



COMMUNITY NOTES

Sisters of the Presentation

APRIL 2016

“They were women of listening hearts.
To them the Spirit spoke: ‘Come.’
So they rose up to follow.”

“Listening, they could not cease from journeying. Always a little further, always one pace beyond...faith and love and laughter brimming over...”

From *Century* by Raphael Consedine PBVM

Most recently, I have been overwhelmed by the fact that listening requires such an expansive presence.

We listen not only to others, but to ourselves. William Isaacs, in the Spring 2016, issue of *a Matter of Spirit*, relates a comment he heard from a manager in a workshop he was giving. “You know, I have always prepared myself to speak. But I have never prepared myself to listen.” Isaacs emphasizes, “Listening is very hard to do, and we are rarely prepared for it.”

Last month as I visited Bolivia, I listened to the fullness of the challenges expressed by Paola Hernandez in my visit with her. You will recall that she is a university student who lived with our sisters in Tarija while in discernment about her vocation as a Sister of the Presentation. Through conversation, participation in community life, prayer, contemplation, and deep listening, she grew into her decision to change course. With her university studies, difficult family situations, and her dedication to a mission group with whom she works, she shared with the sisters there, and with me, that she needs to wait until she graduates from the university before continuing her discernment about religious life. We thank Paola for all the ways she enriched community life through her presence while living in our university community house and we wish her well as she faces her immediate challenges. She knows she is always welcome to visit at any time.

This year (the new academic year began in March) two other university students, Yasi Mendez and Carla Melisa Arevayo Miranda, live with the sisters in Tarija and participate in aspects of community living, charism and mission. Yasi is studying architecture and is in her second year of living in Casa Betania, (Bethany House). Carla is beginning her first year living with the community and is studying psychology at the university. During our time together the providence of God, of which Nano so often spoke, was so evident in all the unfolding events of acquiring the house, welcoming the women and furthering the life-long-formation of all as the women journey together in community life and prayer, plumbing the depths of our Gospel charism of hospitality/inclusivity and mission.

Since the house is about a ten minute walk from the university, it is also used to welcome study groups and to host gatherings. Our deepest thanks to our Sisters Mery, Therese, Marge and Suzanne, for their constant communal listening, generosity, dreams, hopes, courage, perseverance and faith which help to sustain this life-long formative experience for all. Truly, they are women of “listening hearts.”

On October 3, 2015, Sister Mary Therese Krueger entered the novitiate. She began her apostolic/ministerial year during her first year as a novice. She is involved in deep listening as she engages with our sisters in ministry and learns how each is engaged in mission and how each is personally guided and motivated by our charism of hospitality. Mary Therese's own ministry is energized by the zeal and courage of Nano to embrace hospitality in her world of physical therapy and through her service projects. To experience the depth of hospitality/inclusivity in action is to stretch one's heart to embrace the very edges of society wherever and in whatever context our "edges" are identified. We thank the many sisters and associates who have shared their lives and ministries with Mary Therese during her visits to the various sisters in mission thus far. We extend a special thanks to those who form her current living community in Chicago: Sisters Jessi Beck, Marilyn Breen, and Janet Stelken. These women have accompanied Mary Therese during her candidacy and apostolic year of novitiate. Truly, they are women of "listening hearts."

Among the many sacred goals for a novice in her canonical year, the following come to mind: the intention of the canonical year is to provide an opportunity to embrace a time of "going apart" in order to deepen the interior and communal life, enter into opportunities to enhance personal growth, nurture prayer life, engage very intentionally in spiritual direction, understand the depth of meaning in the vows and constitutions, be open to being transformed by new understandings of Gospel mission, theology, spirituality, our Presentation charism, and the prophetic role of religious life as gift for our planetary community.

So during her canonical year Mary Therese will be leaving Chicago and living in our "House of a Thousand Welcomes", (our formation house), in Dubuque. While deepening her community living relationships, she will also have the opportunity to get to know our retired sisters, be of service, and become grounded in her understandings of our heritage as expressed in our historical roots. To enlighten her journey, she will also participate weekly in the Inter-Congregational Novitiate (ICN), hosted in Techny, IL, and continue classes on-line in Pastoral Studies at the Catholic Theological Union, Chicago. We are inspired by her continual listening and searching. As she shares her insights, the life-long formation of all will be enhanced.

Further listening and discernment has brought three women, Sisters Jeanine Kuhn, Margaret Anne Kramer and Rosalyn Ulfers, to accept the invitation to form part of Sister Mary Therese's living community during her upcoming canonical year. "To them the Spirit spoke: 'Come.' So they rose up to follow." We recognize the uprooting involved in listening as well as the transformative power of an open, listening heart. We are grateful for the gifts of generosity, partnership and Providence.

