



# COMMUNITY NOTES

## Sisters of the Presentation

January 2016

What is your *definition* of mercy? Pope Francis says,

“...mercy is a key word that indicates God’s action towards us. He does not limit himself merely to affirming his love, but makes it visible and tangible. Love, after all, can never be just an abstraction. By its very nature, it indicates something concrete: intentions, attitudes, and behaviours that are shown in daily living. As the Father loves, so do his children. Just as he is merciful, so we are called to be merciful.”

Intention...attitude...behavior...visible...tangible...concrete...daily living...action.



What is your *image* of mercy? In the Trappistines’ 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary book “A Life of Hope: Our Lady of the Mississippi Abbey” is an image drawn by one of their sisters that speaks of this action. It is Mary consoling Eve. Yet even more so, it is Mary bringing salvation, the incarnated Jesus, to Eve – what better action of mercy could there be?

As we define and image mercy this year, what will be our actions, individually and collectively, that bring Jesus to others? Reflection on this, brought to mind our Commitment statements from *Witness to Love*:

- We will actively participate in the evangelization of the people of God.
- We will study and promote the Church’s teachings, especially those on justice and peace.
- We will respect and protect human life at every stage of its development.
- We will affirm the dignity of all persons and work to enhance their feelings of self worth.
- We will confront oppressive structures that permit discrimination, especially against women and children.
- We will be in solidarity with the poor.
- We will affirm the rich diversity of God’s gifts and develop leadership styles which encourage collaboration.
- We will promote policies that protect and enhance the environment.
- We will be instruments of reconciliation in a broken world.

As we reflect on our Commitments, what will be our actions of mercy this year?

Sister Leanne

## Visitations:

During our 2015 Community Days everyone was invited to enter into a year of “Visitation” in lieu of Regional Meetings. Beth, Ann, Leanne and I, are making every effort to visit with each member of the community this year. We also encourage your intentional scheduling for Visitations with others as well. May these opportunities for “Visitation” deepen our relationships, engender courage for mission, and help us to mutually respond to the longings of our hearts as we live into our present and future. May they “make our hearts leap for joy, be a mutual source of delight and blessing, birth forth strength, joy, laughter, and wisdom for engaging the future, and help us discover more deeply how the mysterious power and friendship of God is drawing us forth.

During this coming year may we continue to intentionally seek opportunities for visitations and companion one another in “conversations that matter”. May we strengthen one another, whether by phone, Skype, ZOOM, face to face visits or other creative options for all the newness that is being born in our midst.

## Welcome!

Our two sisters from Vietnam arrived on Sunday, January 10. They are enrolled in English classes four days a week at NICC and our sisters at Mt. Loretto will assist them with reinforcement/practice in conversation/grammar, etc. each day. They wish to fully participate in our community life and prayer and will help in any way they can during the two years they are with us before beginning degree work in Houston. The names of these delightful people are Sister Huyen and Sister Nuong.

Thanks to all the sisters and staff who have so graciously welcomed them.



## Community Reminders:

- **All drivers:** please review the policy and procedure (4.2a) on driving. In brief, sisters who reach 60 are asked to complete the self-evaluation and discuss it with their contact person; sisters who reach 65 are asked to take a Defensive Driving course to update their skills and share the verification of such with their contact person.  
\*\*Note: although not required, it would be good if you are a driver over 65 and it has been 5 years or more since you took a Defensive Driving course, that you take another one.
- **Forms:** If you are one of the few who has not updated your financial General Power of Attorney and/or Will this past summer, please do so as soon as possible.  
\*\*If you do not have a current ‘Five Wishes’ form on file, please complete that as soon as possible.
- **List Serve:** The purpose of the list serve is to post community-wide information to our sisters, associates and employees. This includes official announcements as well as such items as prayer requests and funeral information for immediate relatives of sisters, associates and employees as requested. We are happy to post other prayer requests on the Mt. Loretto bulletin board but do not put them on the list serve.



## Ever Emerging

"Evolutionary Spiral"  
Artist: Mary Southard, CSJ  
[www.MarySouthardArt.Org](http://www.MarySouthardArt.Org)  
Courtesy of [www.MinistryOfTheArts.Org](http://www.MinistryOfTheArts.Org)  
Congregation of St. Joseph

Just about 182 days until Community Days 2016! We are literally halfway between Community Day gatherings! How are you and your emerging circle contributing to the *Great Turning*?

- ☉ Individually and as a circle, what have you found challenging? What can you do to engage and energize?
- ☉ What initiative, if implemented within your circle, would have the greatest impact for the common good?
- ☉ How can we advance this movement together? How can and will we share with everyone the sources of energy and movement of this *Great Turning*?

On July 18, 2015, each emerging circle was offered opportunity to review insights from Community Days 2015.

" We heard the call to...

