

# PRESENTATION DOORWAYS

*offering hospitality to the world*



# The COMMITTEE

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY by the Sisters of the Presentation  
2360 Carter Road  
Dubuque, Iowa 52001-2997 USA  
Phone: 563-588-2008 Fax: 563-588-4463  
Email: info@dbqpbvms.org  
Website: www.dbqpbvms.org

## DOORWAYS COMMITTEE

Jane Buse-Miller, director of communications;  
Associate Michelle Covey; Sister Carmen Hernandez; Sister Elena Hoye; Sister Joy Peterson; Cindy Pfiffner, associate co-director;  
Sister Francine Quillin; Marge Reidy; Karen Tuecke, partners in mission coordinator

## The PURPOSE

The purpose of Presentation Doorways is to further the 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 to invite others to become involved in our mission.

## 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. Submit to:

Editor, Presentation Doorways  
2360 Carter Road  
Dubuque, Iowa 52001-2997  
info@dbqpbvms.org

## Cover PHOTOS

The doorways represented on the cover are snapshots of significant doors in the Presentation history and present day ministries: (Left to right) Doorway of Hotel Hope, a nonprofit hotel for homeless women and children in New Orleans, Louisiana; Doorway of St. Vincent's Academy (now St. Columbkille) in Dubuque, Iowa, in 1879; Doorway of La Luz Hispana, a center where Hispanic people come together in Hampton, Iowa; Doorway of the Presentation Motherhouse at 2360 Carter Road in Dubuque, Iowa; Doorway of Casa Betania, home for retreats and a gathering space for students in Tarija, Bolivia.

# PRESENTATION DOORWAYS

Sisters of the Presentation | Summer 2020 | Volume 64 • Number 2

## A Look Inside CONTENTS

### 4 Responding to COVID-19

*"Go out! For the need calls loudly..." is a line from a poem written about our foundress, Nano Nagle, that echoes in the hearts of Presentation Sisters and associates around the world. In this time of global pandemic, the needs have certainly called loudly. Presentation Sisters and associates share reflections on their response to the coronavirus pandemic.*



### 8 Sharing a Pastoral Presence

*Many opportunities arise almost anywhere or anytime when one can respond by being fully present to another in sharing a pastoral presence. Presentation Sisters offer a listening heart as they minister to others.*

### 10 Exceptional Individuals Honored

*Presentation Sisters initiated scholarships and awards to further Foundress Nano Nagle's legacy of education and her desire to serve. Read about the well-deserved recipients.*



### 12 Connecting with Supporters

*This pandemic has not only strengthened our connection to our benefactors but their support in multiple ways has allowed our sisters to continue their work with the marginalized.*

### 14 Embracing All People

*Sister Carla Popes shares how her learnings from a workshop on racism touched her heart deeply during a visit to New Orleans and in her work with immigrants.*

### 16 Presentation Associate Scholarship Recipients

*Presentation associates contributed money to offer three scholarships to individuals associated with ministries supported by the Dubuque Presentation Sisters. Read about the well-deserved recipients.*



### 18 Keeping Her Name Alive

*We remember Sister Barbara Rastatter.*

### 19 Mount Loretto & Beyond

*We share with you special times in the lives of Dubuque Sisters of the Presentation and associates, near and far.*

## Cover PHOTO

There are creative ways to respond to "staying at home" during the coronavirus pandemic. Sister Jennifer Rausch, pastoral care coordinator, enjoys the gift of homemade pie from Oliver Gragert, resident at Glenn Hopkins. His baking efforts are well known in the senior living community in Hopkins, Minnesota.

# A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

*Openings*



by MARILYN BREEN, PBVM

As we prepare this issue of *Doorways*, our lives have been interrupted by an uninvited guest, COVID-19. It has challenged our hospitality in new and uncomfortable ways. Plans, programs, events and celebrations have been postponed or cancelled as we adhere to new “stay-at-home” directives. We are committed to embrace this new and difficult season with courage, determination and thoughtfulness.

The season of spring is budding all around us. We take delight in the soft, lacy shades of green and anticipate planting flowers and vegetables. This beautiful season in nature feels out of sync with our inner experience. Day by day, the news continues to tally the worldwide number of people diagnosed with the virus, the number of deaths and the progress in testing. For many, this is a sad season of darkness and loneliness. Long anticipated graduations, weddings and family gatherings are cancelled. New babies are introduced through closed windows or shared pictures, and funerals are celebrated with few present. The fact that we are all in this together and that the virus treats everyone the same offers little comfort. Understandably, we wonder how long these directives will last and whether we will ever know “normal” again.

We also observe sprouts of green and glimmers of light and goodness as we learn about people who reach out to help others: healthcare professionals, public servants and those who stock the shelves of our grocery stores each day. Creativity abounds in those who are working with children, from the teachers who traded their classroom experience for online lessons to families who are making memories together through games, activities and shared meals. Around the entire globe, we celebrate signs of life and compassion in this confusing time.

Because of this virus, we are forced to learn new ways of relating which, on our own, we would not choose. We are building bridges of hope leading us to accept a new normal. We are learning anew the importance of generosity, creativity and relationships. We hold each other’s fragility as a sacred trust. We are one world, connected in mysterious ways and responsible for one another in extraordinary ways.

History reminds us of hardships which called us to unite, stay strong and make choices knowing that we depend on each other. We had the strength to make sacrifices, act with kindness and reach across differences to care for the most vulnerable and we trust that the same spirit inspires us today.

We hold you in prayer each day and look forward to the day when we will open our doors, come together at Eucharist and continue to respond to the needs of the world around us in the manner of Nano Nagle and all who have walked in her footsteps.

## The Summons

Alone.  
Separate.  
Yet together.

The measure of safety  
feet, inches,  
masks, gloves and gowns.  
No favorites nor boundaries  
for the undetected legs  
of the Grim Reaper  
who gallops the globe.

Through the lens of hospitality  
people of hope  
pursue the common good  
through bridge-building  
through courageous compassion  
and through graced generosity  
that inspires and saves.

*Corine Murray, PBVM, April 21, 2020*

## 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, Venerable 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 vision with you.

## Our DIRECTION

Rooted in the Gospel, inspired by Nano Nagle and united to Presentation Sisters and associates around the world through the International Presentation Association, we, the Sisters of the Presentation of Dubuque, Iowa, are called to live our charism of radical hospitality in kinship with Earth and all people.

### Sisters of the Presentation LEADERSHIP TEAM

*Sister Carmen Hernandez*

*Sister Rita Menart*

*Sister Joy Peterson*

*Sister Marilyn Breen*

*Sister Carmen Hernandez Sister Rita Menart Sister Joy Peterson Sister Marilyn Breen*



Presentation associates, employees and friends visit the sisters “parade-style” sending them love and prayers while practicing social distancing in their cars.

# Responding to COVID-19

by JESSI BECK, PBVM

“Go out! For the need calls loudly...” is a line from a poem written about our foundress, Nano Nagle, that echoes in the hearts of Presentation Sisters and associates around the world. It is a reminder of our continual call to pay attention to those who are suffering in our midst and to go out to respond in any way necessary. In this time of global pandemic, the needs have certainly called loudly, as every one of us has been affected, although some more critically than others! However, “going out” has taken new and unexpected forms including staying home to protect the most vulnerable, sending resources where they are most needed, and finding creative ways to connect with others. Presentation Sisters and associates would like to share a few stories and reflections with you from the early months of the pandemic.