Speaking of partnerships, we also wish to give special thanks to Sisters Rita Cameron and Lynn Mary Wagner for their years of support. They enhanced community living through their accompaniment and gentle presence over many years as they contributed greatly to a marvelous spirit of hospitality, prayer, fun and table sharing with our newer members.

Let us all accompany Mary Therese and each other through our prayer, intense listening, friendships, and visitations. Like Nano, we know that "listening, (we) cannot cease from journeying. Always a little further, *always evolving*, always one pace beyond...faith and love and laughter brimming over..." May what was said of Nano's *listening* heart as she went forth in the winding lanes be said of each of us; "she went forth with laughter in her heart."

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sister Julianne". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.



Ever Emerging

"Evolutionary Spiral"
Artist: Mary Southard, CSJ
www.MarySouthardArt.Org
Courtesy of www.MinistryOfTheArts.Org
Congregation of St. Joseph

- ☉ Thank you for participating in Gathering 1, the Emerging Circle Process Review.
- ☉ You will receive the circle responses.
- ☉ We offer these for your reflection and remain grateful for your contributions and engagement.
- ☉ **Thank you for scheduling Gathering 2 with your circle between April 25 and May 20.**
- ☉ Materials for Gathering 2 will be sent out on April 25.

May we each know ourselves ever emerging...

Celebrating Unity in Diversity



Directional Statement

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.

January 2013

Commitments

We promise to:
promote direct ministry
with people made poor,
facilitate education
and advocacy
on behalf of people
without options,
support sustainability
and systemic change
for the common good.

Being the only Sister of Christian Charity ministering in the area, I was looking for a religious community to call "home." After living on campus at Divine Word College for two years, I connected with the Sisters of Presentation and moved to Mt. Loretto in August of 2015 as the new school year began. Since then, the Mt. Loretto community has been "home away from home" for me. Although living here requires me to commute to and from the college, I appreciate the ride, which gives me space and time to process and celebrate the day. Besides, coming home to a group of wonderful religious women has made life more invigorating for me! I appreciate the opportunity to join a scripture sharing group, to recreate and sharpen my skills in card games, and pick my brain with jigsaw puzzles, just to name a few. Although we do not share the same charism nor ethnicity nor culture, I feel right at home with the sisters at Mt. Loretto.

As I settled into my new home, the sisters were preparing to welcome two Sisters of the Lovers of the Holy Cross from Can Tho, Vietnam. Sisters Nuong and Huyen arrived in Dubuque three days before I returned from my Christmas break. Before we even met, Sisters Nuong and Huyen already connected with my friends in Chicago, who brought the newly arrived sisters to Mt. Loretto. What a small world we live in! There is no boundary in God's world. We are ONE! Living at Mt. Loretto has helped us celebrate **unity in diversity**!

Transitioning from the tropical weather of Vietnam to Iowa weather in January was a challenge! However, Sisters Nuong and Huyen have been adjusting very well to their new environment. The sisters at Mt. Loretto have extended their hearts and home to welcome them. Sisters Nuong and Huyen go to classes to learn English at the nearby college four days a week. On the days they do not go to class, a number of sisters at Mt. Loretto teach them English skills as well as skills for different hobbies. Both sisters are taking piano lessons from Sisters Damian O'Brien and Sharon Kelchen. Sister Nuong is learning different skills in art with Sister Marie Barth and Sister Huyen is mastering her skills in basket weaving with Sister Dolores Zieser. It is wonderful to see that these skills are being passed on to the next generation and the talents and gifts that are being developed. Even more beautiful is that these skills will someday be shared with the people half the world away in Vietnam.

Although my desire to go back and serve in Vietnam did not become a reality, Vietnam came to me through my ministry at Divine Word College and here at Mt. Loretto. It is this unity we celebrate, through which our world becomes smaller and God's family become more inclusive!



Sister Teresa Marie Tran, SCC

Left to right: Sisters Teresa Marie, Huyen, Nuong

COMMUNITY NEWS

APRIL 2016

Dear Sisters, Associates & Friends,

I am very grateful to you for your prayer, notes, and so many other expressions of care. My arm is much better and getting stronger each day. The doctor cautioned me not to fall again. I hope that I will be able to follow his advice!

Blessings,
S Marilyn Breen

Dear Sisters, Associates & Friends,

I wish to thank all of you for your prayers, notes and attendance at my nephew, Tom Hancock's wake and funeral. How blessed to belong to a community of love and support.