We hosted the conversation and heard you say...

Our next turn on the spiral will include...

The question *now* that draws us forward is...."

Circles offered the following:

### Collaborative Leadership Circle

- Leadership is easier when goals are clear. Basecamp works for some; alternative means of communication are needed and were used. It takes time to respond meaningfully and connecting with group members is difficult because of time and distance.
- Offer a tool for inventory of personal leadership style or strengths. Offer new models of elected leadership within our community.
- Who is willing to join our circle to further collaborative leadership? We will invite.

### Futuring Circle

- To examine our identity as Sisters of the Presentation of Dubuque IA.
- That you offered the strong communal sense that at this time God is calling us to sustain our DBQ PBVM entity while we continue to move forward in mission and ministry.
- Moving to other emerging circles to share our energy and the fruits of our research and discussion.
- To commit ourselves to live and nourish the values/strengths which we as a community identified last summer and are on this card for our contemplation and action.

### **1000 Welcomes Circle**

- Broaden our partnership and relationships. Take energy from here back to our own physical space in our heads and hearts.
- Creative ways of presenting Nano's stories, leading us into intentional mystery and mutuality. Come up with practical impetus for vision of 1000 welcomes.
- How do we create an experience in a way we are ALL transformed, while we are open to the Spirit and reflecting on language of us/them!

### **Initial Formation Circle**

- We hear the call to... *with the consultation with others within and beyond the community* – review current practices and explore possibilities of developing and implementing new processes regarding initial membership.
- We hosted conversations with you...at the regional gatherings, and with the accompanying communities of initial members in Chicago and Bolivia. We heard you say that you would like to hear directly from newer members about their longings and hopes for religious life; that you would like us to continue to consider the reality of today's world and the calls, needs and dreams of newer members; that you acknowledge and assume your personal responsibility to initial and life-long formation.
- Exploring new language to articulate our initial formation processes in this new moment in religious life; fostering healthy, mutual intergenerational and intercultural living; keeping charism, mission and community at the heart of these processes; maintaining the values of prayer, community, service, universality and life-long learning while taking community to the margins globally.
- How will living the questions help us to illuminate the initial and life-long formation processes we hope to live into?

### **Stewardship Property and Sustainability Circle**

- Be intentional, strategic in your planning, keep us involved, community is a core-living value.
- Begin with research. Continue communication. Community understanding based on a study of the encyclical..
- How do we keep the Directional Statement and community values driving this circle?

### **Spiraling Mission Groups Circle**

- We are passionate about....immigration reform, global warming, ecology: water, land air; eliminating human trafficking and women and children in poverty and indigenous people.
- Networking for local action; sharing of resources for raising awareness; learning our technology tools: ZOOM, Doodle, Basecamp.
- How can we educate ourselves and others? What can I do where I am?  
How can I make connections from day-to-day tasks to the bigger picture?  
How can we get more immigration stories out? What will we do to share our enthusiasm and fire?

### **Election Process Circle**

- We hear the call to explore new election processes for leadership.
- We heard you say that you have energy for a model of communal discernment for elections.
- Our next turn on the spiral is to present this model to the Chapter Preparation Committee.

*May we each know ourselves ever emerging...*



## Reverencing relationships / fostering partnerships...

My supervisor at Mercy and a Vice President, Laura Wenman, forewarned us lobby receptionists that a team would be coming to Mercy Medical Center, Des Moines, IA, to observe how we extended hospitality to our patients and visitors.

One Monday morning shortly after I had arrived at the information desk in the main lobby at Mercy, a gentleman approached the desk and said that he was to meet an employee. I said that I wasn't aware of anyone looking for him, but he might like to have a seat in the lobby and the person would probably be with him shortly. I went about my business of greeting others who entered the hospital and giving out information or helping those who approached the desk with questions.

Soon the first gentleman returned to the desk. When asked if I knew where a conference room was, I gave him directions. Before he left he asked my name and if I liked working at Mercy. I assured him I very much liked what I did, that I had a wonderful supervisor, and that I enjoyed my fellow co-workers.

About two hours later, my supervisor approached me with a smile and said that she had just come from a meeting and had heard something wonderful. She said that the gentleman that spoke to me was on the observation team. He stood up in the meeting and said, "You ought to clone Sister Pamela! She is doing a wonderful job."



Of course, I was happy to hear the affirmation. I also thought how well this ministry is so closely attuned to our Directional Statement of reverencing relationships and fostering partnerships. I have been impressed with how Mercy continues to promote reverence and compassion as part of their core values and am privileged to partner with them in living these values.