## *Going Out in Direct Service*

**Associate Donna Ewy - Wichita, KS**

As a medical director of numerous facilities, Associate Donna Ewy had to jump in and help with all the policies and procedures needed regarding keeping patients safe, restricting visitors, figuring out how to manage hospice visits, managing return-to-work policies for staff who got sick and much more. It is very difficult for families who aren’t allowed in the nursing facilities to see their loved ones, and Donna spends a fair amount of time both listening to their concerns, fears, anger and sadness and then discusses the rationale for restricting visits. She notes, “I have to maintain calm professionalism while sometimes being quite exhausted and stressed myself. I often have to dig deep to scoop up a piece of radical hospitality!”

### **Associate Billie Greenwood - Davenport, IA**

The Emergency Shelter temporarily placed their participants in local motels for social distancing during the pandemic. Community volunteers, including Associate Billie Greenwood, took turns delivering two meals per day to them, around 8,000 meals delivered each month.

### **Sisters Mary Lou Specha and Julie Marsh - New Orleans, LA**

Hotel Hope has continued to provide housing for women and their children with rooms at a local hotel during this crisis. Sisters Mary Lou Specha and Julie Marsh check on families regularly to monitor their health, bring breakfast, lunch and snacks and provide weekly laundry service. Hotel Hope volunteers deliver a hot meal each day. The sisters pray daily for the health and safety of those around them and patiently await the day when the city lifts the quarantine so these families can prepare to move into their own homes. Sisters Mary Lou and Julie continue to receive crisis calls and expect a higher number of homeless families in the weeks ahead.

### **Associate Yvonne Kisch - Charles City, IA**

Associate Yvonne Kisch prayed for a way to be of service and several opportunities surfaced. The American Red Cross came to town with a much-needed blood drive. Then came the call that mobile food pantry trucks were coming to town. Next came a message from the ACCW president to make and deliver masks for all the priests in the deanery still working with the public. In each case, Yvonne signed up and was grateful that necessary safety precautions were taken to keep everyone healthy. She reflects, "I thank God for all His blessings on everyone in all that they are doing to get us through this. We are blessed indeed!"

**I have attended more webinars than I thought that I would ever attend. I have delved into learning technology and its many uses!**

*Sister Cheryl Demmer*

## *Going Out in Parishes*

### **Sister Cheryl Demmer - Muscatine, IA**

COVID-19 came at the busiest time of year in parish life. With everything on hold, Sister Cheryl Demmer embraced the gift of time by writing letters to confirmands and First Communicants and their parents, to graduates, to religious education families and catechists. She spends time calling parishioners and homebound who live alone to make sure they are doing okay.

Sister Cheryl is also using this time to be proactive in the event that all faith formation experiences this fall will need to be met with the "new normal." She notes, "I have attended more webinars than I thought that I would ever attend. I have delved into learning technology and its many uses!"



*Sisters Julie Marsh and Mary Lou Specha continue the daily operations of Hotel Hope, like preparing food for guests, while many of their regular volunteers are unable to come due to the pandemic.*

### **Associate Mary Stanton - Mason City, IA**

Associate Mary Stanton is part of a calling group organized at her church. She calls three people each week, along with several other volunteers, as a way to keep in touch with members of the parish. She also enjoys attending live streamed Mass at any hour of the day.

### **Sister Margaret Anne Kramer - Dubuque, IA**

Being a parish pastoral care minister it is not always possible to be present in person especially during this time of COVID-19. Knowing how important it is to stay connected, Sister Margaret Anne Kramer uses texts, emails and phone calls to pray, listen and help bear the burdens and anxieties of the people in nursing homes and the homebound.



*Sister Jessi Beck and fellow teacher, Norberto Ramos, Jr., distribute "grab and go" breakfast and lunch boxes three times each week to families at Our Lady of Tepeyac Grade School in Chicago.*



*One of the ways Sisters Brigid Stanley and Jane Conrad, from Yankton, South Dakota, are weathering the pandemic is by taking walks along the Missouri River and enjoying the wildlife in the area.*

## Going Out to Nurture Our Spirit

### Sister Ann Jackson - Cedar Rapids, IA

Sister Ann Jackson feels blessed to work with the Prairiewoods' Ecospirituality Center staff during Zoom meetings and honored to listen in spiritual direction via phone or Zoom as people discover nature as a threshold into deeper awareness of God. In these days of pandemic (also known as pan-deepening at Prairiewoods), Sister Ann has witnessed young and old of all faiths, race and economic status drawn to the intriguing woods, wetland and prairie. As John Muir, father of the national parks, says, "And into the woods we go, to lose our minds and find our souls."

### Associate Becky Searcy - Decorah, IA

For Associate Becky Searcy, there is much more time for prayer and reflection, for phone calls and letter writing via snail mail to family, friends and neighbors who may need a pick-me-up conversation or note during the day. And then there is playing the piano, singing and dancing! Becky asserts, "All such good medicine for my soul, and all of us!" She takes time each day for a good walk outside to connect with the earth and all of creation and to be reassured that God is present through it all!

### Sister Carla Popes - Decorah, IA

One day after her daily morning prayer, Sister Carla Popes took a walk near Trout Run Trail north of Decorah and was reminded of the changing face of life. She reflects, "This year the season of spring is filled with a sense of uncertainty as we live in the time of the coronavirus pandemic. It stirs within everyone, no matter where one lives. I am recognizing the new and wonderful ways our lives are in rhythm with God in every season. We are called to change and newness. In the midst of new uncertainties, we are called to trust just as all who have gone before us did in their time."

**... Even small acts of kindness  
can bring a smile and hope for a  
transformed humanity.**

*Associate Colleen Vlasisavljevic*

## Going Out While Staying In

### Associate Colleen Vlasisavljevic - Shoreview, MN

In addition to having many creative outlets and reading several novels, which she hasn't done in years, Associate Colleen Vlasisavljevic made 56 masks for North Memorial Hospital. She writes, "My family has a history of visiting family members at this hospital over the years. It was the one activity that brought graced moments and a feeling of not being utterly helpless." She says, "It surely underscores that even small acts of kindness can bring a smile and hope for a transformed humanity."

### Sister Raeleen Sweeney and Associate Sister Virgie Luchsinger - Chicago, IL

"Though the days seem to become a blur in these challenging times, they are also gift," says Sister Raeleen Sweeney and Associate Sister Virgie Luchsinger. Through various activities they take time each day to keep informed, alert, connected and healthy. Daily they remember those who are keeping them safe and provided for, and then attempt to send blessings from afar.



*Associate Sister Virgie Luchsinger and Sister Raeleen Sweeney enjoy the relaxation of building a puzzle during the coronavirus pandemic.*

### **Associate Carol Kane - Bloomington, MN**

Associate Carol Kane was planning to move but those plans got put on hold due to the pandemic. For a time, she had two homes when so many in the world don't have one! Carol reflects on her situation, "The only way I can deal with that is to get busy in reaching out! We have so many places where help is called for. This keeps me alerted to my privilege and, therefore, the call to give all I can, and then some. I believe these times will continue to beckon me, and others, to a constant lookout for our world's needs."

### **Sister Carrie Link - Monticello, MN**

During this time of quarantine, Sister Carrie Link has had the opportunity to paint the icon, Mary Undoer of Knots, and reflect on its meaning. While the theology of this icon goes back to early centuries, there are so many applications to today's world and to personal life experiences. "We all have some knots in our lives and Mary can untie them," expresses Sister Carrie.



