

PRESENTATION DOORWAYS

offering hospitality to the world



Celebrating
150
YEARS OF TENDING THE LIGHT
Established 1874

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, Editor; Sister Carmen Hernandez; Sister Elena Hoye; Sister Maura McCarthy; Sister Joy Peterson; Associate Janet Leonard; Dave McDermott; Karen Tuecke; Associate Radie Roberts and Sister Rita Waters

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 partners, 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 invite 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 purpose 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 Céad Míle Fáilte (100,000 Welcomes) located on the property of the Presentation Motherhouse at 2360 Carter Road in Dubuque, 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 | Winter 2024 | Volume 68 • Number 3

A Look Inside CONTENTS

4 Tending Nano Nagle's Light

On November 13, a trumpet fanfare, solemn proclamation, prayerful readings and music launched the Presentation Sisters' celebration of 150 years since their founding in Dubuque, Iowa.

7 Our Dubuque Foundation

Our history is a shared story — sacred and collective — grounded in the heritage and values that continue to inspire and guide us forward, transforming both us and those we serve. We invite you to be drawn into our unfolding story — a journey of faith, determination, resilience and service that has defined our mission for over 150 years.

10 2024 Vote Our Future Tour: Nuns on the Bus & Friends

Sister Richelle Friedman shares her experience of her time on The Nuns on the Bus & Friends Tour (NOTB), led by NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, which began in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on September 30 and ended in San Francisco, California, on October 18.

12 A Heart for the Indigenous: Sister Suzanne Gallagher

Read about Sister Suzanne Gallagher's life and the wisdom she has learned along the way.

14 A Journey of Faith, Family and Giving Back

Marcia Quade, a longtime partner in mission, reflects on her rich journey of faith, family and community service. Her story is one of hard work, gratitude and giving back, inspired by the values instilled in her upbringing.

16 Connecting with Earth

Presentation Sisters, associates, and employees experience a day of renewal and connection at Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center. From exploring gardens to reflecting in nature, this visit fostered peace, learning and a deeper bond with creation.

18 Upcoming Events

Our 150th anniversary is not just a celebration of our Presentation community, but a tribute to all who have faithfully walked with us. We look forward to celebrating this special milestone with you.



Cover PHOTO

The Presentation community gathers with associates, employees, family and friends during the opening celebrations to kick off their year-long 150th anniversary which began on November 13. A lantern, carried by Sister Rita Menart, symbolizes the light of Presentation foundress Nano Nagle's legacy going out into the world, as those gathered process out of the Sacred Heart Chapel.

A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

by RITA MENART, PBVM

150 Years of Tending the Light

On November 3, 2024, a tree was planted in Key West, Iowa, marking the site where the Dubuque Presentation Sisters began their ministry of education. Led by Mother Vincent Hennessy and three young women, they opened a school in Key West to serve the children of Irish immigrants. This tree planting kicked off the celebration of 150 years of the Dubuque Presentation foundation. While the official anniversary date is November 13, we began the commemoration early to join with the Key West parish community. Their warm welcome and high spirits made the day memorable, and we are deeply grateful to them for marking this significant moment in the history of Presentation service in Iowa with us.

Why is it important to celebrate these milestones? Some of the reasons not to celebrate seem logical. It takes time to plan and participate. It takes a lot of other resources, too. So, what benefits come to us and others from celebrating the mission passed onto us from our founding mothers? There are plenty! The ones that stand out are connection, motivation and gratitude. These reasons intertwine and complement each other as the past, present and future touch celebration.

Connection. Celebrations, especially of big projects, allow us to remember and reconnect all the people involved in the accomplishment. Through 150 years, many people have participated in the Dubuque Presentation mission. Sisters, associates, employees, students, parishes, strangers and more have added to the energy of building a hospitable world. Stories are shared and pictures viewed at celebrations that awaken our memories of all the good that has been accomplished.

Motivation. As we look back at our 150 years, we gather energy to move into the future. We may see plans that did not work and learn what to do differently. We may recall hurts that need further attention. Mostly, we gather energy from the good that has been accomplished which motivates us to journey into the future with confidence, regardless of the challenges.

Gratitude. Most importantly, celebrations are to awaken in the present moment – gratitude. As humans we struggle to remember and need events like celebrations to recall the good in life. Abraham Joshua Heschel, a Jewish theologian and philosopher who participated in the civil rights movement, said this about celebration: "People of our time are losing the power of celebration. Instead of celebrating, we seek to be amused or entertained. Celebration is an active state, an act of expressing reverence or appreciation. To be entertained is a passive state – it is to receive pleasure afforded by an amusing act or a spectacle Celebration is a confrontation, giving attention to the transcendent meaning of one's actions." In the 150th celebration, we hope to stir our gratitude and know the transcendent meaning of the community's actions through the years.

Come celebrate with us whether near or far. We have several activities planned. Plant a tree in honor of the 150th or call a sister, associate, employee or other Presentation person who has touched your life and let them know. Read in the following pages of past, present and future fruits of Presentation life. Join us in giving thanks. May this 150th anniversary celebration transform us to serve the future with hope.

Sister Carmen Hernandez Sister Rita Menart Mary Lou Specha Sr. Joetta Venneman
Sisters Carmen Hernandez, Rita Menart, Mary Lou Specha, Joetta Venneman



Our MISSION

We, the Sisters of the Presentation, are called to evangelize, offering hope and love to our broken world by incarnating the hospitality of God, confronting injustice and working for peace.

Our DIRECTION

We, the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Dubuque, Iowa, Associates and Companions in Mission, are called to live our charism of radical hospitality in response to the cry of women and children made poor, our wounded Earth and all creation.

Our COMMITMENTS

We invest time, energy and resources to a process of inner work, opening ourselves to personal and communal transformation.

We listen and respond to the cry of women and children and advocate for racial equity and immigration reform.

We foster connections with people and land to nurture healing of our wounded Earth.



