



# PRESENTATION DOORWAYS

*offering hospitality to the world*



# The COMMITTEE

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY by the  
Sisters of the Presentation  
2360 Carter Road  
Dubuque, Iowa 52001-2997 USA  
Phone: 563-588-2008 Fax: 563-588-4463  
Email: doorways@dubuquepresentations.org  
Web site: www.dubuquepresentations.org

PUBLISHER  
Jennifer Rausch, PBVM

EDITOR/DESIGNER  
Jane Buse

DOORWAYS COMMITTEE  
Karla Berns, Associate; Francine Quillin, PBVM;  
Colleen Venter, Associate; Leanne Welch, PBVM

*The congregation is a member of Sisters United News (SUN) of the Upper Mississippi Valley, National Communicators Network for Women Religious and the American Advertising Federation of Dubuque.*

## 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:

Editor, Presentation Doorways  
2360 Carter Road  
Dubuque, Iowa 52001-2997  
doorways@dubuquepresentations.org

## 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

## A Look Inside CONTENTS

Sisters of the Presentation | Spring 2013 | Volume 56 • Number 1

4

### Making a Lasting Impact

*Sister Julie Marsh ministers as director of campus ministry at the University of Saint Mary in Leavenworth, Kansas, where she is making a lasting impact on the lives of students.*



6

### Making Connections While Exploring Religious Life

*Living Nano Nagle's mission and exploring the shifts in religious life with other young Catholic sisters are guiding lights for Sister Jessi Beck as she continues her first year of life and ministry in Chicago, Illinois.*

8

### Driving God's Miss Daisies

*Tom Richard takes special care in transporting the sisters at Mount Loretto to and from necessary appointments and errands, amusing them with his good humor.*



10

### Where in the World is...

*Sister Dominic Church has reflected love of family and faith throughout her life. She now enjoys a ministry of community prayer and service.*



14

### Chapter 2012-2013

*On December 28, 2012, the Dubuque Presentation congregation entered into a week-long community Chapter to determine congregational direction and leadership for the next five years.*

23

### Mount Loretto & Beyond

*We share with you special times in the lives of Dubuque Presentation sisters, near and far.*

## Cover PHOTO

*Left to right: Sisters Benjamin Duschner, Ruth Ann Takes and Annette Skyles enjoy one another over a break during Chapter 2012-2013. Days of conversations, deep listening and contemplation strengthened bonds and widened the tent for their journey into the wonders of the unknown. Read more on page 14.*

*Contents photos: Top photo: Sister Julie Marsh with St. Mary's students; Middle photo: Tom Richard with Sister James Marie Gross; Bottom photo: Sisters Pamela Quade and Suzanne Gallagher.*

# A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

*Openings*

by LEANNE WELCH, PBVM

*This is the day the Lord has made.*

The responsorial psalm from Easter Sunday reminds us to live each day to the fullest. As Catholics we are rooted in our past but act in the now. We choose to make each day our best knowing that each day is a gift to serve God's people, especially those at the margins. This reality is personified in the articles contained in this issue of *Doorways*. The articles portray how sisters, associates, benefactors and co-workers, in their ordinary, daily lives, give evidence of our newly adopted directional statement which contains the phrases 'reverencing relationships,' 'celebrating unity,' and 'fostering partnerships.'

Two articles in this issue, "Making a Lasting Impact" and "Making Connections While Exploring Religious Life," embody several of these aspects, especially relationships and partnering. Sisters Julie Marsh and Jessi Beck also highlight our community commitment to education and service to the poor.

Two other articles, "All Things Are Connected" and "Charism's Fire: Transforming Our Journey," indicate the celebration of unity that is taking place each day among the various worldwide congregations of Presentation sisters (IPA) as we follow our foundress, Nano Nagle, and also within our own community as we choose our way forward. In addition, "When We All Work Together as One" illustrates how those living in poverty can be empowered to improve their situation when city, non-profits and the community at large unify and work together day-by-day.

For 10 years we have journeyed daily with others in our Associate Partnership – deepening our understanding of Nano Nagle, and her way of living the mission of Jesus. "Lantern Flames Shine" focuses on the spirituality and service dimensions of sisters and associates as we foster partnership.

Relationships are an underlying theme in the articles "Driving God's Miss Daisies," "Doing the Right Thing" and "Remembering Fairbank."

Each of the above stories is a mere sample of the many which could be and will be told over time about "how we live and move and have our being" (*Acts 17:28*) each day that the Lord gives us.

Our new directional statement begins with the phrases "Ignited by the fire of God's love and impelled by the legacy of Nano Nagle...." God and Nano call each of us and inspire us to live well this day that the Lord has made and then to rejoice and be glad.



## Our PURPOSE

The purpose of Presentation Doorways is to further the Gospel 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 invite others to become involved in our mission.

## 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, 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.

### Sisters of the Presentation LEADERSHIP TEAM

Sister Jennifer Rausch, president

Sister Marge Healy, vice-president

Sister Beth Driscoll, councilor

Sister Leanne Welch, councilor



Sister Julie Marsh (second from left) and her University of Saint Mary's students travel to New Orleans on a service trip with the hope of making a difference.

## Spiritual Growth, Service and Hospitality Making a Lasting Impact

by FRANCINE QUILLIN, PBVM

A very long way from Dougherty, Iowa, where Sister Julie Marsh grew up, is a university in Leavenworth, Kansas, where she is making a difference, not in the trite sense that one might say those words, but in a real and life-lasting way. In a word, Sister Julie is teaching university students to think about others, which means that her legacy will spread even beyond the borders of the United States as the students at the University of Saint Mary (USM) learn, through her efforts, how to be Christ to others.

Sister Julie, the director of campus ministry at the university, has a three-fold mission: spiritual growth of the students; service opportunities to expand the students' understanding of the world and its people; and hospitality.

This latter part of her mission has a rather unique twist to it. USM has many "first-generation" students (i.e., they are the first in their families to go to college), and almost 98 percent of the student body is on financial assistance, close to 50 percent on Pell Grants, so the hospitality extended out of Sister Julie's office is, in

part, to make students feel at home in a setting about which they know little, not having heard their parents or other relatives talk about "college days." It is also her hope that this hospitality will be remembered by those to whom she ministered in order to literally keep the university going financially in the future. But most significantly, it is the means by which she advances the first two elements of her mission.

To make hospitality a reality, Sister Julie's office is a true "Welcome Center." Located in the main campus building where all the classes are held, it is spacious and glass-enclosed so that students can know she is there, and can come in to take advantage of the food and coffee bar, the tables for studying or the soft chairs for visiting and, most importantly, the opportunity to get to know Sister Julie, to come to trust her, and eventually to respond to her efforts regarding the first two phases of her mission.

A warm and outgoing person by nature, it is not hard for Sister Julie to build relationships. But she has made special efforts in

that regard. For instance, because only 30 percent of the students are Catholic, she has joined the Leavenworth Clergy Association in order to try to involve other faiths in the spiritual life of young adults. She has also joined the Leavenworth Rotarians, a business organization whose sole purpose is to carry out local and international service. These professional men and women are contacts which enable her to connect students to local service experiences. As advisor to the Rotaract Club (Rotarian Club for university students) on campus, Sister Julie guides and encourages them to develop their leadership skills.

In addition, Sister Julie is the advisor for students who are Saint Vincent De Paul Service Scholarship winners committed to part-time service each semester at the Alliance Against Family Violence and with the Bethany Prison Ministry in Leavenworth. Her responsibilities continue as advisor for the S.O.D.A. (Sexual Orientation Diversity Alliance) club on campus that educates and supports students, faculty and staff in the area of tolerance.

With the help of the campus chaplain, a graduate assistant and a work-study student within the campus ministry department, Sister Julie provides formal and informal educational opportunities in the areas of spirituality, prayer and faith-sharing.

Recently Sister took some students of all faiths to an overnight retreat. Naturally, it was "pulling teeth" to get them to give up that time, but her reward came on the way home. "I heard their excitement as they talked to one another; I heard them marvel that 'God is always there, there in the midst of my break-ups, my failing grade, my loss when someone dies. God really loves me!'"