Gratefully,
S Janice Hancock

From the Office of... VOCATIONS

The service/immersion trip to New Orleans in March was such a rich experience as the women encountered people and situations they did not know. The time spent interacting with those in need as well as with those providing services offered opportunity for learning and sharing. As the women returned to their homes and resumed their normal activity, they have had time to reflect on the New Orleans experience. I would like to share some of their thoughts with you in this article.

Laura: “Thank you for taking me on the New Orleans service/discernment trip. For some reason God keeps calling me back to New Orleans and I keep answering that call. God was very present during the week and I needed that more than you know. With my busy life, I don’t give God the time He deserves. This trip was a great way for me to reconnect with God, to learn more about myself and to let God lead my heart. I needed all those things in order for me to take a step forward with my faith. So now what? I’m home and I have about 3,000,000 things to get done, but here is my plan. I plan on setting my alarm earlier and set aside that time in the morning for God. I bought water bottles and granola bars so if I come across someone who is in need I have something to offer them. I am also going to be more conscious about wasting food and buying more off-brand items to save money. I hope these small changes can help me to refocus my life on what matters the most. I am also going to look into volunteering in New Orleans for the summer.”

Lydia: “Words can't describe the peace and joy that I felt during our week of service. I never knew how much of an impact on my life it would have. It taught me a lot about myself and I have grown in so many ways because of our trip! I am so blessed and thankful to have had such an amazing opportunity! “

Rachel: “Being with people experiencing homelessness or poverty changed me in ways that simply talking about the need to address poverty in our country never did or could. There is something very powerful about simply being with people, whether it be sharing a meal, sharing conversation, or doing an art project together (all experiences I had in New Orleans). This experience led me to not underestimate the importance of human connection, mercy, patience, understanding, love, justice, and peace. Put simply, because of the people I met on my trip to New Orleans, my heart is now a little bit softer, a little bit more patient and understanding, and a whole lot more loving.”

I, too, experienced many moments of grace. As I observed the way the women interacted with each other and with those we met on the journey, I realized what a great opportunity was being afforded all of us. Thank you for all of the community support that allows experiences like this to happen. Your prayers and your support, in so many ways, are a powerful message to the world.



Our Journey in Formation



For the month of March I was able to visit New Orleans and Hampton as well as learn from Sisters Hermann Platt, Francine Quillin, and Louise Scieszinski about our constitutions. My Chicago community visited Sister Mary Lou Specha and Sister Julie Marsh in New Orleans and was able to see the wonderful work they are doing with Hotel Hope. It was incredible to witness their passion and love for their ministry and to see how their love goes to all people they encounter. They truly demonstrated hospitality to us as well as engaged us in conversations regarding the injustices of the people they encounter and of the city as a whole. They are carrying the lantern brightly in New Orleans!

I was also able to visit and observe Sisters Carmen Hernandez and Maura McCarthy at work in Hampton and La Luz Hispana. The investment in the people and in the lives of those around them was obvious as well as their deep love for their ministry. I was able to be a chaperone on a field trip for middle school Latino children to a community college to help them discover the opportunities for a college education. We observed Maura teaching an English class and the joy on her face as they sang a song in English to help them learn phrases. It was clear to see the joy and passion in Sisters Carmen and Maura for providing hospitality and connections for their community. They, too, are carrying the lantern brightly!

At Mt. Loretto, I was able to participate in a hearth circle to dive deeper into the constitutions and our history. Sister Francine spoke of the history of the community and the development of the Constitutions to be approved by Rome with the struggle of carrying Nano's mission as well as complying with the Vatican's requests. Sister Hermann spoke of the daily lifestyle and routine documented in the Constitutions and how daily life, prayer, and routines have changed over the course of time. Sister Louise outlined the progression of *Witness to Love* from the original constitution and helped me to understand the positive changes made with each Constitution. The love and passion for Nano Nagle, the community, and who we are, as outlined by our constitutions, was evident in their faces and hearts.

March was a wonderful month filled with great conversations and experiences. I personally witnessed our sisters living out the Directional Statement, striving to live as Nano, and tapped into the depth of *Witness to Love*. Truly this month, I was able to be a witness of the love and passion of the Presentation Sisters.

Sister Mary Therese Krueger



From the... *Associate Partnership Office*

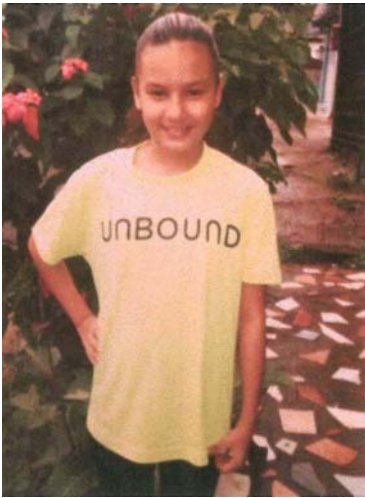
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LANTERN LIGHTS LET THEIR LIGHT SHINE **Sister Julia Wingert**

Lantern Lights sisters and associates (Susan Bennett, Ann Cooper, Linda Dolphin, Judy Munshower, Barb Sauser, Marlene Von Fumetti, Sisters James Marie Gross, Janice Hancock, Julia Wingert) meet regularly throughout the year.