## *Going Out Within Our Family*

### **Associate Thalia Cutsforth - Dubuque, IA**

Associate Thalia Cutsforth has been taking care of her parents by shopping for them so they don't have to go into the stores. Her kids are in school online while she and her husband work from home. They have been having family meals and sharing a favorite thing that happened each day. On Sundays the kids choose different locations for live-streamed Mass. To add some fun to their days, Thalia and her siblings who live throughout the U.S. hold daily challenges like dance, lip sync, air guitar, drawing, rapping via WhatsApp.

### **Associate Marlene Von Fumetti - Dubuque, IA**

Associate Marlene Von Fumetti made masks and sent them to her children and grandchildren. She is grateful that her children and their families had more time to check in, talk and play games on Zoom. She and her husband felt the stress of not being able to visit family in their homes but hope to make up for lost time when travel is safe again. Marlene shares, "This has truly been a teaching time to acknowledge we have such a blessed life and that we can do without all the extras we take for granted."

### **Sister Mary Dennis Lentsch - Knoxville, TN**

In March, Sister Mary Dennis Lentsch came to Iowa for retreat and to spend time with the sisters and her family. While visiting her blood sister in Rockwell City, she received word that travel was not advised due to COVID-19. Sister Mary Dennis reflects, "It is a blessing to be here with my sister Maureen. She reminded me that we had fun growing up together when we were young and are now enjoying growing old together. Of course, I miss my Catholic Worker community and those with whom I engage with peace and justice activities in Tennessee."

## *Going Out Near and Far*

### **House Coordinator and Associate Jean Lange - Dubuque, IA**

When you work in a big house that is the residence of 52 women plus staff, one might think a time of quarantine would spell high stress. "Not so at the Sisters of the Presentation!" says Jean Lange, house coordinator. "I believe quiet acceptance of the current situation on the part of sisters helps our staff to remain calm. We may at times see the restlessness of both sisters and staff, the irritability that the stress of the current situation creates, the longing for something more normal, but it is not high drama. For all that the sisters and staff have done to create this atmosphere of peace and hope, we are all most grateful."

### **Sister Jeanine Kuhn - Dubuque, IA**

Sister Jeanine Kuhn reflects on the experience of being on "lock down" at the Presentation Motherhouse: "While filling in for various jobs needing done, making masks for the nurses, kitchen staff and helpers, it is hard to imagine all that is going on throughout the world. We have been praying with hope that all will be well in a short time. We remember all people struggling to survive with food and other basic needs. I have felt a sadness in my heart, like a cloud over me, as I spend time with the changes in our lives. Even though we cannot have Mass and the sacraments, which is hard to go without, we are so fortunate here at Mount Loretto. It is a delight to see parents, children and others walking and pushing the little ones on our driveway. These experiences are drawing people to care for each other. It's a time to find the blessings and choose joy!"

### **International Presentation Connections**

The International Presentation Association organized a worldwide, virtual prayer on April 5. At noon in each time zone, all were invited to enter into prayer to create a global circle of light and solidarity. In mid-May, the Conference of Presentation Sisters connected Presentation people across North America with virtual meetings. Sisters, associates, employees and friends were invited to pray together and share the challenges and blessings experienced while living through the coronavirus pandemic.

### **Hermanas Therese Corkery, Suzanne Takes, Mery Cari Paz and Marge Healy - Entre Ríos and Tarija, Bolivia**

The sisters living in Bolivia report that shopping is a slow and methodical workout since only one adult per family can shop one morning each week. Other activities for them include getting the gardens in shape, cleaning out, trying new recipes and making pastoral phone calls. They are pondering these questions: What are we learning? How will we be different? How will our world be changed?

The answers are likely still in process as the uncertainty and urgent needs continue into the coming months. What remains constant are the cornerstones of service, prayer and hospitality. Presentation Sisters and associates will continue to use creativity and compassion to respond to the ongoing and ever-changing needs that call loudly in this global crisis.



*Sister Margaret Anne Kramer gives loving support to Sister Carmelle Westemeier.*

# Sharing a Pastoral Presence

by JOAN BRINCKS, PBVM

A friend calls with the news that her father is in a nursing home dying and she is not able to visit him or be with him in those last, precious moments during the coronavirus pandemic. You want to help and so you listen as she sobs profusely in telling her story. At another time, you lose your job and can barely pay the bills. You seek out a trusted neighbor to listen to you as you are greatly troubled and not sure which way to turn. In the next situation, you are excited to tell your sister about the experience of holding your beautiful grandson.

All of us have been on the giving or receiving end, knowing that one is not alone and others care. Many opportunities arise almost anywhere or anytime for one to respond and be present to another pastorally.

Reflecting on presence, Sister Janet Stelken, volunteer minister to the elderly at St. James Parish in Chicago, Illinois, comments, “What greater way can I be pastoral than to offer to those I visit my full and loving attention, earnestly listening without judgment. My complete and undivided presence speaks so much more than what I say or do.”

Listening to and being present to another is a sacred journey for Sister Jennifer Rausch, pastoral care coordinator at a senior living community in Hopkins, Minnesota. She explains pastoral presence as “savoring the treasures.” By this she means, “I have the privilege to journey with people in the senior years of their life and to assist them in naming the blessings of their lives and celebrating God’s presence experienced through joys and struggles.” In her tender encounter with another, creative and healing transformation happens.



**Hospitality is not to change people,  
but to offer them space where  
change can take place.**

*Henri Nouwen*

Henri Nouwen speaks of this encounter as hospitality to another, “Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place.” In this sacred space, one person entrusts themselves to another in the hope of being received, unconditionally understood and accepted just as he or she is, without judgment, interruption or advice. The best truths and decisions are those that arise from within the person in need through the reflective, person-centered presence of the listener. Even in the moments of silence, the other is being invited to go deeper in sharing what matters most, grief, suffering, hopelessness or even forgotten happy, surprises. Being fully present to another in an act of love is listening carefully, remaining calm and believing healing and wholeness can come.

Pastoral presence offered is a gift from within. Thus, self-awareness is very important in being fully present to another. One needs to be aware of both gifts and limitations within, cultivating authenticity and empathy for self and others. Be willing to ponder your own sufferings and losses but also joys and accomplishments. Slow down and pause throughout the day and notice your breathing. Connect with your inner Source who lives and works and prays in you, staying grounded and rooted in God’s love. Return to your center of peace, strength and compassion. Be grateful. Forgive yourself for times when you were distracted with another or tried to control the direction or fix the pain.

Giving your undivided attention takes energy and so it is helpful to replenish your mind, body and spirit. Explore a book or a museum. Enjoy a hobby or a sport. Take time to be outside in nature, soaking up the beauty. Sing a song or listen to soft, instrumental music. Engage in a work of art or journaling. Read or write poetry. Plant a garden. Watch a movie. Remember to laugh.



*Sister Janet Stelken takes time to enjoy nature and the outdoors while soaking up the beauty around her.*



*Sister Joan Brincks offers a listening heart to another.*

During the pandemic, one needs to adapt in being a pastoral presence, possibly wearing a mask and a face shield and practicing social distancing, not being able to give a touch of assurance or a hug. Sending “thinking of you” notes and messages of encouragement have been helpful. Sister Margaret Anne Kramer, pastoral associate at St. Anthony Parish in Dubuque, Iowa, states, “It is important to stay connected so the use of texts, emails and phone calls are used to pray, to listen and to help bear the burdens and anxieties of the people in nursing homes and the homebound.” She is also able to give more pastoral care for the Sisters of the Presentation at the motherhouse. After visiting with the sisters she hears, “Thank you for coming to visit.” Her response is, “Thank you for your example of strong faith, your acceptance not only at this time of COVID-19 but also as you experience decline in health. You are an example to me and to many others.”