And then they posed the same question Sister Julie herself had asked years ago in college: "How can I keep this feeling alive?" Sister remembers saying to herself in those formative years: "This is what I want to do with my life. And I'm doing it!" she proclaims as she reflects on her present ministry. "I'm making God come alive for today's students. I'm giving them the confidence to ask questions they didn't even think they could ask or obtain accurate information in response. So many of them have such an incorrect understanding of church and of theology, and with the help of the incredible theology, philosophy and pastoral studies departments at USM, their academics and pastoral opportunities in campus ministry keep the questions coming. And the conversations keep me alive, help me to articulate what I believe in, so it's a 'win-win' ministry!"

Having now come to midlife, Sister Julie has had her own reflections on what her life means, what she has done to "make a difference," and all of the other questions that often arise at that point of life. That experience made her determined to help people begin to think at a younger age, "What should I do with my life to make a difference? My purpose in life is bigger than getting a degree or a job."

Toward that end she is involved in a deliberate attempt to bring spirituality into the classroom, athletics, etc. Labeled "NetVUE" (Networking Vocations in Undergraduate Education), this venture attempts to focus the students on what is most important in life and to find the common language across various faiths and fields of study to answer the question: "Why am I here?"

"With the help of this national program we hope to remain connected to students long after they have graduated and established their next life stages, in order to 'keep the feeling alive' that God is always there, no matter what the circumstances of one's life may be," states Sister Julie.

But before their graduations she will have provided ample and varied opportunities for the students to experience the need for and value of service. She sees the importance of their experiencing other cultures and economic levels. For instance, they have made service trips to McGee, Kentucky; New Orleans, Louisiana; and Albuquerque, New Mexico, among others, not only to provide opportunities to serve some of the poorest people in the country, but also to expand their understanding of other cultures such as the Native American, Appalachian families and the South. Their service ranges from providing respite care to single parents living in shelters, to serving food at soup kitchens and to reconstructing or winterizing homes with such groups as Habitat for Humanity. After one of the trips to Appalachia, several students, who themselves are receiving financial assistance, commented: "I can't believe we have people living like this in the United States!" Truly their eyes are being opened wide with each new venture.

It was Nano Nagle's desire to see that the poor youth of Ireland would be educated (something which the Penal Laws denied to Catholics) so that they could become active citizens as adults. Nano wanted them to grow up to make a difference, which they could not do without preparation. Now her legacy continues in Sister Julie who is expanding the "education" of university students by emphasizing that, having been given the advantage of being "first-generation collegiates," they must now make a difference for the rest of their lives.



Sister Julie Marsh (right), along with a Saint Mary's student (left), serves a meal at the Denver Rescue Mission during a service experience in inner city Denver.



Sister Jessi Beck receives a donation of school supplies from St. Mary Elementary School in Manchester, Iowa, for the students at Our Lady of Tepeyac in Chicago.

# Making Connections While Exploring Religious Life

by BETH KRESS, PBVM

Living Nano Nagle’s mission in Chicago and exploring the shifts in religious life with other young Catholic sisters are guiding lights for Sister Jessi Beck as she continues her first year of life and ministry in Chicago, Illinois.

After graduating from the University of Northern Iowa in 2003, Sister Jessi was a substitute teacher for a semester and then became a volunteer at Amate House in Chicago, where she lived, prayed and did service and justice work with other young adults. Sister entered the Sisters of the Presentation in 2005. After two years of studies in theology and religious life, she began her ministry as a Presentation sister, teaching second and third grades at St. Mary Elementary School in Manchester, Iowa.

“I really loved my time at St. Mary’s,” comments Sister Jessi. “It was a great school community and I found it hard to leave.”

Sister Jessi’s presence at St. Mary’s is remembered fondly: “Sister Jessi was a joy to work with at St. Mary’s,” shares Principal Vicki Palmer. “She saw the good in everyone she met and was a constant inspiration to me and those she worked with. Her commitment to her faith and to reaching out to those in need has inspired me to do for others as well.”

Presently Sister Jessi is teaching second grade at Our Lady of Tepeyac (OLT) Elementary School located in the Little Village neighborhood of Chicago’s southwest side. The current enrollment at OLT is 155 students with an average of 15 students per classroom. Ninety-eight percent are Hispanic and two percent are African-American. Ninety-nine percent are Catholic.

“I felt called to Chicago and Our Lady of Tepeyac so that I could walk more closely in the mission of Nano in serving those most in need,” Sister states. “Ninety percent of our students qualify for free and reduced lunch. Just as many receive some form of scholarship at our school.”

Sister Jessi appreciates the cultural diversity and richness in her Chicago residential neighborhood where she can hear Chinese, Spanish and English spoken at any time. “I have connections to various groups, including my Amate volunteer friends,” she says. “Seven of the eleven from my original group live in Chicago and follow the Amate vision to put love into action.”

At Our Lady of Tepeyac, Sister is spending her first year listening and learning and figuring out how things happen there. “There is a living adjustment in a large city and a cultural adjustment in school,” says Sister Jessi. “The students are eager to learn and yet many live in a bilingual environment with Spanish spoken at home and English spoken at school.”

Several years ago, Sister studied Spanish with Presentation Associate Dora Serna. This gave Sister Jessi an understanding of how difficult learning another language can be.

“I work with clubs during school time. The one I offer is called Green Team,” states Sister Jessi. “Our school had received a grant from the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum in Chicago for a small outdoor learning area, raised garden boxes, a rain barrel and benches. This year, my Green Club of kindergarten through third grade students bought seeds to grow lettuce, radishes and peas in the raised boxes. This is one way for me to integrate environmental and ecological concepts into my teaching.”

Being in touch with the principal and staff of St. Mary School in Manchester, Sister Jessi networks her Chicago students with the Manchester students. “I am finding I’m in a place of great possibility for making connections,” remarks Sister Jessi. “My second grade students are pen pals with Mrs. Hansel’s second-graders at St. Mary’s. This pen pal relationship has been an excellent way for both groups of students to learn about a group of students in a very different setting. The kids are very excited to make new friends in Iowa. They think a field trip would be awesome!”

This past Advent, the St. Mary school and parish community decided to gather school supplies, games and prayers for the students at Our Lady of Tepeyac.

“This opportunity helped my students, who have so much, to recognize that not all students can have the resources we have,” shares Deb Hansel. “We hope to be able to send a teaching resource for Sister Jessi and the kids later in the year.”

On January 3, before classes resumed in Chicago, Sister Jessi visited St. Mary’s, spoke to the students and received their gifts to take back to her new school. “It was wonderful to visit the students and staff. I am very grateful for their generosity and continued support,” she comments.

Having sister-neighbors is important to Sister Jessi. “The Presentation sisters here in Chicago were part of my discernment



Sister Jessi Beck and the students at Our Lady of Tepeyac celebrate Mexican Independence Day with an enthusiastic parade through the streets of Little Village in Chicago.

and affiliate group before I entered the community. It’s nice to be with them again,” comments Sister Jessi whose students are also doing service with Sister Barbara Rastatter, the director of senior ministries at St. James Parish in Chicago.

Sister Jessi’s sister-neighbors also include young sisters from other communities. Her participation in “Giving Voice,” a peer led organization that creates spaces for younger women religious to give voice to their hopes, dreams and challenges in religious life, is an ongoing experience for Sister Jessi since 2009. At the 2011 summer conference, she gave a reflection on the future of religious life – the blessings and challenges. She will also be part of the planning team for the 2013 conference, “Mission and Ministry in the 21st Century.”

“Giving Voice is the only place where I am surrounded by other young women religious. There are a number of young sisters in Chicago who get together on a regular basis. While we recognize that we are strongly called to our particular congregations, we have community among us,” shares Sister.

Teaching second-graders or participating in a class or vocation event at Chicago Theological Union, gathering with her peers and attending Giving Voice events, meeting with her formation director, catching up with sisters at Mount Loretto or joining her Sacred Circle group in Dubuque inspire this young woman religious.

In addition Sister Jessi serves on the committee for Presentation Quest, an immersion and service program sponsored by the Dubuque Sisters of the Presentation. She is a Eucharistic minister at Our Lady of Tepeyac parish, gathers monthly with young adults for Taize prayer and updates the Presentation Facebook page. There is no doubt that Sister Jessi Beck keeps her Nano lantern burning brightly.

# Driving God's Miss Daisies

by JOAN LICKTEIG, PBVM

*Tom Richard (right) starts off his day accompanying Sister Sheila Kane on a morning drive.*

Tall, dark, handsome and “johnny-on-the-spot,” that’s Tom Richard, the driver at Mount Loretto. When asked why he chose to apply for the job, he good-naturedly commented that not only does he like driving but he has spent most of his life waiting for women, so he presumed the transition would be barely perceptible. His easy-going, flexible nature offers a just-right attitude for a sometimes-complex schedule.

