermuseum.com for more information.

For more information about the touring exhibit, visit www.womenandspirit.org.



Left to right: left photo: Sister Raeleen Sweeney and CORE 2010 scholar/colleague participants. Middle photo: Sister Lou Cota and her student learn with the "Jiji" math enrichment program. Right photo: Sister Raeleen with mentee, Jalaimya and family.

Nano's Light Shines in Chicago

by LOU COTA, PBVM,
BARBARA RASTATTER, PBVM,
and RAELEEN SWEENEY, PBVM

Evangelization, prayer, service and hospitality are signs of Nano Nagle at work in the world as Dubuque Presentation sisters go where needs cry loudly. Since 1979 many sisters have ministered in Chicago-area schools, parishes, teacher-training programs, universities, food pantries and wherever Nano's lantern could shed light. Presently three Dubuque Presentation sisters live and work in the Chicago metropolitan area.

Sister Lou Cota

"My first experience at St. Dorothy School in Chicago was to spend two weeks in the 1978 summer school/camp program," states Sister Lou Cota. In the fall of 1979 four Presentation sisters began ministering in the school and parish. In 1982 Sister Catherine Wingert joined the St. Dorothy staff as the principal and the following year Sister Lou began her many years "of being adopted by this wonderful African-American parish and school family."

Teaching Ministry

Sister Lou's first teaching experiences at St. Dorothy was as a seventh grade homeroom and departmental science teacher for the upper grades. Later she began teaching computer for half of the day, and then she became the full-time technology teacher.

"Technology is now a very integral part of each student and teacher's week," says Sister Lou. "Students spend at least 1.5 hours on a 'fun' and challenging supplemental math program, developing logical reasoning and math skills. My ministry includes working with the students from pre-school through eighth grade. I am challenged each year with covering, raising and acquiring funds for the software licenses. I am rewarded with the great progress of each student."

Some of Sister Lou's other responsibilities include helping the classroom teachers with the materials for the weekly school liturgies, updating the parish and school websites, taking pictures for websites, brochures, calendars and yearbooks and coordinating the local Chicago Archdiocesan "Protecting God's Children Program."

In 1987 Sister Catherine resigned as principal of St. Dorothy and she and Sister Lou moved to St. Gerard Magella Parish in Markham, Illinois. Sister Catherine shared her vast amount of energy and enthusiasm and was very soon involved in many activities of the Markham parish and community. "One of our favorite events was providing an annual ice cream social in our backyard. This allowed everyone to get to know one another better," reflects Sister Lou.

Recalling her many years in Chicago, Sister Lou says that she has been privileged to witness the generosity of individuals and institutions over the years: the committed parishioners and staff

at St. Dorothy and St. Gerard Magella; the e-Rate Program providing students web access; the Big Shoulders Program started by Cardinal Bernadin; the DePaul Social Services providing hardware to develop a 30 PC lab, technology assistants and grants; and volunteers assisting in many after-school programs to keep students involved and safe.

"I have received so much more than I could ever give and learned so much more than I could begin to teach," comments Sister Lou. "I am energized by the enthusiasm of the young, in awe at the wisdom of the elders and inspired by the sharing of time and talent by so many parents and parishioners. I have been greatly enriched by experiencing various cultures and faiths during these years in the Chicago area. I have come to see my greatest service as being present to, and trying to support those who do so much for others. I am certainly aware that God is with me through and in those with whom I walk each day."

Sister Raeleen Sweeney

In 1988 while teaching fifth and sixth grades at St. Germaine School in Oak Lawn, Illinois, Sister Raeleen Sweeney received the Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Teaching. After a free semester sabbatical at Northwestern University, she assisted with the selection and development of the Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program. By 1991 Sister was invited to be on the Golden Apple staff through a grant from the Chicago Community Trust.

"It has been a blessing to carry the education lantern of Nano Nagle alongside 250 award winning teachers (fellows), 1,300 young teaching scholars and potential teachers over the years," expresses Sister Raeleen.

Mentoring Ministry

It was 1997 when the first class of scholars completed their five-year commitment and asked, "Are we no longer scholars?" When asked, "What do you want?" They replied, "We want to stay connected to Golden Apple, share camaraderie and professional development." That day, CORE was born. Sister Raeleen was asked to be the Director of CORE (Center for Ongoing Renewal and Enrichment) which provides professional development and personal mentoring for Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois,

the largest pre-service teacher support program in the nation with a 93% retention rate. CORE provides an opportunity for support and professional growth among respected peers who are committed to excellent teaching in the classroom.