Meilyn from Costa Rica



In an effort to offer "a better world for the poor and uneducated, empower women and children, and reverence relationships" we have, since 2007, sponsored Meilyn Fabiana Esquivel Artavia from Gregorio, Costa Rica through CFCA/Unbound. Meilyn lives with her mother, two brothers and grandparents in a small, tin sheet house in an at-risk area. Her father has abandoned the family. Her mother cleans houses and irons but does not have a steady job. Meilyn is described as a smiling, smart, creative and obedient girl. Our monetary support provides Christian teaching, medical/dental care, clothing, food stipends, recreational activities, tuition, books, school uniform and supplies and gifts for birthday and Christmas celebrations. Our group members send cards and letters to Meilyn and we frequently receive a letter from her, telling of her life at school and with her family.

Currently we are working with other sisters and associates in preparation for our 12th annual benefit garage/bake sale. Sorting and attractively displaying items and offering welcome and hospitality are among the ways we show reverence and respect for all who come to shop. Proceeds of the sale this year will benefit Immaculate Conception School, Charles City, Iowa and Sister Paula Schwendinger's rural ministry outreach with Hispanics in Dubuque County.

When not engaged in the garage sale, we are reading and discussing Pope Francis' *Joy of the Gospel*. The content is inspiring; our sharing, lively and enriching.

Group members also assist with outreach projects and activities sponsored by the Presentation community and other associate groups.

In addition, as Lantern Lights, we endeavor to live our Presentation mission and Directional Statement in a variety of ways in our daily lives. Some examples include:

- engage in daily prayer, reflection, contemplative quiet, and spiritual reading; share God's Word with children during Children's Liturgy and in Scripture/faith sharing groups
- contribute to and support family/community life as well as individuals in their personal life, work, studies, projects and leisure activities
- empower women through tutoring; assist immigrants studying for their citizenship test; teach Religious Education classes
- offer a compassionate presence by attending wakes/funerals; writing notes of congratulations, affirmation, encouragement, support, get well, sympathy, etc.; preparing food; offering a helping hand and/or listening ear and heart wherever needed

- prepare boxes of clothing and household items for mission areas in Mississippi, South Dakota and Kentucky; create cards for the gift shop and special requests
- contact legislators about areas of concern and justice issues; support and practice sustainability for care of the earth

As Lantern Lights, we consciously and joyfully take up the call to "evangelize, offer hope and love to our broken world, incarnate the hospitality of God, confront injustice and work for peace" as we "reverence relationships, celebrate unity, engage contemplation and foster partnerships to transform ourselves and our world."

COMMUNITY DAYS

All associates are invited and encouraged to come to Community Days on July 13-16, 2016. If you can't come for the entire time, come for as much as you can! There will be a special time for associates to gather together for reflection and sharing! More information will be coming soon.

"I look forward to Community Days for many reasons. I love the challenge to my life and mission as it urges me to go "one pace beyond" in all my life's dimensions. The program gives opportunity to be with old friends, get to know new members and associates, and interact with the common focus of making a difference in our challenging world. I am so grateful for all the living and sharing in Nano's vibrant spirit with our sisters and associates." – Carol Kane, PBVM Associate

"Community Days to me, are the greatest benefit of being a Presentation Associate. These special days provide opportunity to visit with many people and participate in discussions that matter. The prayer, the reflection, the energy of the whole Presentation Family that I experience--all these elements make Community Days so valuable. The whole experience is like a retreat for me, in that I step out of my daily life and enter wholly into another reality." - Billie Greenwood, PBVM Associate

DIRECTORY UPDATE

Work is beginning on the 2016-17 Community Directory. Please take a moment to check the present directory to see if your information is correct. If any changes are needed, please contact the Associate Partnership office at associates@dubuquepresentations.org or 563-588-2008.

IT'S GARAGE SALE TIME!

Plan now to join us for the annual Presentation Sisters and Associates 2016 Benefit Garage and Bake Sale in the gym and garage on the Mount Loretto property on April 28, 29, and 30 and May 5, 6 and 7!