As sisters share qualities they appreciate in Tom, it is noted that he embodies several personality gifts of the former Mount Loretto driver, Del O’Hea. Among the endearing qualities cited were: congenial, helpful, sensitive to individual needs, friendly, willing and a good sense of humor.

With more positive qualities than most people, Tom is further described by his clientele as personable, gracious, pleasant, helpful, kind, considerate, accepting, encouraging and soft-spoken. One person finds him particularly knowledgeable, suggesting that he could serve as a docent for folks visiting Dubuque.

When a pair of long legs ambles down the hall, equipped with a cell phone and a set of car keys, you can be pretty sure it’s Tom. But, for further confirmation, look for a teasing smile that begins in his brown eyes and wends its way down his face.

Tom had a “hardy” beginning, born on a cold day in early January, the second oldest in the family of three siblings, one sister and two brothers, and was further strengthened when named after, not one, but two apostles, Thomas and James. A person he particularly admires is Mother Teresa and his favorite saint is Saint Thomas, of course!

Tom, a graduate of Wahlert Catholic High School in 1979, followed a family interest with a four-year apprenticeship in carpentry, preparing for life as a contractor. His father and grandfather before him owned and operated Richard Construction in Dubuque. Tom, a “Dubuquer” through and through, and following the pattern of other contractors, has lived in at least 10 different houses, but always with a Dubuque address.

Climbing around in new and old houses as contractors are inclined to do, Tom fell, resulting in a crushed heel and a broken arm, giving him pause. Perhaps there are other related and less-dangerous pursuits.

Tom pursued training in home inspecting, which consisted of classroom learning but even more hands-on experiences: furnaces, electricity, plumbing, air conditioning, radon detection and more. One gets the picture; if it needs examination or fixing, Tom’s the man.

One thing to note: the Richard family follows the leader. It all began with Darlene, grandmother of Andrew and Holly and mother of Tom. After the death of her first husband, Darlene was looking for something to do, a place to help, a distraction from grief. Happily she was hired as a front-desk receptionist at Mount Loretto. Not long after that, her grandson, Andrew, a high school student was hired as a dietary aide in the kitchen/dining area. When Andrew graduated, his younger sister, Holly, was ready for a job. She followed in her grandmother’s footsteps and served as a receptionist after school and on Saturdays. Andrew and Holly went off to college, but that wasn’t the end. Last, but not least, their dad now serves a “chauffeur’s” role four days a week at Mount Loretto. Most of his drives are in the mornings, so he can still inspect houses for new buyers in the afternoons. His creativity displays itself in numerous ways, including his calling card that shows a magnifying glass with “Inspect 4 U 2.”

Morning departures, on his way to Mount Loretto to drive for “the girls,” take a little extra time because of the farewell moments devoted to his Goldendoodle dog, Bailey. From all outward manifestations, his wife, Laura, observes that Bailey is the most important woman in his life.

When asked about his favorite aspects of the job, Tom said that it is hearing the sisters’ stories when meeting and talking with them around the house and during car conversations.

When it comes to movies Tom likes anything western and if Clint Eastwood is starring in the film, that’s even better. As far as travel for this Dubuquer, he’d go anyplace that’s warm, but returning to Kauai, Hawaii, would be a ready fit. This rural, “laid-back” area is a match for this calm, easy-going employee.

Tom is most grateful for his family, his beautiful, industrious, caring, totally energetic wife, Laura, and their four children: Andrew, Holly, Katrice and Alex. When his wife, Laura, was asked about Tom’s most redeeming qualities, she responded, “Oh, he has so many!” It’s always helpful to have a fix-it man in the house, of course, but his “undying sense of humor, his always-positive, lighthearted approach, his sense of appreciation for his wife and



*Tom Richard assists Sister Francesca Presseller en route to an appointment.*

family” make all the difference – priceless life-gifts. And, if he had a fault it might be that he’s inclined to spend quite a few winter hours watching the Packers’ games.

The Packers aren’t his only bliss, however, because Tom enjoys creative designing and woodworking, as well as barbecuing for the family. As for barbecuing, a meal of barbeque ribs with cheesecake for dessert fills the bill any day.

Like the Pied Piper, Tom can claim quite a following, often a “van-full” of sisters on their way to various doctor, dental or shopping appointments. His easy-going personality offers the perfect antidote to “white-coat-syndrome” and all manner of doctor-appointment nerves. He provides support for the unsteady, reassurance to the forgetful, a smile for the worried and courtesy to all. Like Jesus, he ministers “with care” to the blind, the lame, the sick and the suffering, often accommodating wheel chairs, walkers and oxygen tanks. And all return home with grateful hearts!

## Employment Opportunities

We invite you to become a part of the  
Presentation team.  
For employment opportunities,  
visit our website.

**WWW.DUBUQUEPRESENTATIONS.ORG**  
Under “Service & Opportunities”

# SISTER DOMINIC CHURCH

## Doing the Right Thing

by JENNIFER RAUSCH, PBVM

Take a reflective look around her room at Mount Loretto and you will discover the main elements of the life of Sister Dominic Church. A family tree and a collage of family portraits present her genealogical setting. Her parents were Olive and Guy and her siblings were Lucille, Waldo and Victor. Mary Evelyn (Sister Dominic) is the youngest. She was born and raised in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and attended Holy Family Grade School and Thomas Jefferson High School. She recalls the childhood fun of the four children jumping into the back of their Dad's pickup and riding to the Friday night summertime outdoor movies. Family birthdays were sweetened by her mother's homemade pies with the filling selected by the celebrant. Reflecting on the values that her family instilled, she summarizes: "Behave, you know that's the right thing to do."

Sister Dominic earned her teaching certificate from Iowa State Teachers College (now University of Northern Iowa) in Cedar Falls before she joined the Presentation community. Post entrance studies in math resulted in a bachelor's degree from Clarke College (now Clarke University) and a master's degree from the University of Notre Dame. Her junior high and high school students in Charles City, Humboldt, Elkader, Algona, Dubuque (St. Columbkille), Storm Lake, Cedar Rapids (Regis) and Fort Dodge (St. Edmond) were aware that she demanded their best efforts as they struggled with math derivatives. A *Golden Apple Award* in her room honors her teaching excellence as acknowledged by the Fort Dodge Chamber of Commerce in 1999.

Her interaction with young people expanded beyond academics to include being moderator of the prom crew, pompom advisor, cheerleading moderator and drill team coordinator in various high school settings.

Referring to her lack of experience in dance or choreography she laughs, "I think they asked me because I was new on the faculty and I was probably the youngest nun there."

Next to her comfortable chair within easy view is *The Morning Offering* which reads: "O God, I offer to you my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day..." This phrase could well summarize Sister Dominic's 64 years as a member of the Presentation community. She sees her life as reflective of our foundress Nano Nagle through her devotion to education: "I wanted my students to do their best."

Another similarity to Nano is her deep concern for those in need as illustrated by her donation of 25 "Granny Square" afghans to a Chicago parish where a person living on the street now declares, "This afghan goes all over with me and it keeps me warm."

And so, derivatives, drill teams and devotion are part of the life of Sister Dominic.



### Where in the World is Sister...?

Are you wondering where a certain Presentation sister is and would like to see her featured?

Email  
DOORWAYS@  
DUBUQUEPRESENTATIONS.ORG

Every issue will tell you a little bit about the life of Nano Nagle, the woman behind the lantern, and the women who follow in her footsteps.

by JOAN LICKTEIG, PBVM

The Lady of the Lantern

NANO  
Lives



### Sister Mary Martin McCormick, Superior 1977-1984



Rita McCormick, daughter of Michael and Mary (Martin) McCormick, was born in Waukon, Iowa, where she received her early instruction. When the family moved to Dubuque, she continued her education at St. Joseph Academy and Clarke College, both of Dubuque. Upon completion of her bachelor's degree, Rita served as a social worker for Catholic Charities of Dubuque,

before joining the Sisters of the Presentation in 1946, where she received the religious name of Sister Mary Martin.

Sister Martin taught elementary and high school, and served as a high school principal. She completed a master's degree at the University of Notre Dame and a doctorate at the University of St. Louis. During Sister Helen Marie Feeney's 10 years of community leadership, Sister Mary Martin served as vicarress and spiritual growth director before being elected herself as major superior of the congregation in 1977.