Each summer, a five-day residence CORE Conference is held at Saint Xavier University in Chicago. Golden Apple scholars and colleagues who have completed their student teaching join teaching scholars from across the state to enrich their professional lives as teachers. The conference is organized, planned and facilitated by Golden Apple scholars, fellows, educational consultants and colleagues who plan the proceedings to meet the professional and personal needs of classroom teachers, following Illinois standards and providing Credits for Professional Development Units for recertification.

The CORE conference is open to all preK-12 teaching professionals. The conference provides seminars and fosters camaraderie, time for reflection and exchange of teaching techniques to enhance the art and craft of classroom teaching.

"I feel the light of the Chicago lantern of Nano Nagle burning within me as I am blessed with the privilege to minister among teachers committed to excellence in education in schools of need throughout the state of Illinois," says Sister Raeleen.

As Golden Apple celebrates its 25th anniversary, CEO, Dom Belmonte writes, "We have done so much, but there is so much more to do! Please join us in our mission to assure that all children have the excellent teachers they deserve."

Sister Barbara Rastatter

Sister Barbara Rastatter began working in the Social Care Office at St. James Parish in Chicago in August 2001. It was a real challenge for her to manage the food pantry, coordinate the senior ministry, administer and fundraise. However, the load became lighter in 2005 when Cathy Moore was hired as manager of the food pantry; in 2007 Peter Wawire came "on board" as director of social care. "At last my dream of working full-time with the seniors became a reality," says Sister Barbara.



Sister Barbara Rastatter visits with Beatrice, one her favorite nursing home friends.

Senior Ministry

Sister Barbara's responsibilities include visiting the four nursing homes in the area, several of the senior buildings and the St. James parishioners who are homebound, bringing to all, not only the Eucharist, but the love of the members of St. James Parish.

"One may think that through this ministry, the seniors are the main recipients of the blessings. However, I find that we who are privileged to spend time with them are the blessed ones. I marvel at their wisdom, their ability to take what life hands them, but, most of all, I am amazed at their deep faith in God. I often wonder what it would be like to truly believe that God will take care of us, answer our prayers, and never let us out of His sight," says Sister Barbara.

She continues, "This brings me to Beatrice, who is one of my favorites. Beatrice has been blind for about 40 years, is nearly deaf and has lived for the past 21 years in a nursing home in our neighborhood. I have never heard her utter one word of complaint. The half room she occupies is truly her home and her joy in receiving company is infectious. Each week, when I leave Beatrice, I feel like I have truly encountered Christ. Her effect on me and all who visit her is profound."

At the St. James Food Pantry, Sister Barbara and staff serve approximately 1,800 families per month and nearly 100 homeless persons stop at their door for help. They come for lunches, personal items, shirts and socks. They also come for the warm hospitality. "I know that they stop to see us because they are warmly welcomed, called by name and treated with utmost respect," says Sister. "I look forward to meeting and visiting with all who stop by and hope that the smile on their faces when they leave is a sign that they have the courage to go out and face life on the streets again."

"St. James is a beacon of light and hope in our neighborhood and there is no doubt in my mind that this beacon carries light from Nano's lantern. Just as she took care of the poor and downtrodden in her day, we at St. James strive always to give hope to our neighborhood's broken world."

Generosity Abounds

by DIANA BLONG, PBVM

Generosity abounds during this holiday season as Presentation sisters, associates and the communities where they reside extend their love. "Giving Trees" are prominent in many parishes to assist struggling families. Presentation Lantern Center in Dubuque hosts a posada for the Dubuque area Hispanic community. With contributions from St. Anthony parish, hospitality bags provide practical gifts, including stamps, phone cards, hats, gloves, small toys, first aid and personal supplies.

Local recipients reap the benefits of many creative efforts all year. At Immaculate Conception parish in Charles City, Iowa, parishioners participate in a "Reverse Collection." Requests for items needed locally by the Messiah Food Pantry, Cedar River Community Kitchen and HeadStart are placed in baskets; parishioners draw the requests and return items to grocery carts the following week. A weekly theme during Lent to "Fill the Carts" yields: breakfast items on "Wake Up to DST Sunday," cleaning supplies for "Spring Cleaning," "Soup It Up," "Dinner Delights" and a variety of ethnic foods.

