

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; 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 C ad M ile F ilte (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 | Spring 2024 | Volume 68 • Number 1

A Look Inside CONTENTS

4 Now In This Joyful Meeting

In early February, the Presentation community gathered in Dubuque to continue exploring future planning opportunities and to deepen their commitment to living out the mission of radical hospitality.

6 A Friendship More Precious Than Diamonds

Across town from Mount Carmel Bluffs, Sister Bertha (Berdie) Fox, BVM, visited her former piano teacher, Sister Damian O'Brien, at Mount Loretto. This teacher-student friendship has endured through 70 years.

8 Preserving Our Sacred Story

The archives of the Sisters of the Presentation preserves the sacred story of the congregation and its members. As we look forward to our community's 150th celebration, it is essential to acknowledge the indispensable role of archives in preserving our rich history.

9 Reflections on the Journey

Read about Sister Maura McCarthy's life and the wisdom she has learned along the way.

10 Seeing With New Eyes

During March 16-21, five Presentation associates and one sister traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana, for a service and awareness opportunity.

13 Exceptional Individuals Honored

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

16 Role of a Justice Promoter

Our Presentation commitment to justice is deeply woven into the very essence of the charism of the Sisters of the Presentation. The role of a justice promoter has been instrumental in advancing the mission of the Dubuque Sisters of the Presentation in our pursuit of justice.

20 In Loving Memory

We remember Sisters Karen Jasper, Jeanine Kuhn and Jeanette McCarthy.

23 Celebrating Earth Day

Presentation Sisters, associates and staff come together for an Earth Day clean-up event on the Mount Loretto grounds.



Cover PHOTO

Left to right: During March 16-21, five Presentation associates and one sister traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana, for a service and awareness opportunity. Participants were Presentation associate Radie Roberts, Sister Jessi Beck and Associates Mary Drees, Jo Gullickson, Darla Budden and Deb McClimon.

A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Openings

by CARMEN HERNANDEZ, PBVM

150 Years of Tending the Light

This year, on November 13, we commence the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Sisters of the Presentation in Dubuque, Iowa. Guided by prayerful contemplation, we embark on a journey of reflection upon our rich history and narratives from the past, while embracing the future with hope and confidence. As we approach this significant milestone, it is fitting to reflect on our beginnings.

The foundation of our congregation traces back to the remarkable Honora Nagle, affectionately known as Nano, who established the Sisters of the Presentation in 1775, in Cork, Ireland. Nano, a courageous, daring woman, devoted her energies to educating poor children when penal laws prohibited education for Catholics. After a long day teaching, Nano walked the dark, winding lanes of Cork City, carrying a lantern to light her way as she comforted the sick, the elderly and the marginalized. Throughout her life, she drew strength from her profound faith and trust in God. Her steadfast dedication to those made poor and her fervent desire to transform societal structures inspired many. Evident even in her final moments, she encouraged her young community to go out into the world where the need is greatest.

In 1874, Mother Vincent Hennessy heeded Bishop John Hennessy's call to journey to Dubuque, Iowa, to educate the growing Catholic immigrant population. With unfaltering faith and fortitude, Mother Vincent and three companions left their homeland in Ireland, carrying Nano's "lantern" across the Atlantic, to establish the Presentation community in Dubuque. Over the years, they endured extraordinary hardships, suffering from cold, hunger and serious inconveniences, yet the hospitality given and received prevailed. Neighbors took food from their own supper table to share with the sisters, who in turn shared their skills of educating. Throughout our history, we have taken many steps to share the gift of hospitality with others, expanding the circle of light from the lantern.

The stories of our founding mothers are treasured and resonate deeply with the challenges faced by many today. Our Dubuque congregation was established by four immigrant women who lacked citizenship and voting rights, yet believed strongly in what they needed to do. Despite their fear and anxiety, they forged on with a clear purpose – to educate those most in need.

As we eagerly anticipate our 150th celebration, we pause to reflect with gratitude on our rich heritage, the paths we have trodden, and those still ahead. Our hearts are filled with deep appreciation for the resilience and courage of the four pioneering women who journeyed from Ireland to carry on Nano's vision in Dubuque. We hold in reverence the hundreds of women who have dedicated themselves to sustaining that vision with their sacrifices and steadfast determination. We offer heartfelt prayers of thanks for our families, friends and partners, whose unwavering love has sustained us throughout this journey. With gratitude spanning the past, present and future, we press onward, tending the light as we continue to go out where need calls loudly.

Sister Carmen Hernandez Sister Rita Menart Sister 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.

Presentation Lantern Center Recognized

On November 30, 2023, Divine Word College (DWC) presented the Presentation Lantern Center in Dubuque with the 2023 Matthew 25 Award to recognize the organization's work improving the lives of immigrants in the greater Dubuque area. The award was established at DWC in 2001 to honor those who minister in the spirit of the Bible passage Matthew 25:35-36: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me."

The Presentation Lantern Center offers hospitality, educational opportunities and advocacy to adult immigrants at no cost. Students work one-on-one with tutors to improve their English skills, prepare for the citizenship exam, learn practical life skills and meet people from a variety of cultural backgrounds. In 2002, the Sisters of the Presentation opened the center after research showed a great need for these types of services in the area. Since then, the center has served more than 1,700 adult immigrants from 79 countries.

"Being on the receiving end of hospitality from dedicated volunteer tutors in a safe place is life changing for these newcomers. Their journey to learn a new language, culture, money system and so much more is indeed a daunting challenge," states Sister Corine Murray, Presentation Lantern Center founder. "In this process, lifelong friendships are formed, the rich variety of cultures are celebrated and the strong thread of our common humanity is honored. Both English language learners and their tutors learn so much. It is a wonderful thing to witness."



Left to right: Sister Corine Murray, Presentation Lantern Center founder; Father Tom Ascherman, SVD; Megan Ruiz, Lantern Center executive director; and Sister Carmen Hernandez celebrate the Lantern Center's Matthew 25 award from Divine Word College.



Here in this sacred place,
strong in this holy company,
company of living faith,
open the treasure.
Give all – pour it out.
This is no time
for calculation,
no time to ask for
guarantee or safe return
on our investment –
let LOVE alone
be the measure,
for we have further
yet to journey.
Sister Raphael Consedine, PBVM

Now In This Joyful Meeting

by JOY PETERSON, PBVM

During the congregational Chapter of 2018, commitments were made for future planning with an awareness of the changing demographics of the community of Dubuque Presentation Sisters. One of the commitments directed members to form partnerships and utilize resources for the purpose of mission. Continuing the mission of radical hospitality and service as members of the congregation age remained at the heart of the conversations and decisions of the most recent Chapter in 2022.

One significant outcome of that commitment has been the development of a collaborative team of advocates for individuals who face barriers in the city of Dubuque, especially women and children.

Another outcome has been the commitment to living vitally as a congregation while exploring possibilities for sharing resources such as available building space. In the Fall of 2023, small group sharing engaged the sisters in reflection around these questions:

- What do you envision when you imagine sharing our building, property and resources?
- As we continue to live in community, what is needed to experience vital living?
- Where do we see the intersection of our responses to these questions?

In early February, the sisters gathered in Dubuque to continue exploring their responses and deepen their commitment to living out the mission of radical hospitality. This was a time to share hopes and insights gleaned from the Fall conversations.