Among her talents, Sister Mary Martin could claim gifts of: astute bridge player, humorist, writer and spiritual leader, all of which prepared her for her years of leadership. She maintained a creativity that enabled her to entertain the sisters as Queen of the Madrigal dinner and offer support in personal challenges. A skilled writer, she enjoyed speaking opportunities, as well. With a refreshing style, she addressed the congregation and guests on occasions of receptions, jubilees, professions, community weekends and wakes.

Plans for the Holy Father's visit to the United States in 1979 included a stop in Des Moines, Iowa. Sister Martin wanted the sisters to have the opportunity to attend the historical event. Cars were minimal in the Mount Loretto garage, but that didn't deter her. "She had friends in high places." The vice-president of First National Bank of Dubuque, upon hearing her dilemma offered a bus from the Third Presbyterian Church. The sisters returned the ecumenical gesture and positioned a sign, the length of the bus, completing the identification. It now read: "Third Presbyterian Church and Presentation Sisters."

The post-Vatican II era offered multiple challenges to the Church in general and religious life in particular. Sister Mary

Martin led the community with a strong mind, a firm grasp and determined expectations. Dialogue, as a way of life, had not yet come into vogue. In contrast, her timely letters to the sisters provided inspiration, information and gentle words of encouragement. A valiant woman of dignity, wisdom and strength, she "walked the talk."

During this time period spiritual growth opportunities expanded, offering a new Office book, varied retreats, community prayers and spiritual growth weekends. Likewise, there were new apostolate opportunities and ministry appointments. In 1979 Presentation sisters were assigned to help staff a school of black students at St. Dorothy School, and in 1981, an Hispanic school at Our Lady of Guadalupe, both in Chicago. These offered new cultural opportunities for community members.

Vatican Council II mandated revisions of the constitutions and directories of religious communities. Sister Martin worked diligently for a number of years, rewriting these two documents, incorporating suggestions from community Chapters, along with meeting the requirements from Rome. Her work was completed in 1983 and approval received the following year.

New initiatives and foreign travel were not new to Sister Martin. She had traveled with Sister Helen Marie to South America before the opening of the first Dubuque Presentation mission in Bolivia. She participated in the bicentennial celebration of the beginning of the congregation in Ireland and the 200th anniversary of the death of Nano Nagle held in Melbourne, Australia, which was simultaneously the first international assembly of Presentation sisters.

Following her return from Australia, Sister Martin took ill and died of cancer on November 5, 1984, at age 63. Seven siblings survived her. In the history of the community, only three major superiors died while holding office: Mother Vincent Hennessy, 1880; Mother Angela Crowley, 1906; and Sister Mary Martin McCormick, 1984.

Sister Martin, a woman of intelligence and compassion, lived her life with fidelity and integrity. As a leader, she was not afraid to speak her convictions. She is, likewise, remembered for a laugh that seemed to come from her toes and rise to her twinkling eyes, a sense of humor, unflinching faith, and unyielding courage. She bequeathed to all an example of prayer and penance with boundless trust in the Lord.



Above photo: Left to right: Sisters Elena Hoye, Dubuque; Stephanie Still, San Francisco; and Cheryl Bourke, Victoria, Australia, deepen their connections through discussion at the IPA Assembly. Right photo: Clockwise: Sisters Margaret Kehoe, Peru; Mary Rossiter, Ireland; Jennifer Rausch, Dubuque; and Anne Shay, Lismore, Australia, affirm the formulation of the 2012 IPA Assembly direction statement that proclaims the gospel of Jesus and the spirit of Nano.

Pictured above are the 2012 International Presentation Assembly attendees.

# 2012 IPA Assembly All Things Are Connected

by ELENA HOYE, PBVM

The International Presentation Association (IPA) is a networking of the various congregations of Presentation women. The goal of the IPA is to foster unity and to enable collaboration for the sake of God's mission. Each congregation freely chooses to become part of the Association which was established in 1988.

"All things are connected. Whatever befalls Earth befalls the sons of Earth. Man does not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand of it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself." *Chief Seattle*

An understanding of this belief, that the realization of interconnectedness is essential to survival, was the backdrop to the IPA Assembly held in Newfoundland, Canada, in September 2012. Presentation sisters around the world had prepared for this gathering by daily praying the assembly prayer and reflecting on the question: What do we see emerging among us as Presentation people on mission?

Seventy-nine Presentation sisters and friends of Nano gathered, not only to celebrate, but to better understand the implications of their global connectedness. "We are all part of the ONE – one world of diversity but incredibly interconnected. It is just plain irrevocable truth that an injury to one injures all; that a threat to justice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. This is now understood by psychology, quantum physics, evolutionary biology, planetary theology, etc., and simply confirms the 'golden rule' of doing unto others as you would have them do to you, a principle adhered to by every world religion in their own respective languages with a similar grasp of this basic truth." *S. Brian Wilson, nonviolent pacifist*

Presentation sisters strove to deepen and expand their growing awareness of their "oneness" and their ability to proclaim God's mission on the global stage. During the assembly they expanded their connection to the mystery of God, to all people, especially those without options, to Earth, to Nano and Presentations sisters throughout history. They knew the mystery and power of these relationships could not possibly be fully explored in a week, but they used the time allowed them to commit to an ever-growing dedication and energy to God's mission together.

This new consciousness of their deep connections mandates that they can no longer be "lone rangers," doing their own thing. This awareness calls them to take responsibility for how they interact with Earth and with others made poor, no matter where they live. This is the challenge that the five Dubuque Presentation sisters who participated in the assembly, Sisters Jennifer Rausch, Irma Ries, Diana Blong, Lynn Marie Fangman and Elena Hoye brought back to the community.

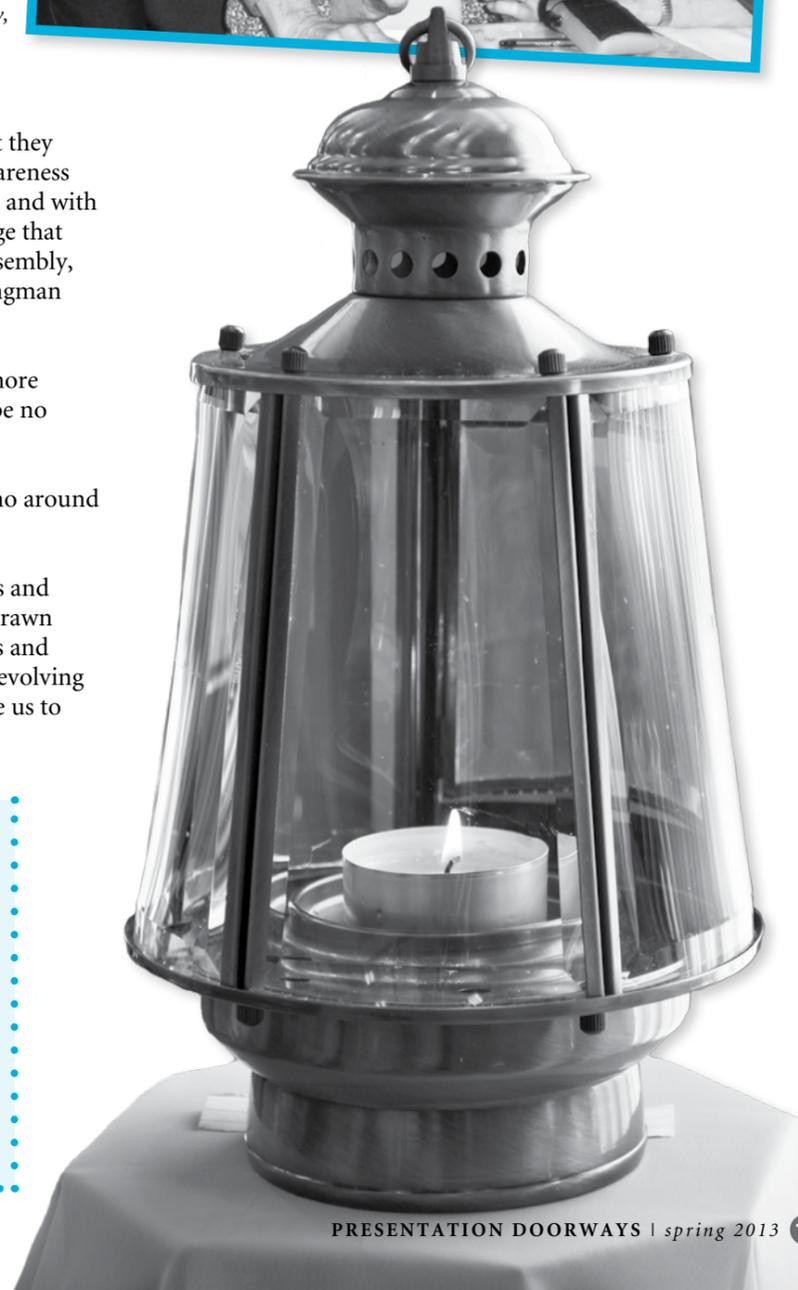
"This is the challenge that we all face as we look to a more and more complex future. Our lives must reflect our belief that there will be no future without justice," states Sister Elena Hoye.