Nashua Associates Lisa Zwanziger and Sue and Dick Baldwin canvassed their town on three hayracks this fall in their "Scavenger Hunt" for the Nashua/Plainfield Food Pantry. Twenty-five youth and 15 adults garnered 468 lbs. of food and \$107 in an hour, followed by a wiener roast. Students later walked the donated items to the pantry via wagons and wheelbarrows.

St. Pius X Food Pantry in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, benefits from local church and school contributions, including grade school students donating a can of food as part of their "I can" refrain from drugs program. At Xavier High School homecoming, a discount was taken off ticket admission for two cans of food, and a check for \$800 was given for those who forgot their food! At a parish farewell for a woman entering the Trappistines, canned goods for the pantry were requested in lieu of gifts. Sister Joellen Price finds it "humbling, to listen to the stories of need within the community and to experience the generosity of so many people helping us and trusting us to share what we receive."

Sister Richelle Friedman volunteers at "Food and Friends" by delivering meals and groceries on Saturdays to clients living with HIV/AIDS, cancer, ALS, MS and Alzheimers. More than 75 per cent of clients receiving the one million meals prepared and delivered yearly, have monthly incomes of less than \$1,000. Helping serve more than 1,400 individuals at any given time in Washington, DC, Maryland and Virginia is both a privilege and inspiration for Sister Richelle as she meets people "who radiate the energy of the Spirit even when they might not be feeling physically well. Their gratitude for the gift of food nourishes my soul."

For Sister Sheila Ann Dougherty, volunteering in a food pantry keeps her "in touch with the daily reality of so many people who are struggling...I continue to be amazed at their graciousness for the smallest service." The double increase in needs in the past two years brings her "a greater awareness of the need to advocate for legislation and programs that will help them better their lives."

WHERE in the WORLD is...

SISTER MARIA GORETTI DULLARD

A Woman of Perseverance

by JANICE HANCOCK, PBVM

Sister Maria Goretti Dullard, daughter of Walter and Mary Theresa Erue Dullard, was born in West Union, Iowa. She was baptized Mary Thomasine in honor of her Presentation aunt, Sister Mary Thomasine.

Mary Thomasine Dullard graduated from DeSales High School in Ossian, Iowa, in 1952. Following her graduation she entered the Sisters of the Presentation at Mount Loretto. She graduated from Clarke College in 1967 with a bachelor's degree in history and received a master's in education in 1973.

Having lived with a physical disability from birth, Maria found ways to make up for her lack of participation in strenuous activities. In the novitiate she worked in the garden with the other novices. Sitting among them, she helped the less astute novices distinguish vegetables and flowers from weeds.

Laughing, Sister Maria comments, "Sister Mary Raphael could depend on me. For a long time I've known the difference between weeds and other plants." This skill Sister Maria developed as a young girl when her parents pulled her in a wagon to the garden, while they tended the vegetables and flowers. She was always grateful for the opportunities her parents provided to help her compensate for her physical challenge.

Sister Maria Goretti served as an elementary teacher in Catholic schools in Dougherty, Charles City, Storm Lake, Farley and Waukon, all in Iowa; and in Timber Lake, South Dakota.

Sister Margaret Anne states, "I had the opportunity to live with Sister Maria for many years in Waukon. This mission was a big part of her life. She enjoyed being involved with the many activities in the school and parish. She is fondly remembered in Waukon to this day."

Upon her retirement in 1995, Sister Maria enjoyed opportunities for prayer and her switchboard community service. She loved visiting with the callers and had the responsibility of notifying the sisters when necessary to share the news from Mount Loretto. Sister also shared her sewing skills by assisting Sister James Marie Gross in the mission room.

Sister Maria enjoys going for rides with friends. A faithful friend, Linda Dolphin, shares, "Sister Maria was a member of the team who guided me through the Associate Process. I appreciate her friendship and her wisdom. We enjoy visiting while we tour Dubuque particularly at times when the seasons change." There are times when Sister Maria drives her special electric cart maneuvering herself around Mount Loretto property.

What keeps Sister Maria going? She lives her life with commitment to her vows. She enjoys playing Tri-ominos on Wednesday nights and scrabble Friday and Saturday evenings. She has a hearty laugh and loves to be teased. Sister Maria's slogan is "Live life the best way you can." She does!



Left to right: Sisters Lois Lehmann, Maria Goretti Dullard and Bernard Mauss play a game of Tri-ominos.