Reviewing her ministry, Sister Joan Brincks, pastoral minister at Mount St. Francis in Dubuque, Iowa, affirms, “I marvel at the moments I meet Christ in the sisters and perceive the movement of the Spirit. I realize that I have been graced, receiving more than I give. In the intimate space where faith, joy and pain are shared, I have been blessed with life-forming wisdom. My listening heart rejoices in gratitude.”

Father Mychal Judge, O.F.M., (deceased) former chaplain to the New York City Fire Department, prayed daily for guidance in being a pastoral presence, rich in life-giving compassion. Following his example of being God’s loving presence to others, may his words become our prayer, too.

*Lord, take me where You want me to go.  
Let me meet who You want me to meet.  
Tell me what You want me to say and  
Keep me out of Your way. Amen.*

# Exceptional Individuals Honored Through Scholarships & Awards

by SAMANTHA GARCIA BRACHO, COMMUNICATIONS INTERN

Many years ago, the Sisters of the Presentation instituted a number of scholarships and awards to further the educational bequest of the congregation's foundress, Nano Nagle. In the spirit of her desire to serve, the sisters are delighted to honor the following admirable recipients.

## Mother Vincent Hennessy Foundation Scholarship

In celebration of Mother Vincent Hennessy and the Dubuque Presentation foundation, the Sisters of the Presentation offer a \$1,500 scholarship to a graduating senior from Wahlert Catholic High School in Dubuque, Iowa, which the congregation has actively supported since its inception.



This year's recipient is **Maggie McDermott** due to her service to the Dubuque community, especially at Wahlert, St. Anthony Parish and Mercy Hospital.

With a sense of pride for her school, Maggie helps Wahlert Catholic to grow and remain strong by being a student ambassador. She is also part of the service club and helps to raise funds for kids battling cancer at the University of Iowa Children's Hospital. Likewise, she serves as a lay Eucharistic minister at both Wahlert and her home parish, St. Anthony. "I enjoy being a part of the Mass and sharing the body of Christ with younger parishioners," says Maggie. "I like leading by example, not only expressing my faith but showing them how to be involved." Maggie has also volunteered at Make-a-Wish, Relay for Life and Take Away Hunger.

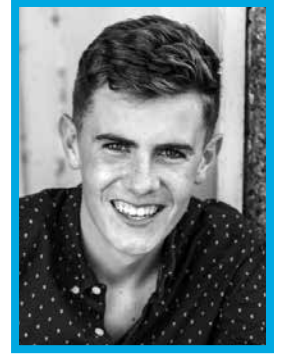
Sandy Gaul, English teacher at Wahlert Catholic, shares, "Not only is Maggie a dependable worker and generous with her time and talent, but she is a good friend. She is supportive and a good listener."

Currently, she is interning at Mercy Hospital in the occupational therapy department, working with patients and helping them with their therapy. "It is a great way to see what I am passionate about firsthand, and experience how you can change someone's life for the better," states Maggie.

Maggie feels these are ways to give back to those who have helped her, and she will continue to use this gift of service when she goes to college this fall in Cedar Falls, Iowa.

## Nano Nagle College Scholarship

The Nano Nagle College Scholarship rotates among the many Iowa high schools in which the Presentation Sisters have ministered and intends to aid graduates in the continuation of their education. Moreover, the \$1,500 scholarship is awarded to a student who models self-giving service, helping to improve the lives of others.



This year's scholarship was awarded to **Chase Hurd**, a student at St. Mary High School in Storm Lake, Iowa. His academic achievements, involvements in athletics and extracurriculars and service to the community, makes him deserving of this scholarship.

Chase serves his family farm community, and became an altar server and lay Eucharistic minister at his local parish. He also volunteers at a local thrift shop whose proceeds benefit his school. "When serving the community at places like The Bridge, which strives to bring a sense of stability into the lives of vulnerable youth, I was able to witness the effects that I had on these children. These services have taught me how important it is to give back to the community," expresses Chase. "The reward for some work is not a monetary reward, but the reward of giving."

Mrs. Kate Swanson, from the St. Mary School social studies department, is a witness of how Chase has become a leader among his peers. She states that "a lot has been asked of this young man, and yet his continually positive attitude and desire to help others as much as he can, says a lot about who he is as a person. He has shown great focus ... despite the many directions in which he is pulled on a daily basis. I believe he values what education will do for him in the future. I have no doubt he will be highly successful at the collegiate level as well."

In addition to this statement, Mr. Steve Swartout, an English teacher of the school, describes Chase as "an accountable, dependable, solid and trustworthy individual who has a good foundation and will do well as an adult."

Chase plans to work over the summer and utilize any additional work opportunities that present themselves in preparation for heading to college in the fall.

## Presentation Mission Service Award

The Presentation Mission Service Award is offered to individuals, 18 years of age or older, committed to serving the Presentation mission and who may otherwise be unable to afford a service experience, locally, nationally or abroad.

This year's recipient is **Mary Gitau**, who works at Clarke University in Dubuque, Iowa. Mary was called to serve in Kinangpop, Kenya, where she helped establish a Community Learning Center for rural women. Mary was born and raised in the Kenya community and has witnessed their abject poverty and lack of basic resources.



"Helping women through the Community Learning Center enables them to get trained on skills that will empower them in many ways," states Mary. "Having a communal place to meet and learn brings cohesiveness and creates a safe place for the children to read and use computers as their mothers acquire empowerment skills."

The foundation of the center was started in 2019 through a generous donation from a Dubuque family. Additionally, a group of students from Clarke University and Loras College organized many fundraisers to cover material costs and labor work from construction experts. In January, they traveled to Kenya to help finish the outside structure of the building, however, the center could not be functional at that phase.

Consequently, the Presentation Mission Service Award was used to complete the inside of the center, including the installment of the ceiling, the flooring and plastering, the wiring for electricity, the rainwater collection gutter and so much more! The Community Learning Center now has a communal meeting hall, a computer room, a kitchen and dining room and a library. Currently, women and children are greatly benefiting from the center in numerous ways.



*Community Learning Center in Kinangpop, Kenya*

# Leaving Our Footprints

by HERMANN PLATT, PBVM, ARCHIVIST

Nano's lantern continues to bring the light of Christ in places where Sisters of the Presentation have ministered, even after they are no longer physically present. In future issues, we will highlight Presentation dedications and memorials in honor of Presentation Sisters.

## FARLEY PARK, FARLEY, IA

In 1887, 13 years after the establishment of the Sisters of the Presentation in Dubuque, Iowa, a band of three sisters arrived in Farley to staff St. Joseph School. Two classroom teachers and a music teacher began the Presentation tradition among the people described by Mother Benedict Murphy as being "unlimited in kindness and thoughtful consideration for the Presentation Sisters."

From this small beginning, 162 sisters served in various capacities in the school and parish for 108 years. The illness and death of Sister Sharon Kelchen in 2018, marked the end of Presentation presence in Farley.

After the demolition of the original school building, which had stood empty for some time, Presentation Park was established on the site in 2008. A raised circular flower bed, with a pillar in the center, provides a quiet place to sit and consider history and the people connected to the area.