*Sister Pamela Quade*

### 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.

# From the Office of... VOCATIONS

“**Discernment** isn’t sitting around waiting for a booming voice to send driving directions for your life; it’s downshifting your ego and your desires and your dreams, ever so gently setting them on the shelf for a moment, and trying to hear the quiet voice of the **You** under and beyond the person you are in the world. The **You** who knows full well when you sinned, though no one else will ever know; the **You** who feels ashamed and embarrassed after you are snide and rude and cutting and sarcastic and cruel, though you would never admit that to a soul. Call that interior **You** whatever you like. Call it the voice of the Mercy that spoke everything into being. Call it the shard of the light that lives in every soul, and is the actual miraculous resurrection, with total respect to the empty tomb long ago. Call it conscience, soul awareness, awakening, epiphany, your better nature, your deepest music, your unadorned self, the one who has taken off all masks, shucked all personas.” (Brian Doyle, editor of Portland Magazine)

In the preface of the book “*Church of Mercy*” by Pope Francis, Giuliano Vigini, Professor at the Catholic University of Milan, says “The life of the Church needs to be cleansed, renewed and revitalized. This requires an ecclesial and pastoral **discernment** that enables the Church to rediscover the essence of its missionary mandate in the light of the Holy Spirit and with the intercession of Mary, mother of the task of proclaiming the Gospel.”

So how do we take this exhortation to the personal level? What is asked of each person in this **discernment** process?

In an article entitled “Do-it-yourself discernment retreat” printed in the latest *Vision Vocation* magazine, we are told that the process of discernment is simply the time we take to identify our strengths and gifts and determine how they may best be put to use in joyful service to the church and the world. Here are seven steps that might help each person explore the depths of a rich prayer life and develop a greater understanding of vocation.

1. Don’t leave it to the experts. Everyone in a community is important. We, like the apostles, are called to encounter struggles, relationships and missteps in such a way that we learn and grow as we get to know God more deeply.
2. Take the hard road. We assume the apostles must have been solid, holy people because Jesus handpicked them to be part of his inner circle of friends and disciples. To the contrary, these were ordinary people who weren’t always clear about Jesus’ message, who occasionally turned their back on Him even when he was most in need, and who struggled with their own faith. The apostles’ relationship with Jesus, as well as with their faith, was work in progress (the hard road) that ultimately brought them closer to God.
3. Have passion for compassion. Saint Paul’s life is an example of being unsure of life’s direction. In the end Paul redirected his life to bring others the message of God’s love. He had passion around forming a community of like-minded people to

pursue his mission. He had to wait and be patient. It can take time to find one's calling and be confirmed in it. But the joy is worth the wait.

4. Learn to love. Jesuit theologian James Keenan says that sin is simply not bothering to love. Sin isn't the absence of love; love is already there. It's the failure to choose to take advantage of opportunities to love.
5. Have a seat! Please sit down. Anywhere is fine. We don't need to have the seat at the right hand of God, but where we sit affects what we do—our neighbor's comfort or discomfort.
6. Walk with me. Jesus sent out the disciples in pairs. Having a spiritual companion can be a great help and comfort on the sometimes difficult spiritual journey. Cultivate spiritual friendships in your own life.
7. Be a legend in your own time. Stories are told and sometimes it is difficult to separate fact from fiction as the years pass. Your own track record with regard to generosity, compassion, love, and passion will be easier to tally. Will anyone sing praises of your generosity, your compassion, your love and your passion? If not what can you do today to start building your own lasting legacy?

Your vocation journey, wherever it takes you, should ultimately bring joy. God wants nothing less for you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rita". The letter "R" is large and loops around the "i", and the "t" and "a" are connected and written in a fluid, elegant style.

# Our Journey in Formation



## **Wake Up the World: Consecrated Life for Our Time** **Sisters Marilyn Breen, Janet Stelken, and Mary Therese Krueger**

During the fall semester Mary Therese, Janet and Marilyn attended a class, *Wake up the World, Consecrated life for Our Time*, at Catholic Theological Union taught by Maria Cimperman RSCJ. This course was a good opportunity to respond to Pope Francis' call for the Year of Consecrated Life and to study particular areas that invite waking up the world and waking up consecrated life for our time. Maria asked us to consider what we must let go of and open ourselves to in order to live the call we are given by God's own Spirit.

Consecrated life can be defined as several ways of life in the Church, all of which presume a special dedication to God marked by attempting to conform oneself to the life of Jesus Christ. The following are forms of consecrated life: Religious Life, Secular Institutes, Hermits, Consecrated Virgins, Societies of Apostolic Life, Associations of the faithful, Lay Ecclesial Movements.

Those who participated in the class included members of several religious communities of women and men, as well as two consecrated virgins. There were several newer members of communities as well as members who have been in community 20, 30 or even 50 years!

The reading and presentations challenged us to consider the world that we live in, the constitutions of our congregations, and the stories of religious life from the beginnings. Topics included: *Laudato Si*, the vows, intercultural living, charism, changes called for by Vatican II and the community response to change.