In her opening reflection Sister Carmen Hernandez, congregational leader, asked the community: "Are you ready to give your all this weekend to something that has not yet been seen, to what is waiting for our hospitality? (Applause and agreement given.) Thanks for your affirmation. Let us look forward to our discussions together and trust each of us will provide much wisdom and input for our future planning." She then quoted the poem from that day's morning prayer as inspiration and encouragement.

**So now in this joyful meeting,
here in this sacred place,
strong in this holy company,
company of living faith,
open the treasure.
Give all – pour it out.
This is no time for calculation,
no time to ask for guarantee
or safe return on our investment –
let love alone be the measure,
for we have further yet to journey.**

Sister Raphael Consedine, PBVM

Left to right: Those gathered for the February community meeting shared deep conversations, prayerful reflections and the joy of coming together as a community to discuss hopes and dreams for the future. Sisters Pamela Quade, Janet Stelken and Janet Goetz; Prayer card distributed to those gathered; Sisters Raeleen Sweeney and Carrie Link; Sisters Michaeline Healy, Suzanne Gallagher and Marge Loughren.

**Are you ready to give your all this weekend
to something that has not yet been seen,
to what is waiting for our hospitality?**

Sister Carmen Hernandez

The poem's invitation to "give all – pour it out" without calculation or guarantee was the backdrop to two days of deep conversation. By the close of the weekend, there was agreement that, within the next couple of years, there is need for a specific plan that meets the desire for living vitally within community and fulfilling the dream to "further yet" journey in the unfolding of the mission.

The weekend's work was an expression of the promises made at the 2022 Chapter to "invest time, energy and resources to a process of inner work, opening ourselves to personal and communal transformation; to listen and respond to the cry of women and children and advocate for racial equity and immigration reform; and to foster connections with people and land to nurture healing of our wounded Earth."

Remembering the courage of Nano Nagle who gave everything to respond to the cries of impoverished Irish children 250 years ago, honoring the commitment of Mother Vincent Hennessy and her companions who left Ireland for the service of immigrant children 150 years ago, the Presentation Sisters of Dubuque in 2024 promise to "let love alone be the measure" as they journey into the future, certain only of God's faithful accompaniment.



Left to right: Sister Damian O'Brien and Sister Bertha Fox, BVM, enjoy reconnecting with deep gratitude for their friendship of over 70 years.



Immigrant Journeys Voices of Resilience

For 35 years, Sister Paula Schwendinger has stood in solidarity with the Hispanic immigrant community across various states. With deep empathy and profound connection, she has collected immigrant stories that resonate within her three published works. Available for purchase via the link: https://bit.ly/orderform_schwendinger, these books delve into the lives of immigrants, shedding light on their remarkable resilience.

In "Silent Voices in the Shadows," published in 2018, Sister Paula aims to bridge an understanding of the immigrant experience which often remains unseen. Through firsthand accounts, meticulously fact-checked and deeply personal, she unveils the harrowing journeys of undocumented individuals.

"Are We There Yet?" highlights Sister Paula's journey to the southern U.S. border in response to the plea from Catholic Charities. In 2021, she lent her support in Laredo, Texas, witnessing the struggles of families crossing continents to seek refuge, each with a story of endurance and perseverance.

Continuing her mission, "Women's Plight Leads to Flight," released in 2024, delves further into the narratives of migrants and refugees. Sister Paula aims to shed light on the driving forces behind leaving their homelands, forfeiting familiarity for the promise of a new beginning in the United States.

Accompanying each narrative are sketches by Fatima, a 24-year-old nursing student with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status, adding visual depth to these compelling stories.



In her three published books, Sister Paula Schwendinger offers personal stories of immigrants in an effort to highlight the motivation and unbelievable circumstances that force people out of their native countries.

A Friendship More Precious Than Diamonds

by BETH KRESS, PBVM with BERTHA FOX, BVM and DAMIAN O'BRIEN, PBVM

When a teacher-student friendship endures through the years, it defies time. Across town from Mount Carmel Bluffs, Sister Bertha (Berdie) Fox, BVM, visited her former piano teacher, Sister Damian O'Brien, at Mount Loretto.

While not in constant contact over the last 70 years, Sisters Damian and Bertha affirmed their thoughts and prayers for each other across time and miles. Their story and friendship travels from music lessons to the inspiration of a religious vocation, from their higher education and ministry and to their eventual retirement. In their meeting, the two sisters celebrated their friendship, rejoiced and came full circle to retrace the graces through the years.

As a young professed sister on her fourth teaching assignment, Sister Damian, with two other Presentation Sisters, served in religious education at Sacred Heart Parish in Osage, Iowa. Sister Damian was responsible for parish music and music pupils. Having begun her postgraduate studies at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago, Illinois, she was well qualified to enrich her music students.

**A good teacher is like a candle –
it consumes itself to light the way for others.**

Brad Henry

In nearby New Haven, Iowa, Berdie's parents were looking for a piano teacher for their sophomore daughter who had studied piano at St. Mary School, the parochial school for St. Peter Church in New Haven. Her piano teacher had been reassigned and not replaced. Berdie's mother heard about the good music teacher in Osage who was a Presentation Sister. And so, their friendship began. Teenage Berdie drove the family car every week to Osage for piano lessons.

"Berdie was a very good pupil," remarks Sister Damian. "She liked music and she practiced. She was quite advanced for her age." Before meeting Sister Damian, Berdie had learned harmony and transposition with her first piano teacher.

After Berdie graduated from high school, she enrolled at Clarke College (University) in Dubuque. "I wanted to study chemistry because I enjoyed it with my high school friends. I also loved writing and music. My final choice was a double major in music and English."

Sister Damian had invited Berdie to attend a reception of Presentation novices during her two years of piano studies in Osage. "When Berdie shared that she was going to Clarke College, I realized she had a vocation to religious life, but not necessarily to our community," shares Sister Damian.

Sister Damian applied her advanced studies to parishes and their grade schools, including giving students instrumental band lessons in Mason City, Iowa, the Midwestern town known worldwide for Meredith Wilson's *The Music Man*. She also served in leadership for her Presentation community, coordinated the center for retired priests of the Archdiocese of Dubuque and was on the initial team for the education and formation of permanent deacons. She served as pastoral associate in several parishes and as assistant to the archdiocesan archivist, retiring at age 98.

Sister Bertha taught music, chant and liturgy in Sisters of Charity, BVM schools in South Dakota and Illinois, at Clarke College and in BVM novitiates in Los Gatos, California, and Dubuque. She continued musical research in Eastern Europe before 1990 and the Fall of the Wall.

"As well as inspiring me to make music part of my life, Sister Damian supported my religious vocation from the beginning. When I made my first vows, she gave me a gift that I took with me for years in my travels, so I thought of her often," reflects Sister Bertha. "She is just special!"

Seeing teaching as a work of the heart, Sister Damian expresses gratitude for her friendship with Sister Bertha, "I am pleased that we can now visit here at Mount Loretto!"

These two outstanding women religious influenced each other, as they touched many lives through their music.

Preserving Our Sacred Story

by HERMANN PLATT, PBVM and MAURA MCCARTHY, PBVM

The archives of the Sisters of the Presentation preserves the sacred story of the congregation and its members and is frequently consulted for insights into individual sister stories or significant historical topics. The archive office has been enriched by the dedicated contributions and tireless efforts of numerous sisters who have served as archivists throughout the years.

