



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 following to:

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Cover PHOTOS

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.

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Left to right: Sisters Ellen Mary Garrett, Josita Zieser, Kay Cota, Donna Determan, Damian O'Brien, James Marie Gross, Catherine Wingert, Anne McCormick, Hermann Platt and Annette Skyles prepare goodie bags for homeless men of Dubuque. The sisters will host them for Christmas Eve dinner. Read about this tradition on page 11.

A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

by JENNIFER RAUSCH, PBVM

What is on your “to do” list in preparation for Christmas? I would take a guess that some of these items might be included: write greeting cards, gift for grandma, menu for family Christmas dinner or care package to Steve.

When the image of the care package comes to mind, you might be packing cookies and bars to send to a soldier niece or nephew far from home. People who are clever about the art of shipping inform us that popcorn makes a great packing material as well as a welcome snack at the opening of a gift-across-the-miles. There is a current TV commercial that features a college daughter talking on the phone to her Mom while opening her care package and sampling the enclosed JIF peanut butter. I am sure that the U.S. Post Office could attest to thousands of care packages being shipped throughout the year.

It is the thought of such a care package that came to mind as I read this stanza from, “At Christmas” by Edgar Albert Guest.

When it's Christmas man is bigger and is better in his part;
He is keener for the service that is prompted by the heart.
All the petty thoughts and narrow seem to vanish for awhile
And the true reward he's seeking is the glory of the smile.
Then for others he is toiling and somehow it seems to me
That at Christmas he is almost what God wanted him to be.

How would this world be a better place if we took this poetry to heart and began to see ourselves as human “care packages?” Could we share that goodness of ourselves that is maximized at Christmas time as suggested by Guest and live “bigger and better” throughout the year? A glimpse at what it would look like to unwrap the care packages of ourselves bit by bit:

-a spirit of forgiveness delivered to the site of a long-held blaming,
-a balm of connection opened in a place of we-don't-think-alike,
-a fragrance of peace that waifs over a sad heart,
-a sweet blessing of providing basic human needs for family, neighborhood and world that brings out the “bigger and better” in us all.

I invite us to live out of a new image...being a care package to those we meet during the coming New Year. May we open our hearts daily to those who hunger for understanding, those who search for peace, those who long for encouragement. When we unwrap our caring, the “glory of the smile” will grace our lives every month. Then we will be what God wants us to be and we can live in “constant” Christmas.

Happy caring this Christmas and throughout 2012!



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



Sister Julianne Brockamp serves dinner to the religious education students at St. Rose of Lima Parish in Hill City, South Dakota.

Service, Care and Perseverance Dakota Fortitude

by FRANCINE QUILLIN, PBVM

Sister Julianne Brockamp has an unusual amount of courage. And that accounts for her survival through many difficult experiences in her life. Her “Dakota Fortitude” spirit speaks of tenacious service, care and perseverance.

Her parents, Julius and Mary Brockamp of Timber Lake, South Dakota, as well as her teachers, instilled in her a great love of learning which sparked her interest in education. Her formal teaching career included the primary and junior high levels, as well as elementary administration.

Sister Julianne has the heart of Nano Nagle who said, “If I could be of service anywhere in the world, I would gladly do so.” Thus did life find her ministering for a total of 17 years in Entre Ríos, Bolivia, which meant leaving family, friends and her sisters in community, going to a new culture, learning an unfamiliar language and using that same “Dakota Fortitude” as a source of strength for her ministry among the *campesinos* of O’Connor

Province in the southernmost part of Bolivia. But it was more than fortitude; it was also the driving passion within her, as it was within Nano Nagle, to serve with those who were made poor, disadvantaged by political systems and deprived of education.

After her first 11 years in Bolivia, Sister Julianne returned to the states and worked on a collaborative two-parish team with the Columban Fathers in Alamogordo, New Mexico. She served there for four years as a youth minister and pastoral associate of Our Lady of the Desert, Boles Acres, an outlying village of Alamogordo. From there, she was elected major superior of the Sisters of the Presentation. While leadership holds its own kinds of challenges, again, Sister Julianne’s sense of humor and her ability to draw forth the gifts of the sisters kept her wholesome in this ministry.

Finishing her leadership term in 1993, she returned to South Dakota, serving first as the director of religious education at St. Joseph Parish and as a campus minister at Black Hills State

University in Spearfish until 1996. That year Sister was invited by Father Bill Pauly to embark upon another new venture: ministering with the Lakota people on the Pine Ridge Reservation as the parish life coordinator of Our Lady of the Sioux in Oglala, South Dakota.

“While this was more familiar territory than Bolivia was to me, I was privileged once again to learn new customs, new ways of walking with friends in another culture, growing spiritually and listening intently to the history of valiant and tenacious people,” says Sister.

Sister Julianne remembers the devastating 1999 tornado that hit Oglala, “A great spirit of solidarity marked the recovery process after the Our Lady of the Sioux Parish complex and many homes of the Oglala residents were destroyed.”

After earning a master’s degree in pastoral studies at Loyola University in New Orleans, Louisiana, Sister Julianne was asked by her community to return to Bolivia to accompany a woman, Mery Cari Paz, who was interested in becoming a Sister of the Presentation.

“Mery’s formation journey included a lengthy international inter-congregational experience in Cochabamba, Bolivia, as well as formation experiences in the United States,” says Sister Julianne. This year, Mery, Sister Julianne’s first novice, professed her final vows as a member of the Sisters of the Presentation. Sister Mery credits Sister Julianne’s pastoral presence in her rural community of Tarupayo for planting the seeds of her vocation. Sister Julianne quietly demurs, but she was pleased to return to Bolivia once again this past September to witness Sister Mery’s permanent commitment as a Presentation sister.

“In addition to work in the religious life formation process, I also worked with CETHA, an integral educational institution which provides not only a high school education in the humanities, but also teaches courses in the technical fields of bee keeping, agriculture, veterinary skills, sewing, nutrition, the growing of fruit trees and basic electricity,” states Sister Julianne. “Students come from the rural community of Potrereros and the area communities.”