One evening we shared the origin, founder or foundress, charism of each community represented in the class. The sharing acknowledged the similarities and the uniqueness of each group, emphasizing the importance of living out the specific charism of each community.

One of the biggest challenges we face is understanding and responding to our call in the circumstances of the world we live in. How can we Wake up the World? How can we understand the vows for our time and in all of the many cultural realities? How can our Charism be a gift to the world and how will we creatively change to find new and deeper meaning?

For those who would like to do more reading on these topics we suggest:

- Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*
- *The Moral Imagination* by John Paul Lederach
- *Living Mission Interculturally* by Anthony Gittins
- *Social Analysis for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* by Maria Cimperman
- Pope Francis, "Apostolic Letter" to All Consecrated People on the Occasion of the Year of Consecrated Life, November 21, 2014





## From the... *Associate Partnership Office*

Carol Witry, Co-Director  
Joan Brincks, PBVM, Co-Director

phone 563.588.2008 ext 608  
fax 563.588.4463  
email associates@dubuquepresentations.org

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT...**

“The angel said to them (the shepherds), “Do not be afraid. I am here with good news for you, which will bring great joy to all the people.” Luke 2:10

*What good news of joy have you experienced in the past year? What good news of joy have you shared with others?*

### **POPE FRANCIS INSPIRES ASSOCIATES:** Mary Stanton

January is a New Year for us all and the Year of Mercy declared by Pope Francis has begun. The Year of Mercy is an invitation to love, kindness, and unbounded generosity. It offers the opportunity to encounter the incredible mercy of God. Encountering mercy means encountering God. This can transform your life, your relationships, your work, and your ability to embrace and experience all of life.

#### ***We are reminded of the Corporal Works of Mercy:***

1. Feed the hungry.
2. Give drink to the thirsty.
3. Clothe the naked.
4. Shelter the homeless.
5. Visit the imprisoned.
6. Bury the dead.

#### ***And we are also reminded of the Spiritual Works of Mercy:***

1. Counsel the doubtful.
2. Instruct the ignorant.
3. Admonish the sinner.
4. Comfort the sorrowful.
5. Forgive injuries.
6. Pray for the living and the dead.

The Cities of Faith group with Sister Joan Brincks and associates from the Forest City and Mason City areas have started Pope Francis' encyclical letter called “On Care of Our Common Home.” We also have a good discussion booklet with questions that is very helpful. There are many news reports as well as newspaper and online articles to supplement our readings and discussion.

Putting mercy and a “culture of care” into action, associate Julie Duncan suggested we assist a man in the area who was in need of a winter coat. The group took up a collection for him. The man was very happy shopping and choosing his own new coat!



*Cities of Faith group:  
Front row left to right: Sr Joan Brincks,  
Jane Nagy, and Stephanie Jacobson.  
Back row: Harry and Mary Irene Stanton,  
Julie and Jeff Duncan. (Missing from the  
picture are Kathy Meinecke and Julie  
Blomme)*

*Cities of Faith members engage  
with the Caritas materials this  
past fall.*



### **LENT REFLECTION BOOKLETS**

Thanks to all who have delivered Lent booklets to help reduce the cost of postage. If you've not yet received yours, be assured that all booklets will be delivered before Ash Wednesday.

### **MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

The spring Sister and Associate Retreat will be April 16-17. Plan now to join as we reverence our relationships with God, others, Earth and self! Your presence will enrich everyone's retreat experience!



**SAVE THE DATE! (And your gently used items)**  
April 28-30 and May 5-7, 2016

# FELIZ AÑO NUEVO HAPPY NEW YEAR



The New Year brings lots of joy, excitement and good things; also, many things to do and prepare before our trip and time is flying.

The preparation time has been a blessing because it has allowed us to get to know each other. We have had the continued support and prayers of our partners, sisters and associates, strengthening and encouraging us in our planning.

The idea of meeting with the Tarija and Entre Ríos communities makes us reflect how much we are going to learn about their culture, food, tradition, and most importantly, their people. We are sure that this experience is going to change our lives. And, in some way, it is going to give us the opportunity to understand what Mary and Joseph experienced during their pilgrimage and what millions and millions of people go through when they come to our country.

Last Sunday during his homily, Father Doug said that if three wise women had come to honor baby Jesus instead of the three kings, they would have arrived on time because they would have stopped and asked for directions. They would have brought wise and practical gifts. They would have helped clean the stable and prepare a meal for Mary. We want to be like these three wise queens and bring practical gifts to our Bolivian friends and with your help we know we can do it. Don't forget to visit the Sisters' website and see how you can contribute. <http://dubuquepresentations.org/>

We want to thank you for your continued support and prayers. Many blessings for this New Year.