The assembly concluded by promising that the daughters of Nano around the world be faithful to the following direction statement:

As Presentation people impelled by the radical gospel of Jesus and on fire with the spirit of Nano, we consciously choose to be drawn more deeply into the mystery of God, the mystery of Oneness and the reality of people and Earth made poor. Energized by this evolving consciousness we engage in expansive partnerships that move us to personal and systemic transformation. *2012 Assembly*

## New Appointments

In June 2013, Sister Elsa Muttathu (India Presentation) will assume the position of representative of the International Presentation Association at the United Nations. Sister Elena Hoye (Dubuque Presentation) will begin as the new IPA networker. The ministry of the congregational justice contacts will be coordinated through the networker. The Dubuque justice contacts are Sisters Joetta Venneman and Irma Ries.





# Chapter 2012-2013

## Charism's Fire: Transforming Our Journey

by CHAPTER WISDOM CIRCLE

On the evening of December 27, 2012, the Dubuque Presentation congregation gathered to celebrate the Christmas spirit and to enter into a week-long community Chapter. The Chapter, which occurs every five years, provided the time and place for rekindling the original fire of Nano as the congregational direction and leadership were discerned for the next five-years.

Sparks of light from glowing coals reflected on the snow as the sisters gathered with warm hearts in the chill of the night in the Mount Loretto courtyard on the eve of the Chapter of Affairs and Elections. Sisters watched intently from windows on all sides of the courtyard as the Chapter fire was blessed and lanterns, symbolic of the congregation's heritage, were lit. Over 200 years ago, in 1775, their foundress, Nano Nagle, gathered with three women on Christmas Eve for the initiation of a new religious congregation in Cork. Nano, often seen passing through the dark lanes with her lantern as she visited the poor and sick, continues to be remembered as the "Lady of the Lantern" in Ireland and around the globe. This Chapter, held December 28-January 1, was dedicated to recapturing Nano's original fire and to calling forth new possibilities for the future.

### Tending the Fire

The leadership team, reviewing the past five years, posed questions for reflection as they shared their own personal, lived experience.

- Since our last Chapter: How have I/we been drawn beyond?
- Through the best of times and the worst of times: What do I count as blessing?
- Comparing the outreach of Nano and the ministries of today: As daughters of the light, how are we the Presentation face of God's mission to the world?
- Pondering the deep questions of our world: How can we live our charism of hospitality with zeal?

### Original Fire

From the winding lanes of Cork the energy of Nano's zeal was palpable for the sisters as they experienced the profound realization that they are part of the 2,600 Presentation sisters present in 22 countries. Sisters with colorful scarves representing all of the International Presentation Association (IPA) countries, danced into the meeting place as the unfolding story of the IPA was about to be shared. Sisters Diana Blong, Elena Hoye, Irma Ries, Jennifer Rausch and Lynn Marie Fangman, who participated in the IPA Assembly in September 2012, creatively conveyed the richness of connecting with sisters and associates from around the world. A sense of deep joy, oneness of heart and an enlivened sense of mission permeated the community as the direction for the next five years was honed and celebrated. On the final day of the Chapter, the delegates embraced the IPA Assembly directional statement. (See page 13)

### Stirring the Coals

The facilitation of Sister Patricia Flynn, SSND, expertly guided the process, aiding the group in staying focused, open and hope-filled. The viewing of the DVD *Humanity Ascending* by Barbara Marx Hubbard provided the impetus to strive for a deeper understanding of our place in the cosmos. Days of conversations, deep listening and contemplation strengthened bonds and widened the tent for their journey into the wonders of the unknown.

### Blazing Forth!

The Chapter of Affairs concluded with the approval of the following directional statement and commitments:

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.

We promise to:

- promote direct ministry with people made poor,
- facilitate education and advocacy on behalf of people without options, and
- support sustainability and systemic change for the common good. *January 2013*

### Lighting the Way

The election of the new leadership team was punctuated by the refrain, "How good it is, how wonderful, when all live together in unity!" On June 15, 2013, the new team members will be welcomed and blessed by the community: Congregational Leader, Sister Julianne Brockamp of Hill City, South Dakota; Councilors, Sister Beth Driscoll of Dubuque, Iowa; Sister Ann Jackson of Cedar Rapids, Iowa; and Sister Leanne Welch of Dubuque, Iowa.

Celebration followed Sister Jennifer's words, "In the Spirit of our consciousness evolving and our transforming energy now flaming forth to the ends of Earth, I declare the Chapter to be closed."

Left to right: Top row of photos: The blessed Chapter fire burned brightly during the opening gathering as Sisters Joan Brincks, Donna Demmer, Beth Driscoll, Lou Cota and Margaret Anne Kramer look on; Sister Suzanne Takes, conveyed Nano's passion and zeal for mission, as well as her warmth and wit; Chapter icon designed by Donna Korba, IHM; Symbolizing their commitment to enter into the process of sharing honestly and deeply, table members, Sisters Rita Menart, Sharon Kelchen, Lynn Mary Wagner, Michaeline Healy and Kay Cota, bundled their fire sticks, which remained on the table during the gathering; The Chapter Wisdom Circle committee members were Sisters Margaret Anne Kramer, Maura McCarthy, Annette Kestel, Facilitator Sister Patricia Flynn, SSND, Sisters Diana Blong, Hermann Platt and Marge Healy; Bottom row of photos: During the opening ritual Sister Jennifer Rausch, congregational leader, carried a bow upon which was written the names of all the Dubuque Presentation sisters since the founding of the congregation in 1874; Sister Therese Corkery presented one of the many colorful scarves representing Presentation communities throughout the world during the ritual celebration of the International Presentation Association (IPA); Community fun enlivened the spirit of the days: Sisters Josita Zieser, Dolores Moes and Julianne Brockamp enjoyed serving root beer floats.

# Lantern Flames Shine

## Near and Far

by DIANA BLONG, PBVM

Nano's light continues to glow through the Lantern Flames associate group who spans three counties: Cerro Gordo, Chickasaw and Floyd in North Central Iowa. Following a year of initiation on the Presentation story with Sister Diana Blong, Maureen Utter, Ventura; Yvonne Kisch, Charles City; and Rita Swinton, Lisa Zwanziger, Richard and Sue Baldwin, all from Nashua, have been gathering almost monthly for further study, reflection, prayer and sharing in various ways these past two years.

Besides participating in associate renewals and area Presentation gatherings, together they served at the Cedar River Community Kitchen in Charles City, gathered personal supplies for gifts to the elderly and needy at Christmas and supported the Spanish-speaking community at their monthly liturgy and for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

When they are not serving together, they are engaged in many ministries in their parishes. All participate in the liturgy in one or more of the following ways: lectors, Eucharistic ministers, greeters, ushers, choir members, leaders of rosary and stations of the cross and members of parish liturgy committees. Lisa Zwanziger also hosts parish outdoor masses twice a year at the pond by her home in Nashua and campout events for the youth.

Dick and Sue Baldwin enjoy their ministries as parish coordinators of St. Michael Parish, Nashua, where they have initiated a prayer line, a Christmas party at Cedar Vale Assisted Living and "Good Samaritan Volunteer Visitors" to the care centers and shut-ins. Among the volunteers are Lisa, whose daycare children sing, and Rita Swinton, who "feels like we have won the lottery!" after a day of visiting. Rita also has assumed leadership roles in St. Elizabeth's Circle and St. Michael's Guild, including coordinating funeral luncheons after the Baldwins assist families with church arrangements. All are highly committed to special events that enrich the broader community, in addition to the annual parish salad bar, the ecumenical Lenten luncheons and the Big Four Fair food stand.