Today Sister Julianne is in still another ministry, but one which uses the skills learned in all her former positions. She works in the public school in Hill City, South Dakota, translating for students who do not yet have command of the English language. As the teacher presents the lesson, Sister Julianne quietly translates what is being said, and, at the same time, helps the student to understand in his/her native Spanish tongue the concepts being taught. She also teaches students growing in reading and language proficiency. In addition, Sister Julianne translates for parents, helps them complete forms, explains terms of applications for hot lunch, computer use, etc. She attends the parent-teacher conferences with those parents in need of translation, and also confers with them when their children need some extra help, so that the parents are always adequately informed.

In her parish, St. Rose of Lima, Sister Julianne helps with food service for the religious education classes. Elementary students

attend an early session and are later joined by their parents for supper. High school students come for supper after their school sports practice and stay late for their youth sessions.

Sister Julianne also instructs the ministers who assist in the Hispanic liturgy held each Saturday night. She is especially pleased that two Hispanics have recently become members of the parish council. The parish itself has, for many years, been working to become an inter-cultural community and has exhibited a very lively and welcoming spirit. “Culturally, there is the challenge to grow together as one community; a welcome challenge that is most desirable and so enriching,” Sister comments.

The Hill City area (the Heart of the [Black] Hills) has been able to employ many Hispanics in the tree farming industry, which is highly ecological. It thins the forest correctly, not just making arbitrary deep cuts into the woodland. About 23 percent of the school population of Hill City is Hispanic. Sister Julianne teaches English to adult English language learners and serves on the Diocesan Disaster Response Committee, which has most recently responded to the tremendous flood devastation along the Missouri River.

“Hill City has some great inter-cultural events,” states Sister Julianne. “The whole city celebrates Cinco de Mayo, with a parade, a plentiful potluck and lots of games in the city park for all the area children. In December the public is also invited to the Our Lady of Guadalupe celebration and meal at St. Rose of Lima.”

Sister Julianne describes her ministry in all its aspects as, very simply, one of hospitality, helping to make the “strangers among us” feel at home in what may be for them a very different world. Sister has had many experiences of being the “stranger,” which has primed her well to be hospitable. More than that, however, Sister Julianne truly strives to live, day in and day out, the charism of the Sisters of the Presentation - hospitality.



Left to right: Sister Julianne Brockamp and Sister Mery Cari Paz celebrate Sister Mery’s final profession into religious life.



Carol Heim is both multi-talented and multi-faceted as a “computer wizard” for the Sisters of the Presentation.

Multi-talented, Multi-faceted A Computer Wizard

by JOAN LICKTEIG, PBVM

If you should be wandering about the administrative wing of Mount Loretto, looking for Carol Heim’s office, you will know you have arrived when you see the steam rising from her morning beverage: good, strong, black Chinese tea – which she characteristically drinks from a soup cup, this oversize mug, one of her trademarks! And if you stop by at 10:00 a.m. you’ll note her second cup of morning tea. That’s how she prepares for the day’s challenges.

And you can be sure the day will have many challenges. As Carol sits at her “commando-computer-station” she trouble-shoots computer glitches for the sisters, no matter their location. With remote control, she solves computer problems whether they’re in Florida, South Dakota or Bolivia. She can and she does.

A typical, quick-flowing message of reassurance might sound like this:

“Why don’t you just make a shortcut on your desktop? Create a folder by right clicking on the desktop; choose NEW; then choose FOLDER; oh and rename the new folder; then I want you to open the folder; right click on the file; choose COPY; just right click on the desktop; choose PASTE.... Did you get that?”

Carol is the oldest in a family of four girls and two boys. Her mother died in 2004. The first of the family to be employed by the Presentation sisters, her father, Jim Richman, expressed concern when he heard that Carol had interviewed for a position. He chided her with the reminder that he had a reputation at stake for being a good worker, and he didn’t want another family member jeopardizing it. She hasn’t.

That was only the beginning. After Jim and Carol had both been employed for some time, an inquiry was made about her brother, John. He now works full-time in maintenance, along with his 81-year-old dad. After that, Carol’s sister, Helen, was hired as an assistant to Sister Corine Murray, director of Presentation Lantern Center. Hope for their being around a long time is engendered by Carol’s 100-year-old grandmother, Jim’s mother, who lives independently in her Dubuque apartment.

As an elementary student, Carol attended Balltown-Sherrill Catholic schools and later graduated from Hempstead High School. As a high school senior she enrolled in an office practice program that had a practicum component. Carol’s practice took her to Myers-Cox Company where she gained experience in a variety of office responsibilities, primarily billing and invoicing, which was done manually with a 10-key adding machine. Hired after high school graduation, Carol worked there for 15 years, where later she had her first computer experience.

Carol’s next job found her at Medical Associates Clinic where she started in data processing and later worked at the IT (Information Technology) Help Desk. Enjoying her fellow IT masters, Carol “picked their brains” and found herself more and more intrigued by the antics of the computer. She discovered she could somehow get inside the “mind” of a computer and wrap her brain around the workings thereof. Amazing!

After 13 years at Medical Associates, Carol was hired at the Sisters of the Presentation and became a one-person-help-desk for the sisters and their employees for the past 10 years.

Carol and her husband, Tom, celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary in May. A quiet, patient man who doesn’t like crowds, Tom delivers medicine for Mercy Family Pharmacy and thus makes many a visit to the Mount Loretto Infirmary.

Sisters and employees all have regular contact with Carol, as she renders varied services for mailing letters and packages and answers all postage questions, gathers information each month from a plethora of departments and people to compile “Community Notes,” assembles information for the annual “Directory,” having checked with each sister, associate and lay administrators regarding correct addresses including e-mail, phone numbers (work phones, home phones, cell phones) and a satisfactory photo – in addition to her on-going computer assistance. Her constituents describe Carol as pleasant, gracious, efficient and helpful; patient, knowledgeable and helpful; reliable, responsive and helpful; interested, caring and helpful.