Celebrating 150 Years of Tending Nano Nagle's Light

by MARILYN BREEN, PBVM

On November 13, a trumpet fanfare, solemn proclamation, prayerful readings and music launched the Presentation Sisters' celebration of 150 years since Mother Vincent Hennessy and her companions, Alice Howley, Ellen Ahearn and Kate Reide arrived in Dubuque, Iowa, from Mooncoin, Ireland, on November 13, 1874.

Sisters, associates, employees and guests gathered to celebrate the Presentation founding story and walk an expansive visual display from the main entrance throughout the building depicting mission, heritage, ministries and a gallery of photos showing those who peopled the past 150 years. Walking the display elicited personal responses and sparked stories. The display led all to Presentation Center where the sharing continued with food and refreshments.

An open house on November 16 offered an opportunity for family, benefactors and friends to join in the celebration through prayer, time to enjoy the historical displays and to visit with sisters. Additional events throughout the year will mark this threshold moment in the life of the community.

The prayer for the open house celebration included an entry from the annals, which is as true today as it was when Mother Mary Benedict Murphy wrote it in 1949, "To the undying honor of Mother Vincent Hennessy be it said that the spirit of the Presentation order, as imbibed by her in far-away Mooncoin, was so successfully implanted by her

in the hearts of her Dubuque congregation that it lives today, as vigorous and potent for good as it was when the gentle Nano Nagle wearily trudged from school to school teaching the little ones to know and serve God." The spirit has indeed been present in the events celebrated this November.

Reflections on the 150th Anniversary

Presentation associate, Barb Ressler found the opening of the ritual and visual displays inspiring. "It offered a time to appreciate and remember the past and to reflect on living Nano's mission in the future."

The displayed quote, "Standing on the shoulders of those who went before us" caused Sister Raeleen Sweeney to wonder, "How do we keep ourselves rooted as we continue our 150+ years?" She finds hope as she reflects, "I see that we continue to be rooted in the minds, hearts, stories and dedication of the associates, employees and friends who walk this timeline and from there, go out 'one pace beyond.'"

"Our 150th anniversary is a time to renew our resolve to make present love, justice and equity through service in our local and global communities," states Sister Julianne Brockamp.

Sister Carrie Link draws wisdom from our foremothers. "As we celebrate our 150th anniversary and remember the



Left to right: Sister Jessi Beck proclaims a year of celebration marking 150 years of the Dubuque foundation of the Sisters of the Presentation; Sister Anne McCormick and Associate Sue Brimmer enjoy time to reconnect; Sister Cecelia Marie Auterman hands out gift bags to guests during the open house; Guests take a step back in history while viewing a heritage timeline of the Presentation community's 150 years; The joy of reconnecting and coming together to celebrate was felt by all.

sisters who have gone before us, I sense how thin the veil between this world and the next is. From Mother Vincent Hennessy, we hear, 'Have a spirit of joy in all you do.' From Mother Patricia Reide, 'If your work is God's work, it will go on.' Mother Perpetua Ryan dreamed of opening a foreign mission in the Philippines. We hear her say, 'Dare to dream.' What are you hearing from our beloved ones on whose shoulders we stand?"

Sister Diana Blong, paraphrasing Scripture, notes, "You have brought us this far and it is not far enough."

In the light of new land justice awareness, Sister Jessi Beck offers this perspective, "Anniversaries are an opportunity to see the threads of connection between the past, present and future. A few decades before the first Presentation Sisters arrived in Dubuque, this land was home to thriving Indigenous communities, like the Meskwaki, who had their land taken through violence and unjust treaties. It is important for me to see how the wrongs of the past are linked to my life today so I can discern right action. As I hold gratitude for our sisters who came here to tend the needs of immigrants who sought a better life for their families, I also hold gratitude for the Indigenous communities who continue to fight for the life of their culture and the land despite relentless attempts to eliminate them. It seems to me that the way forward most aligned with our charism of radical hospitality is a journey of healing and repair for the good of all people and the planet."

The God of surprises has entered the lives of the Presentation Sisters with blessings that the four Irish missionaries could not have imagined:

- From a small beginning, the community has thrived for 150 years;
- Thousands of children have been taught in Catholic schools and catechetical programs;
- Ministries have expanded to serve the needs of the time;
- A mission in Bolivia has served the people for over 50 years;
- Embracing the mission of Nano Nagle, lay women and men have become Presentation associates;
- The Presentation Lantern Center serves immigrants from many countries; and so much more ...

With grateful hearts for the past, present and future, we press onward, tending the light as we continue to go out where need calls loudly, always united by the legacy of our founding mothers.



The proclamation of the
150th Year of the
Sisters of the Presentation,
Dubuque, Iowa!

On this, the 13th day of the 11th month of November,
in the year two-thousand twenty-four,
the Dubuque Foundation of the Sisters of the Presentation
proclaim a year of celebration!

In the year one thousand eight-hundred seventy-four,
Mother Vincent Hennessy and three companions
dared to bring the light of Nano Nagle's lantern
to the United States of America.

We rejoice for the many women who have answered
God's call throughout the last 150 years ~
for our beloved departed ones,
on whose shoulders we stand tall,
for Presentation associates, employees
and partners in mission,
for all who now live the Presentation charism
and mission in new ways.

We open this year of celebration with music, with dance
and with a deep reverence for our heritage.
With grateful hearts, let us lift our voices in song
to the God of all Grace!



On January 7, 1875, the Presentation Sisters relocated to a newly-built rectory in Key West, Iowa, marking the establishment of their first motherhouse. This building served as both a convent and a school. The convent parlors became the classrooms of the sisters' first school. Twenty pupils answered roll on the first day of class, a number that surged to 80 by the following September.

Our Dubuque Foundation

by HERMANN PLATT, PBVM

"Land, ho!" This must have been a welcome sound for four weary Irish travelers who had boarded the ship on October 29 in Mooncoin, County Kilkenny, Ireland. Sister Mary Vincent Hennessy and her three companions looked at the sprawling city of New York that ninth day in November of 1874 and wondered what lay ahead of them. After changing their English pounds for American dollars, they boarded the train for the four-day journey that would take them to the city of Dubuque, Iowa. At the invitation of Bishop John Hennessy, they hoped to bring the message of the Gospel to the families of the lead miners in the not-so-recently-settled area.

