



# PRESENTATION DOORWAYS

*offering hospitality to the world*



# The COMMITTEE

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY by the  
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*The congregation is a member of Catholic Sisters of  
the Upper Mississippi River Valley, Communicators  
for Women Religious and the American Advertising  
Federation of Dubuque.*

# The PURPOSE

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

# Your THOUGHTS & COMMENTS

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

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# Cover PHOTOS

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

# PRESENTATION DOORWAYS

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## Cover PHOTO

Presentation associates from the group Nano's Neighbors recently completed a project called Covers for Comfort, which provides soft, colorful fleece blankets for hospital patients who have long-term stays. Left to right: Back row: Michelle Covey, Karen Freiburger, Clara Ernst, Jeff and Jean Lange, Sister Benjamin Duschner and Mary Lou Mauss. Front row: Darlene Richard, Sister Mary Louann Doering, Betty Allen. Not pictured Helen Thielen.

# A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

*Openings*

by LEANNE WELCH, PBVM

## Engaging Contemplation

The seasons of Advent and Christmas provide good opportunities for reflection on an important aspect of our Directional Statement – engaging contemplation.

Mary shows us the way to integrate contemplation and action. As Pope Francis says in *Joy of the Gospel*, “Mary is able to recognize the traces of God’s spirit in events great and small. She constantly contemplates the mystery of God in our world, in human history and in our daily lives. She is a woman of prayer and work in Nazareth and she is also Our Lady of Help, who sets out from her town ‘with haste’ (*Lk 1:39*) to be of service to others.” (#288) Our foundress, Venerable Nano Nagle, modeled contemplative living as she served the poor of Cork, Ireland.

As we walk with the challenge of balancing contemplation and action in our lives, perhaps three themes common to a number of spiritual writers may be helpful:

### *Sabbath: “Be still and know that I am God.” Psalm 46:10*

Pope Francis states in *Laudato Si*: “... Sabbath is meant to be a day which heals our relationships with God, with ourselves, with others and with the world ... And so the day of rest, centered on the Eucharist, sheds its light on the whole week, and motivates us to greater concern for nature and the poor.” (#237) Spending time in solitude and/or prayer, relaxing with loved ones, reading, renewing – all examples of ways to “keep the Sabbath” – allow us to go deeper in our relationship with the Lord and each other. Venerable Nano found her way to “keep the Sabbath” as she spent time in prayer in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament and with her sisters at meals and recreation. If each of us finds our own way to “keep the Sabbath,” we will learn more about ourselves, our God and our work.

**Reflection:** *How does the gift of Sabbath refresh my soul?*

### *Compassion: “Whenever you did it to one of these, you did it to me.” Matthew 25:40*

Compassion literally means “to suffer together.” This mystery of God’s merciful love is what drew Nano to those made poor by the systems of the day. She saw them in a new light – as children loved by God. This experience of God’s merciful love compelled her to reach out to those who did not experience God’s love and light. We, as Presentation people, strive to follow her example as we commit to Pope Francis’ call to live into a Year of Mercy.

**Reflection:** *How will my call to compassion be enriched by the Year of Mercy which began December 8, 2015?*

### *Gratitude: “In everything give thanks.” 1 Thessalonians 5:18*

Giving thanks for the many riches of each day helps keep life in perspective. At times our troubles and challenges can be many, yet so are our blessings. It may be helpful to recognize for what we are grateful, acknowledge it and appreciate it. One day, a 20-year-old student came to me after a class on conscience. I had mentioned beginning a daily examen by naming all the good deeds one had done that day and all the blessings of the day – and then to say thanks. He said “I don’t think I’ll ever be religious, but this is good – I’m learning a lot. Thank you.” Recognized. Acknowledged. Appreciated. Both he and I could give thanks. As Father Richard Rohr, OFM, states “Our job is simply to thank God for being part of it all and allow it to happen ... We are in this together as the living body of God. All we can do is accept and give thanks.”

**Reflection:** *How do I recognize, acknowledge and appreciate the blessings of each day?*

Mary and Nano lived contemplatively by engaging in Sabbath, being compassionate and having a grateful heart. As we walk in their footsteps, how do we engage contemplation?



## Our MISSION

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

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

## Our DIRECTION

Ignited by the fire of God’s love and impelled by the legacy of Nano Nagle, we, the Sisters of the Presentation of Dubuque, participate in the evolving consciousness of the cosmos by

**reverencing relationships**  
**celebrating unity**  
**engaging contemplation and**  
**fostering partnerships**

to transform ourselves and our world.

### Sisters of the Presentation LEADERSHIP TEAM

Sister Julianne Brockamp

Sister Beth Driscoll

Sister Ann Jackson

Sister Leanne Welch



Sister Rita Cameron loves her grandma time with her granddaughter, Sophia.

# SISTER RITA CAMERON Mother, Grandmother, Sister

by FRANCINE QUILLIN, PBVM

“Oh, good! Sister Rita’s grandchildren are here today!” exclaims one of the sisters.

“Grandchildren?” questions a visitor. “I thought sisters never got married, much less had grandchildren.”

Well, that would be a most reasonable response, because normally that is the case. But Sister Rita Cameron is not a “run-of-the-mill” sister from any perspective.