There are other things you might like to know about Carol. She has a lot of good friends with whom she enjoys connecting on a regular basis, one group in particular are her grade school friends of 45 years. She prefers Italian restaurants and favors peach pie for dessert. She is notorious for deleting e-mails. Her favorite pastime is reading; her favorite movie of all time “has to be *Gone with the Wind*.” And when it comes to television, she admits being hooked on *Grey’s Anatomy*. Her favorite music is country, along with almost any other music except jazz. If she were going traveling, she’d choose Hawaii. And as you might guess, she is totally

intrigued by computer problems and can’t rest until she solves each and every conundrum. Silicone Valley, watch out!

But how is it that such a computer-savvy woman can be so much fun – as in “being the life of the party?” From the hands of the Wonder Creator all enjoy the unusual blend of a mechanical engineer and everybody’s friend. A brilliant, masterful scientific mind coupled with a sense of humor that doesn’t quit, a charming personality, conversational gifts, the contributions of an avid reader and behold...a blended persona named Carol Heim. Multi-talented, multi-faceted – like a diamond, she reflects the light. It’s likely Nano’s.

DUBUQUE’S
got
SISTERS

Discernment Weekend
March 30-31, 2012

Are you interested in checking out religious life?

Then join us for a 24-hour tour of four tri-state area convents to share life through praying, dining, and storytelling. Local transportation will be provided, and there is no fee to attend.

SAVE THE DATE

Friday, March 30 at 5 pm
to 6 pm on Saturday, March 31



**To register or
for information:**

e-mail Sr. Lou Anglin, BVM, at
newmember@bvmcong.org
or call (563) 588-2351 ext 5134.

**Register by
Friday, March 23**

Sponsored by Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Dubuque Franciscan Sisters, and Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters.



Top photo: On one of his many trips to southern Mexico, Leo Gese travels on a horse through the mountain villages visiting the local people. Left photo: Desa Gese embraces Sister Myra Remily, Aberdeen Presentation sister.



A Missionary to the Missionaries

by MAURA McCARTHY, PBVM

Leo Gese is a gifted lawyer from Tacoma, Washington, who is also a committed Christian turned missionary. Leo had previously done home missionary service in Snohomish County in the state of Washington helping establish safe, affordable housing for seniors. Then he turned to Mexico. He made many visits to the mountain villages of Southern Mexico, home of the Aberdeen Presentations' mission, helping with water, solar ovens and many other projects.

It was in Mexico that Leo Gese met Sister Myra Remily, an Aberdeen Presentation sister who gifted the Dubuque Presentation sisters with her missionary heart for eight years of devoted service in their Southern Bolivian mission. She recalls a poem written by Leo entitled, "Are We Evangelizing Yet?" One of the verses goes like this:

*Oh Sisters, oh Sisters, are we evangelizing yet?
When the pain from the jarring ride
whether by jeep or burro is exceeded
By the pain witnessed in the mountain Indian's daily life;
When the sisters from Thlacuauhislahuaca
bring medicine and God's Good News
To ease their strife;
Oh Sisters, oh Sisters, are we evangelizing yet?*

A short time after Sister Myra became established in the Dubuque Presentations' Entre Ríos mission working on the catechetical team with Sister Therese Marie Hawes, Leo had planned a visit this mission. He relates this historical experience in his own words:

It had been my pleasure to experience life in the Southern Mexican mission with its founders, Presentation Sisters Helen and Gabriella from Aberdeen, South Dakota, who were assisted by other sisters including Sister Myra. In 1997, the good sisters, having completed approximately 17 years, returned to the United States, except for Sister Myra who decided to continue missionary work with the Dubuque Presentation sisters at their Southern Bolivian location. Her presence there prompted me to pay a visit to this mission site. What a glorious experience it turned out to be. Their principal home was in a village called Entre Ríos. I enjoyed meeting the Presentation sisters there and learning of their experiences living and working in Bolivia for over 30 years.

My first experience was driving with Sister Myra to the remote village of Salinas where she took me into a small church constructed by the Jesuit missionaries many centuries ago. The church is in remarkably good condition considering its age. It is still used as a church by the nearby villagers. There are a number of similar mission churches remaining in Bolivia.

I soon met Sister Maura McCarthy from the Timboy Guaraní mission. She lived by herself in a small house a couple of hours away along winding gravel roads from Entre Ríos. Sister Maura learned the language of the Guaraní indigenous people who had been enslaved for 100 years. She was active along with other local and national advocates to free the Guaraní people of the Pilcomayo River region. Sister also assisted the local Guaraní village women and girls to commercialize the beautiful baskets they made from palm tree branches. Sister worked with American Peace Corps workers on this project.

I had the pleasure of accompanying Sister Maura delivering a load of groceries. We spent the day driving from one Guaraní village to another purchasing the baskets and unloading groceries. The Guaraní women then purchased the groceries with their basket funds.

Another adventure was a trip to the Guaraní village of Ñaurenda to meet with representatives of the Guaraní villages of Bolivia, as well as Argentina and Brazil. I had the pleasure of addressing this large group as they discussed how to assist the Guaraní people in becoming free as they were still enslaved this late in the 20th century.

This trip was also a great opportunity for my wife Desa and me to assist in the purchase of materials and equipment for a beautiful round chapel called "Santa Isabel y San José," which is used for a multitude of community and school needs.



Santa Isabel y San José, the new round chapel in Ñaurenda, is financed by Leo and Desa Gese.

A few years later, my brother Bob travelled with me to visit the Ñaurenda mission for the chapel dedication ceremony. The pastor, who resides in Entre Ríos and visits over 100 communities, celebrated the dedication Mass which was followed by a great lunch of local foods. The local chief thanked me for assisting in the chapel construction with a beautiful discourse. I will never forget the honors bestowed upon me.