Four years earlier, Bishop John Hennessy, on his way home from the Ecumenical Council in Rome, detoured to Mooncoin, Ireland, to visit some seminarians there who were preparing to join him in America. Finding them on a holiday fishing trip, he decided to take a stroll around the village, and was intrigued by the sight of a stately building. He asked a little girl about the building, receiving the reply,

"That's where the sisters live." Presenting himself at the door, he discovered that there was a sister residing there who shared his last name.

This chance encounter led to discussion of the bishop's diocese (the whole state of Iowa) and the work he was doing there. One of his concerns was the fact that there was not a place which would provide Catholic education for the children who were growing up on the streets. Bishop Hennessy was known as the Education Bishop, as he had recruited several orders of sisters to work in the diocese. Not surprisingly, he made his plea for assistance, and several sisters expressed interest in the project.

By the time arrangements had been made, and it was time to make plans for the voyage, Mother Vincent found herself with no companions, each deciding against the venture for various reasons. Undeterred, she searched among her friends and relatives for recruits. The first to agree to the mission was Alice Howley, a certified teacher who had

worked in the Mooncoin school. A letter of appeal to a friend, Ellen Ahearn, brought an immediate response, "Without delay." The last member of the group was Kate Reide, a niece of Mother Vincent.

The sea voyage was uneventful, and companions on the ship proved to be agreeable. However, according to the annals, Sister Rosalia Plamondon states, "Seasickness seized the young ladies and proved Mother Vincent a first-class nurse."

The next leg of the journey was to be taken by train, a four-day trek, which was not without incident, but was later talked about with much laughter. Sister Rosalia adds, "Not a little amusement was furnished the first morning of the trip when Mother Vincent, attempting to descend from an upper berth, made an impromptu call on the occupant beneath."

At last, about 5:00 p.m. on the evening of November 13, 1874, the travelers arrived in Dubuque, where they found no one to meet them. Found later, the letter announcing the time of their arrival was buried beneath other missives on the bishop's desk, and he was away on a confirmation tour. Undeterred, the group hired a hack and arrived at the bishop's house where David Hennessy, the bishop's brother, took them to stay at the house of the Visitation Sisters, as had been previously arranged.

As documented in the annals, Sister Francis Bannon gives an insight into the hospitality of the Visitation Sisters when she writes, "Words fail to tell the kindness and sisterly affection of the good Visitation Nuns to the little band of Nano Nagle's daughters whom they sheltered and treated as their own from November 13, 1874, until January 7, 1875, when they moved to the place selected as their home by the bishop."

Sister Rosalia describes the trip to their new home in Key West. "A drive through snowdrifts on a bright, but blustery, morning in January, was the nuns' initiation to their pioneer life. At 11:00 o'clock, January 7, 1875, the sisters stood at the door of the first Presentation convent in Iowa and received a hearty welcome from its builder."

The Reverend James Ward had built the house the previous year, intending to use it as his rectory, but graciously gave it over to the sisters. Upon entering the house, the new inhabitants discovered that only one room was finished: the kitchen. There, also, was the only source of heat for a group not used to Iowa winters. They stood around the stove warming themselves as a boiler of melting snow was prepared to provide water for drinking, cooking and cleaning.

Cleaning was a priority, as most of the rooms in the house were just as the not-too-careful construction people had left them. A day of cleaning left everyone hungry. Finding only tea, coffee and flour in the kitchen, to which they were able to add some butter, which Ellen Ahearn had brought from Ireland, they were able to make a butter cake which they ate for supper. A few days later, the bishop came to see them, bringing meat and other provisions.

Classes began on February 5, 1875, using the parlor as a classroom and whatever could be found as desks and chairs. As many as 20 pupils crowded the little room until April of that year when the nearby district school building was vacated and Sister Alice Howley and her little band were given permission to move in. The enrollment soon soared to 80, and all the sisters were enlisted to help with the instruction.

By December of 1879, the house at Key West had become crowded with young women who wished to join in the work of the sisters. A move on December 9 to a new convent on West Hill, now known as Rush Street, marked the first expansion of the community after coming to the United States.

What would later be designated as St. Columbkille Parish became the second motherhouse of the Dubuque Presentation Sisters. There they built St. Vincent which was destined to be a permanent fixture on West Hill.

The sisters faced many challenges but they never lost their determination. From the first day of warming themselves around the kitchen stove, using melted snow as water, and making a simple butter cake for supper, their faith and resilience carried them forward. Through every trial and triumph, these brave women built a legacy of faith, education and service that would flourish for generations in Dubuque and beyond.



Wearing wedding dresses for the reception rite was a tradition brought over from Ireland. The earliest surviving photograph of that event is from August 22, 1901, showing Petronilla Clark, Celestine Tobin, Rita Sullivan and Leo Roach being received by the congregation.

The Role of Archives

by JOEL THORESON, ARCHIVIST

One of the most frequent uses of any archives is to celebrate institutional anniversaries. The 150th anniversary of the Sisters of the Presentation is no exception.

Many photographs from the archives were reviewed to illustrate the exhibit text and scanned at high resolution to allow for the oversized displays in the halls of Mount Loretto. Exhibit text had to be written and revised after checking archival resources.

The collection has photographs from many of the early sisters, but surprisingly not for Mother Vincent Hennessy. A group photograph, seemingly taken during the early years at Key West, pictures four sisters, with three identified. The small community had grown by two in 1878 and seven in 1879, with another sister on loan from Ireland, so the fourth sister may be one of these.



Sister Mary Angela Crowley, an unidentified sister, Sister Mary Josephine Howley and Sister Mary Evangelista A'Hearn.

After a brief run of taking formal portraits through the early 1880s, there are very few until the early 20th century. It may be that the early surviving portraits were from an individual's personal album, rather than any systematic attempt by the community to collect images of the sisters.