Dispositions for Discernment in Everyday Life

by JULIA WINGERT, PBVM

Discernment is an ongoing process and we are each responsible for attending to and listening for God's guidance for our lives.

And we need to listen to our life!!!

If we truly desire to develop a discerning heart, we need to step back from the intense pace of our lives to be reflective...reflective about our day...about our life...about our relationship with God, with ourselves, and with others. The search for the definite and delicate traces of God's action requires commitment and practice.

One helpful practice for noticing the presence of God in our lives is some form of Daily Review more familiar to many as a Consciousness or Awareness Examen.

We are invited in 2 Corinthians 13:5: "Examine yourselves to see whether you are living in faith. Test yourselves. Do you not realize that Jesus Christ is in you?"

Most faith traditions have some version of Examen used to review one's relationship with God. The Examen or Daily Review can help us pay attention to those moments in a day where we have been in touch with and followed God's guidance and when the opposite has been true.

The Daily Review is intended, not to grade or punish us, but rather to encourage and help us look within and learn to recognize God's presence and guidance.

For St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits, the practice of Examen was his way of trying to remain in tune with God's action at every moment of his day. Ignatius insisted that whatever other spiritual exercises a Jesuit would miss due to his work in the apostolate, the practice of Examen should always be retained. Ignatius believed that with periodic reflection on their day, his Jesuit followers and anyone who was faithful to the practice of Examen, would become "contemplatives in action."

The Daily Review...the Awareness Examen...enables us to walk more closely with God and has the power to transform us.

Many people find it helpful to do this practice at the end of the day while memories of what has happened throughout the day

and evening are fresh. If the end of the day is not a good time for you, you might try it in the morning or at midday...or at a time of coffee break. You might choose to ponder a question as simple, yet profound, as, "For what moment today am I most grateful?" or "For what moment today am I least grateful?" as suggested in the book, *Sleeping With Bread: Holding What Gives You Life* by Dennis, Sheila and Matthew Linn.

In this same book the Linns offer other ways to ask the same question:

- When did I give and receive the most love today?
- When did I give and receive the least love today?
- When did I feel most alive today?
- When did I feel life draining out of me?
- When today did I have the greatest sense of belonging to myself, others, God and the universe?
- When did I have the least sense of belonging?
- When was I happiest today?
- When was I saddest?
- What was the high point of the day?
- What was today's low point?

By using the Daily Review regularly over time, you will find yourself becoming increasingly aware of God's presence in the moment instead of hours or days later.

As you persevere in the practice of listening to your life, you will become more sensitive to God's abiding presence and love and more attuned to the delicate invitations, insights and inspirations of God's Spirit as you live in relationship and in service.

You will also discover that you are becoming more discerning and more responsive to the subtle presence and movement of God in your heart throughout the day.

What is the best time of day for you to pause for a Daily Review of your life?

Coming Next Issue...

Dispositions for Discernment in Everyday Life:
Articulate Your Faith Experience

Presentation Sisters Celebrate 50 Years of Gratitude

by BETH KRESS, PBVM

Four Dubuque Presentation sisters are observing 50 years of religious life this year. "Graced with God's Abundance" was the jubilee theme for the sisters who celebrated with family, friends and Presentation sisters and associates, on October 16, at Mount Loretto. Sisters Mary Janet Goetz, St. James Lickteig, Carla Popes and Rosalyn Ulfers entered the Sisters of the Presentation in 1960 and professed final vows in 1968.

Sister Janet Goetz

Sister Janet Goetz, presently of Algona, Iowa, is registrar, secretary and school board secretary at Bishop Garrigan High School. Previously she served as a science teacher in Catholic schools in Dubuque, Sheldon and Farley, all in Iowa, and Shoreview, Minnesota.

Reflecting on this jubilee, Sister Janet says, "A jubilee pulls together past, present and future. I look back and remember always wanting to be a teacher. Today I look around Bishop Garrigan High School and see students and teachers who are creative, generous and enthusiastic about life. I look to the tomorrows and trust in the Lord's love and promise to be with me."

Sister St. James Lickteig

Sister St. James Lickteig, presently of Dubuque, serves as an AmeriCorps volunteer member. Previously she served for 45 years as a teacher in Catholic elementary schools in Algona, Dubuque, Farley/Bankston and Key West, all in Iowa; in Timberlake, South Dakota; and in Shoreview, Minnesota.