On another outing we accompanied Sister Maura on a visit to a very small indigenous village next to the Pilcomayo River. We were well fed with fresh fish before touring the new village school. I have seen a number of native village schools and this one beat them all – a 10 x 18 foot, crude wood frame with a large blue plastic tarp constituting the roof and walls and a dirt floor with crude logs cut in half for their desks and seats. A small blackboard graced the front wall – that was their school. They were so proud they had a teacher.

We experienced driving through rivers, up and down scary winding roads with the horn blowing constantly going around corners. We were shocked to find out that the Pan American Highway was just another narrow twisty so-called road.

We enjoyed all of the many experiences with the good sisters and praise their bravery and dedication. It has been a unique and outstanding spiritual experience to visit and work with the Aberdeen Presentation sisters to the indigenous peoples in Mexico and with the Dubuque Presentation sisters in their Bolivian mission.

Leo Gese tells his story of sharing the Aberdeen and Dubuque Presentation missions in Mexico and Bolivia. He and Desa continue to support the Entre Ríos mission. Leo is particularly enthusiastic about native Bolivian vocations to the Presentation sisters. He believes passionately in the impact of religious women in the ministry of the church and contributes economically to continue their mission.

International Speakers Bureau Welcoming the Stranger

by CORINE MURRAY, PBVM

The Christmas season is a wonderful reminder of the importance of hospitality to strangers. A perfect example is the story of the Holy Family's flight into Egypt. While the Scriptures provide few details, one can imagine the challenges of such a journey.

Sister Corine Murray's experience at the Presentation Lantern Center with recent immigrants has gifted her with inspiring stories:

A woman who escaped from the civil war in Bosnia shared that her family lost their house and added, but it was only a house. As refugees, she and her entire family were welcomed to the U.S. She is now a U.S. citizen.

A man rode 30 miles to work on a bicycle even during an Iowa winter. He did not have money for gas.

A young couple left their infant daughter with the child's grandmother, journeyed to the United States and two years later were able to bring the child to this country.

A woman described the difficulties communicating with her health professionals at the birth of her first child because of the language barrier.

Years ago, Sister Corine lived with a sister who frequently shared this pearl of wisdom, "If you don't have the microphone, sit down." As a member of the International Speakers Bureau in Dubuque not only does she occasionally have a microphone but she gets to pass it to recent immigrants and invite them to share their stories.

In 2008, Sister Corine became a member of the City of Dubuque subcommittee of the Human Rights Commission with a focus

Left to right: International Speakers Bureau committee members, Vince Vandenhoevel, Mani Vedanayagam, Mary Jean Gregory and Joe Featherston enjoy the connections they have made with each other and the other committee members.



As we celebrate the story of the birth of Jesus and recall that he and his family were strangers in a strange land, let us consider how we welcome the strangers among us.

on national origin, who worked with Loras College Productions to create a short DVD about recent newcomers to the area. The subcommittee evolved into the International Speakers Bureau (ISB), an independent committee of concerned citizens. Many individuals featured in the DVD have a Lantern Center connection.

Presentation Associate, Dora Serna Bedoya, one of the ISB speakers states, "I have seen how Dubuque has become a more welcoming, tolerant and friendly city to all immigrants due to the effort of different organizations like the Sisters of the Presentation, the City of Dubuque and the International Speakers Bureau."

During the last three years the ISB has made presentations to numerous civic, educational, business and faith-based groups reaching nearly 1,000 people. The presentations include showing the DVD, sharing by a recent immigrant and inviting questions. Audiences have been very positive. For some, the presentations invite them to recall stories of their own ancestors from such places as Germany, Ireland, Norway and Italy or to appreciate the struggles that they have experienced. Others develop a deeper understanding of the challenges current immigrants face.

We never tire of good stories. They have the power to inform, enlighten and often inspire. As we celebrate the story of the birth of Jesus and recall that he and his family were strangers in a strange land, let us consider how we welcome the strangers among us.

Contact Sister Corine at corinemurray@aol.com or 563-557-7134 for more information about ISB or to schedule a presentation.

In the Spirit of Nano Nagle Tradition Continues

by LEANNE WELCH, PBVM

Waiting for the coming of Christ as celebrated at Christmas time brings many memories, traditions and adaptations. Sometimes, all three are combined. This is the case when on Christmas Eve 2009 an early tradition of Nano Nagle's was re-instituted at Mount Loretto.

T.J. Walsh, in his book "Nano Nagle and the Presentation Sisters," writes about the early days of Nano with her religious community. Founded at Christmas time in 1775 as the Sisters of Charitable Instruction of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, later to become the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Nano's community of four lived in her small cottage.

Walsh writes:

"The new home of the Charitable Instruction was given a symbolic blessing on Christmas Day 1777 when fifty beggars were invited to dinner. They were waited on by Nano and her Sisters. The annalist noted the occasion.

She waited on them at table with great joy and singular charity; she helped them as their menial servant, faith strongly representing to her the Great Patron of the Poor who on that day made His first appearance among men and who came not to be ministered to but to minister."

Remembering reading about this tradition through the years, the sisters at Mount Loretto decided to open their home to those less fortunate on Christmas Eve of 2009. They chose to invite the men from Hope House (a Catholic Worker House) and the Dubuque Rescue Mission to share prayer and the evening meal.

As planning took place, generosity sprung forth. Sisters made individual donations so that sweatshirts, caps, gloves, fruit and candy could be purchased and placed in a reusable tote bag as a gift to each man. As word spread, associates stepped forward and made donations. Associate Mags Young and her husband, Lenny, donated their time and service by providing transportation for the men to and from Mount Loretto.

As the men arrived they were welcomed to sit by the fireplace in the front parlor to visit with the sisters until all could gather. They then joined the sisters in the chapel for a prayer service of seasonal scripture readings and hymns. The dining room was set to welcome two men and two sisters to each table so that conversation and food could be shared.