The Presentation archives was established by Sister Mary Vivia Cranny in the 1950s and she collected much of what we know about the early sisters, conducting interviews with the older sisters. She also was the founder of the *Mount Loretto Bulletin*, predecessor to *Presentation Doorways*, leaving us a valuable resource documenting the activities of the congregation from the 1950s-on.



Sister Mary Vivia Cranny



Free Showing of “Maya”

Wednesday, January 22, 2025

5:30 p.m. at Phoenix Theatres

555 JFK Road, Dubuque, Iowa

The public is invited to view the movie, *Maya*, to educate themselves about human trafficking. *Artists for Change* created this film showing how traffickers use social media and how young people become vulnerable by these techniques. The film's producer and actors will share some of the “red flags” which will help parents, teachers and youth avoid becoming victims of human trafficking. To better understand human trafficking, a 20-minute clip can be viewed prior to the showing of *Maya*. You may choose to attend either the clip which starts at 5:30 p.m. or full film starting at 6 p.m., or both. This event will last for approximately 90 minutes.

Maya was shown during the 2024 Julien Dubuque Film Festival. The Tri-State Coalition Against Human Trafficking is sponsoring this free showing of the film during Human Trafficking Awareness Month.

The Tri-State Coalition Against Human Trafficking (Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois) is a collaborative, faith-based network that engages in education and advocacy in an effort to eradicate human trafficking. The coalition collaborates with other area groups who are also working to spread awareness of this modern-day slavery.

A Voice for All Synod on Synodality

by JOY PETERSON, PBVM

On March 7, 2020, Pope Francis announced that the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was being established. More commonly called the Synod on Synodality, the theme of the gathering would be “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission.” In a radical shift from previous synods, participants would include women and non-ordained men from all six inhabited continents of Earth, along with cardinals, bishops and ordained priests and deacons.

Unlike the usual gathering of bishops, this Synod was convened following listening sessions held in parishes, then dioceses and eventually in national or continental conversations. The handbook on the preparation for the gatherings of Synod participants describes the intention of these gatherings as invitations to “recall that the purpose of the Synod is not to produce documents, but to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands.”

In October of 2023, nearly 400 delegates to the Synod gathered in Rome for a month of listening and dialogue. During the Second Vatican Council, the work of social justice was brought forward as “a constitutive element” of Church doctrine. This Synod, which officially closed on October 27, 2024, following a second month of meeting, identifies synodality as constitutive to the institution of the Church.

The themes of the synodal process call for the communion of all, living in unity and love. Believers are called to participate in the pastoral decision-making of a synodal Church.

The final document of the assembly calls for Church leaders to listen more attentively to the voices of the people of God, particularly those who are not typically heard. This calls for greater participation in decision-making, as well as the development of protocols leading to more accountability and transparency in relation to Church governance. Article No. 91 from the document states that bishops and pastors are to conduct consultations before making decisions and are “obliged to listen” to the insights of the faithful.



The call to be a Church of Mission to those who live on the “spiritual, social, economic, political, geographical and existential peripheries of our world” is a common theme in the efforts of Pope Francis. For some, the final document of the Synod fails to address some of the peripheries of the world such as the question of the ordination of married men, the call for women’s participation as ordained deacons or L.G.B.T.Q. issues. Some find hope in the establishment of 10 study groups that were given these topics for further discernment as follow-up to the Synod.

Pope Francis has called synodality the path “which God expects of the Church of the third millennium.” This path is an invitation to transformative expressions of faith for all believers, living in communion with the call to love and service of all of God’s creation.



Sisters and friends prepare to board the Nuns on the Bus & Friends Tour bus in Arizona. (Sister Richelle Friedman is fourth from the left).

2024 *Vote Our Future Tour* Nuns on the Bus & Friends

Reflection by RICHELLE FRIEDMAN, PBVM

The Nuns on the Bus & Friends Tour (NOTB) led by NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice began in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on September 30 and ended in San Francisco, California, on October 18. During the 20-city, 11-state tour of religious sisters and lay women, riders participated in town hall events, rallies, small group discussions and press conferences, as well as site visits to local social service agencies and community organizations.

This was the eighth NOTB tour beginning in 2012. Sister Richelle Friedman has participated in six of the tours. She joined the third leg of this trip which included stops in Arizona, Nevada and California.

At all stops along the way, event attendees were urged to vote for candidates who will promote the common good by supporting policies that give everyone the freedoms to thrive; an affordable and safe place to live, food, health care, childcare, the Child Tax Credit, a living wage, a fair tax system, clean air and water, and the freedom to participate in our democracy.

Sister Richelle shares her reflections on the experience:

“What a great privilege it was to ride the bus! Over and over again, we were offered radical hospitality, beginning with the sisters at the Kino Border Initiative in Nogales, Arizona, who welcomed us and who feed and welcome immigrants every day. We saw it in the respect for those they serve shown by staff who work at Three Square in Las Vegas providing meals for seniors, children and families who otherwise would go hungry. We experienced hospitality from those who came to the town hall and community centers to welcome us. Hospitality emulated from the staff at the César Chávez Monument who continue to educate and advocate on behalf of farm workers. Hospitality and respect are the hallmarks of the housing and services provided at the St. Francis Center in Redwood City and Mission Action in San Francisco.

A rally at Notre Dame High School in San Jose where an inscription on the building reads “Center for Women’s Leadership” was inspirational. The students are learning the



Top photo: Sister Eileen McKenzie, FSPA, talks about the work religious sisters are doing at the border wall in Nogales, Arizona, and Mexico; Bottom photo: Sister Richelle and Andres Chavez, grandson of Cesar and Helen Chavez, who shared the history of his grandparents' work with farmworkers at the Cesar Chavez Monument.

Our advocacy to bring about a reality where everyone thrives – no exceptions – is more important now than ever.

Sister Richelle Friedman

importance of taking seriously Matthew's Gospel to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless and welcome the immigrant, and they are coupling service with advocacy. Those of us with teaching backgrounds were very impressed.

Great work is being done, and yet there is still so much to be done!