Sister Vivia Cranny began to gather the fragments of the earlier and contemporary community members in the 1950s. She used snippets of papers, interviewed older members and collected all available annals. She initiated the *Presentagrams* and the *Mount Loretto Bulletin*, recording history as it happened.



Sister Vivia Cranny

Sister Ethel Paulus, after her educational career, worked as an archivist and researcher for a diocesan newspaper and as editor of the *Mount Loretto Bulletin*. Her last ministry assignment was Mount Loretto archivist.



Sister Ethel Paulus

Sister Angela Feeney was an inventive teacher who, for her term as archivist, invited others to help her including Sister Madonna Meyer, a band playing musician, and Sister Anastasia Burns, an art teacher and librarian. They initiated oral history tapes of the ministries of many sisters through interviews. Sister Marian Sweeney, an avid reader and teacher become librarian, also gained archival experience with Sister Angela. She manifested great reverence and effort to preserve the documents for historical needs.



Left to right: Past congregational archivists – Sisters Anastasia Burns, Angela Feeney, Marian Sweeney and Madonna Meyer.

The value of archives lies in their ability to connect us with the past, illuminate the present and inspire the future.

American Library Association

Sister Hermann Platt, with her innate organizational abilities, educational and librarian background, brought great dedication to the archive office. She attended a week-long training workshop with the San Francisco Presentation archivist and continued her education through webinars. Her passion for writing helped to preserve fascinating stories of the past for present-day members.



Sister Hermann Platt

More recently, the stewardship of the Presentation archives transitioned from Sister Hermann to Joel Thoreson, who officially assumed the role of archivist on February 26. Joel was employed with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Elk Grove Village, Illinois, for many years. He has a bachelor's degree from Augsburg College (now University) in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and a master's degree in history and museum studies from the University of Nebraska. This will be his first challenge in delving into the culture of religious life, but he is receiving excellent coaching from Sister Hermann.



Joel Thoreson

As we look forward to our community's 150th celebration, it is essential to acknowledge the indispensable role of archives in preserving our rich history. Archives are the heart and soul of our congregation's memory, a gathering of the stories authenticating outreach and service that shaped the small towns and cities where Presentation Sisters served.

These archives offer invaluable insights into our shared heritage, encapsulating the Presentation spirit of hospitality, dedication, sacrifice and service. During our 150th celebration, we look forward to sharing with you glimpses of our storied history and the countless ways Nano's light has been tended over the years.

Reflections on the Journey Sister Maura McCarthy

by ELENA HOYE, PBVM

She loves the world! She reverences it and her sacred relationship with Earth. Sister Maura McCarthy currently resides in Dubuque, a city nestled in Eastern Iowa along the Mississippi River. For Sister Maura, this mighty river is an important part of Earth, the home she shares with all sisters and brothers.

Her life journey began secure in a loving family in Allamakee County, Iowa, upriver from Dubuque, a place immersed in the beauty of nature. Her formal education began in a one-room schoolhouse with several grades located in the same room. She had only one classmate in her grade. She recalled that he responded to math facts with extraordinary speed, but she surpassed him in the areas of pronunciation and vocabulary. From an early age she developed an appreciation and love for words. Throughout her life, she has used words to communicate the gift of her wisdom, her common sense and her willingness to stand for justice.

In 1991, Pope John XXIII invited women and men's religious communities to tithe their membership by sending members to foreign missions. The Dubuque Sisters of the Presentation missioned two sisters to Bolivia including Sister Maura. After completing language school, she helped establish a mission in southern Bolivia where she remained for 10 years. Back in the United States, she taught at the Resurrection School in Dubuque and Our Lady of Guadalupe in Chicago, Illinois. And yet a piece of her heart remained in Bolivia, and so she returned.

Sister Maura returned as a missionary with deep roots, good language skills and a desire to work with the most neglected and oppressed people of Southern Bolivia, the Guaraní. The Guaraní were just beginning to organize in response to their near state of servitude. They lived at the mercy of the local landlords and ranchers. Their needs were many – to claim and establish their tribal territory and to secure funding for tools, food, fencing and building projects, including schools and housing.

The unjust landlords had one interest – cheap/slave labor. In 1992, an organization of ranchers and landowners of O'Connor Province made a declaration condemning the Sisters of the Presentation and asking that they be expelled from Bolivia because of their work with the Guaraní people. The root cause of their action was that the Guaraní people's



Friends came to visit from La Luz Hispana in Hampton, Iowa, where Sisters Maura McCarthy (second from the left) and Carmen Hernandez (far right) ministered.

request for a territory of their own would result in a decrease of cheap labor. In the end, the oppressed Guaraní won the day. During this struggle, Sister Maura was part of an international solidarity team committed to learn the Guaraní language, help them write grants and live among them. She has built an important bridge between the Guaraní and the Bolivian people.

Over time, because of the witness and friendship of the sisters, the Guaraní began to seek the sacraments. As an expression of their faith, prayer services began to be part of their community meetings.

In all the places that Sister Maura has called home, she has savored the gift and richness of life. She currently proofreads for Vietnamese students, translates for the Marriage Tribunal and serves as a generous volunteer in prison ministry and within her Presentation community. Every morning, Sister Maura reads the Scripture readings of the day in English and Spanish and the Gospel in Guaraní, reflecting that this practice brings them into her prayer. "They are always present to me." She also enjoys following her Guaraní and Hispanic friends on Facebook.

Sister Maura has a "big soul." She counts many blessings in her life including growing up on a farm in Iowa, classical music that enriches her life, a multitude of friends and her pure delight in a good game of bridge or perhaps a serious game of ping pong.



The Dubuque Seeing with New Eyes team gathers with New Orleans associates after preparing and serving a meal together at Hotel Hope. The separate associate groups began as strangers, but parted as friends after participating in a shared Presentation mission and service work.

Left to right: Presentation associates Deb McClimon, Radie Roberts, Jo Gullickson, Darla Budden and Mary Drees smile as Sister Jessi Beck takes a group selfie. Wearing festive St. Paddy's Day hats, the group poses for a photo in front of the St. Louis Cathedral in the French Quarter. Associates Mary, Deb, Jo, Darla and Radie prepare a morning snack at Lantern Light.

Service & Awareness Opportunity

Seeing with New Eyes

by RADIE ROBERTS, ASSOCIATE PARTNERSHIP CO-DIRECTOR

During March 16-21, five Presentation associates and one sister traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana, for a service and awareness opportunity. Participants visited Sisters Mary Lou Specha and Julie Marsh, who minister in the city. A vital aspect of the trip was touring and serving at Hotel Hope and Lantern Light Ministry, both founded by Presentation Sisters and still serving people affected by Hurricane Katrina 18 years ago. This outreach allowed participants to experience the Presentation charism of radical hospitality towards women and children made poor in a city 1,000 miles away from Dubuque.

After a long day of travel, the group attended Mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, home to the shrine of St. Jude. They then traveled into the city to experience the Hurricane Katrina Museum. All group members but one had traveled to New Orleans in the years following the hurricane to work with the rebuilding effort. It was an emotional experience to visit exhibits and view videos of the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, which many members had seen firsthand.