"I wish to thank God, family and community for all the gifts that have been received by me and evolved for me during my life," states Sister St. James. "There have been many transitions that have brought me to this day and I am grateful."

Sister Carla Popes

Sister Carla Popes, presently of Strawberry Point, Iowa, serves as pastoral associate for St. Mary Parish, Strawberry Point, director of religious education for Sacred Heart Parish, Volga and is a resource person for St. Joseph Parish

Elkader. Most recently she served as vocation director for her community; previously she served as director of lay formation and director of catechetical services for the Archdiocese of Dubuque; she was an elementary teacher and director of religious education for Catholic schools and parishes in Algona, Cedar Falls, Charles City, Epworth, Farley and Monona, all in Iowa.

"Jubilee time is sacred. It is a holy season for reflecting on God's faithfulness, goodness and generosity over the past 50 years," comments Sister Carla. "The example of Presentation foundress Nano Nagle inspired and challenged me to be a woman of the Gospel and a faithful disciple of Jesus in the company of like-minded women, lantern – bearers, who make a difference."

Sister Rosalyn Ulfers

Sister Rosalyn Ulfers, presently of Dubuque, Iowa, serves as chaplain at Mercy Medical Center in Dubuque. Previously she also served as chaplain at Holy Family Hall, Sisters of St. Francis, Dubuque, and for 26 years she was a primary teacher in Catholic elementary schools in Dubuque, Epworth, Humboldt, Osage and Sheldon, all in Iowa, and Oak Lawn, Illinois.

"My heart is filled with joy and gratitude as I celebrate this 50th jubilee. Fifty years ago I heard a call, spoken deeper than any call I have ever heard. I responded 'Yes,' and that burst forth into a very fulfilling life," declares Sister Rosalyn. "I praise and thank God for calling me and I thank my family, Presentation community and friends for their prayers and loving support."

Left to right: Sisters St. James Lickteig, Carla Popes, Rosalyn Ulfers and Janet Goetz enjoy a jubilant celebration.



Socially Responsible Investing

by LYNN MARIE FANGMAN, PBVM

For many years the Sisters of the Presentation have practiced good stewardship by investing their savings. The purpose, of course, was the continued desire to provide for mission and ministry and to care for the retirement needs of community members. How funds have been invested and with what types of managers and corporations has also been of extreme importance.

The Sisters of the Presentation are well aware of the various ills of the global society and recognize that corporate responsibility and social concerns are valid parts of investment decisions. Socially responsible investing is a broad-based approach to investing in today's marketplace.

Considerations include affordable housing, land use, sale of tobacco products, child labor, pornography, violence in video games, water rights, social justice, production of nuclear war materials, rights of women and children, reduction of the carbon footprint, consumer protection, and the list goes on.

SRI considers both the investor's financial needs and an investment's impact on society. By choosing SRI managers, the Sisters of the Presentation are able to ensure that "screens" are included in the community's portfolios allowing for the purchase of appropriate investments.

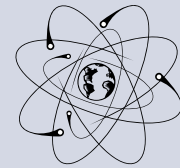
Thus, the Sisters of the Presentation have put their funds to work to build a more sustainable world while reflecting the teachings of the Catholic Church and earning competitive returns for today and into the future.

Relationally SPEAKING

Sisters, Associates, Family, Friends in Brief



Sister Barbara Rastatter was a recipient of the 2010 "Love of Neighbor" Award presented by "Brothers and Sisters of Love," an agency that ministers to members of gangs and their families. She was honored for her willingness to reach out to those who live in her near-south side Chicago neighborhood.



PRESENTATION QUEST

IMMERSION & SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

April 25-30, 2011

**Quest Immersion Opportunity
Urban Plunge/8th Day Center for Peace**

An immersion into the systems and structures of the urban environment from the perspective of justice, spirituality and ministry.

Late June-Early July, 2011

**Quest Service Opportunity
Kansas City, Missouri**

An effort in caring for Earth and the people in the Kansas City area.

July-2011

**Quest Service Opportunity
The Cedar Rapids Rebuild Project**

Organized services helping to rebuild a flood-ravaged community.