Big conglomerates who never see the migrants toiling in the fields doing back-breaking work still do not provide farmworkers with just wages and humane living conditions. There is the stark reality at the border in Nogales where immigrants are not welcomed by too many in our country and, in fact, are lied to and disrespected by some border agents. Affordable housing is a need virtually everywhere in our country. And despite the tremendous work done at Three Square in Las Vegas, food insecurity there and elsewhere is increasing.

Our advocacy to bring about a reality where everyone thrives – no exceptions – is more important now than ever."

Unveiling the Path to Land Justice

by DAVE MCDERMOTT, JUSTICE PROMOTER

On August 29 and 30, 2024, the Land Justice Futures organization hosted an illuminating workshop focused on the critical issue of land justice at Mount Loretto. The two-day event brought to light the historical context and contemporary challenges of land justice.

The workshop kicked off with a series of talks on the history of colonization. These sessions delved deep into the detrimental effects of the Doctrine of Discovery – a legal and religious principle that justified European powers' domination over Indigenous lands and peoples. Attendees learned how this doctrine laid the foundation for centuries of exploitation and disenfranchisement of Indigenous communities worldwide. Through powerful storytelling and historical analysis, the speakers highlighted the enduring impact of these injustices, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive understanding as a stepping stone towards healing.

The workshop explored practical avenues for achieving land justice. Diverse strategies were presented, encompassing legal, social and environmental approaches. One of the most inspiring discussions revolved around the concept of land back initiatives, where land is returned to its rightful Indigenous stewards. Several case studies showcased successful instances where land reclamation had led to environmental restoration, cultural revitalization and strengthened community bonds.

Shelley Buffalo, of the Meskwaki Tribe of Tama, was able to join the workshop via Zoom. Her interview ensured that the voices of those directly impacted by land injustice were at the forefront of the conversation. Shelley discussed a variety of examples of native people attempting to reclaim ancestral practices. One example is her son who has begun teaching others the Indigenous methods of harvesting bison.

The journey towards land justice is a collective one. By acknowledging the past and actively working towards a just future, we move closer to a world where all lands are respected, and their stewards honored.



To learn more about Land Justice Futures, visit www.landjusticefutures.org.



Sister Suzanne Gallagher embraces this grace-filled chapter in her life with moments of stillness and self-discovery.

A Heart for the Indigenous Sister Suzanne Gallagher

by MAURA MCCARTHY, PBVM

Sister Mary Suzanne Gallagher (Theresa Marie) is a welcoming and friendly face at Mount Loretto, distinguished by her long, wavy hair. As librarian, she is passionate about providing materials on justice and planetary spirituality for Roncalli Library.

Sister Suzanne is the oldest of 10 children, born to Vernon Gallagher of Hanover and Frances Larkin Gallagher of Cherry Mound, both of the picturesque Allamakee County in Iowa. Her call to religious life as a Presentation Sister was inspired by three Presentations: Sisters Mary Aloysius Rush, Helen Marie Feeney and her aunt, Judith (Karen) Gallagher.

Sister Suzanne taught grade school for 14 years before serving as principal at Epworth, Peosta, Placid Catholic School, now Seton School in Epworth, Iowa, for five years; St. Germaine in Oak Lawn, Illinois, for eight years; and St. Mary in Guttenberg, Iowa, for 16 years.

When she arrived in Guttenberg, the school reflected the depressed economy: the building needed repair, textbooks were outdated, playground space was minimal and teachers were underpaid. Sister Suzanne began fundraising with activities such as recycling newspapers, selling school t-shirts and writing grants. She was especially elated with the new teaching materials, including art appreciation, expanded music, poetry, phonics and the initiation of St. Mary's own "Passion Play."

In 2004, Sister Suzanne was honored with the National Catholic Educational Association's Distinguished Principal Award, one of 12 principals from across the United States who were nationally recognized. Sister Suzanne made possible the innovative programs in Guttenberg by grant writing, rebuilding an endowment fund and deep involvement with parents, students and staff.

She later moved to Waukon, Iowa, to be available for eldercare and, in 2018, moved to Mount Loretto to

assist Sister Ellen Mary Garrett in the library and later was named librarian due to Sister Ellen Mary's illness and death. Shortly after Sister Suzanne's new assignment, the first-floor bathroom flooded the library, soaking the shelves laden with books. The books were removed rapidly and put in boxes away from the area. After assessment, the wooden shelves were declared irretrievably damaged. Sister Suzanne gathered a team to review the inventory and decide which books were important to keep. Then she planned for new shelving with room for lounge furniture and quiet reading space. With her team, Sister Suzanne persistently orders up-to-date books, magazines and prepares them for display or shelving. The card catalogue has been digitalized.

Another source of energy and passion for Sister Suzanne is her work on the Land Justice Team. The travesties suffered by the Native American people have seared her soul and their enduring land and nature values never fail to inspire her anew. She continues to research her role in reconciliation and repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery.

Formerly, Sister Suzanne believed that her worth was valued by her gifts for service, what she could do to promote the Kingdom of God, rather than just being worthy and lovable in her inner being. She views these years as a grace-filled time of transition and transformation.

"The work of a workaholic principal has receded into the shadows, and I am left with me. I now have the amazing gift of time for silence, stillness, prayer, reading, remembering, walking, talking, singing and writing to journey within, to be with the Great Spirit Mother. I am learning about the 'well' at the center of my being."

"I am hungry for sources that challenge my being. I harness 'breath' prayers, gathering with my ancestors and angels during passing moments of a day which nourish. Creative writing prompts, poetry explorations and music and art soothe my being." Sister Suzanne's prayer: "Spirit Mother, my heart is grateful for this day and the opportunity that has been presented for me to review who I am and how I came to live here. May I deeply know my sacred purpose."

Sister Suzanne's journey is one of deep commitment, resilience and transformation. From her early days as an educator to her pivotal role as librarian and justice advocate, she has always poured her heart into serving others and nurturing a love for learning. Throughout her life, Sister Suzanne's passion for justice, education, and spiritual growth has touched countless lives.