St. Patrick Church in Clear Lake is blessed with Maureen Utter's commitment to the RCIA process, Confirmation team, sacramental prep tutor and hospitality for faith formation events. Her efforts extend beyond the parish as the chairperson

of the five-parish Faith Formation Commission, the Dubuque Archdiocesan Lay Formation Advisory Board and the Living in Mission Board. She is also a parish ambassador for the American Martyrs Retreat House and volunteers on their Dream work weekend.

With her past leadership experience on the Immaculate Conception Pastoral Council, Yvonne Kisch is now vice president of the New Hampton Deanery ACCW. Appalachia has called her to a work group in Kentucky and to the Passionist Volunteers in West Virginia. In her winter Florida parish, Yvonne helps with bake sales and rummage sales as fundraisers for the needy.

Community service for Yvonne includes delivering Meals on Wheels, being a team leader for Relay for Life to support cancer research and volunteering with the community theater group, The Stoney Point Players, to support the local arts council and scholarships for senior high drama students.

As a youth minister and vacation bible school coordinator, Lisa offers untold hours for others, including quilting for the silent auction or donating crafts to help youth raise funds for their national conventions. A Girl Scout leader for 15 years, she is an active leader in Nashua's Garden Club and creatively organizes special events in the parish. When she isn't encouraging youth to collect food for the needy, she may be boxing up clothing to a homeless shelter in St. Louis.

Near or far, in the parishes, their communities or other parts of the country, Lantern Flames are brightening the world with their dedication, love and care for others in the spirit of Nano!

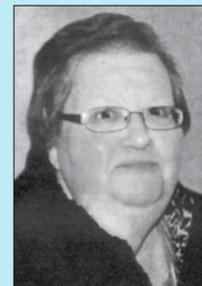


Left to right: Above photo: Sue Baldwin and Lisa Zwanziger are "all smiles" and ready to help as they prepare for the Cedar River Community Kitchen Sunday evening meal in Charles City, Iowa. Bottom left photo: Lantern Flames associate group: Dick and Sue Baldwin, Rita Swinton, Yvonne Kisch, Sister Diana Blong, Maureen Utter and Lisa Zwanziger.

## ASSOCIATE PARTNERSHIP

### In Memory of Betty Simon

May 24, 1949 - January 11, 2013



Presentation Associate Betty Simon desired to share her life and spiritual journey with the Presentation sisters as an associate and made her first commitment on August 12, 2000. In her application to begin the Associate Partnership orientation, Betty stated that "it was through the influence the Presentation sisters had on my life that I have looked to many of these

committed women as role models in today's society to be present to the injustices suffered by some of society's members. Association would provide opportunities to further service and prayer in my life."

As taken from her obituary, Betty "lived life to the fullest, savoring and cherishing every moment. She touched the lives of many throughout her life. She was a woman of faith, and because of who she was, she probably never talked about it. Instead, she lived her faith." Betty lived by the words of Presentation foundress, Nano Nagle, who said, "Not words, but deeds." We remember Betty with love and gratitude.

## Annual Benefit Garage/Gym Sale

The 2013 Presentation Garage/Gym Sale is right around the corner and work is already underway! The 2012 sale raised \$16,219. For the past eight years, many of you have helped support the Sisters of the Presentation ministries through donations of money, sale items, baked goods and time. Can we count on you again this year?

### WHEN:

Thursday, Friday, Saturday  
April 25-27, 2013  
(Thursday, Friday 8 a.m.-dusk; Saturday 8 a.m.-1 p.m.)

Thursday, Friday, Saturday

May 2-4, 2013  
(Thursday, Friday 8 a.m.-dusk; Saturday 8 a.m.-1 p.m.)

### WHERE:

Garage and gym behind the  
Sisters of the Presentation Motherhouse  
2360 Carter Road  
Dubuque, Iowa

### WHY:

The proceeds from the 2013 sale will assist the following ministries/charities:

- Student Endowment Fund, St. Mary Catholic School, Humboldt, Iowa
- La Luz Hispana Ministry, Hampton, Iowa

### WHAT:

Please donate gently-used items: clean adult, children and baby clothing; household items; books; CDs; furniture; games, toys, etc. Plants such as hostas, ferns, schefflera, crotons, etc. sell very well too. (Please no shoes, computers/accessories, TVs, baby cribs or car seats, Nordic tracks or treadmills). Homemade baked goods will also be sold. Wrapped baked goods can be brought to the gym on April 25-26 and/or May 2-3.

The gym behind the Sisters of the Presentation will be open for drop-offs of useable items beginning Monday, April 1 until Monday, April 22 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily EXCEPT Sundays. No items will be accepted after Monday, April 22. Larger items such as furniture, desks, large lamps, etc. should be dropped off at the garages across from the gym.

### For more information, contact:

Office of Associate Partnership  
2360 Carter Road  
Dubuque, Iowa, 52001  
563-588-2008  
[associates@dubuquepresentations.org](mailto:associates@dubuquepresentations.org)

# Dubuque Circles® Initiative

## When We All Work Together As One

by LEANNE WELCH, PBVM

"I'm so excited! I got enough money to buy a car. It's an old car but it runs and gets me to my place of work." This quote from a person in poverty participating in the Dubuque Circles® Initiative shows the excitement of meeting a goal with the assistance of knowledge and encouragement from others. It is the result of various individuals and groups working together for a common cause, the eradication of poverty.

Circles® is an innovative model based on a body of research suggesting that in order for low-income families to improve their situation, they must have bonding social capital within the community and bridging social capital to access the resources contained by higher income networks and public institutions. Each matched Circle consists of a family/individual working to get out of poverty and several middle and upper income allies who befriend them and lend support. The family/individual is the Circle leader, setting direction for activities/goals and, with the friendship and knowledge learned from allies, making decisions to move forward.

A number of sisters and associates are involved at differing levels with Circles®. Various associate groups have provided the weekly community meal. After Sister Jessi Beck's associate group served a meal, Sister Jessi suggested that, in keeping with the Presentation focus on caring for Earth, the Presentation community make a donation of sustainable table service for the weekly meals.

**Associate Molly Olberding** says of her experience, "I really enjoyed participating in the Circles® Initiative. It was a great experience and a powerful reminder of how many people are living in poverty and in need of the tools to overcome poverty."



At various times a number of sisters attend the community meal and information sessions. Sister Leanne Welch participates in a matched Circle with her Circle leader, a young single mother, and three other allies. She also serves on the Resource Committee.

Circles® started in 2007 when a group of concerned citizens and service providers met to develop a plan to eliminate poverty in the Dubuque community. In the summer of 2008 the first Getting Ahead™ course was offered. The 16-week course guided the participants through an in-depth investigation of the impact of poverty on their lives and their community while providing the tools to build their own resources and transition out of poverty. In 2010, the Bridges Initiative added the final piece, Circles®.

The outcome of these efforts is portrayed in the comments of Circle leaders. "I now have a job," "I now have a place for my spouse and me to live," "The lessons I learned on how to dress for my new position were most helpful" are responses of some.



The Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque, the City of Dubuque, local church groups, businesses, individuals, non-profits and volunteers are all working together as one in this cause.

## Scholarship Opportunities Deadline April 1

Presentation Foundress Nano Nagle, was a young Irish woman who spent her days teaching those who would have otherwise been deprived of an education. Her evenings were spent walking through the streets of Cork, Ireland, bringing food and medicine, comfort and hope to those in need. Nano Nagle was a woman of service. Today the Sisters of the Presentation follow in Nano's footsteps by serving in education, pastoral ministry, chaplaincy and advocacy for the disadvantaged and those made poor throughout the United States and Bolivia.

In the spirit of Nano Nagle, and her desire to serve, the Dubuque Presentation sisters and associates established four scholarship opportunities.

- Presentation Mission Service Award
- Nano Nagle College Scholarship
- Mother Vincent Hennessy Scholarship
- Nano Nagle Service Award

To apply, visit:  
[WWW.DUBUQUEPRESENTATIONS.ORG](http://WWW.DUBUQUEPRESENTATIONS.ORG)  
SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

## 365 AWARD Making an Impact



Left to right: Mary Jean Gregory, board president, and Sister Corine Murray, executive director, represent Presentation Lantern Center at the 2012 365 IMPACT awards.

The Presentation Lantern Center was nominated and subsequently selected as the 365 IMPACT Award winner for 2012 in the category of Non-Profit Excellence. The 365 IMPACT Awards have been given to individuals, businesses and agencies making an effort to impact the world around them 365 days of the year. Some of the categories include the arts, community, historic preservation, non-profit excellence, recreation. Each winner received a beautiful sculpture from local metal sculptor, Gene Tully, Jr.