One face of the pillar has an etching of Nano Nagle with her signature lantern, while the other three sides give information about the founding of the Presentation community in Ireland and its subsequent expansion to Dubuque by Mother Vincent Hennessy and her companions.



*Presentation Park in Farley, Iowa.*



Left to right: Joseph (Joe) Voss of Olive Branch, Mississippi, and Mary Beth Erickson, sister of Sister Ellen Mary Garrett, of Cherokee, Iowa.

## *Partners in Mission During a Pandemic* Connecting with Supporters

by KAREN TUECKE, PARTNERS IN MISSION COORDINATOR

Since March 2020, and particularly in recent weeks due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Sisters of the Presentation, associates and employees have gone above and beyond to adjust to the new “normal” of conducting everyday activities which encompass the care of retired sisters, working remotely, and collaboratively. Faithfulness to the heart of the mission, to live radical hospitality in all relationships is evident.

Our benefactors have continued to provide support in a multitude of ways during this vulnerable time. As partners in mission, their support does not go unseen. The pandemic has only strengthened the support provided to the sisters as they continue to work with the marginalized.

A few supporters share why they continue to offer support through this pandemic. They express how they are making their donations and that they make donations on a recurring basis to create a level of sustainability. Sustaining donors are transformational donors and have committed to support the Presentation Sisters using any regular frequency (monthly, bimonthly, quarterly or annually) of gifts.

Terese Black first encountered the sisters when she began her college career at the College of St. Benedict in Minnesota and later attended and graduated from Clarke College. Terese expresses, “We give to the Presentation Sisters, and continue to give to them, because we strongly believe in the sisters as very faith-filled women who are doing great work in so many ways. Also, I am grateful for the education I received from them and the years I was able to be a part of them. I continue to learn so much from them.”

Terese and her husband, Rob, contribute monthly to the Presentation Sisters, “We make monthly donations through our credit card because it is easy and faster as the funds come out automatically and gets to the sisters more quickly. We have been very fortunate to have employment and retirement funds that keep me and my husband, Rob, secure for years to come as well as to support our children. We want to share what extra we can.”



Left to right: Presentation partners: Robert and Terese Veverka Black; Barbara Leifker; Lawrence Clark; Linda Dolphin; and Robert and Carol Besch.

Terese also shares, “My passions for social justice, education, mission work in Bolivia and working with Mexican migrants are all being done by the sisters. So, if I can help them in any way, I am glad to do so. I feel I owe it to them for all they gave and taught me.”

Each month an envelope arrives from Barbara Leifker. She takes the time to send in a gift and note in memory of her deceased husband, David. “I contribute to the Sisters of the Presentation because one of the sisters, Sister Mary Jo Leifker, is my deceased husband's aunt. She is what we call the family ‘saint’ and prays for all of us. I know many of the sisters and they have been with me during the many travels through my life and I always feel welcomed by them and love them.” Barbara adds, “My deceased husband was very fond of the sisters and my current husband has been welcomed by them also. What I contribute isn’t all that much, but the sisters represent all that is good: the respect for life, hospitality for all and a love for all human beings in general. They are true inspiration!” Barbara is proud to call the sisters family.

Over the last few years, Joe Voss, a Loras College Alumni has come to stay at Mount Loretto during the Loras Homecoming weekend. Prior to becoming a Loras graduate, Joe attended school in western Iowa. “I'm so thankful for everything that the sisters and staff, including the priests, did for us in our Catholic education at St. Mary Catholic Church and School in Storm Lake, Iowa. It was an excellent preparation for everything that the journey through this life presents us!” Joe recites a quote from St. Augustine, “Pray as if everything depended on God and work as if everything depended on you! He has the whole world in His Hands!” Joe prays often for the sisters and their families who have given so much in a common and unnoticed manner. His monthly contribution and prayers are deeply appreciated.

Presentation associate, Linda Dolphin, and sister to the late Sister Kathleen Dolphin, is actively involved with the Presentation Sisters as a volunteer, a benefactor and as an associate. Linda states, “When I donate to the Presentation Sisters, I know it will go toward supporting the marginalized poor. The areas identified to receive assistance are those with the greatest need.” Linda’s gift, combined with other monthly gifts make a difference. “I realize that my contribution combined with others rather than alone, is more effective in creating lasting change. I favor monthly automatic

withdrawals as a way of assuring the funds will be there on a consistent basis. I am blessed to be able to support the worthwhile projects that are sponsored by the sisters.”

Lawrence (Larry) Clark, of Peachtree City, Georgia, continues to give in support of family, as a nephew, and mission. “The primary reason I give is in memory of Sisters Michael and Anthony Rottinghaus and in recognition of Sister Rosanne Rottinghaus. My mother, Mary Catherine, was their sister.” He reflects, “I have great childhood memories of them when we would visit Mount Loretto. Over the years their dedication to Catholic life and especially Catholic education inspired me to live my faith. I am always impressed with the manner in which the Presentation Sisters reach out and touch all aspects of our society. I was in the Air Force for 30 years and have heard this phrase many times but I would like to pass it on to all of the Presentation Sisters. ‘Thank you for your service!’” Larry, thank you for your service as a 30-year veteran.

As monthly benefactors, Robert and Carol Besch believe that making donations is not only beneficial to the Presentation Sisters to meet expenses, but it is also mutual. Their donation assists with their personal budget. “We see and read about work being done by the sisters. Communications from Sister Rosalyn Ulfers (Carol’s sister) and through *Presentation Doorways*, we feel we know what work is being done and we feel good about helping out. We also like the fact that a very high percentage of our donations go to the cause and very little goes to administration expenses.”

“Through the formative years of our growing up, the Presentation Sisters gave so much to us. God has blessed us and now we believe it is time to help those who helped us so much. Our contributions are made through automatic withdrawal. By making our gift this way, it is convenient and it also insures we do not forget and miss a monthly donation.”

These sentiments and gifts create a loved relationship and a level of sustainability for the sisters and the mission work being done. This work simply could not be done without our partners’ prayers and support.

If you would like more information on recurring gifts via automatic withdrawal, electronic check or credit card payments, contact the Partners in Mission Office at [partnersinmission@dbqpbvms.org](mailto:partnersinmission@dbqpbvms.org) or visit [www.dbqpbvms.org](http://www.dbqpbvms.org).

# To Grow in Love and Acceptance Embracing All People

by CARLA POPES, PBVM

In January 2020, Sister Carla Popes was blessed to be part of a group of Presentation Sisters and associates who participated in a workshop on racism in Chicago. Sister Carla shares her reflections and experiences here.

The workshop was an enlightening and challenging experience for each of us. One of the first questions we were asked was to reflect on our personal experiences with racism. It did not take long for me to realize that I have had little or no connection with people of color as a child or as an adult. My family farmed near Nashua, Iowa, and, to my knowledge, there were no families of color or of another ethnic group living in Nashua. This workshop was a rich learning experience for all who participated. I am forever changed.

Racism in America is about much more than the color of one's skin. Racism is about the power that comes with being white and educated. Persons of other countries come to U.S. borders seeking a better life for their families, a life that provides work and a place to call home. Our borders are now almost completely closed to persons entering the United States legally. It is apparent that it will take longer for persons to complete the citizenship process. When individuals become new American citizens, this country will continue to change.