Now, in this grace-filled chapter, she embraces moments of stillness and self-discovery, seeking connection with the Spirit and deepening her understanding of purpose. Sister Suzanne's legacy is a testament to the power of faith, service and the continuous pursuit of inner and outer growth.

Keeping Her Name Alive Among Us



Sister Mary Francine Quillin

August 25, 1937 – October 20, 2024

Sister Francine Quillin's life was marked by a deep commitment to faith, education and service. She dedicated herself to a life of ministry and service, fulfilling various roles that included teaching, parish ministry, leadership and pastoral care. She earned her degrees from Clarke College, Marquette University and the University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome, where she studied Canon Law. Her career was marked by compassion, humility and the deep relationships she built with those she served.

One of her most cherished roles was pastoral associate at the Church of the Resurrection in Dubuque, where she offered care and companionship to parishioners, particularly the elderly and homebound. Even in retirement, she continued volunteering in this ministry, which brought her much joy. Her presence was a source of companionship to many, characterized by her genuine care, gentle humor and compassion.

Sister Francine often spoke of the importance of relationships stating, "I think what was most valuable about my years in all those positions was the people with whom I worked and the people I met through various ministries." Her life was rooted in her love for people and community. She built enduring relationships through every ministry, embodying the Presentation charism of radical hospitality. Reflecting on her ministry, she recalled the profound examples of faith and endurance she witnessed in others, considering it a privilege to serve.

She treasured time spent with friends, family and community members, finding joy in prayer, music and shared conversations.

A Journey of Faith, Family and Giving Back

by KAREN TUECKE, PARTNERS IN MISSION COORDINATOR

As the Presentation Sisters celebrate their 150th anniversary, Marcia Quade, a longtime partner in their mission, reflects on her rich journey of faith, family and community service. Now 85 years old, Marcia, originally from Clare, Iowa, lives in Omaha, Nebraska. Her story is one of hard work, gratitude and giving back, inspired by the values instilled in her upbringing.



Marcia Quade

Growing Up in Clare, Iowa

Marcia grew up in a bustling household with 11 siblings – six sisters, including Presentation Sister Pamela Quade, and four brothers. “My mother Agnes was a saint,” Marcia fondly recalls. “Raising all of us was no small task, but my parents did it with love.” The Quade family bond remains strong to this day. “We still get together as often as we can,” Marcia shares. “Every Christmas, my youngest sister hosts a family gathering.”

The small town of Clare, with a population of about 500 people, was where Marcia learned the value of community support. “Everybody helped everyone,” she says. “No one had much money, but we always found ways to support each other.” Marcia’s early exposure to generosity and community came through the Presentation Sisters who taught her at St. Matthew Catholic School. “The sisters dedicated their lives to teaching families like ours,” she recalls. “They not only taught us academics but also how to live with compassion.”

The Influence of a Determined Mother

One of Marcia’s most vivid memories is of her mother’s efforts to create a hot lunch program at their school. With 11 children to feed, packing lunches was a daunting daily task. “My mother saw there had to be a better way,” Marcia remembers. Agnes approached the school board to propose a hot lunch program. Her initiative was successful, and she organized the meals herself in the church basement. “It made a big difference for our family and others,” Marcia says. “When my mother spoke, people listened because they knew she cared.”

The Quade Home: A Hub of Activity

The Quade household was a lively place, full of children and activities. Marcia remembers growing up on the family farm where neighboring kids would gather. “Everyone wanted to come to our house,” she says. “We played outside, built snowmen and just enjoyed being together.” Her mother, always involved, even started a 4H club and served as a leader, teaching the children valuable skills.

Education and Career Beginnings

Marcia excelled in school, particularly in home economics, which she jokingly refers to as her “Martha Stewart” days. After high school, she attended college, initially majoring in home economics. Encouraged by her aunt, who helped fund her education, Marcia switched to business, which required extra summer courses to graduate on time.

After completing her degree, Marcia moved to Omaha, where she began her career at the Grain Exchange Building, a historic center in the city. Her first job was running the front office for L&N Railroad. “It was an exciting time,” she recalls. “I learned so much, especially since my boss was often away. It was my introduction to the business world.”

A Career in Finance

In her late 20s, Marcia transitioned into the finance industry, working for a company that sold municipal bonds. “I was in charge of the teletype machine,” she says. “All our business was conducted this way back then.” As the company grew, Marcia helped expand its trading operations and earned several promotions.

Marcia’s interest in the stock market deepened, and she decided to obtain her license to place orders. “I was already taking orders, so I figured, why not place them too?” she says. However, her first stock order came with a learning curve: she mistakenly placed an order for 100 shares of toilets instead of 10. “It was a valuable lesson in attention to detail,” she admits with a laugh.

An example of a personal investment was a single share of Berkshire Hathaway, which cost her \$10,000. “That was a big investment,” Marcia recalls. “But it was the beginning of understanding how to grow wealth for the future.” Over

the next 30 years, Marcia dedicated herself to a career in finance, retiring as a vice president financial advisor from Piper, Jaffray & Hopwood, Inc.

Giving Back: A Lifelong Commitment

Throughout her career, Marcia never forgot the lessons she learned from the Presentation Sisters about the importance of giving back. "The sisters were always there for us," Marcia reflects. "Even as adults, they welcomed us at Mount Loretto, especially during the holidays." These cherished memories deepened her commitment to support their mission.

Now retired, Marcia uses her financial knowledge to give back to the sisters and other causes close to her heart. "The sisters provided me with a foundation for my education and my values," she says. "I am grateful to be able to return the kindness they showed me."

The sisters have dedicated their lives to educating and serving others, and it is wonderful to celebrate their legacy. I have been fortunate to build a good life, and I want to share that success. The sisters taught me to live generously and with purpose, and I am happy to be a part of their journey.

Marcia Quade

Celebrating 150 Years of the Sisters of the Presentation

As the sisters celebrate their 150th anniversary, Marcia is filled with gratitude for the role they played in her life. "This milestone is significant," she says. "The sisters have dedicated their lives to educating and serving others, and it is wonderful to celebrate their legacy."