"So many people share in this award: the Sisters of the Presentation, our board of trustees, tutors, friends, benefactors and staff," comments Sister Corine Murray, executive director of the center. "Together we honor the life of Nano Nagle, Presentation foundress, and give expression to her charisma of hospitality."

"This award, received on February 26, is a strong affirmation of the center's ministry of hospitality for the strangers/immigrants among us," continues Sister Corine. "That it came during our 10th anniversary year is significant and we are grateful for the public recognition giving the center even greater visibility in the community. Day by day, with the help of many people, we are touching and changing lives."



## PRESENTATION LANTERN Honors Volunteer Tutors

by CORINE MURRAY, PBVM

The Presentation Lantern Center honors two dedicated individuals with the Presentation Lantern Outstanding Service Awards. Volunteers Meghann Toohey and Sister René Laubenthal shine a light in the hearts of immigrants through their service at the center.

During the past four and a half years, Meghann has met and worked with people from several different countries. Her experience at the center makes the world a much smaller place.

As a volunteer tutor Meghann is patient as she explains the meaning and pronunciation of words, along with the structure of good sentences. Her knowledge of Spanish is very helpful. Meghann also knows that there is more to life than verbs. The giggles that come from her work station speak volumes about the friendship she and her student enjoy.

Meghann is also a recruiter of volunteers. About a year ago, Mary Toohey, Meghann's mother, became a tutor. She said that she had heard Meghann talk so much about the center that she decided to come also.

"When I first began tutoring at the Presentation Lantern Center I had just moved to Dubuque and was unsure about what would be involved. Little did I know how profoundly the experience would change my life," remarks Meghann. "Through the center, I have had the opportunity to work with people from Taiwan, China, Colombia and Mexico, as well as meet many others from around the world. All of them inspire me with their dedication and hard work. As we practice English together I often feel like I am the one who is learning the most."

After a teaching career where she unlocked the mystery of reading for hundreds of elementary students, Sister René Laubenthal continues to share her teaching skills with the adults who come to the center to learn English or improve their language skills. Over the years she has taught a diverse group of individuals and learned so much from their life experiences. Sister René treasures each and every one of her students and can call them all by name.

Currently Sister is working with people from Bosnia and Iran. Her students past and present appreciate not only that she is an excellent teacher, but also that she is gentle and wise.

"The Presentation Lantern Center is a great place to give service to others. There is a welcoming and friendly presence," comments Sister René. "I feel blessed to tutor English to those from other cultures. They desire to learn and have grateful hearts. Friendships grow as visitors and tutors work together and share life stories."

Meghann (left) and Sister René (right) received Presentation Lantern service awards at the December appreciation dinner for volunteer tutors, the board of trustees and the leadership team of the Sisters of the Presentation. Each received a lantern, symbolizing the life of Presentation Foundress Nano Nagle and her desire to serve others through a ministry of hospitality.

# Remembering Fairbank

1907-1969

by HERMANN PLATT, PBVM

“No town is an island, but the town of Fairbank wouldn’t be without one.” Thus began an article in the *Des Moines Register* on September 3, 1978. This picturesque island lies in the Little Wapsipinicon River that bisects Fairbank at the west edge of the business district. It is accessible via a pedestrian bridge. Fairbank residents showed their pride in this unique feature when they organized fundraisers to save it from silting in and becoming part of the “mainland” in 1978.

It was to this small town that the Sisters of the Presentation came in August of 1907, replacing the three Holy Ghost Sisters who had been in charge of the school since its opening in 1895. The first faculty consisted of four classroom teachers and one full-time music teacher. Mother Presentation Griffin headed up the group, having as her companions Sisters Isabel Julian, Agnes Griffin, Genevieve Burke and Lucy Rogers.

These five sisters then began the task of providing education for students in eight grades and conducting a normal training course for prospective teachers. They soon recognized the students’ need for further education to qualify for a teacher’s certificate, and Mother Presentation, under the direction of Father W. T. Donahue, added the 10th grade to the school. By 1915, more space was required, and so the sisters moved from the school building into the renovated former rectory.

A fire in 1916 destroyed the original school, taking with it everything except some clothing, a few books and desks. Classes continued in a donated space on the second floor of a building downtown until a new building could be finished in 1917. At that time the rest of the high school classes were added under the direction of Pastor John Q. Halpin and Sister Mary Calasanctius Kelly. The first class graduated in 1917. Immaculate Conception High School was placed on the list of certified Iowa non-public schools in 1923.

In 1932 the school was re-organized according to the 6-3-3 plan. Kindergarten was added in 1933, but was discontinued in 1958 because of lack of space. Enrollment continued to increase, requiring a staff of six sisters by 1933. A badly-needed new building was completed in 1955, providing a parish hall, classrooms, kitchen, meeting room and stage.



By 1965, lower enrollment and greater academic demands prompted the high school to close, sending students to Sacred Heart High School in Oelwein. “Competition and pressure, plus finance, caused the Immaculate Conception Academy (School) to be discontinued in the fall of 1969.” (*Parish History*)

The community of Fairbank gave many of its sons and daughters to the service of the Church, among them 11 Presentations: Sisters Mary Celestine Tobin, Rita Duffy, Annette Bierschmitt, Eunice Kane, Valeria Durnan, Julie Siggelkov, Georgia Schmeltzer, Ethel Paulus, Clarice Kane, Carol Duffy and Therese Corkery.

At a reunion in 1977, approximately 700 former students and teachers gathered in the parish hall for a reception, where they viewed class pictures and received a specially-prepared history of the town, parish and school. After-dinner speakers were former teachers Sisters Mary Ellen Murphy and Patrick Waldorf. They represented the more than 70 Presentation sisters who had been part of the school history.

Sister Mary Agatha Broderick, who taught in Fairbank from 1941-1947, told of the Irish-born sisters who were there in her time: Sisters Mary Grace O’Donnell, Alicia Howley, Antoinette Walsh and Anicetus Quinn. She talked about the small enrollment at the time, which left her with four girls and one boy in grade seven, and remarked about how hard she studied to keep up with some of the “wise ones” as she called the troublemakers in her class.

Sister Mary Margaret Donnelly, working with Paul Peters, then a student, on Christmas decorations in the church, fell through the grate onto the furnace below. Luckily, she was unhurt and able to walk away from the unfortunate incident.

One can expect pranks from children, and Fairbank students were no exception. Sister Mary Virginia Gereau told of the day she opened her desk to find a snake curled up inside. She calmly picked up the snake, said to the class, “Isn’t he cute? But I think

Top left photo: Fairbank School. Middle photo: Left to right: Sisters Vincent Donnelly, Rosalia Plamondon, Antonio Murphy, Boniface Reiman and Isidore Leonard. Bottom photo: Presentation convent in Fairbank.

we should give him his freedom.” She then released the snake out the window and had no more pranks that year.

The junior class of 1951 published a vocations pamphlet which included descriptions of works done by various religious orders, along with the distinctive clothing worn by many of them. It closed with the following challenge: “When you come out (on Easter) with your navy suit and accessories or your soft light tan mocs, remember that religious wear outfits that are becoming to almost anyone – maybe even you.”

## Save the Date Postville Immigration Raid Five Years Later

On Friday, May 10, 2013, all are invited to a gathering commemorating the Fifth Anniversary of the Postville, Iowa Immigration Raid in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The purpose of the event is to remember the 389 persons who were arrested on May 12, 2008, to reconcile with those who contributed to the injustices and to advocate for the reform of immigration policies.

The event will begin at 12:00 p.m. with a remembrance ritual at the park across from the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Iowa, 111 7th Avenue SE in Cedar Rapids.

A “Walk for Justice” at 12:30 p.m. to Immaculate Conception Church, 857 3rd Avenue SE, will follow. Here an interfaith prayer for reconciliation and a call for reform of our immigration policies will take place at 1:15 p.m. The assembly is being planned by a wide coalition of those involved in the response to the raid, as well as those affected. It will include immigrants, who were part of the 2008 raid, church representatives who ministered to the immigrants and their families, lawyers who saw the injustice of the system and others who are concerned about immigration reform.