Rita Julson was born and raised in Aberdeen, South Dakota, middle child of Leslie and Mercedes Julson. Her father farmed and managed grain elevators, so they moved around the area a bit, and thus Rita and her two sisters, Leslie Ann and Sue, attended small schools where they were living.

After high school, Rita attended Northern State University in Aberdeen, earning a bachelor’s of science in music education, and meeting her future husband at a dance. It was fortuitous that both Rita and Bruce Cameron loved to dance, because they married after graduation!

For about 20 years, while Bruce farmed, Rita taught K-12 music in a district near Aberdeen. Meanwhile, she earned her MA in guidance and counseling from Northern State University. Bruce and Rita had two children, JoAnn and Robert. Most unfortunately, Bruce died in 1986, leaving Rita to raise her children alone. Rita taught music in South Dakota until 1994.

In 1994, Rita’s sister, Sue, suggested to Rita that a move might be good for her, and told her there was an opening for a guidance counselor at Newman High School in Mason City, where Sue lived. Rita was ready and accepted that position at Newman, where she remained until 2002.

Since the Presentation Sisters staffed that high school, Rita came to know them well, and frequently visited the convent where she also met the sisters who taught at St. Joseph Grade School. She observed the sustaining prayer life of this community and their great capacity to have fun together. They were also hospitable, so Rita was often invited to do things with them.

Rita began reflecting on all of this, and she questioned herself: “What if I became a sister?” She reasoned that her children were adults “on their way” in life. And indeed they were supportive. Well, with one qualification: Robert, then 21 and in the service overseas, asked, “What on Earth do I tell my friends!?” But JoAnn, with the voice of reason, commented that her mother had spent her life taking care of them, with very little time for herself, so now it was time for her to take care of herself and to do what would make her happy in the rest of her life. The only person who was a little disappointed was her aunt who, as it happened, was a member of the Sisters of the Presentation in Aberdeen. Her disappointment is more than understandable, but it was mitigated by the fact that they were now both daughters of Nano Nagle, and the two communities often shared meetings and other events.

So Rita began the process of formation, entering the Presentation community in Dubuque in 2002. As it happened, there were no other women entering the community that year, so Rita was alone in her formation process. But two Franciscan Sisters became her fast friends when they all attended inter-community formation events. During her formation years, Rita ministered as a guidance counselor at Wahlert High School in Dubuque. After she made her first vows in 2005, she began music ministry at St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa.

Sister Rita made her final vows in 2008 and in 2010 she was invited to begin vocation ministry for the Presentation community, a position she still holds. She has been an active member of the Dubuque Area Vocation Association (DAVA), and has been its facilitator for two years. Sister Rita also volunteers at the Dubuque Food Pantry, working with Lynn Mary Wagner, who is the director of that facility.

Sister Rita is a joy-filled woman with an even spirit for whatever arises in her life. Partly that is because she loves people,



Dubuque Area Vocation Association (DAVA) members: Father Nam Vu, Sister Kathy Carr, BVM, Father Adam MacDonald, Len Uhal and Sister Rita Cameron.

interacting with them, learning from them, hearing their stories and appreciating how they got to where they are today. Additionally, she loves woodworking, restoring old furniture to new life and she is very skilled at this hobby. Finally, she loves any kind of music – and dancing! A well-rounded person indeed!

Sister’s life is highlighted by going to see her son’s two children in Mason City, and her daughter’s three children in Michigan. But the sisters like it even better when they come to Mount Loretto!

Never were words more true than are these from Sister Rita, who summarizes her life saying, “I have had the best of both worlds.” And there are two children and five grandchildren, many students, and all the Sisters of the Presentation who concur. All have been blessed by her presence and are thankful she asked that question of herself many years ago: “What if I became a sister?”

## Discernment/Service Trip to New Orleans

The Sisters of the Presentation offer a week-long service trip opportunity in New Orleans, Louisiana, for women who are interested in:

- Deepening their service involvement
- Discovering more about themselves
- Discerning where God is calling them

**Saturday, March 12 - Saturday, March 19, 2016**

Service will include helping at the Rebuild Center and Hotel Hope, centers for the homeless. Travel and housing accommodations will be provided.

**Contact Sister Rita Cameron for more information.**  
vocations@dubuquepresentations.org  
563-588-2008

**Registration due by March 1, 2016.**



Sister Annette Kestel blesses Mary Therese Krueger during her Rite of Initiation into the Sisters of the Presentation community.

## RITE OF INITIATION

# Sister Mary Therese Krueger

by JANE BUSE

Mary Therese Krueger, of Chicago, Illinois, was received into the Sisters of the Presentation community on Saturday, October 3, during the Rite of Initiation, which begins her novitiate journey.

Companioning Mary Therese through her formation process, Sister Annette Kestel gave witness to Mary Therese's commitment to religious life. "I have had the privilege of journeying with Mary Therese for the past 10 months," states Sister Annette. "In my time with Mary Therese thus far, I have personally witnessed her deep desire to learn about and engage in the life of our Presentation community in the areas of prayer, community living, mission and ministry."