Gently used donations are being accepted at the gym behind Mount Loretto from 8 am to 8 pm daily except Sundays **until Saturday April 18**. Baked goods need to be individually wrapped and can be delivered to the gym on April 28-30 and/or May 5-7.

Help Still Needed – Contact us today if you are able to help. associates@dubuquepresentations.org or call 563-588-2008 EXT. 608 with the following information:

1. Your name
2. Date(s) you will help (choose from April 28, 29, 30, May 5, 6, 7)
3. Hours you will help (choose one or more of the times periods listed below)
 8:00 – 11:00 11:00 – 2:00 2:00 – 5:00 5:00 – close



Posters - Please consider where you might hang a poster advertising the upcoming Sister and Associate Garage Sale. Posters are available at the gym and at the Associate Office. Pick some up today to post at your parish, your workplace, wherever people gather!



HISTORY HAS SHAPED US. TODAY WILL BE TOMORROW'S LEGACY.

Religious Vacation Schools

From 1926-2005, many of us spent part of our summers teaching Religious Vacation School for students who attended the public school. Originally, this duty was assigned to all who were able to do so; in later years we were asked to volunteer.

RVS duties included 377 sisters over a span of 79 years, and reached students in 288 different parishes in 9 different states. The largest number of places to which sisters were assigned in one summer was 59 in 1954. The year 1962 saw the largest number of students taught in one summer: 2277 boys and 2198 girls. Most of the groups consisted of grades 1-8, though in some instances high school students were included.

Conditions under which the classes took place varied according to the location. Many were held in the church proper, some in basement rooms divided by curtains, and some in classrooms which were used during the year for regular school classes.

In some parishes the pastor provided materials, and in others the sisters were free to choose what topics they would teach. Many times there would be a common theme for all the grades and the instruction at any given level was related to that theme. Sister Mary Columba Offerman published several sets of curricula which could be adapted to whatever setting in which one found herself. More recent innovations included commercially-published materials which outlined instruction, activities, prayer, and Mass plans.

As late as 1951, in Eufaula, Alabama, numbers of students were listed as "colored" and "white". One of the pictures on this page chronicles the "Colored Vacation School Group 1939" at "St. Columbkille" (presumably Dubuque, since the pastor is listed as Msgr. Halpin). The other picture, labeled as July, 1928, depicts a more common group – all ages and sizes – at Harper's Ferry and Paint Rock.

Sister M. Hermann



¿QUÉ TAL, BOLIVIA?

[WHAT'S HAPPENING, BOLIVIA?]

A long journey, but SADITH CAN SEE without squinting!!!



Nearly two years later and three surgeries (heart, both eyes), Sadith Gallardo Sanchez, who will be seven years old on April 20, has new energy and a new lease on life. (See *Community Notes, Que tal articles ...November 2014 & April 2015*)

We met Sadith when he was just five years old. He was born with congenital cataracts. We knew we wanted to help this precious young man.



However, it wasn't long before we learned that his little heart could not withstand the eye surgery. Sadith first needed to have the small opening in his heart closed surgically. Even though it was a lengthy process to locate a heart surgeon and obtain the necessary finances, through the generosity and prayers of many, Sadith had successful heart surgery this past October.

At long last he was ready to have cataract surgery, which just took place in Tarija, the end of March. Sister Therese noticed that his sight improved greatly when they went for his first check-up and Sadith called out, "There's Dr. Aguirre". Previously he would not have been able to recognize a person at that distance.

Sadith and his family are most grateful for the many donations that enabled him to recover his sight and now he is able to begin first grade.



Sadith & Mom, Lucia

Hermanas Therese, Suzanne, Marge, and Mery



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New Students from Venezuela

In response to a question about their reason for coming to the United States, they shared that they have a son and that their country is not a safe place to raise a child. Their little boy, who is almost two, loves to play with our toys while his mother studies. In fact, he cries when she picks up the toys and tells him that it is time to go home.

Keep praying

Before Christmas I shared the story of one of our pregnant women who has many health issues. The baby is due in July. It has been and continues to be a long, hard road.

Almost there

Inna, from Ukraine, will be taking the citizenship test in Des Moines on May 3. The timing is good. In April she traveled to Ukraine for her father's funeral and hoped that she would not be scheduled for the test while she was out of the country.

New Board Member

Tim Moothart is a new trustee. The board welcomed him at our March meeting. Tim comes with the experience of a world traveler. His work with John Deere took him to several countries. Both he and his wife Mary, are tutors and are very active in the Social Justice Committee at the Church of the Resurrection in Dubuque. They also have the wisdom of being parents and grandparents.