In working with immigrants from Guatemala, I have become more aware of how invisible persons are in my community of Decorah, Iowa. As communities and parishes, we are called to embrace these courageous families as our brothers and sisters and to invite them to enjoy the same opportunities that we have – to be at home, be safe and have what they need. Each of us is given the opportunity to grow in understanding the gift of each person and each culture. What will we contribute toward a richer society? How will our contributions help make our communities more holistic, caring and supportive of all?

After attending the racism workshop, Associate Becky Searcy and I visited Sisters Mary Lou Specha and Julie Marsh in New Orleans, Louisiana. We had a wonderful time and experienced true radical hospitality. We enjoyed being with them in their own space and seeing the fruits of their labors at Hotel Hope. We certainly experienced the challenges ministry provides for those made poor daily. It is not so easy now to read in the scripture, "The poor you will always have with you." Everyday life changes in relation to those who live on the edges.

Today, as need continues to call us daily into the winding lanes, Nano's spirit continues to call us back to the winding lanes wherever we live. Never did I think for a minute that our visit



Left to right: Sisters Carla Popes, Julie Marsh and Mary Lou Specha and Associate Becky Searcy explore New Orleans.

to New Orleans would speak so deeply in our hearts what we learned from the Chicago workshop on racism.

One day, Sisters Julie and Mary Lou drove us to the Whitney Plantation in Wallace, Louisiana. When registering at the plantation we each received a picture and name of a child who was sold into slavery. I was given the name of Ellen Broomfield who was born into a family of 19 children and became a slave as soon as she was big enough to work. As we entered the church, seeing the names and faces on stone of the slaves who were forced to work at the plantation haunted us. We saw the block where the children stood when they were auctioned into slavery. We walked through the cemetery where tombstones held name after name of those sold and buried on the property. As we left the plantation office, we saw three words written on a sign calling us to action: Freedom, Education, Family. The saddest part about this piece of history is that women and children are still sold into slavery.

We are called to become people who care for the most vulnerable and powerless as Nano did. In so doing, Nano came to live radical hospitality in many acts of kindness by working with the poor, walking the streets to visit the elderly and sick, building schools to educate those made poor, giving herself daily to hours of prayer, educating children and serving the needs of the poorest of Cork, Ireland. Service to the most vulnerable guided Nano in following her family motto, "Deeds not words." Today we are guided by Nano's example and pray we continue to grow in love and acceptance of all people. May we become color blind in a way that, no matter the color of one's skin or status, we will learn to embrace every person as a sister or brother.

# Renewing Vows in a Foreign Land Blessings in the Unknown

by MAURA MCCARTHY, PBVM

On April 26, Sister Mary Tuyet Thi Pham of the Bui Chu Vietnamese Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena renewed her vows in Sacred Heart Chapel at Mount Loretto. Sister Tuyet was called forward by Sister Carmen Hernandez, congregational leader, in the name of the congregational prioress of the Bui Chu, Vietnam Dominicans, Sister Cecilia Pham Thi Tuyet. In a recent e-mail letter to Sister Carmen, Tuyet's prioress thanked her for receiving the vows in her name and expressed her gratitude to the Presentation Sisters for their hospitality to the Dominican Sisters living at Mount Loretto.

Sisters Tuyet and Thoa Pham, also a Dominican Sister from Bui Chu, Vietnam, are dedicating these first two years in the United States to the study of English. They are enrolled in intensive English classes at Divine Word College in Epworth, Iowa, and before the COVID-19 shelter-in-place regulations, spent entire days at the college, and then returned to Mount Loretto to practice their English by sharing prayer, meals and community service with the Presentation Sisters. Now all classes are online.

Sister Tuyet tells her story poignantly: "I was born in a poor village in North Vietnam, growing up in a small family with one older brother and one little sister. When I was 10 years old, my mom, who had a desire to give one of her children to God, asked me, "Would you like to live in religious life?" "Yes," I replied even though I didn't understand. She brought me to the Bui Chu Dominicans of St. Catherine of Siena. While I was living with the Dominican Sisters, I studied at the local middle and high school. Then I studied traditional medicine which was one of my favorite subjects.

"While I was serving in a small clinic in my community, my mother superior asked me to go to the United States to study. I was very surprised, excited and worried because I didn't know how to speak English. However, I offered my life into God's hands. As a result of that, God gave me you, the Sisters of the Presentation. When I came to the U.S., everything was very strange; only your smiles looked familiar to me, so that I did not feel lonely and lost. Everything is new and invites me to explore, seek God in a new language and in a rich culture. However, it is also for me, the biggest challenge of my life. I walk and ponder slowly every day and wonder: "What is God presenting me through your community?" I think your name is, in itself, a big present. From the bottom of my heart, I say thank you to all of you who are and will be living in my heart as long as I live."



Sister Carmen Hernandez blesses Sister Tuyet Thi Pham during her vow renewal on April 26.

Sister Carmen recalls their arrival in December 2018: "The language barriers were more apparent when Thoa and Tuyet arrived. I remember when they would ask us to repeat words, spell the word and they would write it in their notebooks that they carried with them. Their willingness to dive into anything is so apparent as is their desire to learn English. Our lives are deepened and richer because of their presence. Their gift of music, making seasonal decorations in celebration of holidays, willingness to learn and help are ways our lives are expanded. Both Tuyet and Thoa have been blessing to us."

Sister Julia Wingert voiced effervescently: "Our Vietnamese Sisters are a great joy to have among us, truly a gift in so many ways – full of life and youthful enthusiasm, helpful and most generous, willingness to be of service to anyone, eager to learn, not only the English language, but anything and everything. They have a natural and overflowing spirit of gratitude."

Sister Jeanine Kuhn, who shares second floor living space with Sister Tuyet affirmed the inclusive spirit of Tuyet, her helpfulness, prayerfulness and dedication to study. Jeanine's birthday prayer for Tuyet featured the hymn "The Summons" (also used in the vow ceremony) expressing lucidly Tuyet's vocation: "Will you come and follow me if I but call your name? Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?"

*{Continued on Page 17}*

# 2020 Presentation Associate Scholarship Recipients

by CINDY PFIFFNER, ASSOCIATE PARTNERSHIP CO-DIRECTOR

Presentation associates contributed money to offer three scholarships to individuals associated with ministries supported by the Dubuque Presentation Sisters: La Luz Hispana in Hampton, Iowa; Hotel Hope in New Orleans, Louisiana; Presentation Lantern Center in Dubuque, Iowa; and Hispanic Outreach Ministry of Evangelization (HOME) in rural Iowa. Three \$800 scholarships were awarded to assist individuals to further their education, receive job training or to help with immigration/citizenship expenses. Congratulations to the 2020 Presentation Associate Scholarship recipients!

## Cesar Alejandro Damas Hernandez

Cesar Alejandro Damas Hernandez was born on September 12, 1998. He grew up in Benemérito De Las Américas Chiapas, Mexico, until he was eight years old when he moved to the United States, the start to his new life. Elementary school was difficult until Cesar became bilingual and could translate from Spanish to English. He adapted to that way of learning and kept pushing ahead and developed an understanding of his abilities. He graduated in the class of 2018 and was a member of the Hampton Honor Society.



That same year Cesar attended North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC) and received a certificate in welding. The following fall, he re-enrolled at NIACC and started studies to become an automotive technician. Cesar completed his first two semesters, with an accumulative GPA of 3.5, a big accomplishment. When Cesar finished the first year of the program, he was very pleased with the college experience, but he was unsatisfied and wanted to do more. He decided to continue his education and applied at William Penn University to pursue a business degree.