Mary Therese Krueger truly believes God drew her to religious life. "The life of service, the love, the joy, and the gift of presence from the sisters I have met, especially the Presentation Sisters, drew me to discern this call to religious life. I first became acquainted with the Presentation Sisters through Sister Rita Cameron during college; however I became truly drawn to the Sisters of the

**I truly believe God drew me to religious life. The life of service, the love, the joy, and the gift of presence from the sisters I have met, especially the Presentation Sisters, drew me to discern this call to religious life.**

*Sister Mary Therese Krueger*

Presentations after a service discernment trip to New Orleans. The hospitality, love and gift of being present to each person they encountered opened my eyes to a new way of service. The ministry the sisters are involved in and the relationships they form truly embrace their charism of love and hospitality."

Mary Therese continues, "I am energized to be part of a group of people who live to serve and love God, committing their lives to social justice and making the world a more loving place to live."



Mary Therese (second from left) has grown through her experiences of living in community in Chicago with (left to right) Sisters Jessi Beck, Marilyn Breen and Janet Stelken. Mary Therese and these sisters embody the charism of hospitality through their welcoming of dinner and overnight guests.

"Mary Therese has entered whole heartedly into communal and personal prayer," affirms Sister Annette. "Her experiences of community prayer have helped her deepen relationships with the sisters in her local community and to discover new forms of prayer. Mary Therese has made the time and space daily to grow in her personal prayer and through retreat and spiritual direction. She desires to grow deeper in her love for God and for all of creation and to discern God's call in her life."

Mary Therese is the third of six daughters of Ann and James Krueger of Villa Park, Illinois. She attended St. Alexander Catholic Grade School and Willowbrook High School. Mary Therese received her BS degree in Exercise Science and Doctorate in Physical Therapy from St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa. Currently, she is a physical therapist at Advocate Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn, and taking a graduate class at Catholic Theological Union in Hyde Park, both in Illinois. In addition, Mary Therese is on the core team for The Mustard Seed, a young adult ministry group in the Joliet Diocese, participates and assists with various service opportunities and recently completed the Chicago Marathon.

Mary Therese looks forward to continuing her journey of discernment with the Sisters of the Presentation. "I hope to receive the gift of grace and understanding of the religious life, community and the world around us. I'm excited to become a novice with the Presentation Sisters, being able to grow in faith and love. I am learning how the community and my life come together to discover how we are gifts to each other."

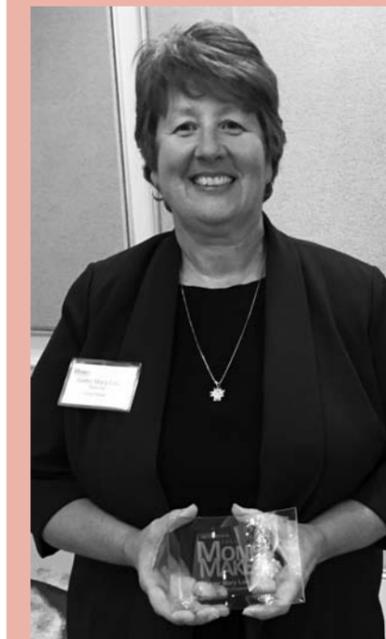
## Fundraising for a Cause

# Hotel Hope

*Adapted from the New Orleans City Business Money Makers*

When Sister Mary Lou Specha reached out to the philanthropic community to raise money that would help local women and children in New Orleans, she was overwhelmed by the flood of generosity. Recently Sister Mary Lou Specha was recognized with the 2015 Money Makers award from the New Orleans City Business, which honors exceptional financial professionals who go above and beyond the call of duty.

Sister Mary Lou was able to raise \$1.2 million over the past year to turn an old convent on South Broad Street in New Orleans, Louisiana, into Hotel Hope, an emergency shelter for women and children who are homeless or experiencing a housing crisis.



Sister Mary Lou Specha accepts the 2015 Money Makers award by the New Orleans City Business, which honors local professionals for financial achievements and their community impact.

The old convent, built in 1960, was destroyed during Hurricane Katrina and has sat blighted for 10 years. Hotel Hope has an arrangement with the archdiocese to rent the building long term and renovate it. A \$1.2 million renovation will get underway this fall and the shelter will open sometime in early 2016.

Hotel Hope will have space for 40 guests that stay an average of 30 days. After that, the shelter helps them find an apartment or house.

"People have been extremely generous for this cause, which God has called me to oversee, so others can find a better way in life," states Sister Mary Lou, executive director of Hotel Hope. "I love meeting women and children, telling their stories and asking people to invest in solving this problem. No one wants to see vulnerable women and children living in blighted houses."

Although Hotel Hope raised enough money to complete renovations, they still need to raise \$555,000 to \$600,000 for the first year of operating funds.

"Raising money is a challenge, but I'm excited because of what we can do for local families," expresses Sister. "We're all about helping them get back on their feet."

"My biggest challenge is advocating for the bigger picture," continues Sister Mary Lou. "How do we overcome generational poverty that has been crippling our country for years? Economically in this environment, it's hard. People making \$7.25 an hour have to work 100 hours a week to afford a two-bedroom home in New Orleans, so placing people in homes they can afford and keep is a huge challenge."