Getting started. A couple from Syria is ready to complete the paperwork for the Citizenship Test. They can actually do the application 90 days before they have completed the five-year residence requirement. However, if they applied earlier than 90 days, their application would not be accepted. Ver Vang, an immigration lawyer hired by the Archdiocese of Dubuque is such a valuable resource for details like this. People who subscribe to *The Witness*, the newspaper for the Archdiocese of Dubuque, may have read a recent article about her.



Great Give Day is returning on May 3, 2016, and **PRESENTATION LANTERN** is excited to take part in this third annual 24-hour, online day of giving! Great Give Day is hosted by the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque as a community-wide celebration of Northeast Iowa's spirit of generosity and support of the work of non-profits.

This 24-hour online event will help **PRESENTATION LANTERN** provide educational materials for adults who are learning English as their second or third language and preparing for the U.S. citizenship test.

Giving is easy! Visit www.GreatGiveDay.org on Tuesday, May 3, and make a gift of \$10 or more to **PRESENTATION LANTERN**. One hundred percent of your gift goes directly to our organization and will help us to qualify for additional prize dollars throughout the day.

For more information contact Corine Murray, PBVM, at 563.557-7134 or visit www.GreatGiveDay.org



The Hampton women, with their young children, put their best creative energies into the LIVING STATIONS OF THE CROSS, which they presented in St. Patrick's Church. The women read the



station narratives with great commitment, and had diligently created their own costume designs for their offspring who portrayed Jesus, his mother Mary, the faithful women, Pontius Pilate, his wife, the Roman soldiers, and the apostles Peter and John. The onlookers, who had previously witnessed the spirited mischief of the children, were quite astounded by the earnest and solemn portrayal of the Gospel characters by these same frisky youngsters. The Spanish narrative recapped how Jesus

continues to agonize today in the sufferings of the poor and marginalized in our midst.

The endeavors of *La Luz Hispana*, in addition to our programs, are an ever expanding involvement in hospitality. We sometimes describe the people who approach us as the "walk-ins"—the folks who daily enter the center, or call us by phone, with particular problems that require our responsiveness and compel us to contact other institutions that can be of help to their specific needs.

On various occasions young women have walked into *La Luz Hispana* seeking help and protection from abusive boyfriends or spouses. The Sisters are often called upon to be interpreters for the domestic abuse or sexual abuse advocates. The two very capable advocates at the CRISIS CENTER provide counseling and education for the victim and the family. The advocates often help the women obtain *pro bono* legal support and accompany the women to hospitals, law enforcement agencies, and to their court proceedings. They also take the women and their children to protection shelters if this is necessary. The advocates also frequently offer opportunities for support groups either for the women or for their children.

Clara (name was changed), a young mother of three children came into the center a month ago with a concerned friend. Clara had suffered extreme trauma in an auto accident involving a Hummer with a snowplow as she was returning home from work. The driver's side of her vehicle was entirely demolished, and she herself was unconscious after the impact. Clara was taken by ambulance to the Iowa Falls Hospital and then on to Mercy Hospital in Mason City where she remained in a coma for three days. Her hair was shaved off and a plate had to be implanted in her skull. She does not remember what happened at the accident, had no driver's license and was undocumented. Fortunately, Megan Rosenberg, a young lawyer and an adjunct board member of *La Luz Hispana*, made contact with a personal injury lawyer in Des Moines. Through Megan's office, the Des Moines lawyer obtained the facts of the case by telephone, talking to Clara through Maura's interpretation and agreed to accept the case. Without this legal aid, Clara would have been left with enormous hospital bills and no disability pay. The Des Moines lawyer will put an investigator on the case and

there will most likely be an accident reenactment. Since this very reputable lawyer accepted the case, we have some confidence that justice will be procured.

After the appalling public outrage against the immigration authorities in the Postville meatpacking raid of May in 2008, the IRS has chosen what is often termed "silent raids". This refers to the systematic and rather arbitrary checking of the documents of workers in the huge and widely scattered hog and chicken containment farms of northcentral Iowa or other areas of the country. The following is an excerpt from the wife of one of the Hampton Hispanic men, who was dismissed for lack of a social security number. The letter was addressed to the company president and expresses her anguish over the situation:

. . . By means of this letter, I address you with all possible respect that you and your company deserve. . . Maybe for you it's just another employee who leaves your company; you may not notice his absence because of the great number of employees in your company account; but for us, we live my husband's layoff in a painful way, because it affects us deeply. My husband gave 16 years of his life to the company. He entered as a young inexperienced 19-year old, but based on great effort and dedication, has risen gradually to become assistant technical manager. He is leaving today as a mature and responsible man who loves and respects his work; he was even awarded a trip to Las Vegas for being a good employee. My written words are supported by all of the evaluations regarding my husband's work over all of the time that he has been working for you and for your company; this in addition to the testimony of people who have been in charge of him, including heads, managers, and supervisors who have qualified his work as excellent. . . because I do not quite understand that you have not even attempted to help my husband fix his legal immigration status so that today he cannot continue working for your company, as he has done for almost 16 years. . . This is all that I wanted to express and I am asking God to bless you, and I thank you in advance for your attention. . .