*Samuel Neil*

*Colleen Ventur*

*DORASERNA*

## TO ACCESS OUR WEBPAGE:

1. Go to **www.dubuquepresentations.org**
2. Click on **Members Login** in the upper right hand corner.
3. Enter your **username** and **password**.  
(Contact Jane Buse at [jane@dubuquepresentations.org](mailto:jane@dubuquepresentations.org) if you do not remember your login.)
4. Once logged in, click on **Bolivia Venture 2016** on the navigation on the left hand side.

## Relics

A recent question about a relic in our collection sparked an interest in the topic. The discovery of an article in the Telegraph Herald dated Oct. 24, 1998, sent this archivist searching through lists and boxes to see what saints' relics are in our possession.

A document dated March 20, 1997, states:

"This envelope contains original documents for relics at Mt. Loretto as well as copies of the same. Also a listing of the documents and as many of the documents as we could find when we moved the relics and documents from the sacristy of the present chapel.

"Many of these most likely were left in the sacristy when the seminary was closed. Others may have been turned in by individual sisters at Mt. Loretto."



Included with the above document was a list of 57 saints for whose relics the documents are in the archives. In all, 113 small reliquaries are contained in the boxes, though many are lacking documentation.

Two large crosses (apparently from side rosaries) open up to reveal multiple tiny reliquaries inside. One of these belonged to Sister Mary Rosalia Plamondon, and the other is not identified.

Some of the items in the collection are questionable, falling into the category described by Fr. Neil Manternach in the Telegraph Herald article this way: "There were enough splinters to make the equivalent of half a dozen crosses upon which Jesus had been crucified, scores of leg bones of St. Peter and so forth." These would include the Crib of Jesus, and St. Paul the Apostle.

In spite of the abuses during the low years in Church history when "relics" were manufactured and sold, authentic relics remain a part of the tradition of honoring the saints with an eye to emulating their lives. Some of us treasure a relic of Venerable Nano Nagle as a reminder of our roots and our mission.

*Sister M. Hermann*



**Board of Trustees**

*Carol Walsh*

*President*

*Luis Rojas*

*Vice-President*

*Brad Kane*

*Treasurer*

*Louise Scieszinski, PBVM*

*Secretary*

*Rita Cameron, PBVM*

*Kevin Deeny*

*Sheila Ann Dougherty, PBVM*

*Benjamin Duschner, PBVM*

*Laurie Noel*

*Hermann Platt, PBVM*



***Corine Murray, PBVM***

*Executive Director*

*900 Jackson Street*

*Suite LL5-1*

*Dubuque, Iowa 52001*

***phone*** 563.557.7134

***cell*** 563.542.1226

***email*** lanterncenter@aol.com

**Blessings for the New Year**

A heartfelt thank you to all of the people who were so generous to the center during the past year, especially during the Christmas season. Support for the immigrants is so important at this time when the news is full of negative messages.

**Almost finished**

One of our students, originally from Ukraine, went to Des Moines for the fingerprinting process on December 21. Soon, she will be scheduled to take the actual test which I believe she will pass with flying colors. As a citizen, she can sponsor other family members. Ukraine, a country on the border of Russia, is a troubled place at this time.

**It's a girl!**

The family that was sponsored by the Associate Group, Joyful Servants of the Light, had a baby girl. They were overwhelmed with the generosity of the associate group. Both the mother and little Maria are doing well.

**Almost ready for Christmas**

One of our former families thought they were all ready for Christmas, only to discover that when they returned home after a trip to the grocery store, all of their Christmas presents had been stolen. Even the computers from the children's backpacks were taken. The youngest daughter shared that they did not take her dolls, even though one of them was wearing a tiara. This family of five, parents and three children, received some assistance from others who heard about their situation. Through a grant from the Archdiocese of Dubuque-Campaign for Human Development, we were also able to provide some assistance.

**A Sad New Year**

One of our current families experienced the unexpected death of the husband/ father. He had been sick for a few days before Christmas. On one of those days, he got out of bed, fell and hit his head. He was taken to the hospital where he died. His wife and two little girls are trying to make sense of all of this. Please keep them in your prayers. Resurrection parish in Dubuque was very generous when I asked for some help for this family.

*Corine*

# ¿QUÉ TAL, BOLIVIA?

[WHAT'S HAPPENING, BOLIVIA?]

## Christmas in Entre Rios

The holidays brought time to relax with our visitors, but also the challenge of continuing our ministry with adults and children.

Hermanas Maura McCarthy and Rita Menart thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to renew acquaintances with people in the *pueblo*, in the rural areas and for Maura, especially, with the Guarani that she ministered with for so many years.

*Jessica, Samaniego, Betty, Jhorsey*



young man her age who due to an accident is confined to a wheelchair; Eusebia Merma and her five sons, four of whom were baptized at Christmas; visiting several of the Guarani communities and enjoying fish soup with Justina Cuellar and family in Yukimbia.