Associate Joann Gullickson (far left back row) is energized and inspired by her associate group, Nano's Nine. Pictured: Back row: Joann, Dawn Olberding, Sister Lynn Fangman, Mary Drees and Sharon Loeffelholz; Front row: Sister Carmen Hernandez, Darla Budden, Delynn Fangman and Deb McClimon.

## Impelled by the Legacy of Nano Nagle

# Presentation Associates

by CAROL WITRY, ASSOCIATE PARTNERSHIP CO-DIRECTOR

Decades ago, after an evening out in Paris, a young woman's life was forever changed when she recognized simply and profoundly that the poor are Christ. What a startling and life-changing realization for young Nano Nagle! From that day forward, alleviating the misery she experienced in the lanes of Cork, Ireland, became her life's mission. Over 240 years later, Nano's legacy endures in the hearts and lives of thousands who seek to bring the light of Christ to all, especially those in need.

Associate Joann Gullickson is one of many who are inspired by Nano's mission of care for the poor and marginalized. Sharing her skills from a former career, Joann serves as volunteer bookkeeper for La Luz Hispana, a Presentation mission in Hampton, Iowa, offering hospitality and space for Hispanic people to share and develop their strengths. "Serving La Luz Hispana is a real blessing to me," states Joann. "I'm motivated to follow in Nano's footsteps by the commitment of the sisters and the courage and persistence in the face of adversity that I experience in those who are served."

Joann and her husband, Lee, also share in Nano's mission through their work as coordinators of their parish marriage preparation ministry. "Nano was all about helping families and children. We hope to do the same by working to nurture the growth and development of good marriages."

Commenting on the need for encouragement and companions on the journey, Joann notes, "Both my husband and my associate group greatly support me as I try to follow in the footsteps of Nano and Jesus. Whether it's working with my associate group on the annual Presentation spring garage sale or sharing faith as we study Pope Francis' book, *The Church of Mercy*, my own faith is nurtured by the group's energy and enthusiasm for service to others. It has helped me to focus my retirement time in a more purpose-filled and life-giving way."

Associate Yvonne Kisch was first acquainted with Nano's story when she became an associate. Reflecting on some of the ways Nano has touched her life, Yvonne shares, "All my life I felt that

I was lacking in courage. I was fine as long as I was in my little niche in the world, but I never had the courage to reach beyond that until I read about Nano." Shortly after becoming an associate, Yvonne was invited to serve as a leader in her deanery of an archdiocesan organization. "I felt completely inadequate," Yvonne adds, "but somehow I knew this was what I was to do with my newfound courage, thanks to Nano and my Presentation connections."



Top photo: Associate Yvonne Kisch helps give new life to a storm-damaged space. Right photo: Associate Colleen Vlasisavljevich brings Nano's light to a local care center.



Following in Nano's footsteps, Yvonne stepped farther out of her comfort zone when she participated in a Presentation service trip to New York to provide aide after the flooding caused by Hurricane Sandy. "The whole experience, though filled with hard work, was one of joy," states Yvonne. "Working with a team of volunteers from across the country reminded me of the importance Nano placed on relationships as she gave herself to bring help and healing to the poor. Like Nano and her small band of sisters, our service was as much about building relationships with other workers and the people we were helping and than it was about fixing roofs and cleaning away debris."

Associate Colleen Vlasisavljevich has also been deeply influenced by Nano Nagle. "Nano inspires my prayer and my actions. In my home I have a lantern, perhaps like one that Nano carried through the streets of Cork. It is a daily reminder to be still with the Christ of my faith and to ask, 'Where will I bring light today? How am I being asked to reach out beyond my own security?'" Colleen has found that opportunities to do so abound!

Sharing Nano's lantern light of love through weekly visits with her mom and other residents at a local care center, Colleen finds her faith enhanced and strengthened. "My mom and the others are Christ-light to me," says Colleen.

Colleen emulates Nano's charism of hospitality as she hosts a monthly tea and faith-sharing group in her home. "The eight women who come share their spiritual journey, the challenges and joys of their lives, their insight and wisdom on our shared reading and their laughter," Colleen explains. "I think Nano would enjoy our group!"

Like Nano, Colleen tries to recognize Christ in all. In recent months she has become a volunteer who does spiritual listening with women in recovery from addiction to drugs or alcohol. "When I go to Transformation House," Colleen shares, "I am very conscious of the light of Christ in the sessions with these women who are at such vulnerable times in their lives." Nano would surely say the same.

Over the years the beams of Nano's lantern light have reached far beyond her imagining, changing lives worldwide. Just

as these three associates, countless Presentation people and others continue to be impelled by the legacy of Nano's courage, persistence and love, to alleviate suffering and bring healing to a broken world. Like Nano, they have come to realize simply and profoundly that each person, no matter their circumstances, is Christ in our midst. May that startling and life-changing realization continue to compel all to go "one pace beyond!"

## In Memory of M. Kathleen Fahey

June 25, 1931 - October 3, 2015

M. Kathleen "Katie" Fahey made her first commitment as a Presentation associate on June 18, 2009. Since then she shared her life and spiritual journey with Presentation Sisters and associates in many ways. Even after moving to Iowa City, she remained connected and loved receiving cards and letters from sisters and associates.