Working with students who could possibly be eligible for DACA status has its rewards and sometimes its grief. Recently a brother and sister came to *La Luz Hispana* asking Sister Carmen for help in completing the paper work necessary to obtain the DACA status. The process began with a series of qualifying questions, which if all could be answered positively, meant that they could collect the documents or other papers needed in order to meet with an immigration lawyer. Since the majority of inquiries were answered favorably, the hopes for this brother-sister team grew more optimistic.

But, alas, the one determining requirement brought distress: one must have been physically present in the U.S. on or before June 15, 2012. The brother and sister were 9 days short of meeting this guideline. Our hearts broke with this family as the painful news sank in that they would not qualify for DACA status. We called JFON (Justice for Our Neighbors) hoping for a loophole. The immigration lawyer informed us that our only possibility would be that DACA guidelines might change under the current or future administration. The only response of the young people was, "That's okay. We'll keep praying that things will change."





HOTEL HOPE Update • April 2016

MAKING ROOM FOR HOPE

GiveNOLA ... Remember HOTEL HOPE!

On **Tuesday, May 3**, by the Greater New Orleans Foundation, GiveNOLA Day is the community's one-day, online giving event to inspire people to give generously to the nonprofit organizations that are making our region stronger, creating a thriving community for all.

It's our day to come together as one! Every dollar donated from **midnight to midnight** on May 3 will be increased

with additional "lagniappe" dollars provided by the Greater New Orleans Foundation and our generous GiveNOLA Day sponsors. Last year we raised \$4 million dollars from 34,000+ donations around the nation!



With your generosity **Hotel Hope** raised over \$11,000 last year in 24 hours! Help us move that needle forward! — Mary Lou

Homelessness is real ... Affordable housing is shrinking

Many poor people are at risk of homelessness. Ultimately, this is because it is hard for them to afford housing. Unemployment, the housing cost burden and living doubled up are indications of this struggle to afford housing. Longitudinal trends and changes from 2013 to 2014 indicate that populations at risk of homelessness may be starting to benefit from the economic recovery.

- In 2014, 7 million people in poor households were doubled up with family and friends, the most common prior living situation before becoming homeless. This represents the **first significant decrease since the Great Recession**. Still, the number of people in poor households living doubled up is 52 percent higher now than in 2007, prior to the recession.
- The number of **poor renter households experiencing severe housing cost burden**, those households in poverty paying more

than 50 percent of their income toward housing, totaled 6.6 million in 2014, increasing 2.1 percent nationally from 2013, with 33 states seeing an increase.

- From 2013 to 2014, the number of unemployed people fell 16 percent, and **the unemployment rate continued its multi-year decline**, falling to 6.2 percent in 2014. Every state and the District of Columbia saw decreases in the number of unemployed people.
- The number of **people** in poverty (48.2 million) and the poverty rate (15.5 percent) remained relatively steady in 2014. Thirty-two states and the District of Columbia saw a decrease in the number of people in poverty; 18 saw an increase.

Source: *National Alliance to End Homelessness*. Go to this link: <http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/SOH2016#ChapterTwo>

Interested in becoming involved?

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HOTEL HOPE

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Hotel Hope Update is a monthly sharing with Dubuque PBVM Sisters and Associates.
Communications Team: Mary Lou Specha, PBVM; Julie Marsh, PBVM; Beth Kress, PBVM

Family Homelessness



A mother and father with a 17-year-old son and an 18-year-old

daughter have been living in a one-star hotel since January. In order for this family to be eligible for housing assistance, proof of homelessness is required.

This means that a family must have experienced living out of their car, on the streets or at a shelter for at least five days. If a family has a son over the age of 15, however, they are unable to get into a shelter for liability reasons (fear of becoming a sexual predator).

As I tried to think of ways to get this family out of a hotel, which is costing them \$200 a week for a room without a microwave or refrigerator, I couldn't help but think I will have to put them out of the only safe place they know... make them homeless... in order to get them into a more permanent house. This is insane!

The City of New Orleans and the agencies working with homeless families are creating a coordinated entry system which will prioritize the severity of need each family is experiencing. The Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization and Decision Assistance Tool Survey (VI-SPDAT) is used as intake information for each shelter and sent to UNITY of Greater New Orleans, an overall umbrella of homelessness resources, in order to prioritize the homeless families within the entire city.