Looking back, Marcia is proud of her journey and the role she has played in supporting the Presentation mission. "I have been fortunate to build a good life, and I want to share that success," she explains. "The sisters taught me to live generously and with purpose, and I am happy to be a part of their journey."

Marcia Quade's story is a testament to the enduring values of faith, community and service. As the Presentation Sisters celebrate their 150th anniversary, Marcia's life is a shining example of how one person, inspired by her upbringing and education, can make a lasting impact. Her journey, shaped by the lessons learned in Clare, Iowa, and the guidance of the Presentation Sisters, is a beacon of what it means to live a life of gratitude, generosity and purpose.

2024 Annual Appeal

The Lantern Light is Burning Bright

As we continue to learn, we strive to bring educational opportunities to others, bringing a more widespread awareness to what we can do, as together we "listen to the cry of Earth and the cry of those living in poverty."

Pope Francis, Laudato Si'

Celebrating the Legacy of the Sisters of the Presentation

As we approach 2025, we joyfully commemorate 150 years since the founding of the Sisters of the Presentation in Dubuque, Iowa. This anniversary celebrates a legacy inspired by our courageous foundress, Nano Nagle, whose enduring spirit of service and education has guided us through generations.

Your unwavering support has been the backbone of our mission to serve, educate and advocate. Whether it is serving those made poor, educating the uneducated, caring for the vulnerable or challenging unjust systems, our shared commitment lights the path forward.

Reflecting on our journey, we see not only our milestones, but the countless lives touched along the way. Your partnership is more than support – it is a testament to hope, love and shared purpose. As we look to the future, may we continue to be guided by our shared mission, letting our lantern shine brightly as a beacon of hope for all.

Your gift to the 2024 Annual Appeal sustains the mission of the Presentation Sisters, empowering us to continue serving, educating, and advocating for those in need. Donations can be made online at www.dbqpbvms.org by clicking the Donate Now button.

For more information, contact Karen Tuecke in the Partners in Mission Office at 563-588-2008 ext. 109 or partnersinmission@dbqpbvms.org.

May your holiday season overflow with love, joy, and cherished moments.



Left to right: A group of 21 Presentation people, including sisters, associates and employees, visited Prairiewoods Retreat and Conference Center in Hiawatha, Iowa, on August 16, 2024. Associates Delynn Fangman, Jo Gullickson, Darla Budden and Sister Maura McCarthy fill in their artwork during a guided mandala drawing meditation. Hearts of Hospitality associate group members Judy Zahren-Kalb, Sister Rosalyn Ulfers and Carol Wyatt pose for a photo during the prairie tour.

Connecting with Earth

by JANET LEONARD, ASSOCIATE

On August 16, 21 Presentation people visited Prairiewoods, a Franciscan Ecospirituality Retreat and Conference Center in Hiawatha, Iowa. The group was comprised of sisters, associates and employees. The day began with a beautiful video of the creation of the world followed by a history of the center. The group was then given options to view the Community Gardens or walk the trails leading around its 72 acres of woods and prairie.

Sandy Rosenberger, development coordinator at Prairiewoods, describes the visit, "We visited our Green Prairie Gardens where the majority of the produce goes to the Metro Catholic Outreach Food Pantry in Cedar Rapids and also the new Hiawatha Public Food Pantry. Last year Prairiewoods was thrilled that we were able to donate over 4,000 pounds of fresh produce to the food insecure in our metro area.

We also took a tour of the Community Gardens where local members of the community rent garden plots so they can grow food for themselves and their families. Many of the garden plot renters live in apartments and are immigrants and refugees from around the world. They are so happy to be able to have a small plot to grow fresh produce for themselves."

Jerry Hermesen, Presentation employee, was especially impressed with the center's involvement with the Hiawatha community: "I enjoyed the quietness of Prairiewoods; yet it is within the city population and open to the community. It is so fortunate that the resources of the center are available for public use – like the gardens and hiking trails."

After a nutritious lunch, participants were given a variety of options including walking the labyrinth, participating in a guided mandala drawing meditation, learning Qigong movements, walking (or riding) the wooded trails or even resting in one of their retreat rooms.

Associate Colleen Venter shares her experience, "Another associate and I took a ride on a gator truck with our tour guide, Ben. Little did we know how much we would learn from our young driver about Prairiewoods. Ben shared his wealth of knowledge and his deep love for the woods and prairies he cared for. He was so mindful of Mother Earth and drew our attention to every flower, butterfly, garden, stream of water, tree, bench and solar panel. Ben was kind, his spirit gentle, his presence joyful and truly passionate about his work at Prairiewoods."

In Loving Memory Associate Yvonne Kisch

March 24, 1947 – October 10, 2024

Associate Yvonne Kisch of Charles City, Iowa, died peacefully from brain cancer on October 10, 2024, surrounded by family. She leaves behind her loving husband James, four children and five grandchildren – all of whom brought her immense joy.



Yvonne Kisch

Yvonne made her initial commitment to the Presentation Associate Partnership on September 18, 2010, and actively participated in the Lantern Flames associate group of Charles City.

She reflected, "Being a Presentation associate has affected me in many ways. I have experienced so much joy in meeting and getting to know the sisters; their influence on my life have given me more self-confidence to reach out to others in loving and helpful ways."

And that she did! Yvonne's life was exemplified by love, kindness and commitment to family, church and the civic community. She served on the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women and was an active member of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church where she served on the Pastoral Council and Guild, lectured at Mass, organized funeral lunches and volunteered with Meals on Wheels and the local food pantry.

Yvonne also participated in service trips throughout the United States, including Appalachia, Chicago and several Native American reservations. A spirit-led person, Yvonne made pilgrimages locally to LaCrosse and Champion, Wisconsin; and to Lourdes, France; and Fatima, Spain.

Additionally, she had a passion for the Pittsburgh Steelers and gardening. She loved being part of Stony Point Players, a local community theater group. Her warm smile, generous spirit and legacy will live on in the hearts of her family and friends.