In addition to being a loving wife, mother and grandmother, Katie worked as a nurse in Dubuque for the Visiting Nurse Association and the public school district for many years. She was an active member of St. Anthony Parish. Over the years, Katie followed in Nano's footsteps as she visited the sick in hospitals, served as a Eucharistic minister at parish daily masses and at Luther Manor Care Center and extended compassion through her work on her parish bereavement committee.

Katie's deep faith, love for her family and compassion for others were exemplified throughout her life. Katie is remembered with love and gratitude.



Sister Jeanette McCarthy captures special moments with her Presentation community, family and friends through her photography and scrapbooking skills.

## SISTER JEANETTE MCCARTHY A Full Life of Gratitude

by BETH KRESS, PBVM

Whether teaching in Catholic high schools or doing Hispanic ministry in the Midwest or Texas or using her musical talents for worship or community, Sister Jeanette McCarthy has been heard exclaiming, “Fire up!”

Sister Jeanette’s energy and enthusiasm are very much what brand her – her way of being and doing. She can strike up a song on the guitar or walk you through her interesting scrapbooks and photo albums with great motivation while inviting you to share her many pastimes.

After some changes in her health over the past several years, Sister Jeanette demonstrates her tenacity to keep going and stay positive. “I don’t drive anymore, and that’s life,” she says, “but I like to do as many things as I can.”

Sister Jeanette’s intensity for life began as the eldest daughter of Don and Marion McCarthy in western Iowa. With her eight brothers and seven sisters, she grew up on a farm and attended Catholic schools and learned many life skills.

It was through her large family that Sister first shared the Catholic faith. “My faith formation began when my oldest brother Leo and I were very young,” explains Sister. “Our family farmed near the very small town of St. Benedict, Iowa. There was a Catholic school and church. We attended grade school at St. Benedict. However, my parents wanted us to continue Catholic education through high school, so Dad bought us an old Ford car that we older siblings drove the 15 miles to St. Cecelia Academy in Algona.”

Sister Jeanette was able to take piano lessons at St. Cecelia which helped her in later years to learn and play guitar and eventually to lead music at masses in Spanish. Presentation teachers, Sisters Matthew Cunningham, Redempta Collins, Alberta Lynch and Aloysius Rush helped her develop her musical and business skills.

“After high school I continued working as a legal secretary until I entered the Sisters of the Presentation.” Higher education followed as she earned a bachelor’s degree from Clarke College in Dubuque and a master’s degree from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. Such opportunities gave Sister

**I hold gratitude in my heart over the years in religious life. I am grateful for my family spirit, which I learned as a small child, for my years in teaching and, most especially, for the privilege to live in my Presentation community.**

*Sister Jeanette McCarthy*

Jeanette the expertise for becoming and excelling as a high school accounting and business teacher and a junior class advisor and yearbook moderator. “Some fellow teachers called me ‘Flash’ because I took photos while working on the high school yearbooks,” she says with a twinkle in her eye.

“During the last eight years of teaching I worked at Bishop Heelan High School in Sioux City, Iowa,” Sister Jeanette shares. “During that time my hobby was playing guitar at the Spanish masses at the Cathedral. I found that this was an opportunity to improve my conversational Spanish while spending time with the Hispanic musicians and other parishioners and friends. I enjoyed this ministry very much.”

In the early 1990s Sister transitioned from the formal classroom. She applied to several dioceses in Texas where there were openings in Hispanic ministry. She worked at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Port Arthur, Texas, and St. Monica Parish in Cameron, Texas.

“While I enjoyed the ministry in Texas, I found it far from home. After four years I learned of an opening for Hispanic ministry at St. Patrick in Dubuque, Iowa, so I applied and got the position,” she recounts. “It was an exciting job, because I also shared in the Hispanic ministry office of the Archdiocese of Dubuque.” There were many new Hispanics arriving in Dubuque at that time, finding work at dairy and livestock farms and at industries.

“This was a delightful ministry that I was very passionate about doing!” remarks Sister Jeanette. “There was a great need to help the Hispanic families with their documents and with the sacramental preparation for their families. I continued to minister at St. Patrick for 13 years where there were many children to be baptized, couples to be prepared for marriage, girls to celebrate their 15-year birthdays (quinceañera) and teenagers to be confirmed. In addition, many individuals needed translation assistance with legal papers.”

Sister’s enthusiasm and energy permeated many facets of her ministry as she would give many hours to accompany persons to appointments or participate in preparing for big feast days and celebrations such as Our Lady of Guadalupe or the Las Mañanitas. In 2008, she received an honorary doctor of law degree from Loras College, Dubuque, for her 10 years of dedication and work with Hispanic immigrants at St. Patrick Parish.

Sister Jeanette gives much energy to keeping connected with her seven living siblings, extended family and friends. “I feel that it is important to keep the family bond and friendships, to keep sharing

with letters, emails and phone calls,” says Sister. “Each year I attend a family reunion hosted by one of my family members at their location. In June 2015 we gathered in Dallas, Texas.”