On Monday, March 18, the group participated in another educational experience. They traveled to the nearby Whitney Plantation, which educates the public on the history of slavery in the United States from the perspective of the people who were enslaved. The tour brought to life in a new way the horrors of slavery and the resistance efforts of those who were enslaved. After experiencing this opportunity, associate Darla Budden states, "My eyes were opened to the many challenges and hardships people in New Orleans and the South experience on a daily basis. The Whitney Plantation audio tour was deeply emotional for me. To know so many people today are still living the same social injustice is overwhelming!"

The second half of Monday marked the group's first visit to Hotel Hope. They were ready for a tour and to roll up their sleeves and get to work! Hotel Hope provides emergency housing and case management to support families moving from homelessness to self-sufficiency. The group cleaned several rooms recently vacated, organized closets and

served a meal to clients. Associate Deb McClimon reflected on this time, stating, "I saw God in the mothers and their children at Hotel Hope and also directly in Sisters Mary Lou and Julie as they work in their ministry."

On Tuesday, March 19, the team traveled to Lantern Light Ministry, a non-profit organization that offers support to unhoused adults in New Orleans, where they served a morning snack to approximately 150 people. The mission of Lantern Light is to provide a place of peace, support and encouragement to the working poor and homeless in downtown New Orleans as they rebuild their lives.

Lantern Light is part of the Rebuild Center of New Orleans, a nonprofit that brings together several organizations to provide a safe, outdoor environment for people in need. Onsite clients can take showers, do laundry, obtain medical services, receive mail and get assistance with government paperwork such as obtaining a driver's license. Associate Joann Gullickson shares, "I saw God in the faces of both the people being served and those who are serving at the Rebuild Center. In addition to Lantern Light food services, there is a huge variety of other services being offered there by professionals and volunteers."

On Wednesday, March 20, participants shopped for groceries for a meal that would be provided that night at Hotel Hope, visited a local cemetery and traveled into the city to visit the famous Café du Monde for coffee and beignets. New Orleans' cemeteries are different from those in the Midwest because the deceased are buried in a mausoleum above ground due to the city being below sea

My eyes were opened to the many challenges and hardships people in New Orleans and the South experience on a daily basis ... To know so many people today are still living the same social injustice is overwhelming!

Associate Darla Budden

level. Once the tourist time wrapped up, the group traveled back to Hotel Hope to finish their cleaning and organizing projects and to begin meal preparation.

A special aspect of this time was collaborating with associates from another Presentation community. The other associate group is connected to the New Windsor Presentation Sisters, but all members reside in New Orleans. After a short introduction, both groups paired off and dug into work that needed to be completed before the meal could be served. This service opportunity provided a common goal for both groups and broke the ice. By the time the work was done, group members exchanged contact information and hugs.

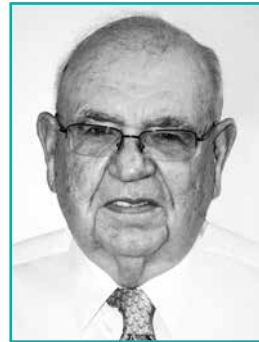
Seeing With New Eyes team members shared in fellowship and gathered in prayer daily to reflect on their experiences. The days were full and included a balance of tourist activities, educational opportunities and service work. By being immersed in local history and culture, team members were truly able to see the city of New Orleans and those they encountered with new eyes.

In Loving Memory

Associate James L. Kluesner

August 17, 1937 – April 5, 2024

On August 21, 2014, James “Jim” Kluesner became an associate with his wife, Judy, after connecting with Sisters Mary Dolores Moes, Agnes Marie Lynch, and Margaret Anne Kramer. Jim and Judy belonged to the Branches of the Word associate group for 10 years, meeting monthly to share friendship and prayers and to read and discuss the Gospel.



James “Jim” Kluesner

Jim was born in Strawberry Point, Iowa, and was a 1955 graduate of Holy Cross High School in Holy Cross, Iowa. He was united in marriage to Judy Clemen on October 12, 1968, in Farley, Iowa. Together they welcomed two children, Amy and Andrew. Jim is survived by his wife of 55 years, his children and seven grandchildren.

Jim had a very strong Catholic faith and was active in many religious organizations over the years. He enjoyed going out for a good meal with family and friends. He also enjoyed sitting down and visiting with people. Most of all, Jim loved spending time with his family, especially his grandchildren who affectionately call him “Papa Jim.”

Jim will be missed by all who knew and loved him.

For Jim's full obituary, visit www.egelhofsiegertcasper.com.

Presentation Associate Identity Statement

Dubuque Presentation associates are women and men called to share in the life, spirituality and mission of the Dubuque Presentation Sisters. Grounded in prayer, we support and encourage one another as we seek to embody the Presentation charism of radical hospitality both individually and communally. In the spirit of Nano Nagle, we reach out with hospitality and compassion as we seek justice and respond to the needs of the world.

New Co-Director of Associate Partnership

Sister Rita Waters, a Sister of Mercy (RSM), is so closely connected to Presentation mission, charism, values and spirituality that she feels right at home in joining the Presentation Sisters as co-director of the Associate Partnership. She maintains that, in a way, there is only one seminal charism: the awareness of the needs of our time and the courage and creativity to respond to them. Sister Rita states, “I am privileged to forward that charism as co-director, with Radie Roberts.”



Sister Rita Waters, RSM

Sister Rita entered religious life in 1968, shortly after high school. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Mount Mercy College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa; a master's degree in pastoral studies from Loyola University in Chicago; and in 2002, became a Certified Rubenfeld Synergist, which is an innovative, body-oriented psychotherapy. During her 50 years of ministry, Sister Rita served as elementary teacher, retreat center staff, parish minister and assistant to the Theology chairman at The Catholic University of America.

Just prior to moving to Dubuque, Sister Rita served 10 years on the team for the Collaborative Leadership Development Program which guides and inspires associates and younger members of religious life in developing and expanding leadership skills. A first-time “Dubuquer,” Sister Rita relishes living in a city with such abundant foliage, beautiful bluffs, proximity to the mighty Mississippi and friendly and kind people.

Sister Rita loves to line dance and enjoys racquetball, pickleball, board games and camping. A favorite pastime is to travel and explore new places, learning about customs, food, climate, politics and uniqueness.

Since joining the Presentation team, Sister Rita has delighted in getting to know the individual sisters and great group of associates. She states, “Daily, and in so many ways, I witness a spirit of Nano Nagle which transcends her time and is still relevant and thriving in the associates and sisters of 2024. The associates are genuine partners in receiving Nano’s torch, kindling it within their own hearts and bringing a new light into this world. It is an honor to know them.”

Exceptional Individuals Honored Scholarships & Awards

by LUGENE BERNING, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT and RADIE ROBERTS, ASSOCIATE PARTNERSHIP CO-DIRECTOR

In 2010, 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 recipients.

Mother Vincent Hennessy Foundation Scholarship

A \$1,500 scholarship is offered to a graduating senior from Wahlert Catholic High School in Dubuque, which the congregation supported since its inception in 1959. This year’s recipient, **Madelyn Mullen**, is honored for her dedicated service to others through her school, parish and the Dubuque community. Madelyn works as a certified nurse assistant at the Sisters of the Presentation, which has fostered her desire to pursue a career as a nurse.

Madelyn has shared her gifts as a minister of music, lector, eucharistic minister, altar server, retreat leader and vacation Bible school leader. In the wider community, she has served through various volunteer projects.