Summer-2011

**Quest Immersion and Service Opportunity
New Orleans, Louisiana**

Working with Operation Helping Hands/
Catholic Charities, Café Reconcile Ministry and
Presentation Lantern Light

Visit www.dubuquepresentations.org
for more information or contact:

Sister Rita Cameron, PBVM
Coordinator of Immersion and Service
2360 Carter Road
Dubuque, IA 52001-2997
563-588-2008
service@dubuquepresentations.org

KEEPING *her* NAME ALIVE

ALWAYS GRACIOUS AND CONSIDERATE *Sister Mary Madonna Meyer*

June 1, 1924 - October 16, 2010

by JOAN LICKTEIG, PBVM

Scripture readings, selected by Sister Madonna Meyer for her funeral liturgy trace the Christian journey of hearing God's call, responding and faithfully living the call. No coincidence; that was Sister Madonna's life story.

The community welcomed her body home by singing, "I have loved you with an everlasting love. I have called you and you are mine" – a perfect theme for Sister Madonna, her vocation, her life in the Lord.

Madonna's life brimmed with love, the love of her family and friends for her, her love for them and her love for the God who had such a hold on her heart that nothing could separate her from this God. As a young woman, Madonna had a good friend, a young man who loved her and asked her to marry him. His offer was flattering and appealing, but Madonna chose instead to follow her vocation to religious life.

Sister Madonna's vocation story reads like a romantic novel. While she didn't ride off to the convent on the back of a white stallion, there is a good bit of romance surrounding the narrative of her entrance into community.

The oldest daughter in her family, Madonna was the apple of her father's eye. He, a dominant man, talked to his daughters about becoming sisters. Madonna listened to his wisdom and experienced God's call. When she told the family of her plans to enter the convent, her sisters could only imagine their lonesomeness. At the time, there were no home visits. Her father and brothers worked to dissuade her. Responding to the hurt feelings created by her announcement, Madonna, 24-years-old, agreed to wait yet another year before leaving. She

kept her word. But when the year was up, she eloped with the Lord. Madonna could have been the vocation poster girl of the 1950s.

An excellent musician, Madonna played the organ for all the Masses in her home parish, St. Joseph, Key West. It was Madonna's gift to the Church, but perhaps more significant was the sacrifice her family made: to leave the farm early every morning to drive her to Key West, go home for chores, drive in again to pick her up and return home.

In September 1949, she got a ride to morning Mass, as usual, with her brother, Harold, and played the organ. When her brother arrived to pick her up, however, she wasn't there. Plans had previously been made by Madonna, Mount Loretto Convent and the parish pastor, that on this particular day, after Mass, the parish custodian would drive Madonna to Mount Loretto. The pastor would then break the news to her brother.

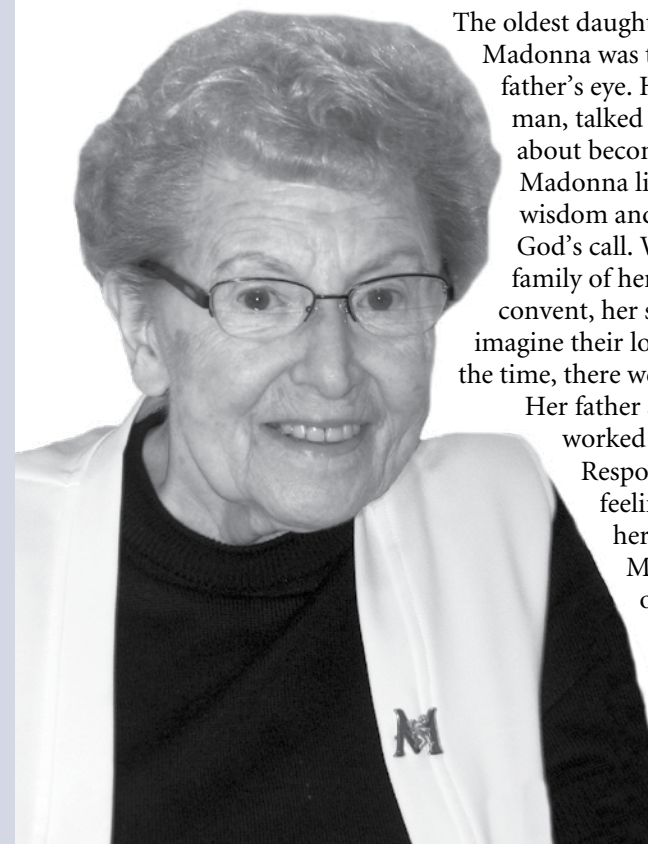
It was a painful experience for all concerned. Madonna did not want to hurt her family, but felt she had run out of options. She left home that morning with nothing but the clothes on her back. She traveled to Dubuque in the back seat of the car, with her head down so that no one in the village would see her and report to her family.