One man's great delight was to have horseradish on his meat. On the way home another man commented that everything was so nice but the nicest part of the evening was the conversation with the sisters at his table.

This ritual was repeated at Christmas time 2010 and will take place again this year. Memories, traditions and adaptation as we celebrate the coming of Christ!



Left to right: Top photo: Sister Catherine Wingert enjoys conversation with a guest on Christmas Eve 2010. Bottom photo: Sisters Hermann Platt, Josita Zieser and Donna Determan prepare bags for the made poor.

Remembering Elkader

by HERMANN PLATT, PBVM

The Presentation sisters began their ministry in Elkader, Iowa, on August 25, 1885. The Sisters of Charity, BVM, who had spent 17 years in the school, had withdrawn due to increased commitments elsewhere. According to Mother Benedict Murphy's *Annals*, "Bishop Hennessy immediately requested Mother Patricia to send sisters to replace them." Mother Patricia sent Sister Mary de Chantal Heiser and two companions, Sisters Mary Gertrude Hanlon and Alphonsus Green. They were described as "women of good sense and judgment."

"Rev. Fr. Quigley, a man of advanced years...was pastor at Elkader. A small frame building served as convent and school when our sisters first occupied the place to continue the work of education." The convent occupied the basement, while first floor housed two school rooms: the "little" room where the beginners started, and the "big" room to which they later advanced.

There were early concerns that, having replaced the well-liked and respected BVM sisters, the Presentation sisters might encounter some resistance and hard feelings. They were received with warmth, however, and experienced the "gracious consideration and friendliness typical of the people of Elkader."

A sense of humor helped ease the loneliness of the three members of the original community, who especially liked to tell the story of an incident involving Father McCulloch.

Upon visiting the Church one day to pray, the sisters discovered an elderly retired priest, shoes and stockings removed, feet on the pew ahead of him, absorbed in prayer. Suppressing their giggles, they remained to pray, and later recalled the years spent by Father McCulloch as a pioneer priest tramping the prairies on the frontier. They concluded that God wouldn't mind his bare feet, which must have been worn out from his travels.

Upon the death of Father Quigley in 1886, the new pastor, Father John F. Reilley, undertook a much-needed renovation of both convent and school. With more space and added enrollment, Sister Mary Josephine Howley joined the original group of three, followed by Sisters Mary Veronica Mulgrew and de Pazzi Curtin in 1888 and 1889 respectively. In 1889 and 1898 further additions to the building provided space for more students, and even allowed the sisters to open a limited boarding school for girls.

By 1911, Father Reilley, pastor at the time, had erected a two-story brick building to serve as the school, leaving the sisters in the privacy of the convent. Grade and high school curriculum matched and even exceeded that offered in all small parochial schools at that time, with Father Reilley providing college preparatory classes in addition to the regular course of study.

The new 1911 building provided room for increased enrollment, and a full course of high school studies by 1925. A year later the St. Joseph High School was recognized by the Iowa Committee on Secondary Schools and placed on the list of accredited schools in Iowa. Further program expansion into the area of athletics was made possible by the work of Father James Taken, who remodeled the old stone church to serve as a parish hall and gymnasium. The church and parish hall were later listed in the National Register of Historical Places.

In later years, one of the young boys who had graced the halls of St. Joseph's grew up to be Bishop Francis J. Dunn, who became Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Dubuque in August of 1969.

According to the parish history, published in 1981, 23 young women from Elkader entered the convent: 18 became Sisters of the Presentation, and five joined various other communities.

St. Joseph School closed in 1969. According to the Clayton County Register (February 13, 1969), reasons for closing were listed as "financial pressures, a decrease in teaching religious and the need for a more efficient school system."

After the closing of the school, Presentation sisters continued to minister to the people of the parish by maintaining a religious education program there until 1975.

A letter from the Burlingame Family, dated February 1969, says of the sisters who taught at St. Joseph School in Elkader: "For many years the Presentation sisters have taught our children in the grades and supported them in athletics. They have lived among us 'as poor yet enriching many'...none of us care to have faithful friends leave."

Two years ago Presentation presence returned to Elkader when Sister Carla Popes began ministering at St. Joseph Parish. She helps with life-long faith formation classes and guides parents and students together as they prepare for the sacraments of initiation. "It has been a wonderful gift walking with those who remember the sisters. We, too, have received the blessings of these wonderfully generous people," comments Sister Carla.

Sister also ministers as the director of religious education in the Sacred Heart Parish in Volga, Iowa; and pastoral associate at St. Mary Parish in Strawberry Point, Iowa.

Far left photo: St. Joseph School in Elkader, Iowa, built in 1911; Right photo: left to right: The early Elkader community: Front row: Sisters Dolorosa Lynch, Antonio Murphy, Zita Lynch; Back row: Dominic Dougherty, Mother de Chantal Heiser and Veronica Mulgrew.



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 Aquin Walsh, Superior 1922-1931

Her winsome picture hangs on the Archives' wall – a bundle of Irish charm exuding from her smile. Mother Aquin Walsh, assistant to Mother Benedict in her last term of office, became the eighth superior of the congregation in 1922. Taught by the Presentation sisters, she entered the community from Waukon, Iowa, one of the earliest Presentation missions.

Annals written by Sister Mary Vivia Cranny describe Mother Aquin as "gentle and retiring," as well as a charming conversationalist. As the first Presentation sister in Iowa to receive a master's degree, she was also perceived as scholarly. She was the first congregational superior to serve a six-year leadership term in keeping with the new Constitutions of 1925.

"Frugality" was the watchword of the day, and a heroic effort was made to pay interest and principal on notes from the previous building of the new Mount Loretto motherhouse. The sale of the St. Vincent property to St. Columbkille Parish in 1930 freed the community from a primary financial burden and responsibility. With the removal of this obligation the Sisters of the Presentation gradually lifted themselves out of a 23-year indebtedness.