“From the moment you first meet with Maddy, you can already tell that she has a very kind and generous heart, and she shares this compassion both inside and outside of the classroom,” states Bailey Petersen, social studies teacher at Wahlert Catholic High School. “Maddy values volunteer work and giving back to our community, which further reinforces the compassion and care that she holds for others around her.”

In the fall, Madelyn plans to attend the University of Iowa, pursuing a career in nursing. While in college, she hopes to continue serving local parishes through music, her favorite form of prayer.

Nano Nagle College Scholarship

This \$1,500 scholarship, awarded to a student who models self-giving service, rotates among Iowa high schools where Presentation Sisters have ministered. This year’s scholarship is awarded to **Stephany Ronquillo-Contreras**, a student at Wahlert Catholic High School in Dubuque.

Her contributions to her community, parish and school serve as an outstanding example. Stephany is a conscientious student and a hard worker. Since the death of her father in 2016, she has strived to lighten the load of her hardworking mom. Stephany has worked since the age of 14 to help cover her own expenses and is currently employed at Mercy Hospital. Volunteer work is also a priority for her.

“While Stephany’s time and energy are pulled in many areas, she always makes a concerted effort to be of service,” shares Barbara Ressler, English teacher at Wahlert. “When there is a need she steps up.”

In the fall, Stephany will be attending Grinnell College. She is undecided on a major but knows she wants to do something to help people in the future. “I trust that God will guide me to find my purpose,” shares Stephany, “In my life, many people have been there to help me when I was at my lowest ... and I want nothing more than to pay their kindness forward.”

Presentation Mission Service Award

The Presentation Mission Service Award is offered to individuals committed to serving the Presentation mission who may otherwise be unable to afford a mission immersion experience locally, nationally or abroad.

This year’s recipient is **Grace Flemming**, a pre-med student at Loyola University of Chicago in Illinois, who works as a scribe in an emergency department. This \$2,000 award is presented to Grace for a second year as she continues to exemplify the Presentation mission through her service to others.

For the last couple years, Grace has traveled to San Pedro Laguna, Guatemala, as part of a medical outreach team



Stephany Ronquillo-Contreras



Madelyn Mullen



Grace Flemming

of Loyola students and faculty through the organization VAW Global Health Alliances. There, they provided free primary healthcare clinics, evaluations with physicians and prescription medication to citizens who didn't have access to such care. These trips have deeply affected Grace and solidified her choice to pursue medical school as an avenue for caring for vulnerable people such as those she met in Guatemala. In May, Grace will use these award funds to return to Guatemala where she will again offer care to persons made impoverished by unjust corrupt systems.

Grace feels she is called to provide not only medical care but respectful connections with persons she encounters. "I have always had a passion for social justice and strongly believe that all persons have the right to a high quality and happy life where they can exercise and reach their full potential," she expresses. "I am also a strong believer that one's health is the basis for quality of life, and every individual should be provided with the basic right of primary healthcare."

Presentation Associate Partnership Scholarships

Presentation associates contributed funds to offer scholarships to clients associated with the following ministries supported by the Sisters of the Presentation: La Luz Centro Cultural 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. Eight \$600 scholarships were awarded to assist individuals to further their education, to receive job training or to help with immigration/citizenship expenses. Congratulations to the following recipients!

Angelica Manzo – La Luz Centro Cultural

Angelica Manzo, a stay-at-home mother of three, is currently learning English to have better communication with her children, their school and potential job prospects.

Angelica says, "My dream is to finish my middle and high school education since I wasn't given the chance to do so when I was younger. I want to be able to at least get my CNA so I am able to help the rest of my family with the salary. I also want to completely dominate the English language so that I am able to work in better environments. This will also enable me to understand what my youngest daughter is learning in school and be able to help her with schoolwork. As my two older daughters grew up it has always been a struggle because whenever they had any school-related questions I could never give an answer due to me not finishing my education."



Angelica Manzo

Every opportunity I have received I have tried my best to make the most out of it, knowing that there is the chance that it is all I have left.

Marleth Mateo Salvador, Scholarship Recipient

Marleth Mateo Salvador – La Luz Centro Cultural

Marleth Mateo Salvador is a senior in high school from Tarecuato, Michoacan, Mexico. Marleth reflects, "Coming from a household where only my mother is legally 'allowed' to work can be difficult at times to be able to disburse the earnings for what is necessary for living. The uncertainty of not knowing if and for how long my dad can hold his employment is terrifying considering that is what supports our family." Marleth continues, "My brother, Francisco, and I help out with finances as much as we possibly can. He had to make the tough decision of discontinuing his college education to get a full-time job with my mother. When I had more availability I worked three jobs all at once and would struggle from time to time to find transportation because I did not have a car nor did I know how to drive. Every opportunity I have received I have tried my best to make the most out of it, knowing that there is the chance that it is all I have left."



Marleth Mateo Salvador

Monica Vela-Lopez – La Luz Centro Cultural

Monica Vela-Lopez is a senior in high school and the daughter of immigrants. She plans to use the funding to pay for a course in phlebotomy, for gas and for scrubs. Her hope for the future is to have a stable career and she feels phlebotomy is just the right path.

Valeria Gonzalez states in her letter of support, "Monica is the calm within the storm, and brings her relaxed personality and efforts to everything she sets her sights on. She will be a first-generation college student, paving the way as a role model for her younger brother Victor. Monica hopes to make her parents proud by continuing her education after high school and showing them that their efforts to offer a better life to their children were not in vain."



Monica Vela-Lopez

Fatima Lopez – HOME

Fatima Lopez is a first-generation nursing student pursuing a degree without family support. She was brought to the United States as very young child by her single mother. Fatima saved money two years after high school before she could even begin to apply to colleges. She plans to use the scholarship to pay for tuition and books for her education.



Fatima Lopez

Sister Paula Schwendinger expresses in her letter of support, "I have always been impressed with Fatima's desire to get ahead and achieve her goals. I know it has not been easy to forge ahead with no monetary support from her family. She has a lot of resilience and continues to pursue her dreams. I feel this scholarship will lift her up and enable her to know that she is important and her dreams are important as well."

Amsatou Diallo – Presentation Lantern Center

Amsatou Diallo, from Mali, West Africa, plans to enter the certified nurse assistant licensure program in May.



Amsatou Diallo

Amsatou states, "After completing that program, I plan on entering the LPN nursing program. I want a career in which I can help people through the medical profession. I am service-oriented and would find great hope and satisfaction by becoming a nurse. I want to create a safe and happy life for my daughter and me. She will have many opportunities in America including education and freedom. I am interested in gaining a career so I can contribute to goodness in my community and my world. I can be a better role model for my daughter in America."

Phyo Ko Ko – Presentation Lantern Center

Phyo Ko Ko is from Myanmar/Burma and attends college in Iowa. His parents remain in his home country with his siblings. Phyo explains that his country is under the control of a military regime and is unstable. He states, "I hope to graduate, making my parents proud. I want to have a home, a job and be a good citizen. I want to help people like I have been helped."



Phyo Ko Ko

Deborah Adams, Phyo's tutor, describes him, stating, "Phyo is a diligent student. He is resilient and

optimistic for his future. He attends class, goes to work every day after class and returns to his dorm to study into the early morning hours. He has a gift for mathematics and is interested in having his own business someday. I support Phyo for this scholarship. I witness his significant effort to his studies and work."