Five years ago on May 12, 2008, the largest single-site immigration raid at the time in the history of the United States occurred in Postville, Iowa. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials raided Agriprocessors, the main producer of kosher meat in the United States, handcuffed immigrants and bused them to the National Cattle Congress in Waterloo, Iowa. Most detainees were charged with identity theft and were shipped to prisons across the country where they spent five months before being deported. Immigration charges against the CEO of Agriprocessors were dropped. In a matter of hours on that fateful day, Postville lost a significant amount of its population and even worse; hundreds of families were torn apart.

The location in front of the federal Court was chosen both because of the court’s role in the raid and the significance of the event to the on-going national conversation about immigration.

For more information about the fifth anniversary commemoration and call for the reform of the immigration policy, as well as for resources for organizing events in communities or congregations to coincide with this commemoration, please contact:

Rockne Cole  
rocknecole@gmail.com  
(319) 358-1900

Sister Mary McCauley, BVM  
mmccauley@bvmcong.org  
(563) 583-8989

# St. James Food Pantry in Chicago Where Everybody Knows Your Name

Reflection by BARBARA RASTATTER, PBVM

“You wanna go where everybody knows your name.” This is part of the theme song from the comedy show, “Cheers,” which was popular in the 80’s and early 90’s. While this song refers to the “Cheers” bar in Boston, it can also refer to St. James Pantry in Chicago, Illinois, where the homeless who come to the door are “called by name.” As delighted as they are with the lunches, socks, hats, gloves and coats they receive, even higher on their list is being called by name and treated with respect.

Homelessness is one of the greatest plagues of modern day society. It seems that we as a nation should be able to solve this problem – provide people with the basic necessities of life. Yet, there are thousands of people: men, women and children, wandering the streets in search of food, clothing and a place to live. Many people look the other way, pretending that the homeless aren’t there. Perhaps not seeing them makes them disappear before our very eyes.

The causes of homelessness are complex: substance abuse, depression, untreated mental illness, physical disabilities, eviction from apartments or housing foreclosures. Homelessness can also be caused by tragic life occurrences like the loss of loved ones, job loss, domestic violence, divorce and family disputes. As many as 3.5 million Americans are homeless each year. The fact is that more than half the homeless are families with children.

Who of us can imagine what it would be like to wander the streets day and night; cold, wet, hungry, with no one to turn to. Most, if not all those whom we encounter at St. James, are estranged from their families and have no support system. The growing number of women and children with no homes is alarming. What would it be like to be a child and have no warm bed, no food and no possessions to call my own except what I’m able to carry from place to place in a garbage bag? We don’t know; neither can we imagine it.

## Meet Quincy

I’d like to tell you about my friend, Quincy, a 42-year-old man, who is a frequent visitor to St. James. He has been on the streets since he quit school when he was 16. When forced to leave his home in the Dearborn Housing projects for unknown reasons, he lived here and there, mostly “squatting” in another project, the Harold J. Ickes apartments. When Ickes was torn down about five years ago, Quincy was forced to “hit the streets” where he has



Sister Barbara Rastatter beams as three homeless clients at St. James Food Pantry admire the “ditty bags” they received from the Presentation sisters at Mount Loretto. Sister Barbara has been the director of senior ministry at St. James Parish for the past 12 years.

been ever since. It is apparent that he is very ill – you can see it in his eyes. His teeth are rotted away and he has constant pain in his mouth. He stops by every day for lunch. But we all know that besides the lunch, he comes for warmth, and to be with people who care about him. He said to me on one occasion, “I like to come here because everybody is so nice to me and they even know my name!”

## What Can We Do About Homelessness?

We can advocate for more shelters, donate money or supplies to existing shelters. However, most importantly, when we encounter a homeless person, we can learn his/her name, treat his/her with dignity and respect and become a friend. Hopefully, some day a homeless person can say about each of us, “She knows my name!”

# Mount Loretto AND BEYOND

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



## Pen Pal Friends

Sister Maria Goretti Dullard enjoys a special visit from her pen pal, Isabelle, at a Sunday brunch. The family came for mass and spent some time visiting with Sister Maria Goretti. The pen pal relationship between the Presentation sisters and the second-graders at St. Francis Xavier School in Dyersville, Iowa, began in 2010.



## 1966 Class Reunion

The young women who entered the Sisters of the Presentation community in 1966 held their first class reunion in September 2012 in Preston, Iowa. The nine members of the class who attended the gathering enjoyed reviewing memories of their days together at Mount Loretto. They also shared their life experiences of the intervening 46 years. A second reunion is planned for 2014 with the hope of improved attendance of the total 14 members.

Left to right: Back row: Phyllis (Reichenauer) Koschmeder; Sister Anne McCormick; Pat (Weiglein) Bouska; Sister Carol Besch, OSF; and Colleen (Conlin) Vlavisavljevich; Front row: Jean Tvrdik; Hazel (McEnroe) Wagner; Mary (Conway) O'Neill; and Sister Marjorie Loughren.

## Extending Hospitality

As hospitality coordinator for the Chapter 2012-2013 gathering, Sister Linda Reicks dreamed of how the Presentation community could move hospitality beyond themselves by helping warm and feed people of need during this winter season. She challenged each sister to bring a cup that would be used during Chapter and then offered to those who are less blessed after the gathering. Sister Linda also invited each sister to bring a package of hot chocolate and some warm gloves to accompany the cup. The sisters were more than willing to share their blessings with others and the cups, hot chocolate and mittens were collected and distributed to people in need in the Cedar Rapids, Iowa, area. Sister Joellen Price, the pastoral associate of St. Pius X Parish, helped with the distribution to St. John of the Cross Catholic Worker House, Willis Dady House and the Cedar House, all in Cedar Rapids.



May we all continue to extend hospitality and look beyond our own comforts and blessings to see the eyes, hands and hearts of those made poor.

## You are invited to join us.

**April 5-6, 2013**  
Dubuque's Got Sisters  
Discernment Weekend  
Sisters of the Presentation  
Dubuque, Iowa

**April 21, 2013**  
Vatican II Lecture Series  
Clinton, Iowa

**April 25-27 & May 2-4, 2013**  
Garage/Gym Sale  
Sisters of the Presentation  
2360 Carter Road  
Dubuque, Iowa

**June 9-14, 2013**  
QUEST Service Opportunity  
New Orleans, Louisiana

**July 28-August 3, 2013**  
QUEST Service Opportunity  
Appalachia community in  
Talcott, West Virginia

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.

**April 20, 2013**  
Conference of Associates and Religious of the Midwest Area  
Dubuque, Iowa

**April 21, 2013**  
World Day of Prayer for Vocations

**June 15, 2013**  
Installation of Leadership Team

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

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

Please help us keep our database up-to-date.  
Please change this label and send it back to  
us, call us at 563.588.2008 or email us at  
info@dubuquepresentations.org. Thank you.

- \_\_\_\_ New Address  
\_\_\_\_ Misspelled Name  
\_\_\_\_ Wrong Address  
\_\_\_\_ Remove my Name  
\_\_\_\_ Receive Duplicate Copies  
(please indicate which is correct)

# Relationally SPEAKING

*Sisters, Associates, Family, Friends in Brief*



On February 28, **Associate Barbara Ressler** participated in a focus group conversation at Clarke University with other members of the Dubuque community and surrounding area on the characteristics of “life-ready.” She was also invited to present a break-out session at Clarke University’s Education Conference, “Teach Like Your Hair is on Fire” held on April 20.



**Sister Mary Lou Specha** is serving as program director at APEX Youth Center in the Central City neighborhood of New Orleans with the focus of forming communities of creativity and accountability to reduce cycles of poverty, crime, illiteracy and neglect.



**Sister Elena Hoye** has been appointed to a Des Moines-based committee by the Iowa Department of Justice under the direction of the Office of the Attorney General to develop an effective, sustainable Human Trafficking Law Enforcement and Prosecution Initiative.

## Celebrating Vatican II: Sharing the Vision



The Catholic Sisters of the Upper Mississippi River Valley are sponsoring “Celebrating Vatican II: Sharing the Vision,” a four-part lecture series that reviews and renews understanding and appreciation of the Second Vatican Council of the Roman Catholic Church.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE LAST LECTURE:  
Sunday, April 21, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. in Clinton, Iowa**  
Dr. Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA, and Bishop Daniel Turley, OSA, will speak on “The Church in the Modern World: Vatican II’s Challenge for Our Time” at Prince of Peace Church in Clinton, Iowa. The lecture will describe Vatican II’s invitation to read the signs of the times and respond in dedicated service, reflecting on ways the Church is called to solidarity with people throughout the world. Event is free and open to the public.