During her second term of office, Mother Aquin organized the celebration of the community's golden jubilee (1875-1925). Only a few sisters were absent for the group picture of 132 sisters gathered for the occasion.

In 1930 Mother Aquin celebrated her own silver jubilee, at which time her assistant, Sister Mary Clementina Mackey procured for her a gift: the large picture of the Presentation of Mary in the Temple, a treasured art piece which has always hung in a place of honor at Mount Loretto Convent.

After the completion of her second term Mother Aquin no longer enjoyed good health. She returned to teaching, however, and served at St. Columbkille School in Dubuque and St. Joseph School in Elkader. She retired only a short time before her death in 1948, having given 17 years to leadership, including the last five years of her life, when she again served, this time as a general councilor. She died leaving a legacy of genteel leadership, Irish charm and quiet service.



Left to right: Associates Julie Lundstrom and Bernie Graves draw words of encouragement with Julie's boys, Owen and Charlie for Sister Mary Dennis Lentsch.

Daring to Dream of A Better World

by BERNIE GRAVES, ASSOCIATE

The Kansas City Area Presentation associates “dare to dream of a better world” through their actions of service, prayer and daily living. Again this past summer they provided lunches for the Urban Rangers. The Urban Ranger Corps is a program for inner city youth that provides positive male role models, discipline, job skills and basic health care. In the summer months, the Rangers are employed to improve housing in the urban core. This year there were 53 Rangers in the program. The associates and their helpers made “foot long” sandwiches for them. In an effort to be “greener,” the food was boxed by work sites instead of packing individual lunches.

The group came together in August to pray for Sister Mary Dennis Lentsch and for peace. Their prayer and discussion centered on David Haas’ song, “Voices that Challenge.” Sister Mary Dennis is a voice that challenges all to live with passion and integrity as she works for peace and a nuclear-free world. How can we be a voice for peace? Julie and Rich Lundstrom’s boys, Owen and Charlie, each drew a picture for Sister Mary Dennis that was sent to her.

The associates continue to carry Nano’s lantern light as they go out each day in Kansas City. Julie Lundstrom volunteers at her parish food pantry and coordinates the parish school’s Box Top program. Bernie Graves is in the second year of training to become a spiritual director and is facilitating a group called “Beyond RCIA.” Judi Moritz is an RCIA sponsor, a choir member and a champion for employment of the blind. Nothing that they do is extraordinary, but all is done with God’s grace and the inspiration and example of the Presentation sisters. As Nano said, “Not words, but deeds.”

Joyful Women of Light Serving People in Need

by DOLORES ZIESER, PBVM

At the Joyful Women's August meeting the group suggested some activities they could do to help people in need. The project they chose was to make fleece neck scarves for the women and children living at the Maria House in Dubuque.

The September meeting was spent finalizing the plans. Associate Sue Murphy did the research. Each person would contribute \$5.00 to buy a yard of fleece which would make four scarves.

At the November meeting they cut the scarves and made a fringe on each end. These scarves were delivered to Maria House in time for Thanksgiving. “This was a fun project for us, and we are sure it was ‘warmly’ received by the women and children at Maria House,” states Sister Josita Zieser.

The next project planned is to purchase Christmas gifts for a family in need. Associate Dora Serna will research a family and their needs so the group can accomplish this project at their December meeting.

Left to right: Back row: Associates Kate Kleeman, Laurie Noel and Mary Rohner; Front row: Dora Serna, Sue Murphy, Sister Josita Zieser and Sister Donna Determan. Not pictured is Sister Dolores Zieser



Celebrating Associate Partnership



Newly committed associate, Elizabeth Guiliani, joins 128 other men and women associates in identifying with the mission of the Sisters of the Presentation in being “called to evangelize, offering hope and love to a broken world by incarnating the hospitality of God, confronting injustice, and working for peace.”

In her letter requesting commitment, Elizabeth states, “Becoming a Dubuque Presentation associate allows me to foster the connection to the sisters whom I journeyed, prayed and ministered with in Jesus’ and Nano’s name for three years. Though we are not close in miles, the connection is deeply rooted and maintained through prayer, the charisma and contact with each other. I am grateful to those who remain connected and faithful to ‘Go out for need calls loudly in the winding lanes and you must seek Christ there.’”

On October 29, 2011, Elizabeth made her first commitment as a Presentation associate in Aberdeen, South Dakota. Witnessing that commitment were Sisters Lynn Mary Wagner and Marilou Irons.

The Value of Friendship

by RAELEEN SWEENEY, PBVM

It was the fall of 1956 when 13 young women from various areas of Iowa entered the Presentation community at Mount Loretto in Dubuque, Iowa. This was a time of innocence; choices were few for women’s careers. It was prior to the Vietnam war, and Vatican II changes in the church. Four years of college was a priority for teacher preparation and these young women would attend Clarke College to attain their teacher certification. The friendship began as they earned and learned their sisterhood profession and education profession.

As the years advanced and ministry called each one to schools in Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Arizona, Colorado, California, Texas and Wisconsin, the 13 women valued the gift of friendship by staying connected. Seven opted for other paths in their lives in the wider community: Gwen Wright Johnson Le-Mer (California), Janet Quade (Arizona), Marilyn McCormick Brissett-Kruger (Wisconsin), Sister Marlene McDonnell, SFCC (Iowa), Mary Ann Kane (Colorado) and Mary Hardgrove (Texas). One has been called to her eternal reward: Mary Pat Dougherty. Six continue the Presentation path: Sisters Donna Determan (Dubuque), Emilie Bormann (Rochester, Minnesota), Hermann Platt (Dubuque), Jeanine Kuhn (Cedar Falls), Raeleen Sweeney (Chicago, Illinois) and Sheila Ann Dougherty (Dubuque).