Than San – Presentation Lantern Center

Than San is a college student in Iowa who calls Myanmar/Burma home. After the fourth military coup in his home country, Than's parents wanted him to leave Myanmar to pursue an education.



Than San

Suzanne Rubenbauer, Than's tutor, describes him as a kind and earnest young man, thoughtful in his speech and actions towards those around him. She states, "Than's workload is tremendous.

Besides being a full-time college student, he also works during the week and weekend to meet his financial obligations. Somehow he manages to juggle both of these necessary responsibilities. There are times when I know he is exhausted, but he does not complain. Instead he carries on with a dedication to his education that is remarkable."

I hope to graduate, making my parents proud. I want to have a home, a job and be a good citizen. I want to help people like I have been helped.

Phyo Ko Ko, Scholarship Recipient

Win Htet – Presentation Lantern Center

Win Htet is the third scholarship recipient who came to the United States for college because his family experienced civil war in his home country of Myanmar/Burma. Win, a full-time college student, works 16 hours a week to help pay his school fees.

Win's tutor, Kristin Largen, describes Win as upbeat, friendly, smart and determined. Kristin says, "Win loves his courses, works extremely hard and makes sure his studies are his first priority. He knows his education is his path to economic stability and vocational success, and he is determined to make the most of it."



Win Htet



Presentation Sisters, associates and friends join others in Dubuque to use their public voice to demand an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, a release of all captives - both Israeli and Palestinian - and an end to Israel's military occupation of Palestine. The Sisters of the Presentation seek a ceasefire because of the Gospel call to seek peace and end violence whenever and wherever we can.

Educator, Advocate, Visionary Role of a Justice Promoter

by MAURA MCCARTHY, PBVM

Justice promoters within religious organizations play a pivotal role in advancing the institution's commitment to social justice and advocacy. Their work involves raising awareness about issues of injustice and inequality, both locally and globally, and mobilizing the community to take action.

The work of justice promoters is multifaceted, encompassing education, advocacy, community organizing and outreach. Their efforts are guided by the principles of Catholic social teaching and the mission of their religious organization to work towards a more just and equitable society.

The Presentation commitment to justice is deeply woven into the very essence of the charism of the Sisters of the Presentation, emphasized in the community's mission statement which challenges members to incarnate the hospitality of God, confront injustice and work for peace. Their apostolic spirituality includes prayer and action on behalf of the poor. Presentation foundress Nano Nagle's call to conversion, service and prophetic witness is also our call. Working for justice and peace is a constitutive dimension of proclaiming the Gospel.

The role of a justice promoter has been instrumental in advancing the mission of the Dubuque Sisters of the Presentation in their pursuit of justice. Often serving as educators, justice promoters provide resources and organize events to deepen the community's understanding of social justice issues. Discussions and workshops are facilitated focusing on topics such as poverty, human rights, environmental stewardship and peacebuilding.

Additionally, justice promoters engage in advocacy efforts, lobbying policymakers and advocating for systemic change to address root causes of injustice. This often involves writing letters, participating in public demonstrations and collaborating with other organizations and coalitions working towards similar goals to amplify their impact.

Over the years, several sisters have served as the community's justice promoter, empowering the community to deepen their understanding of social justice issues and actively engage in efforts to address them.

Sisters Ruth Mary Cassel and Lynn Marie Fangman, among others, were part of the World Vision Committee. This group studied local and world justice issues and endeavored to address these matters. Sister Richelle Friedman, who worked as a justice lobbyist in Washington, D.C., frequently contacted this committee about urgent justice issues in this country. The committee often summoned sisters at Mount Loretto and local community members to contact lawmakers urging them to make policy changes.

Sisters Joetta Venneman and Irma Ries became contact justice persons, while continuing their full-time ministry, also coordinating with the International Presentation Association and with the Dubuque Presentation Sisters, associates and partners in mission. These justice contacts expanded into a justice promoters team, a group of visionaries and planners comprised of Presentation Sisters and associates who would positively impact the justice efforts of the Presentation Sisters.

Sisters Elena Hoye, Marge Healy and Joy Peterson became the justice point persons while serving on the Presentation leadership team. In 2017, Sister Joy was named to full-

time work in a newly-formed role as justice promoter for the community. She was succeeded by Sister Marge, who assumed the office for a year and a half after her return from Bolivia.

With abundant anticipation and enthusiasm, Dave McDermott was recently welcomed into this position. Dave expresses his appreciation for this opportunity. Dave spent the last 18 years between leading the Fr. Ray Herman Center for Peace and Justice at Loras College and directing faith formation at St. Anthony Parish, both in Dubuque.



Dave McDermott

"My journey into the work of justice promotion started as a realization that living my Catholic faith necessarily meant that I work for a more just and equitable world. That conviction led me to the Catholic Worker movement and teachings of Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin which continue to shape my thoughts on the right ordering of society. The first tenet of Catholic social teaching speaks to the life and dignity of every human being and my work for justice always ties directly to wherever life and dignity are being withheld," expresses Dave. "I am so grateful to be in the position of justice promoter with the Sisters of the Presentation. My first months here have been filled with countless opportunities to learn from the collective wisdom of the community. I am humbled to add my bit of labor to the 150 years of this community's work toward justice."

With deep gratitude, we remember those who prophetically led us to this new era and those who will lead us into the future as we continue to seek peace and justice for all.

Prophetic Pathways Toward Justice

The pursuit of justice is not the task of a single individual; it is a collective effort that requires the engagement and collaboration of an entire community. While individuals may initiate and coordinate advocacy efforts, addressing systemic injustices demands the involvement of all members. Many prophetic paths have been taken by various sisters throughout the years in responding to injustices. The listing below attempts to highlight some of these pathways.

- Began a major pastoral planning process centered around reaching the needs of the world to prepare prophetic strategies.
- Committed to the needy and marginalized of society and to the ecological needs of the world with equitable distribution of resources.
- Took on new initiatives among the poor urged by the World Vision Committee.
- International Presentation Association attained status in Economic and Social Council at the United Nations to advocate for equity.
- Conducted immersion experiences in El Paso and the Rio Grande Valley, Texas, and into Mexico.
- Advocated lawmakers for systemic change through NETWORK, the McAuley Institute, Children's Defense Fund and the Coalition on Human Needs in Washington, D.C.
- Ministered to immigrants and migrants in Florida and later rural Iowa through Hispanic Outreach Ministry of Evangelization (HOME). Accounts of the journeys and challenges endured by immigrants and asylum seekers in the United States were published.
- Lived and worked among the Appalachian poor in Tennessee.
- A peace pole on the Mount Loretto property was created in several languages stating: "May peace prevail on Earth."
- Weekly demonstrations for peace and nonviolence took place.
- Joined other religious congregations in making a public statement of opposition to the war in the Persian Gulf.
- Accompanied the Guaraní people of Bolivia as the Guaraní People's Assembly liberated themselves from peonage, and increased production, infrastructure, health, education and territory.
- Accompanied the Quiche people of Guatemala in Chupol and the surrounding area in their struggle for a better life.
- Taught and provided support at an underprivileged school in Arizona staffed by Presentation Sisters from Ireland.
- Served the mentally and physically challenged in foster care at La Posada del Valle in San Juan, Texas, and continued to serve the dying in hospice care in the Rios Grand Valley.
- Began advocating on issues from the Catholic social teaching perspective at the federal, state and local levels, paying special attention to leading justice issues.
- Volunteered and taught at a needy school in San Antonio, Texas.
- Taught at St. Francis School for exceptional children in Illinois.
- Provided new border experiences, offering education on the plight of the immigrants and theological reflection.
- Worked with the Mercy Affordable Housing Ministry in Dubuque, creating new housing projects and affordable apartments for low-income families.
- Coordinated parish life and service groups in Oglala, in the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation of South Dakota, and accompanied the indigenous people, even surviving a devastating tornado.
- Offered prison ministry in Florida and Minnesota.
- Worked in shelters, latch key programs, teen centers, affordable housing and job training in Muscatine, Iowa.
- Directed an afterschool program and other assistances for students at Okolona, Mississippi.
- Offered multiple services to the Latino population of Dubuque centered at St. Patrick Church.
- Assisted the preparation of women religious leaders in Tanzania, East Africa.
- Administered the inner-city food pantry at St. James Parish in inner city Chicago.
- Established the Presentation Lantern Center in Dubuque to offer hospitality, English language learning, citizenship classes and a multitude of other services. Retired Presentation sisters, associates and others offered their well-developed teaching skills and hundreds of donated hours as tutors.