Cesar shares, "I like learning anything I don't know, as long as it is a way to challenge myself. La Luz Hispana has been the Luz, the light, that has kept me going and taught me to be a role model showing others that if one falls one can choose to stay down or get back up and keep fighting for a better future. I thank the Presentation Associate Scholarship for allowing me to further my education as one of the recipients of this scholarship award."

**"The people at Hotel Hope ...  
taught me that anything is possible."**

*Semaj Lee*

## Semaj Lee

Semaj Lee is a 26-year-old single mom of four children, ages 10, three, two and one. She has been living at Hotel Hope in New Orleans for a while now and working at a grocery store. Semaj is a dedicated mom who wants a better life for her children. She plans to pursue online studies toward an early childhood degree at Delgado University, working during the day while her children are in school and day care and doing her class work in the evenings. The scholarship will help Semaj purchase a computer to make this possible. Opening a day care and becoming a pediatric assistant to help sick children is Semaj's dream.



"The people at Hotel Hope are the happiest and nicest people I have ever met," says Semaj. "They taught me that anything is possible. Without them, I don't know where I would be. They are so helpful with everything for me and my kids."

## Sahr Lebbie

Sahr Lebbie is originally from Sierra Leone in South Sudan. He has been a student at the Presentation Lantern Center since May 2017 and through his studies and hard work became a United States citizen in January 2018. Sahr has a bachelor's degree in education from his home country, but it is not recognized in the United States.





# In Memory of Charlotte Danner

December 28, 1921 – April 27, 2020

Presentation associate, Charlotte Danner desired to share her life and spiritual journey with the Presentation Sisters as an associate and made her first commitment on June 16, 2000. In addition to having two aunts who were Presentation Sisters, Charlotte was educated by Presentation Sisters at St. Joseph School in Key West and at St. Columbkille High School in Dubuque. Charlotte's niece, Barb Sauser, is a Presentation associate and three of her sisters, Doloras Hendricks, Mary Danner and Jean Foust, who preceded her in death, were also associates.



Charlotte was born in Farley, Iowa, and married Joseph A. Danner, Jr. on November 23, 1945, at St. Joseph Key West. She worked as a bookkeeper for 20 years for Business Supply Company. Charlotte was an active member of St. Joseph Key West Church, where she served on several boards and committees throughout her life. She was a member of the Catholic Daughters of America #1287 and serving as grand regent, Dubuque Serra Club, Theresians of Dubuque and the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women where she served as president. She also volunteered at Mercy Hospital, Power of Prayer, Presentation Lantern Center and Hospice of Dubuque. Family and faith were always her priorities, and Charlotte greeted everyone with a smile and kindness. We remember Charlotte with love and gratitude.

Currently Sahr works as a certified nursing assistant caring for adults and children with disabilities. He has completed the prerequisite math and science courses for the nursing program at Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC) and plans to use the scholarship to help pay for tuition and books. Megan Ruiz, director of the Presentation Lantern Center, states, "Sahr is one of the most hardworking, dedicated people I have ever met. No matter how tired he may be from his grueling schedule of working 40-60 hours per week and taking challenging classes, he takes everything in stride and always has a smile and kind words for everyone he encounters."

Sahr plans to attend classes at NICC and work full-time. He shares, "I am so incredibly grateful for the Lantern Center and the talented tutors who have helped me in so many ways. It is my dream to help others and give back to the community as a nurse."

*{Continued from Page 15}*



*Sisters Thoa Pham and Tuyet Thi Pham enjoying a lighthearted moment.*

Sister Marie Barth, motherhouse art instructor, spoke of her joy in doing art work with Tuyet who loves to try new things and is especially awake to connecting creativity to spirituality. "There are, of course, some vocabulary challenges like explaining horizon, reflection, perspective," comments Sister Marie. "But Tuyet marvelously finds the equivalent in Vietnamese with Google!"

Sisters Tuyet and Thanh Nguyen requested that Sister Dolores Zieser teach them her basketmaking art skill. Soon after their initial sessions, Sister Dolores proudly displayed their delightfully crafted handiwork. The fabrication of the baskets came quite straightforwardly; learning the names of the basket materials was occasionally a challenge.

Sister Mary Hermann is responsible for preparing Sister Tuyet to be a community sacristan. She comments that Tuyet is punctual, eager to do the sacred work impeccably, is very reverent and constantly completes the tasks well.

Each Saturday Tuyet and Thoa practice reading aloud the English Sunday Mass scripture readings with Sister Maura McCarthy. They meticulously work on pronunciation, phrasing and emphasis. Both manifest great diligence in understanding vocabulary, finding synonyms in both English and Vietnamese. Their laughter and joy makes the effort gratifying. They also frequently read the scriptural passages for the liturgical office.

Every weekend Sister Corine Murray converses with Sisters Tuyet and Thoa, her Dominican cohort, about current events and culture. Language skills and pronunciation grow unsurprisingly from the pleasurable experience.

"How could we sing the songs of God in a foreign land?" Sister Tuyet sings, prays and serves in a new language as she lives out her vows to love. And consequently she adds a bright new spark to our charism of hospitality.

# SOMEDAY ...

## Sister Barbara Rastatter

*January 25, 1934 - March 6, 2020*

by SHEILA ANN DOUGHERTY & MARY LOUISE SCIESZINSKI, PBVM

Sister Barbara Rastatter, daughter of Art and Bea Rastatter and youngest in their family of seven children, was born in Dubuque, Iowa, on January 25, 1934. She grew up across from St. Columbkille Church, attended the parish school and formed lifelong friendships. Her mother was the parish organist for over 50 years and her father the favored bass soloist at Christmas Midnight Mass. Music and singing were part of family life, as were humor and good times and adventures beyond count. Her siblings, Jeanne, David, Lo-E, Mimi, Charlie and Paul, and later, with their families, were her cherished support throughout life.

After completing high school years at St. Columbkille School and a year of college at Clarke College (University), Barbara entered the Sisters of the Presentation “in the back yard” at nearby Mount Loretto, then located on Mt. Loretta Avenue, on September 8, 1953. She was the “go to” person regarding anything in life or anywhere in Dubuque for others in the formation program at the time. After completing her music degree at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago, Sister Barbara, then known as Sister Mary Arthur, embarked on her teaching career and soon became known among students for making music fun as well as making life brighter. Students liked her, not especially due to individual music ability, but because Sister Barbara took a personal interest in each person and genuinely made each one feel unique.