She has maintained many interests and hobbies – speaking Spanish, guitar, sewing, family genealogy, scrapbooking, photography, art work and traveling. “I definitely enjoyed and learned from my various travels,” she says. “Some places I had the opportunity to visit and spend time were Bolivia, Argentina, Peru, Australia, New Zealand and Ireland. I also experienced many parish mission trips to Mexico (Guadalajara, Arteaga and Monterrey to name a few) and to El Salvador.”

Reflecting on her retirement years and how she still carries out Nano’s charism to make a difference, Sister Jeanette states, “I feel fortunate that I am able to live at Mount Loretto and to get to know our sisters in a new way.” Over several years she decorated the dining room and still gives her heart and soul to weekend musical gatherings in the Nagle Center infirmary.

Sister Jeanette’s passion for life and people have translated into thankfulness. “I hold gratitude in my heart over the years in religious life. I am grateful for my family spirit, which I learned as a small child, for my years in teaching and, most especially, for the privilege to live in my Presentation community.”

### Arts & Crafts Boutique A Benefit to Support Charitable Ministries

The Sisters of the Presentation are happy to report that \$5,144.91 was raised from the Arts & Crafts Boutique and Bake Sale on Saturday, October 17. This amount was donated to the Mary’s Inn Maternity Home, Dubuque; Sister Paula Schwendinger’s Hispanic Ministry, Dyersville Deanery; and Sister Carla Pope’s St. Mary’s Food Pantry, Strawberry Point.

The sale took place in Presentation Center at the motherhouse which was filled with tables for art, crafts and baked goods. The annual event could not have been the success it was without the wonderful community of sisters, associates, students and friends who worked together to make it so great.

Mark your calendars for next year’s sale on October 15, 2016, where you will find unique, hand-crafted gifts and delicious pies and baked goods by Presentation sisters, associates and friends. Gift items of hand-woven baskets, trivets, watercolor paintings, jewelry, greeting cards and much more will be available.

# REMEMBERING Algona, Iowa 1927-2015

by MARY HERMANN PLATT, PBVM

“Father (Thomas) Davern organized the parish men to assist in the building of St. Cecelia Academy. The basement area of it was dug by horses pulling slips and fresnos along with many hands digging with spades and shovels. The farmers would drive their teams to town daily during the week with feed to sustain the animals at noon. An organized group of ladies prepared the eats at the noon meal. Much of the food was donated by all concerned ... Then the contractors who steered the building process also used the parishioners who would volunteer their assistance.” *Memoirs of St. Cecelia Academy by Floyd T. Bode*

The spirit of cooperation exhibited in the building of St. Cecelia Academy in 1927 continued to be a hallmark of the parishioners in the Algona area. Through several periods of restructuring, the school system has continued to be maintained by the generosity and work of those who have seen three and four generations of families educated there.

On September 5, 1927, Presentation Sisters Mary Hildegard McBride, Elise O'Malley, Agnes O'Brien, Ellavene Dolan, Archangela Duffy and Justine Smith opened St. Cecelia Academy, welcoming 164 students in grades 1-8. One grade was added each year until the first class of 18 graduated in 1932.

Bishop Garrigan High School opened in 1959, supported by parishes in Algona, St. Joseph (Bode), Wesley and Whittemore. At that time St. Cecelia and St. Joe merged their elementary students who attended at either center. Several other communities of sisters taught with the Presentations until the center at St. Joseph closed in 1991.

Kindergarten was added in 1979, the same year that elementary students from Wesley and St. Benedict entered the system and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton became the new name for the Algona center. Students later came from several other areas as their home centers closed or their parents desired Catholic education at the high school level which was not available in their hometown.

Preschool began in 1982 with four-year-olds. It has expanded to include three-year-olds, kindergarten prep and all-day class and



Top photo: Left to right: The first Algona community of Presentation Sisters: Sisters Mary Hildegard McBride, Agnes O'Brien, Ellavene Dolan, Archangela Duffy, Elise O'Malley and Justine Smith. Bottom photo: The original St. Cecelia School building.

day care options. A new middle school wing was built in 1991, and the original Academy building was demolished to make way for a parish center in 2015.

The Sisters of the Presentation continued to staff the school system and maintain the high standards of education which parents expect and deserve. They were also active in parish ministry, serving as coordinators for religious education as well as for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

Sister Annette Skyles, middle school teacher at Seton until her retirement in 2004, has fond memories of her time in Algona. She especially remembers the family atmosphere created by the faculty and staff. Their support of the sisters, and their creative preparation for liturgies, stand out in her memory, along with their support of her in nominating her for one of the first Bishop's Awards for Excellence in Teaching.

Having the distinction of teaching in both the St. Joseph and the Garrigan centers, Sister Janet Stelken recalls her work with the confirmation candidates who were juniors in high school. The incorporation of students, sponsors, teachers, pastors and parents in retreats and discussions, created a community of faith which enriched the lives of all participants. She welcomed the support offered by the different groups, and credited this with enriching the program for all involved.

In 2010, Sister Hermann Platt left the Seton Center. Sister Janet Goetz officially retired from the Bishop Garrigan center in 2015, although she continues to serve by volunteering at the school and in the parish. Over the years, 145 Sisters of the Presentation served in the Algona area.