Left to right: Sister Rita Menart accompanied the Quiche people of Guatemala in Chupol and the surrounding area giving formation to the Christian base communities; Sisters Dolores Moes, Bernard Mauss and Mary Jo Leifker promoted peace and nonviolence during weekly demonstrations; Sister Mary Dennis Lentsch protested the violation of the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty by the U.S. government with an act of civil disobedience at the Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

- Protested the violation of the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty by the U.S. government with an act of civil disobedience at the Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, followed by months of prison time in Lexington, Kentucky. The line at the School of the Americas (known as the School of Assassins) was crossed protesting the formation of brutal Latin American dictators.
- Adopted the Earth Charter, with principles for justice and peace, a global society and encompassing the needs of Earth.
- Justice promoters from each Presentation congregation worldwide met in Cebu City of the Philippines to coordinate justice work among countries and continents.
- Prepared young African Americans to be future food service chefs and entrepreneurs at Café Reconcile in New Orleans, Louisiana.
- Joined Presentation Conference members to respond to homelessness after the Katrina flooding in New Orleans and collaborated on the joint mission of the Lantern Light Ministry.
- Began receiving homeless women and children at Hotel Hope in New Orleans and assisting them to resilience and home independence. Service trips to Lantern Light and Hotel Hope began, heightening awareness of the painful realities of women, children and men and fostered ongoing relationships.
- Made connections to services for unattended needs of immigrants of Central Iowa through an outreach program of Mercy Hospital in Mason City, Iowa.
- Supervised schools for a very diverse population in Birmingham, Alabama, including upgrading curriculums for schools in need.
- Facilitated collaborative efforts among the six local congregations of women religious to address immigration issues as well as care of creation. These congregations participated in the United Nations Climate Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 2009.
- Directed St. Pius X Parish's Social Justice Outreach recuperation efforts from the major flood in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 2008, obtaining donations and grants for attending to food, water, clothing and all basic needs of the hundreds of persons affected.
- Joined the Tri-state Coalition Against Human Trafficking to alert bus drivers, law-enforcement, social workers, county attorneys, mayors, business owners and others to discover and capture traffickers and then provide recovery services. The coalition began to educate sisters, associates and the public and train hotel personnel, law enforcement and companies on how to apprehend traffickers.
- Began serving Hispanic immigrants in Mason City, Iowa; Caminando Juntos in South Dakota, and established La Luz Hispana, a welcoming and educational center in Hampton, Iowa.
- Volunteered to help asylum seekers in El Paso and Kino to legally reach friends and family members.
- Met with the tri-state congregational justice promoters to coordinate justice efforts in the area.
- Established the Laudato Sí Committee, inviting sisters and associates to respond to the cries of the earth and the poor, adopt sustainable lifestyles and become empowered.
- Established the Land Justice Committee to look at restoration and reparations around land issues.



In Loving Memory Sister Mary Karen Jasper

March 15, 1936 – November 25, 2023

Sister Karen Jasper was known for her unwavering dedication to serving others with compassion and love. Sister Karen was the second youngest of eight children, deeply rooted in the rural community of Farley, Iowa.

From a young age, Sister Karen felt called to religious life, inspired by her sister, Emma, who became Sister Philip. Sister Karen entered the Presentation Sisters in September 1953. Her education included a bachelor's degree in natural sciences from Clarke College and a master's degree in biology from the University of Notre Dame. For years, she dedicated herself to education, serving as both teacher and principal in various Catholic schools across Iowa.

Sister Karen's commitment to her ministry extended beyond the classroom. Her passion for caring for others led her to a new role in healthcare at Mount Loretto, where she provided compassionate support and pastoral care to her elderly Presentation Sisters. She meticulously attended to the needs of her sisters, fostering a warm and nurturing environment that provided comfort and solace to those in her care. Sister Karen's love for her sisters shone brightly, as she tirelessly advocated for their well-being and ensured they felt cherished and cared for. Recognized for her leadership and dedication, Sister Karen's impact on the healthcare community was profound.

In her own words, Sister Karen saw her ministry as a continuation of Nano Nagle's legacy, bringing comfort and healing to those in need and allowing Jesus' presence to be felt through her compassionate care.



In Loving Memory Sister Mary Jeanine Kuhn

July 1, 1937 – March 23, 2024

Sister Jeanine Kuhn was a devoted spiritual director whose life was a testament to service and faith. She dedicated over six decades to the Sisters of the Presentation, leaving an indelible mark on countless lives through her commitment to God and community.

Throughout her life, Sister Jeanine exemplified the spirit of Nano Nagle, embracing her call to serve. Her journey of faith led her through various ministries, from teaching and administration to pastoral care and spiritual direction. She approached each role with enthusiasm and a welcoming heart, embodying the essence of hospitality in her interactions with others.

One of Sister Jeanine's significant contributions was her ministry as the administrator of the American Martyrs Retreat House in Cedar Falls, Iowa, from 1997 to 2012. Under her guidance, the retreat house flourished as a haven for spiritual renewal, welcoming thousands seeking solace and guidance on their spiritual journeys. Her vision provided a nurturing space where individuals could encounter the presence of God amidst the beauty of nature.

Sister Jeanine's impact extended to students at the University of Northern Iowa offering spiritual direction in the Cedar Falls/Waterloo area. Her genuine care and guidance touched the lives of many, inspiring them to deepen their relationship with God and live out their faith in meaningful ways. Her legacy of hospitality, kindness and compassion will continue to resonate within the hearts of those she served.



In Loving Memory Sister Mary Jeanette McCarthy

August 9, 1938 – April 8, 2024

Sister Jeanette McCarthy's life was marked by an steadfast commitment to faith, service and companionship. Entering the Sisters of the Presentation on September 8, 1957, Sister Jeanette embarked on a remarkable 66-year journey of religious life, during which she touched countless lives through her ministries and dedication. She professed her perpetual vows on August 22, 1965, solidifying her commitment to a life of service and compassion.