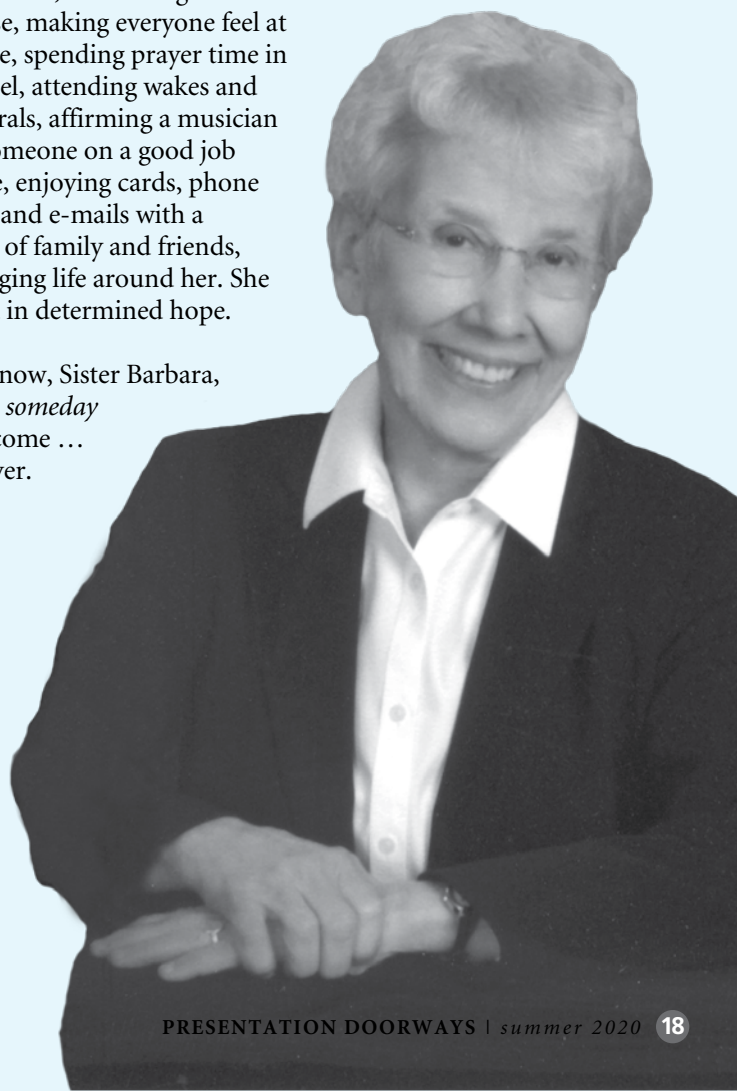
Sister Barbara filled many roles of responsibility in her life that made a difference in others’ lives: teacher, musician, music supervisor, motherhouse liturgist, community leadership, parish minister, parish choir director, parish liturgist, pastoral associate, community member, confidante and friend. All roads of her life led to what became her last active ministry, that of working at St. James Parish in Chicago. There she met people who became friends, one and all, as she journeyed with them through their good times and hard times, sparing herself nothing and pouring out her concern, compassion and friendship. She brought hope by her words and her presence, no matter the crisis or condition.

For Sister Barbara, relationships were her lifeblood. Self-giving and loyalty never had a limit or noticeable cost. She moved the thought of being a “people person” to a new level with a much higher bar. Those she met along the way were better for knowing her, and certainly uplifted in spirit and strength.

Sister Barbara lived her life for others guided by the scripture Matthew 25: “I was hungry and you gave me food, thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me. I was ill and you comforted me, in prison and you came to visit me.”

After a stroke in 2003 ended her active ministry, Sister Barbara put all her energy into community life and speech therapy. One of her earliest successful speech achievements was the question, “Do you think that *someday?*” That soon became abbreviated to her wistful and determined “*someday?*” and used innumerable times. She never let speech impairment prevent her from being with the sisters in community, sitting by the hour with sick sisters, greeting employees and associates, welcoming visitors to the house, making everyone feel at home, spending prayer time in chapel, attending wakes and funerals, affirming a musician or someone on a good job done, enjoying cards, phone calls and e-mails with a bevy of family and friends, engaging life around her. She lived in determined hope.

And now, Sister Barbara,  
your *someday*  
has come ...  
forever.



# Mount Loretto AND BEYOND

Featured below are special times in the lives of Dubuque Presentation Sisters and associates.



## We Stand Together in Hope

With enthusiasm and creativity, Sisters Paula Schwendinger and Rita Cameron gather the Presentation community twice a week for music, games, singing and a variety of video clips ranging from magic to karaoke. Sisters in Nagle Center are able to enjoy these activities in the comfort of their own rooms. This is a great way to be together while “staying in” during these challenging times. Left to right: Sisters Donna Demmer, Rosalyn Ulfers, Jeanine Kuhn, Suzanne Gallagher and Cecelia Marie Auterman.



**ROOTED IN PRAYER**  
**STRENGTHENED BY COMMUNITY**  
**CALLED TO SERVE**

**We are the Sisters of the Presentation**

*Is this life for you?*

Contact Sister Jessi Beck at [vocations@dbqpbvms.org](mailto:vocations@dbqpbvms.org)

CONNECT WITH US @dbqpbvms



SISTERS OF THE PRESENTATION  
DUBUQUE, IOWA

## PLEASE CONNECT WITH US.



## INSPIRATION FOR 2020 WORD OF THE DAY

Every day in 2020, a Word of the Day post is shared on our social media channels with the hope to inspire all to live a healthier and happier life. **Follow us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram @dbqpbvms.** Or, if you would like to receive these daily reflections by email, send your email to [info@dbqpbvms.org](mailto:info@dbqpbvms.org) and we will add you to the list.

## PLEASE JOIN US.

Due to the coronavirus, many activities have been cancelled. We continue to be closed to visitors at this time. We await the day we can fill the calendar with encounters with friends.

For updated information about the activities and events of the Sisters of the Presentation, please visit our website at [www.dbqpbvms.org](http://www.dbqpbvms.org) or call 563.588.2008.

## PLEASE PRAY WITH US.

21st of each month  
Pray for Vocations

25th of each month  
Mass for Benefactors



NON PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Dubuque, IA  
Permit No. 477

Please help us keep our database up-to-date.  
Please change this label and send it back to  
us, call us at 563.588.2008 or email us at  
info@dbqpbvms.org. Thank you.

\_\_\_\_\_ New Address  
\_\_\_\_\_ Misspelled Name  
\_\_\_\_\_ Wrong Address  
\_\_\_\_\_ Remove my Name  
\_\_\_\_\_ Receive Duplicate Copies  
(please indicate which is correct)

## Companioning Our Vulnerable in Distress *composed by Sister Paula Schwendinger*

In response to COVID-19, the following litany was prayed daily at the Presentation Motherhouse and beyond. We share this litany with you as we continue to pray for healing and strength.

### **Response: Protect them, Spirit of God**

For all health care workers who are attending to the needs of those affected by the virus. We pray ...

For all those who are employed in jobs where they put their own health at risk. We pray ...

For the homeless who do not have access to many resources, that they be kept safe. We pray ...

For those in nursing homes, and other health care facilities who are vulnerable and may feel alone because they can't have visitors. We pray ...

For those who live alone and are fearful about their daily needs being met. We pray ...

For those who have lost their jobs due to mandatory closings. We pray ...

For parents who worry for the well-being of their children. We pray ...

For our associates, families, benefactors and friends, who rely and trust in our prayers for them. We pray ...

For all our employees who are taking extra measures to keep us safe, and for their families. We pray ...

For those who have tested positive and are in isolation, that they may remain calm in the midst of the uncertainty. We pray ...

For those who are being treated for the virus, and for their families. We pray ...

For immigrants, refugees, and all people on the margins, whose lives are further interrupted by the virus. We pray ...

### **Response: Give them wisdom, Spirit of God**

For government officials, who are responsible for making laws that they may listen to doctors and those with medical knowledge and act for the benefit of all. We pray ...

That political agendas can be set aside as all lawmakers work together for the common good. We pray ...

For those who are working behind the scenes to increase the supplies needed to test and treat the virus. We pray ...

For those who are using their time and talents to help those who are most vulnerable. We pray ...

For scientists and researchers who are working to develop a vaccine. We pray ...

For corporate and business owners, who are trying to keep their businesses afloat, while thinking of those whom they employ. We pray ...

For each of us, that as we make decisions during this time we may keep the vulnerable in mind. We pray ...