Associate Shirley Lammers also praises the workers, "The people of Prairiewoods are so gracious and grace-filled. They easily shared their gifts of peace and knowledge with us. Radical hospitality emits from all spaces, both indoors and out. And we carried ample portions of grace back to Dubuque for continued sharing."

The group ended the day sharing reflections on their experiences. This was the first time many of the participants had visited this spiritual haven; but for many, it will not be the last.

Associate Bonnie Hancock shares, "It was lovely to be exposed to the beauty and hospitality that surrounded us. An aura of peace while letting go of stress was evident."

Associate Rose Rauch shared her Prairiewoods experience, "Dedicated staff and volunteers sharing natural space and gardens for the benefit of the broader community welcomed all as Jesus taught. My mind, spirit and body were brought to closer relationship to the Trinity."

Presentation Sister Ann Jackson, Prairiewoods' coordinator of spiritual services, shares her thoughts from the staff perspective, "Thanks to all Presentation associates, employees and sisters – those able to be present and those present in spirit – for contributing such spirit, curiosity, awe and wonder to the Prairiewoods land. Our staff enjoyed hosting all and are eager to welcome you back."

Visit www.Prairiewoods.org for more information. A variety of retreat experiences are offered.

Upcoming Events

Our 150th Anniversary is not just a celebration of our Presentation community, but a tribute to all who have faithfully walked with us. We look forward to celebrating this special milestone with you.



150 Trees for 150 Years Tending Our Earth

As we celebrate our 150th anniversary, we are reminded of our deep commitment to Earth and the care of creation – a core principle that has guided our mission throughout the years.

To celebrate this occasion, we invite you to be part of our “150 Trees for 150 Years” initiative in honor of the Presentation Sisters’ 150 years of service. The legacy of a tree outlives those who plant it, serving as a powerful symbol of how the legacy of our congregation has grown, flourished and extended far beyond those who first sowed the seeds of faith 150 years ago.

You can be part of this collective effort and help us reach our goal by either planting a tree or sponsoring a tree.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:

Choose how you want to participate and scan the QR code with your cell phone camera. Fill out the online form and click submit.

Plant a Tree



Sponsor a Tree



Feel more comfortable contacting us? No problem!

Call Karen Tuecke at 563-588-2008 ext. 109 or email partnersinmission@dbqpbvms.org and she will get you signed up!

You can also visit

<https://dbqpbvms.org/150-trees-150-years>

Nano Nagle, Path Through the Dark

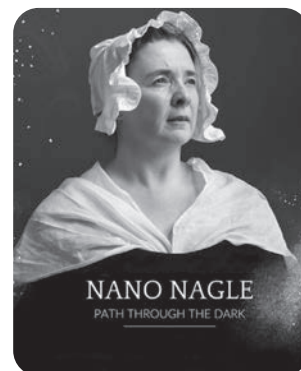
Two Performances

March 22 and 23, 2025

2 p.m.

**Clarke University, Jansen Music Hall
1550 Clarke Drive, Dubuque, IA**

Join us for the enchanting “Path Through the Dark,” a one-person captivating theatrical performance that brings to life the inspiring story of our foundress Nano Nagle.



In 1874, Nano’s legacy was carried into the future when Presentation Sisters journeyed to Dubuque, Iowa. With unfaltering faith and fortitude, they departed their homeland of Mooncoin, Ireland, carrying Nano’s “lantern” across the Atlantic, fueled by the fiery passion for love and service ignited within them by Nano.

“Path Through the Dark” delves into Nano’s remarkable journey, illuminating her courage in the face of adversity and her triumphs in creating a brighter future for those in need. Through captivating performances and stirring narratives, the production brings to life Nano’s legacy of hope and empowerment, inspiring audiences to embrace her teachings and carry forward her vision of a more just and compassionate world.

Don’t miss this unique opportunity to witness history unfold. Join us as we honor Nano’s enduring legacy. Light refreshments will be served after each performance. This event is free and open to the public.

Mount Loretto AND BEYOND

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



Celebrating 75 Years of Religious Life

The Presentation community honors and gives thanks for the lives and ministries of Sisters Marian Sweeney and Dolores Zieser who celebrated their jubilee on December 5, 2024. These two extraordinary witnesses of endurance, grace and dedication have been a blessing for many.

{ [Read about each sister at dbqpbvms.org/news-events/jubilees.](https://www.dbqpbvms.org/news-events/jubilees) }



SHOW LOVE. OFFER HOPE. LIVE HOSPITALITY.
EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY

FOLLOW US @DBQPBVMS | [WWW.DBQPBVMS.ORG](https://www.dbqpbvms.org)



Contact vocations@dbqpbvms.org



PLEASE CONNECT WITH US.

For updated information about the activities and events of the Sisters of the Presentation, visit our website at www.dbqpbvms.org or call 563.588.2008.

PLEASE JOIN US.

December 25, 2024

Christmas Day
9:00 a.m. Mass

January 1, 2025

New Year's Day
9:00 a.m. Mass

March 22-23, 2025

Nano Nagle, Path Through the Dark
2 p.m. performances
Clarke University, Jansen Music Hall
1550 Clarke Drive, Dubuque, IA
Open to the public

PLEASE PRAY WITH US.

December 14, 2024

Christmas Dinner provided for
Dubuque Rescue Mission
and Hope House guests

February 2, 2025

World Day for Consecrated Life

March 8-14, 2025

National Catholic Sisters Week

21st of each month

Pray for Vocations

25th of each month

Pray for Benefactors



ESTABLISHED 1874

2360 CARTER ROAD
DUBUQUE, IA 52001-2997

*Help us keep our database up-to-date.
Send changes to info@dbqpbvms.org
or call us at 563.588.2008. Thank you.*

CONNECT WITH US @DBQPBVMS



WWW.DBQPBVMS.ORG



As Nano Nagle inspired the Dubuque Presentation Sisters for 150 years to love and serve, may the presence of Jesus we celebrate this Christmas inspire you to be love, joy and peace in our world.

*Wishing you a joyous Christmas
and a Happy New Year!*

SISTERS OF THE PRESENTATION | DUBUQUE, IOWA