The Isaiah reading affirms: "The Lord God will wipe the tears from all faces." There were many tears on the part of Madonna and her family, but in time wounds were healed, and no one was more pleased or proud than brother Harold and her father.

Always gracious, appreciative, and considerate, Madonna never talked about herself or drew attention to herself. Center stage was not a comfortable place for her. She was, however, a natural jazz pianist; it seemed her touch was like none other – her music sheer delight for her and her audience.

In high school and beyond, Madonna led a popular music combo, with weekly engagements. Gifted with extraordinary musical talent, she shared her talent throughout her life, in ministry and in friendship. Even in retirement, she wanted her music, most of all, to make others happy.

Singing for joy, Sister Madonna now rests securely in the arms of the God, who has always been central in her life. Her community and her family will forever feel a Madonna-hole in their lives.



POET, ARTIST, SCHOLAR, HUMORIST

Sister Mary Kevin Cummings

January 19, 1928 - November 6, 2010

by JOAN LICKTEIG, PBVM

Sister Mary Kevin (Beverly) Cummings was born in Waterloo, Iowa, daughter of Francis and Eula (Lamb) Cummings. She entered the Sisters of the Presentation at the age of 17, the youngest member of her postulant group. She received her bachelor's from Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa, and her master's from Rosary College, River Forest, Illinois. She did further graduate study at five additional universities. Her active ministries as teacher, librarian and archivist took her to 12 different locations over a period of 58 years.

An elementary and a high school teacher, Sister also worked with religious education classes and summer religious vacation schools. She was a TAG (Talented and Gifted) volunteer, participated on RCIA teams (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults), was a volunteer hospital chaplain, helped tutor immigrants in English and took Eucharist to the homebound. In her retirement she spent hours using her archivist skills to update community annals.

Sister Kevin was an accomplished poet and enjoyed doing artwork, photography and playing the autoharp and harmonica. An ongoing pattern was her generosity in sharing her knowledge with anyone interested. Whatever she did, she did it wholeheartedly and with competence. She was a totally participative person, whether she attended a staff meeting, a community gathering, a prayer service or a party. She gave her all.

Possessing a brilliant, creative mind, Sister Kevin was a life-long learner. Industry characterized her days and nights. There was always another chapter to read, another person to remember, a poem to write, an article to send. She had a deep-rooted family faith and an Irish heritage, which she wore well, not only in green attire, but also in the pink glow of her Irish complexion.

Sister Kevin's heart surged with compassion, her head spilled over with insights, her soul burst with poetry. Sister Kevin could not not write. She had to write, and she did – thousands of poems. She wrote everywhere and on everything. She wrote in the chapel and in her hospital bed; she wrote on airplanes and in the elevator. She wrote on the backs of menus and in the margins of her own correspondence; she wrote on scraps of envelopes, in her notebooks and on table napkins. Her muse was relentless and poetry bubbled forth.

Contemplative, as well as creative, Sister Kevin composed poetic reflections for the Sunday Scriptures – every Sunday in the entire three-year liturgical cycle, plus all major feast days, as well as poems for jubilees, birthdays, anniversaries, and all manner of special occasions. If anyone needed a poem for some reason, she provided “poetry on-tap.”