Left to right: Back row: Janet Quade, Sister Sheila Ann Dougherty, Sister Emilie Borman, Sister Hermann Platt, Mary Ann Kane, Sister Raeleen Sweeney, Gwen Wright Le-Mer; Front row: Marilyn McCormick Brissett-Kruger, Sister Jeanine Kuhn, Sister Donna Determan, Sister Marlene McDonnell, SFCC. Not pictured: Mary Hardgrove

“We have ‘blessed’ ourselves with the title of ‘Wise Women’ because that defines who we have become to one another over the years,” states Sister Hermann Platt. The group continues to meet semi-annually to share and enjoy one another. The gatherings began with a retreat directed by Father Pat Barder, SVD. Since that time, the gatherings developed into a 1956 Reunion, hosted each time by a different member in a different location. Gatherings have been in Cedar Falls, Iowa; Grand Junction, Colorado; St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin; Chicago, Illinois; and Sun Lakes, Arizona. Each meeting provides time for sharing the beauty and culture of the area, time to share stories of past and present, time to encourage and support one another, time to laugh together, change together, grow together; time to create, time to re-connect, time to continue the journey of life together whether distance or presence provides itself for the “Wise Women.”

“We began this journey together over a half-century ago. Our friendship has lasted all these years because we take time for one another and appreciate one another as a person and as a gift in each of our lives,” states Sister Raeleen Sweeney. “We continue as ‘Wise Women’ entering the ‘Autumn’ of our life. It is with gratitude and humility that we share a portion of our life’s story across the expanse of the United States.”

SISTER FRANCESCA PRESSELLER

Generous, Happy Spirit

by JEAN LANGE

In retirement at Mount Loretto since 1999, Sister Francesca Presseller is grateful that she is physically able to do the things she does and believes it is her faith that allows her to continue to be active at the age of 90.

Born in Robbinsdale and raised in Monticello, Minnesota, Sister Francesca was the 10th child in a family of 13. She and her siblings are first generation Americans; her parents both emigrated from Hungary. Sister became interested in the Sisters of the Presentation because of the School of Religion in Monticello, run by Sister Eunice Kane. In addition, Sister Francesca's sister, Elizabeth, had entered shortly before Francesca. Joining the congregation in 1948 at age 27, Sister Francesca began a life of teaching that started and ended in Mason City, Iowa. Her teaching career included assignments in Clare, Monona, Algona, Elkader, Epworth, Iowa; St. Paul, Minnesota; and Chicago and Oregon, Illinois. She also served for two years at Mount Loretto as retirement director.

Of great significance to Sister Francesca from her years of teaching were the relationships she built with other teachers and especially with the people of St. Dorothy School in Chicago and the Presentation Lantern Center in Dubuque.

"I am grateful for the children whose lives I was fortunate to touch," comments Sister. "I approached each new assignment head-on. What was there, you did. I always took people as they were. If something was not to my liking, I considered that my problem, not theirs."

Sister Catherine Wingert noted this about Sister's years of teaching, "I believe that Sister Francesca taught, not only from books, but she taught the presence of God in all of nature and each person."

In her retirement, those attitudes and relationships continue. Her friend, Sister Rene Laubenthal, says of Sister Francesca, "She has an abundance of common sense and a generous, happy spirit. She can sing most any song and name most any bird." Her days at Mount Loretto are spent at the switchboard for five hours a week and she often fills in for vacations and weekends. She has settled most happily into a hobby of playing cards, playing at least three nights a week. The card games are lively and fun and, according to Sister Francesca, involve a fair share of "required grumping and complaining" – for fun, of course! Sister also loves to read mystery novels in her spare time.

Throughout her entire life one constant for Sister has been her love for her community of Presentation sisters. "To me community is everything," says Sister Francesca. "Community is life-giving." Well said from one who has spent her years giving life and love to all around her.

Left to right: Sister Francesca Presseller is surrounded by her faithful card players: Sisters James Marie Gross, Annette Skyles, Rene Laubenthal, Pierre Kollasch and Catherine Wingert.



Celebrating 60 Years of Religious Life

Come to the Feast

by BETH KRESS, PBVM

"Gather the people! Enter the feast! All are invited ... the banquet is ready, now to be shared," words sung as the gathering song for the 60th jubilee Mass for Sister Rosanne Rottinghaus. "Come to the Feast" was the theme Sister Rosanne chose as she celebrated with the members of the Presentation community on October 9 at Mount Loretto.

Sister Rosanne, presently of Dubuque, resides at Mount Loretto and is in community prayer and service. The daughter of the late Joseph and Catherine (Gudenkauf) Rottinghaus, Sister was educated in Catholic schools in Dougherty, Roseville and Charles City, Iowa. She entered the Sisters of the Presentation in 1951 and professed final vows in 1957.

A veritable feast could describe Sister Rosanne's life of ministry. She received her bachelor's degree at Loras College in Dubuque and served as music teacher and parish liturgist in Algona, Cedar Falls, Clare, Key West, Dubuque, Fairbank, Humboldt, Marion and Whittemore, all in Iowa, and in Timber Lake, South Dakota. She was also a pastoral associate in Osage, Iowa.

"These years have truly been a blessing for me, my family, my religious community and God's people whom I have served," states Sister Rosanne. "I spent the first 35 years enjoying singing God's praises with youngsters in schools and producing Christmas and spring programs. Working with the adults in parish choirs, community projects, town centennials, ecumenical and fund-raising events were all part of good times.

"During my last 14 years as a pastoral associate I worked with aspects of liturgical music, training all ministers, ministering to the elderly, sick and dying and conducting wake services," Sister comments. "I found each of these areas very satisfying. People were so supportive and grateful."

As Sister Rosanne retired from active ministry in 2000, she has appreciated living a more contemplative life and enjoying her sisters in community, especially the elderly and ailing.

"I am grateful for the graces given me to answer God's call to religious life, to spend time feasting with God and his people." Praying for continued vocations to religious life, Sister Rosanne shouts: "It's a great life, girls. Come to the feast!"

Left to right: Together, Sisters Anthony and Rosanne Rottinghaus enjoy life in community.