Following a meeting with the agencies very recently, my family of four is eligible for assistance. They could possibly be housed within the next couple of weeks. Keep them in your prayers along with countless other families struggling desperately to find a safe place to live. —Julie



HISPANIC OUTREACH MINISTRY OF EVANGELIZATION

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"For nothing is impossible with God"

As I listened to those words in the Gospel for the feast of the Annunciation, and as Father Doug reiterated them in his homily, I did not realize until the day went on what a powerful impact they would have on me.



When I started my Bible sharing groups, I met (Maria), who is in her mid-30's and pregnant. She was having health issues, and the doctors sent her to Iowa City. She was told that the baby was going to have serious health problems, and that she should think about abortion before the first trimester ended. Maria told them that under no circumstances would she do that, that she would accept the baby and take care of him no matter how much care he needed.

Maria worked in a factory, was on her feet all day, and sometimes had to lift heavy boxes. The doctor told her that she needed to have lighter work, and when the managers would not do that and her health was compromised further,

she had to quit. Then she was put on bed rest for several weeks so as not to deliver prematurely. Through it all, Maria continued to come to Bible sharing and her faith in God's providence inspired me. At least twice she was the only one who came and I knew that Maria needed that time to share, to cry, to pray. God certainly gifted me with Maria's presence to increase my own faith.

The priest in the parish was alerted to Maria's condition by another woman, and enrolled Maria in Gabriel's project. He prayed with her and talked to her. His kindness was appreciated, and the people in the parish gifted Maria with a crib, car seat, and clothes for the baby.

The doctors were going to induce labor on Monday, the feast of the Annunciation. Maria and her family went to Mass in Spanish at St. Patrick's, and in the early morning hours on Monday, Maria gave birth to a healthy baby boy, who weighed 9 lbs.2 oz. She told her husband to ask the doctor and the nurses several times if the baby had any health issues. They assured her he was fine and when I went to the hospital to visit in the afternoon, his ruddy complexion and chubby cheeks, with a full head of hair, was an obvious sign that God had listened to Maria's cry for help. Maria has 17 and 13-year-old girls, and a 6-year-old boy. All are rejoicing, along with her husband at this miracle.

"For nothing is impossible with God."



Sister Paula Schwendinger

PRESENTATION CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY 2016						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

(B) = birthday
 (F) = feast day
 (R) = reception
 (b) = baptismal

2	Sister Ann Jackson (B)
3	Cathy Schmitz
4	Sister Jessi Beck (B) / Mary Rohner
6	Sister Benjamin Duschner (B)
8	Sister Sharon Kelchen (B)
12	Verona Buchner
14	Becky Searcy
20	Sister Paula Schwendinger (B)
23	Sister Mary Lou Specha (B)
26	Sister Mery Cari Paz (B)
28	Judy Kluesner
31	Dianne McDermott

Special Events

8	Mother's Day
30	Memorial Day

PRAYERS

March 19, 2016 – April 15, 2016

4/14

Pat Hobart, brother-in-law of Sister Mary Dennis Lentsch, died Wednesday, April 13. Pat is Maureen's husband. Mary Dennis is very grateful for all the prayers offered for her family. Please also remember Maureen who goes for her second chemo treatment for ovarian cancer on April 14.

4/12

Please remember my sister, Jeanne Kress, in your prayers. This Wednesday, she will have another ecogram and meet with her cardiologist to see how her condition of congestive heart failure is in three months' time (last appt. was Jan. 13).

We still do not have a decision regarding open heart surgery to replace the aortic value vs. using medication only. I know that it is not an easy decision and Jeanne has felt understandably fearful about surgery. As her guardian, I would never tell her she must have surgery. We place this in God's hands.

Sister Beth Kress

4/11

I met with the oncologist this morning. I will begin chemo on Thurs. at Medical Associates. The plan is that I will get chemo one day every 3 weeks. Please continue to keep me in your prayers.

Sister Lynn Wagner

4/10

Funeral arrangements for Cele Barth Doyle, Sister Marie Barth's sister, who passed away this weekend. Our prayers are deeply appreciated by Sister Marie and all the family. Please continue to pray for all.

3/29

On Easter Monday I had my follow-up appointment in Madison. The news was not good. I have endometrial cancer. So in a few weeks I will begin 6 sessions of chemo--which will take about 18 weeks, followed by 5 weeks of radiation. Thankfully, all this can be done in Dubuque. Thank you for all your prayers, cards, words of encouragement, and just being there for me. I rely on your continued prayers and support.

Sister Lynn Wagner