## Reflections On Pope Francis' U.S. Visit

Reflections by

DIANA BLONG and RICHELLE FRIEDMAN, PBVM

Immediately the world was attracted to the newly-elected Pope Francis. Gospel values permeate his relationships to all peoples and living things heightening the excitement that he was choosing to visit the United States. Some, fearing that Francis' words would be counter to their political agenda and conservative ideologies, suggested that Francis should limit his speeches to morality and not politics. His encyclical *Laudato Si'* makes clear their inextricable link. Sisters Diana Blong and Richelle Friedman had the opportunity to be a part of his visit and share their experiences.

### Sister Diana Blong

Pastoral Associate, Immaculate Conception Parish, Charles City, Iowa



What a joy and privilege to be in Philadelphia, “The City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection,” as it lived up to its name by becoming a “haven of hospitality” for over 17,000 who assembled for the World Meeting of Families the week prior to an estimated 680,000 who gathered to see Pope Francis for the Papal Mass on Sunday, September 27!

Being part of this international event was enhanced by staying in a Philadelphia suburb with four Tanzanian Holy Spirit Sisters, two of whom were my English students 16 years ago in Rauya.

An added delight was the companionship of Sister Diane Wolf, SSJ, as we traveled by train to the Pennsylvania Conference Center for the World Meeting of Families. Participants from over 100 countries included families with babes in arms to elderly with walkers, clergy, women and men religious. Of the many speakers addressing challenges facing families in society, I appreciated hearing Cardinal Peter Turkson of Ghana, charged with writing the draft for the Encyclical on Human and Natural Ecology, reflect on the dual impact of economy and ecology in “Caring for Creation: Pope Francis and Environmental Stewardship.”

Even though the World Meeting of Families occasioned the visit of Pope Francis to the United States, Philadelphia waited patiently for his arrival on the final two days of his stay. While I was not in the crowds who gathered on the weekend, I felt I was there since on Thursday I toured the venues where he would speak. The complexity and vastness of preparations included 40 jumbo-trons being erected, miles of coiled cables and hundreds of chairs assembled. With an amazing unhurried pace, folks were eager to chat while graciously offering assistance.



Tanzanian Holy Spirit Sister Catherine Msuya and Sister Diana Blong pose by one of the many Pope Francis images in Philadelphia.

Streams of ribbons with prayer requests cascading from trees and bushes outside the Cathedral Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul created a faith-filled sculpture by thousands who shared Pope Francis' special devotion to Our Lady Undoer of Knots.

Viewing a live-streaming of the Papal Mass on Sunday with Assumption BVM parishioners on two huge screens in the church united us with those gathered along the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. No violence in Philadelphia for two days, round-the-clock coverage by the local TV stations, an abundance of shared treasured memories, inspired hopes of a gentler kinder world.

### Sister Richelle Friedman

Director of Public Policy, Coalition of Human Needs, Washington, DC



For two days the usual activity in Washington came to a halt as the much anticipated visit by Pope Francis arrived. I had no expectation of coming close to Francis, just being present in the same setting made the experience holy.

I was invited to attend the arrival ceremony on the White House lawn. As we awaited the Pope, I visited with those near me. One woman drove seven hours from North Carolina for the half-hour ceremony. I asked what drew her to Francis. She responded, “He is approachable, caring and courageous.” A first generation Cuban expressed appreciation that Francis' desire for peace helped broker a closer relationship between the United States and Cuba. Excitement riveted through the crowd as the small Fiat approached the south portico. The Pope's first speech expressing gratitude for the welcome he received and inviting mutual dialogue touched those of us gifted to be in his presence and set the tone for his visit.

In the early morning dawn the following day, a stunning pink cloud came out of the otherwise deep blue sky and seemed to touch the Capitol dome – perhaps an indicator that Francis' message would descend like the Spirit upon Congress! Watching his address on a large screen on the Capitol lawn with 60,000 others was awe-inspiring. The themes of the common good, common home, common ground ... culminate in the simple rule, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” A powerful message for all of us.

## Partnering in Mission

As partners in mission, your annual support is greatly appreciated and is vital to the growth of Presentation ministries. You are the key to their success and you make it possible for the Sisters of the Presentation to provide individuals and families in need with assistance and critical services.

**DONATE NOW**

With your donation, you will help to sustain Presentation ministries throughout the world well into the future.

Online giving offers supporters a flexible, paperless way to contribute to the Sisters of the Presentation. You can make a one-time or monthly donation by visiting the Presentation website and clicking the **Donate Now** tab. Donate Now is secure, convenient and easy for an ever growing community of Presentation Sisters, partners, employees and associates, near and far.