Throughout her life, Sister Jeanette was defined by her boundless energy, enthusiasm and deep-rooted faith. From her early years growing up on a farm in western Iowa to her extensive educational pursuits, Sister Jeanette demonstrated a relentless pursuit of knowledge and a passion for serving others.

Sister Jeanette's ministries spanned various communities across Iowa and Texas, where she served as a teacher, pastoral minister, parish music coordinator and director of Hispanic ministry. Her dedication to serving the Hispanic community was particularly notable, as she worked tirelessly to meet their spiritual, social and emotional needs.

Known for her energy and enthusiasm, Sister Jeanette's presence lit up any room she entered. Whether leading Spanish hymns at Mass, organizing community celebrations or advocating for those in need, her commitment to making a difference was evident in every aspect of her life. In her leisure time, Sister Jeanette enjoyed a myriad of hobbies, including photography, playing the guitar, sewing and exploring her family's genealogy. Her zest for life and genuine curiosity about the world around her endeared her to all who knew her.

What is a Donor Advised Fund?

How can you increase your giving power and have more to give to charity? Set up a donor-advised fund account as a simple investment solution for charitable giving.

A donor-advised fund is a tax-smart way to manage giving because you can:

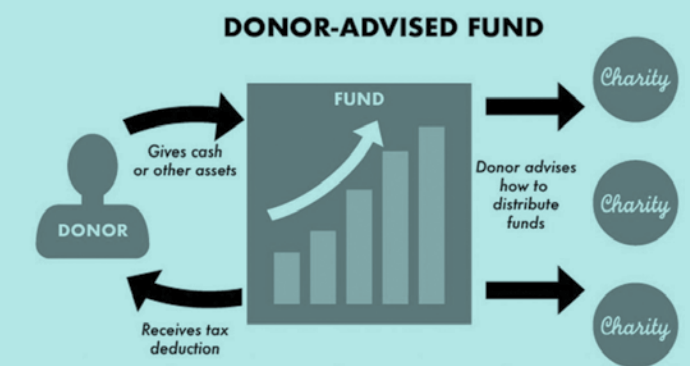
- Contribute cash, appreciated assets or investments that have been held for more than a year without paying capital gains taxes.
- Contribute to your account and grant to charity at any time, not just at year-end.

You set up a donor-advised fund with your investment agency and contribute cash, securities or appreciated assets. You will be eligible for a current-year tax deduction and can be more strategic about your giving decisions.

For more information on donor-advised funds, contact Karen Tuecke, partners in mission coordinator, at 563-588-2008 ext. 109 or partnersinmission@dbqpbvms.org.

A donor-advised fund, or DAF, is like a charitable investment account for the sole purpose of supporting charitable organizations you care about.

fidelitycharitable.org



Read more about Sisters Karen, Jeanine and Jeanette at dbqpbvms.org/news-events/obituaries.



Left to right: Presentation associates and employees, Radie Roberts, Carol Wyatt, Judy Zahren-Kalb, John Richman and Karen Freiburger, haul cut branches and rake up leaves, small twigs and pine needles; Earth Day volunteers began their day with prayer and an explanation of efforts to make the Mount Loretto grounds friendlier to pollinators. Front row: Sister Janet Stelken, Lindsey Gapinski, Karen Freiburger, Carrie Breitbach and Sister Beth Driscoll. Back row: Beth O'Connell, Radie Roberts, Jean Lange, Jeff Lange, Sister Rita Waters, Sister Marge Healy, Dianne McDermott, Sister Rita Cameron and Randy Engler; Employees Lindsey Gapinski and Megan Lucas smile as they haul branches out of the woods near the lake at Mount Loretto.

Celebrating Earth Day

On April 22, Presentation Sisters, associates and staff gathered to join in a day filled with purpose, camaraderie and meaningful environmental action. Eager volunteers showed up ready to roll up their sleeves and make a difference. From gardening gloves to sturdy footwear, volunteers came prepared, ensuring both safety and efficiency in their endeavors.

Split into two shifts, the morning and afternoon sessions each offered unique opportunities to engage with nature and contribute to conservation efforts. For those who joined the early shift, the morning was spent immersed in various projects aimed at enhancing the natural beauty of the Mount Loretto grounds. From trimming trees to planting seedlings, picking up branches to clearing paths, every task was undertaken with enthusiasm and dedication.

Volunteers arriving for the afternoon shift were greeted with a warm welcome and a shared meal before tackling similar projects. Mother Nature smiled upon the day, granting participants clear skies and gentle breezes to accompany their efforts.

One participant remarks, "There's an undeniable joy that comes from working together for a common cause, especially when that cause involves caring for Earth. It was fulfilling to experience the power of community and the tangible impact we can make when we unite in carrying out the Presentation commitment of caring for creation.

"This experience reaffirmed my belief in the power of collective action to effect positive change. Together, we can build a more sustainable future," shares another participant.

As the day drew to a close, volunteers gathered to reflect on their accomplishments of a job well done and the joy of the shared experience. They departed carrying forward the spirit of Earth Day in the words of Pope Francis:

All-loving God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.

Mount Loretto AND BEYOND

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



Celebrating Sister Damian's 104th Birthday

On March 30, Sister Damian O'Brien celebrated her 104th birthday! Yep 104!! She's not just a year older, but a year more fabulous and inspiring. Sister Damian's love, kindness and laughter has left a lasting impact on countless lives who are blessed to know her. The Dubuque community celebrated Sister Damian with a delicious lunch, a birthday cake and celebratory yard sign.



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

FOLLOW US @DBQPBVMS | WWW.DBQPBVMS.ORG



Contact Sister Jessi Beck at vocations@dbqpbvms.org

PLEASE CONNECT WITH US.

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

PLEASE PRAY WITH US.

July 17, 2024

50th Jubilee Celebration
Sister Gina Marie Foletta

60th Jubilee Celebration

Sister Diana Blong
Sister Cheryl Demmer
Sister Richelle Friedman
Sister Suzanne Gallagher
Sister Elena Hoye
Sister Beth Kress
Sister Corine Murray
Sister Pamela Quade

July 18-21, 2024

Community Gathering

21st of each month

Pray for Vocations

25th of each month

Pray for Benefactors



SISTERS
 OF THE PRESENTATION
of the Blessed Virgin Mary
 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 @DBQPBMVS



WWW.DBQPBMVS.ORG

“

**The future is made of you,
 it is made of encounters, because
 life flows through our relations with others.
 Life is not merely time passing by,
 life is about interactions.**

Pope Francis

”

Because of the ongoing support of you, our partners, we have been able to help many people through presence, service, hospitality and support who would not otherwise have received assistance. We simply could not do the work we do without your partnership and prayers.

If you have not received the mailed 2023 Annual Report sent in March 2024 and would like to receive one, contact:

Karen Tuecke
Partners in Mission Coordinator
563-588-2008 ext. 109
partnersinmission@dbqpbvms.org

Thank you again for your contributions, continuous support and for trusting us to be good stewards of your generosity.

You can also download an electronic copy at dbqpbvms.org/give-back/annual-reports.

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



A Living Experience

We, Sisters of the Presentation, are rich examples of our communal call to live radical hospitality. We find joy in community living, deep prayer and living in service to our mission, continuing to make life meaningful for ourselves and for others. A common thread that runs through our lived experiences is a desire to joyfully go where need calls most loudly.