Jessica Thomas, Suzanne's niece, taking advantage of the semester break from St. Ambrose University, Davenport, IA, appreciated the opportunity to practice Spanish. Jessica enjoyed a variety of experiences and met many people such as Samaniego, a



*Jessica, Ventura, Pastor, Silver, Alfredo*

Hermana Mery and Jessica practiced Christmas songs with a group of children who sang at the Christmas Eve liturgy, the New Year's Eve Liturgy, as well as sharing the holiday spirit with prisoners in the jail in Entre Rios.

As we begin this New Year and continue our Bolivian ministry with catechists, sacramental preparation for adults, helping people get their identification papers (documents) and being present to the university students in Casa Betania, we are especially grateful for the loving support of the community and associates.



*Maribel, Jessica, Benita and Jhoel*



*Back row: Hermanas Therese & Suzanne  
Front row: Hermanas JoAnne Leo, Maura, Marge, Mery & Rita*



On the Evening of December 12, thank you to everyone for coming to our celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe. We hope you enjoyed the evening, the dances and food. Thanks also to the many people who helped make this night possible. It was a grand success! So proud of each and every one of our dancers.



*Maura* *Charmen*

# Hotel Hope Update

## January 2016

### Affordable Housing in United States

#### Did you know that... ?

- Roughly one in five renters earning less than \$15,000 annually would need their rent to be under \$400 to be affordable.
- Between 2001 and 2014, the number of households with severe burdens (paying more than half of their income for housing) jumped from 7.5 million to 11.4 million.
- The households most likely to be severely cost burdened have dependent children and/or rely on a single income, spending 38 percent less on food and 55 percent less on healthcare in order to pay their rent.
- One out of every eight rentals under \$600 a month, which is the range for lowest-income renters, is physically inadequate.
- Households lacking stable, decent-quality housing are more vulnerable to health problems and developmental delays among children.
- Frequent moves, whether voluntary or forced, are associated with adverse health outcomes particularly for low-income families.

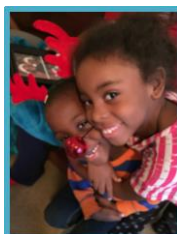
Statistics from the 2015 Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University: *America's Rental Housing – Expanding Options for Diverse and Growing Demand.*



#### 2016 Year of Mercy

- 4 families served
- 2 families housed

Since December 2015



*Blessings on your New Year!*

Thank you for your prayers and gifts to our ministry at **Hotel Hope**.

*Sr. Mary Lou Specha and Sr. Julie Marsh*

#### Interested in becoming involved?

##### Contact:

Mary Lou Specha, PBVM  
Executive Director  
4222 South Broad  
New Orleans LA 70125  
Cell: 504-715-9798

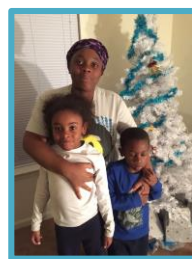
[mlspecha@hotelhope.org](mailto:mlspecha@hotelhope.org)



[www.facebook.com/hotelhope.nola](http://www.facebook.com/hotelhope.nola)

[www.hotelhope.org](http://www.hotelhope.org)

#### In a Home for Christmas



#### *A Gift for Kendra*

What a difference it can make when a community that CARES comes together.

Last month Kendra Charles and her fiancé, Sheik Bount, shared their journey that brought them to **Hotel Hope** following their eviction from the hotel in which they had been living. Their month stay at St. Thomas Catholic Worker, with only the clothes on their back, gave them the time and space they needed to connect to the resources available. Through relationships with the City of New Orleans, Sheik will be working more steadily where previously he had been working two-part time jobs with unpredictable hours.

The case manager helping us with crisis calls met with Kendra and Sheik to assess their qualifications for the Rapid Rehousing program for homeless families with income. Once they received word that they had qualified for the funds and Sheik found an apartment they could afford, volunteers from the Catholic Worker moved them into their new home.

From our community of friends and partners, we had furniture delivered to the house. The school teacher of each of the children delivered Christmas gifts to their new apartment. Food was donated in the spirit of the holidays. Due to Kendra's stress during her pregnancy, her medical doctor even stopped by her home to make sure she was doing well! "My face hurts from smiling so much," Kendra said.