**To make your gift, visit:**  
[www.dubuquepresentations.org](http://www.dubuquepresentations.org)  
**or call the Partners in Mission Office**  
 at 563.588.2008 ext. 105



*On October 24, a conference entitled “New Faces, New Voices, New Ways of Being Church” was held in celebration of the National Catholic Reporter’s 50th anniversary at Dominican University in River Forest, Illinois. As part of the celebration, an essay contest was promoted to high school juniors and seniors in Catholic schools across the country, asking them to reflect on their experiences of change and growth in the church and to describe their hopes for the church in the years ahead. The first place winner was Maia Julianne Kennedy from Brownsboro, Alabama. Sisters and associates in the Chicago area attended the conference. Left to right: Back row: Sister Francine Quillin, Sister Lou Cota, Associate Betty Spehar, Sister Marilyn Breen, Sister Janet Stelken, Maia and Sister Raeleen Sweeney. Front row: Associate Bridget Lahart and Sister Virgie Luchsinger.*



*Sister Janice Hancock (middle front) recently retired after 10 years as administrative assistant for Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Dubuque. Her co-workers helped her celebrate at a farewell luncheon. Pictured: Back row: Angella Link, Debra Jasper, Deacon Bill Hickson, Zoe Houlihan; Front row: Cristy Manternach, Sister Janice, Lynne Lutze.*

# FAITH ON FIRE



**Featuring Paul J. Kim**  
 PAUL J. KIM has earned a growing international reputation as a dynamic speaker and musician with a powerful message of faith, hope, and love. The way he presents is a rare gift to witness and has impacted people of all ages. Moving his audiences from laughter in one moment, to deep reflection and prayer in another; Paul utilizes his many talents to communicate the Gospel to young people in a way that is engaging, entertaining, and altogether inspiring.

**January 27 @ 6:45 PM**  
 A Family Celebration—All are Welcome  
 Clarke University—Kehl Center

**January 28 @ 10:00 AM**  
 High School Presentation  
 Wahlert Catholic High School

**January 28 @ 1:00 PM**  
 Middle School Presentation  
 Wahlert Catholic High School

Sponsored by:  
 Clarke University, Holy Family Catholic Schools, Burns-Donovan Foundation, Serra Club of Dubuque, Dubuque Area Vocation Association (DAVA), Archdiocese of Dubuque—Office of Vocation Awareness, Cistercian Monks of the Strict Observance, Cistercian Nuns of the Strict Observance, Divine Word College, Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa, Dubuque Franciscans, Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, Sisters of Charity, BVM, Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of St. Benedict, Sisters of the Presentation, Sisters of the Visitation

# Mount Loretto AND BEYOND

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



## Tuesdays with Tim

Every Tuesday morning, Sisters Annette Skyles (left) and René Laubenthal (right) play cards with Tim Toohey, son of Mary and Bill Toohey. Tim is a great card player and, of course, loves to win. Every time Tim comes he wears a shirt with a different tie from his collection of over one hundred ties picturing cartoon characters, heroes and much more. Sisters Annette and René look forward to their Tuesday mornings with Tim. He is friendly and outgoing, always greeting sisters and employees with a smile and warm handshake. For his recent birthday, Tim was gifted with a sports balloon and Iowa Hawkeye pop can holder.

## Make a Difference Day

The Sisters of the Presentation sponsored a team that participated in Dubuque's Andrew Connolly Make a Difference Day on Saturday, October 24. The purpose of the day is to provide service for people unable to do tasks such as cleaning, winterizing and yard work. The Presentation team helped an elderly lady at the St. Mary Apartments deep clean her house as well as perform some regular maintenance tasks. The group then helped rake leaves at Maus Park and finished the day by joining another team in raking leaves for an elderly resident. Sisters of the Presentation have joined in this event the last six years. Left to right: This year's team members included Lance Miller, Sister Rita Cameron, Employee Jane Buse, Employee Nicole Baumgartner, Noah Baumgartner, Emilee Culbertson and Max Baumgartner.



## You are invited to join us.

**December 25, 2015**  
Christmas Mass  
9:00 a.m.  
Sisters of the Presentation  
Sacred Heart Chapel  
Dubuque, Iowa

**December 28, 2015**  
**January 25, 2016**  
**February 22, 2016**  
Centering Prayer  
5:30 p.m. Evening Meal  
6:15-7:00 p.m. Prayer  
Sisters of the Presentation  
Sacred Heart Chapel  
Dubuque, Iowa

**January 27, 2016**  
Faith on Fire! featuring Paul J. Kim  
6:45 p.m. Presentation  
Clarke University  
Kehl Center  
Dubuque, Iowa

**March 12-19, 2016**  
Discernment/Service Trip  
New Orleans, Louisiana

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

## Please pray with us.

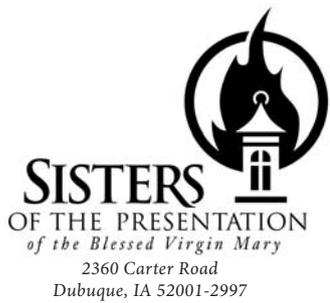
**December 8, 2015**  
Year of Mercy begins

**December 19, 2015**  
Christmas Dinner with guests from Dubuque Rescue Mission and Hope House  
Sisters of the Presentation  
Dubuque, Iowa

**March 8-14, 2016**  
National Catholic Sisters Week

**21st of each month**  
Pray for Vocations

**25th of each month**  
Mass for Benefactors



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God is the light  
that illuminates  
the darkness.

*Pope Francis*

May the light of God  
cast beams of joy  
upon your holidays  
and new year.  
Merry Christmas.

SISTERS OF THE PRESENTATION  
OF DUBUQUE, IOWA