Reweaving Gathering

The weekend of April 30, 2011, former members and Sisters gathered at the Sisters of the Presentation for a day of re-connecting. Following the welcome and prayer, Marilyn Brissett-Kruger and Marlene McDonnell, SFCC, shared the creative ways their entrance class of 1956 (six former members and six sisters) remain connected.



Karla Berns and Sister Lynn Mary Wagner, co-directors of the Associate Partnership, provided updates on the events and happenings of the associates, highlighting that this partnership is celebrating its 10th anniversary.

The group took advantage of visiting over lunch and throughout the afternoon. Some participants visited the "Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America" exhibit at the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium. Gratitude was expressed for the opportunity to re-weave and re-connect. Everyone looks forward to the next gathering.



What is in a Document?

by SUZANNE TAKES, PBVM

We take many things for granted. Most of us, shortly after we were born, were registered with all the information necessary including our full name, our parents' names, the date and hour of our birth. Routine questions are asked of us from early on in life such as, "What's your name, your age, your birthday, your parents' names?" We grow up in a culture of naming things and counting days and years according to the calendar. But what if we grew up unable to read and write, add or subtract or in some cases not even be able to count? How would we manage the routine questions without the written word, numbers or traditional record keeping of parents and lineage?

During the past four years, I have had the opportunity to accompany many Bolivian citizens who have never been registered in the civil registry and have never owned a birth certificate. Searching for records or papers where one's name is recorded is difficult when one has never had formal education. Knowing the name of your parents is a challenge if your parents didn't use formal or last names. This is especially true for the Guaraní people.

The most common place where people in rural communities keep their papers or documents is tucked under the bamboo or thatched roof and often in a reused five kilo plastic macaroni bag. People pull out their treasured documents to proudly show me not knowing what they have. Among the assortment are bills, receipts, notes and political advertisements and, on occasion, a baptismal registry.

I am learning not to ask routine questions that have no easy answers, such as full name, age, birth date and parents' names. The document project started with a visit to Ñaurenda from a family who asked for help in registering their eight children ranging from 11 to 25 years old. The first step was getting the parents registered. The next step included months of administrative work, visiting the Court House and Civil Registry to have their children's documents legally accepted. Since then there has been a continuous stream of visitors to our door asking for help.

Many times, the case is not a lack of being registered but a double or triple registration which requires considerable paperwork and visits to the Court House in the capital city of Tarija about three hours from the village of Entre Ríos.

The month of October was a record month for documents. Forty-five people traveled to Tarija for the final step of receiving their identity cards, which is similar to having a driver's license for identification. The identity card is essential for everything including health benefits, social security and participation in all government programs.



Top photo: Sister Suzanne Takes drives Rafael Avila to get his first identification card and birth certificate after several months of paperwork. Bottom photo: Sister Suzanne is surrounded by the many Bolivians who wait for legal documentation.

Rafael Avila, who just turned 60, is one of the proud owners of his first identity card and birth certificate. He was registered in May and finished the legal work for all his papers in October. He traveled with me to Tarija for the last details of the paperwork which, in his case, includes registering for his social security pension. He will be able to collect approximately \$28 dollars monthly.

We are most grateful to all who have supported and continue to support this document program and all our programs for the Bolivian people.

Mount Loretto AND BEYOND

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



Ruby Sutton Award 2011

Congratulations to Sister Corine Murray who was given the Ruby Sutton Award by the Dubuque chapter of the NAACP at its annual Freedom Fund Banquet on November 18. She was honored for her ministry at the Presentation Lantern Center. As she accepted the award, she acknowledged the Lantern Center staff and its many volunteers who carry on its mission of offering hospitality, educational opportunities and advocacy to guests. Pictured with Sister Corine is Mary Jean Gregory (left), Lantern Center board chair.



80th Jubilee Celebration

Presentation Associate Sister Virgie Luchsinger, SFCC, (right) congratulates BVM Sister Vincentia Kaeferstein (left) on her 80th year in religious life. Sister Vincentia stayed with the Presentation sisters for a lengthy time during Mt. Carmel motherhouse's renovation. Sister Vincentia taught for many years in Dubuque, including Clarke College and St. Anthony School. She taught Sister Virgie, her twin sister, Virginia Olliff and the parents of Sister Ann Jackson's parents, Joan and Fred, among others.

Ministry Updates



1 SISTER CECILIA AUTERMAN: Receptionist, Sisters of the Presentation



2 SISTER LYNN MARIE FANGMAN: Director of Stewardship, Archdiocese of Dubuque.



3 SISTER JOAN LICKTEIG: Prayer and Community Service

4 SISTER JEANETTE MCCARTHY: Prayer and Community Service

5 SISTER MAURA MCCARTHY: Short term United Nations Representative for International Presentation Association

6 SISTER IRMA RIES: Sexual Abuse Prevention Educator, Clayton County, Iowa

7 SISTER ROSALYN ULFERS: Pastoral care at Clare House, a residence for Sisters of St. Francis of Dubuque.



You are invited to join us.

December 25, 2011
Christmas Mass
9:00 a.m.
Sisters of the Presentation
Sacred Heart Chapel
Dubuque, Iowa

March 30-31, 2012
Dubuque's Got Sisters
Discernment Weekend
Sisters of Charity, Mount Carmel
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 9-14, 2012
National Vocation Awareness Week

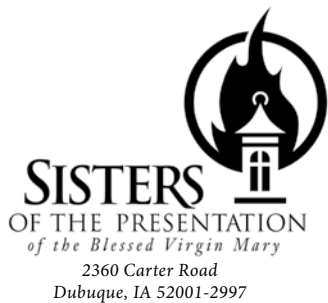
February 5, 2012
World Day for Consecrated Life

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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- Wrong Address*
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(please indicate which is correct)



The song of the angels is stilled.
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas BEGINS:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among peoples
To make music in the heart.

Howard Thurman

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

SISTERS OF THE PRESENTATION OF DUBUQUE, IOWA