This is the philosophy and vision of **Hotel Hope**. We believe that by creating a "Community of Care" that provides a variety of services to families in need, the family, especially the children will have a greater opportunity to thrive. We are blessed. — *Julie Marsh, PBVM*





# HISPANIC OUTREACH MINISTRY OF EVANGELIZATION

Hermana Paula Schwendinger, PBVM

Dirección: 2360 Carter Road, Dubuque, IA 52001

Email: paula@dubuquepresentations.org

Teléfono: 563.258.1105



As I reflect on the HOME ministry over this past month, I find myself identifying with the shepherds who came to Bethlehem. They **observed**, **learned** and **reflected** on their experience in the stable. I, too, have been **observing** the customs of the Hispanic people of this area. As I mentioned last month, they had a special Mass for the feast of Juan Diego on Dec. 9. The Dyersville paper reported that there were 300 people who celebrated the Mass and then enjoyed the typical Hispanic food, which was prepared by the people. This was the first attempt at bringing the cultures together and it was truly successful. As I **observed** the posadas, I learned how very different the Hispanics here celebrate them. Part of it is because of the cold climate, which prohibits processions and candles, and part of it has to do with the part of Mexico where they come from, the songs and prayers which they learned and passed on. Although I did not participate in all nine posadas, I was impressed by the number of families that participated and are eager to have their children, of various ages, carry on this custom.



This year I also **observed** for the first time the celebration of lullabying, and laying the Baby Jesus in the crib. This was a custom in Florida, but because I was so involved with the music and liturgies on Christmas Eve I could never participate. I was told that most families celebrate this in their own family, but I was invited to a larger celebration in Dyersville. There were over 50 people present, including two vans of friends and family who had come from Waterloo. The celebration begins with the rosary, the litany of Mary, and several other prayers. Then the children of the household remove the huge porcelain baby Jesus from the crib, remove his clothing and wipe him off with cotton swabs and baby oil. Then all the people present come forward to kiss baby Jesus, and receive a piece of candy from the plate beside him. All during this ritual songs are being sung. Then the baby is placed in a blanket, and two children rock Him back and forth, as a lullaby is sung. After that, the baby is placed back in the crib, and the blanket is placed over him, with the candies all around. Then a meal is served to all present. On Feb. 2, the feast of the Presentation of Jesus, there will be another celebration, where the baby Jesus will be lifted up and dressed. I have not been present for this celebration but hope to be there this year, so I will let you know what that entails.

So, as the shepherds on that first Christmas, I **observed** and **learned** from the people. When I **reflected** on my experience, I came to realize once again how much family and traditions play a part in the lives of the people. In Mexico, since most came from the country, they were not bombarded with the commercialism of Christmas and could truly observe the religious custom of waiting, looking for lodging for Mary and Joseph, and then celebrating Christ's birth. The parents are very much aware that if they do not teach these customs to their children, they will be lost. Therefore, from babies, to toddlers and grade, middle and high school age, all are present, and participating to some degree.

I was so impressed to see how the leaders emerged and who was willing to step forward and invite others. It is my hope to expand this to other towns, and also to invite the English-speaking population. Some were invited this year, but of course with out of town family members and parties, etc., they declined. Possibly Feb. 2, which is not a particularly busy day, they may share the celebration of the Presentation of Jesus with the Hispanic people.

I mentioned in my December note that two of our women from Farley were expecting babies. Both of them have delivered healthy babies. Matthew was born Dec. 22 and Victoria was born on Jan. 3. So along with Victoria's two year old brother, Bruno, who has been a part of our gatherings, we will now have two newborns in our midst! (Of course I won't mind holding either of them to give the mothers a break during our sharing time together!)

Another bit of news which the people shared with me this week when I was in Dyersville, and which was in the paper as well, is that a farmer in Earlville was fined and imprisoned for employing undocumented workers, as well as giving them a place to live. I later **learned** that this happened three years ago, that Father O'Connor found lodging for the family that very night, and the undocumented worker went to jail, served his time and is now working with legitimate documentation. However, it seems that just now the court system has tried the case of the farmer. But there are "whispers in the winds" that there are more raids in the area, so the people are on alert. I pray each day that my presence among them will be a "sign of hope and love to a broken world".

As the Christmas season draws to a close, I pray that I may continue to have the shepherds' gifts of **observing, learning, and reflecting** as I travel to visit the Hispanics of this eastern Iowa area.

Sister Paula Schwendinger

**PRAYERS**  
**December 19 – January 18**

**1/14**

Please pray for my sister Jeanne Kress and her doctors to decide on a care plan for her congestive heart failure. Sister Beth Kress

**1/13**

Sr. Annette Skyles will have a procedure that will provide a shock to her heart to hopefully restore her heart to a regular rhythm. She is very grateful for your prayers, notes and concern.

**1/12**

Sister Joetta Venneman's back surgery went very well. Joetta's mom and Jan are with her.

Prayers are requested for Chicago Associate, Kathryn Scudella, who died Sunday, Jan. 10th. She had been in an Alzheimer's Center for the past few years.

**1/10**

Sister Mary Lou Specha is having a series of medical tests this week and would very much appreciate your prayers and thoughts.