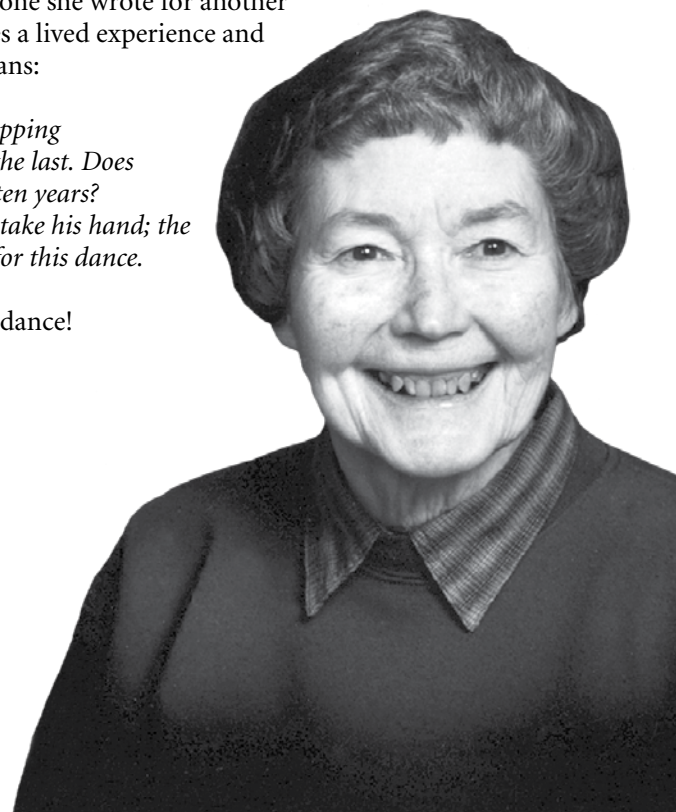
Kevin was a reader, thinker, scholar, writer, poet, artist, mystic, and humorist. Her bliss manifested itself in her jokes, her chuckles, her stories, and the adventures she shared. Her wit was priceless, offering free entertainment at mealtimes. She literally beamed with on-going delight. Her eyes twinkled just thinking of human antics and the foibles of humankind, and her infectious smile often had an impish quality to it.

Randy Pausch said, “We don't beat the Grim Reaper by living longer; we beat the Grim Reaper by living well.” Sister Kevin lived well. Close to her devoted family, community members, and friends, Sister Kevin will be royally missed for her literary, loving, and fun-loving ways.

Recently Sister commented, “When I get settled in heaven, I'm going to dance, play musical instruments, sing and paint.” The closing poem, one she wrote for another sister, expresses a lived experience and her celestial plans:

*Each decade slipping
by faster than the last. Does
each still have ten years?
Reach out and take his hand; the
Lord is asking for this dance.*

Dance, Kevin, dance!



Mount Loretto AND BEYOND

Featured below are special times in the lives of Dubuque Presentation sisters, near and far.



A Howlin' Good Time

In preparation for the Halloween season, the staff in Nagle Center planned a pumpkin decorating day. Clockwise: Sister Marie Therese Coleman, Sister Catherine Wingert, Employee Michelle Hein with Sister Dorothy McCormick.



Congratulations, Sister Louise

Sister Louise Scieszinski was awarded the Clergy/Woman Religious Award from the Diocese of Sioux City at the annual Bishop's Dinner in Sioux City, Iowa, on October 10, 2010. The award was established in 2006 to recognize a priest or woman religious who has made significant contributions to Catholic schools in the diocese.



Non-violent, Peace Presence

Sisters Rita Cameron, Joy Peterson, Joetta Venneman and Marge Healy joined three sisters from Aberdeen at the SOA (School of the Americas) Watch at Ft. Benning in Columbus, Georgia, on November 20-21. Walking with them, as Quest Immersion participants, were students from St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa, and a Michigan family who had worked with Presentation sisters in Peru. In Nano's spirit they called for an end to the training of military in techniques that foster repression and death in Latin American countries.

You are invited to join us.

December 25, 2010

Christmas Mass

9:00 a.m.

Sisters of the Presentation

Sacred Heart Chapel

Dubuque, Iowa

April 25-30, 2011

Quest Immersion Opportunity

Urban Plunge/8th Day Center for Peace

Chicago, Illinois

April 29-30, 2011

Dubuque's Got Sisters

Sisters of the Presentation

Dubuque, Iowa

For updated information about the activities and events of the Sisters of the Presentation of Dubuque, please visit our web site at www.dubuquepresentations.org or call 563.588.2008.

Please pray with us.

January 9-15, 2011

National Vocation Awareness Week

February 6, 2011

World Day for Consecrated Life

21st of each month

Pray for Vocations

25th of each month

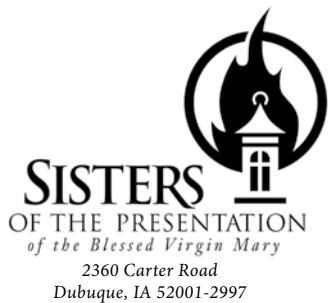
Mass for Benefactors

Do you have news to share?

We would love to publish it.

Please send your news items to:

doorways@dubuquepresentations.org




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**May the stars that once sparkled
over Bethlehem enlighten your heart
with the gentle and powerful love
of Jesus, our Savior.**

*A Blessed Christmas and Happy New Year
Sisters of the Presentation
Dubuque, Iowa*