**1/9**

Associate Maureen McDonnell asks for prayers on January 13 when she returns to Omaha for her 6-month check-up for breast cancer

**1/8**

Mary Haas, cousin of Sisters Dolores & Josita Zieser, asks for prayers for her daughters, son-in-law and her granddaughter. Deborah – suffering with Multi-Myeloma cancer and soon will have her second Stem Cell transplant which makes her very ill. Julie's husband, Jon Bartlett, is suffering from Parkinson's disease. Julie's daughter, Sarah, a senior in high school, has just been diagnosed with pre-cancer colon polyps for a second time.

**1/4**

Please pray for Sister Barbara Rastatter's nephew, Pat Miller (Lo-E's son), who will have a kidney removed this Friday in Iowa City. The cancer on his lung is being treated medically.

**12/28**

Sister Joellen Price ask for prayers for her niece, Didi, who will undergo a total hysterectomy.

**12/22**

Associate, Chuck Schmidt, died suddenly last night, December 21. Please keep his wife Carol and the family in your prayers.

Sister Sheila Kane's cousin, Ellen, asks for prayers for her husband, Michael Mulroney, who will have surgery for tongue cancer on January 5. On 1/13 Michael suffered cardiac arrest but is now stable.

**12/21**

Please keep my brother-in-law, Jim Mauss, in your prayers. He had three heart by-passes last Monday. He got home from the hospital on Saturday and is doing very well. Also, please keep Pat Berry, mother of Ann Mauss, who is now in hospice. Thank you, Mary Lou Mauss, Associate

PRESENTATION CALENDAR OF EVENTS

# FEBRUARY 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					

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

- 1 Sister Brigid Stanley (F)
- 2 Mary Therese Krueger (B)
- 3 Sister Janet Stelken (B) / Lisa Zwanziger
- 8 Sister Annette Skyles (B)
- 10 Sister Joellen Price (B) / Karen Kurtt
- 14 Sister Carmelle Westemeier (B)
- 17 Radie Roberts
- 18 Sister Carla Popes (B) / Bernadette Graves
- 19 Mary Jane Besch
- 20 Helen M. Thielen
- 24 Sister Mary Jo Leifker (b)
- 27 Sister Richelle Friedman (B)
- 28 Sister St. James Lickteig (B)

### Special Events

- 5 St. Joseph Key West 1st class (1875)
- 10 Ash Wednesday
- 14 1st Sunday Lent / Valentine's Day
- 19 Death of Mother Vincent Hennessy (1880)

# WINDOWS 10

By now you have probably had many pop up messages instructing you to download your *FREE* copy of Windows 10 Operating System. But should you? There are compelling reasons to hold off upgrading your computer to Windows 10 at this particular point in time if you are using Windows 7.

## What is the free upgrade to Windows 10?

Microsoft is making Windows 10 available as a free upgrade for compatible devices that are running genuine Windows 7 Service Pack 1 or Windows 8 Update.

The free upgrade is a full version of Windows (not a trial or introductory version) and is available until July 29, 2016. Once you upgrade, you'll have Windows 10 for free on that device.

## How to decide: Should you upgrade to Windows 10?

If you want the free upgrade, you're not getting a choice of editions. If you're running Windows 7 Home Premium or Windows 8, you're getting Windows 10 Home. If you're running Windows 7 Professional or Ultimate or Windows 8 Pro, you're getting Windows 10 Pro. One thing to keep in mind is that Windows 10 Home will have mandatory updates. While that's a great safety net for the many users who don't bother to update their machines, there's always the chance Microsoft will include some options you may not want, as part of an update, and be unable to remove it.

### Recommendation summary

- **If you're buying a new PC:** Go ahead and get it with Windows 10 if you are ready for change and you are comfortable with the learning curve of a new operating system. Stick with Windows 7 if you are a casual user and are more comfortable with what you already know.
- **If you're running Windows 8:** Upgrade right away. Windows 8 is about to become forgotten to history.
- **If you're running Windows 7:** Unless you absolutely love one of the Windows 10 new features (most notably Cortana or the gaming features), you should stick with Windows 7.
- **Windows 10 Upgrade Verdict:** Wait. The updates are not completely functional and many users are downgrading BACK to Windows 7. The free upgrade will be available thru 7/29/2016.
- **Regardless of whether you choose to upgrade or not,** be sure you have your virus protection up-to-date, be mindful of never opening suspicious emails or websites, and download Malwarebytes, a free, run on demand program that will help detect malware, spyware and trojans that your virus protection may not catch. Run it once a week for extra protection. At download, uncheck the option of free trial version. You don't want just the trial.  
[http://download.cnet.com/Malwarebytes-Anti-Malware-Free/3000-8022\\_4-10804572.html](http://download.cnet.com/Malwarebytes-Anti-Malware-Free/3000-8022_4-10804572.html)