



PRESENTATION DOORWAYS

offering hospitality to the world



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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. You may submit the
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Cover PHOTOS

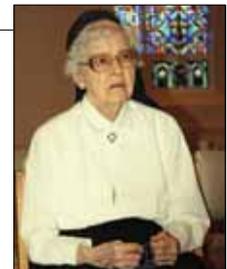
*The doorways represented on the cover are
snapshots of significant moments in the Presenta-
tion history: (left to right) doorway of the current
motherhouse at 2360 Carter Road; doorway of
St. Vincent's Academy (now St. Columbkille) in
Dubuque in 1879; doorway of Sacred Heart Cha-
pel at the current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

PRESENTATION DOORWAYS

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Cover PHOTO

"Presentation Pacers," a Relay for Life team consisting of six Presentation sisters, six associates, family and friends, teamed up to celebrate the lives of people who have battled cancer, remember loved ones lost, and fight back against the disease. Left to right: (back row) Dwayne Murphy, Sister Benjamin Duschner, Sister Sheila Ann Dougherty, Jodie Cook, Colleen Venter, Sister Marilyn Breen, Ron Dankert, Sister Margaret Anne Kramer, Mary Dankert; (front row) Dora Serna, Sister Rosalyn Ulfers, Sister Dolores Zieser, Susan Murphy and Sandy Kahle.

Openings A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

by BETH DRISCOLL, PBVM

During the early 1980s when I was teaching music at Newman Catholic Elementary School in Mason City, Iowa, I frequently visited with George Price before or after the 6:30 a.m. Mass. George was the father of a friend of mine, Presentation Sister, Joellen Price. At least once a week George shared news from Georgene's (Sister Joellen) weekly letter. "There's nothing better than receiving a letter in the mail," he often said. George took great pleasure in reading and re-reading these letters; they served to deepen the relationship he and his wife had with their oldest daughter.

Our culture attempts to lure us into frenetic busyness while social networking promises to connect us to hundreds of friends via instant messaging, texting, blogging, Facebook and Twitter. Instant messages, instant friends... is it enough? Letters put us in touch with the inside story of our hearts, inviting us to reflect on life's experiences. Long-lasting and enduring, letters have the power to lift spirits, celebrate joys and bear struggles along the journey of life.

As Sisters of the Presentation, we profess to offer hope and love to our broken world by incarnating the hospitality of God. We commit to affirm the dignity of all persons and work to enhance their feelings of self-worth. (*Mission Documents*) Letter-writing has become a very practical way for me to bring these words to life. For the past 11 years, on the anniversary of my friend Sister Ruth Mary Cassel's death, I've written a letter to her sisters and brothers. In addition to connecting me to her family, this letter helps me to honor her eternal presence and to articulate the ways her spirit of goodness is carried on in those whose lives she touched.

I gather monthly with a faith-sharing group whose practice is to send cards to people whose names we've spoken during our prayer time together. Notes of encouragement to a person who has lost his/her job; expressions of support to a couple whose young child has been diagnosed with cancer; congratulatory words to the young adult who has agreed to serve on the pastoral council.

Last year when I attended the wake of a friend, I noticed a large basket filled with cards, notes and letters. There was a simple note beside the basket that read: "Cards and notes you sent to support us during David's illness." That basket was a testament to me of community strength mediated through the written word – caring incarnate.

In a conversation with a friend and a former student of a recently deceased sister, both commented on how different Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter and Thanksgiving would be without the usual "holiday" card coming from Sister. Her greetings and letters had sustained their relationship for 30 years.

For some time I've scheduled my yearly retreat near my birthday. During these sacred days, I leisurely spend time re-reading my birthday cards. These birthday messages offer support and set direction for living into a new year of life: "You are in my prayers. May you proceed with grace and quiet confidence, knowing that God is with you."

Will you give someone the pleasure of finding a letter from you waiting in their mailbox?



You yourselves are
our letter, written
on our hearts.

II Corinthians 3:2



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 Emilie Bormann is a prison chaplain at the Federal Medical Center in Rochester, Minnesota, who compares her ministry to that of Sister Helen Prejean, author of *Dead Man Walking*. "Sister Helen ministers

to inmates on death row – condemned to death by a judge. I work with prisoners who are also on death row, condemned to death by terminal illness. My ministry is to walk that journey with them as they prepare to meet their Creator."

Balancing Custody and Compassion

by JENNIFER RAUSCH, PBVM

One way to be attentive to the world in which Sister Emilie Bormann ministers is to listen to the sounds she encounters during her workday at the Federal Medical Center (FMC) in Rochester, Minnesota, an agency of the Federal Bureau of Prisons. When Minnesota weather permits, Sister "purrs" into the parking lot at the FMC on her Puch moped, her way to by-pass the use of a car and thus reduce her carbon footprint. Passing through Control, access to the 64 acres on which the six major buildings of the prison complex are located, affords a series of audio stimuli. Sister Emilie positions a chain around her waist for her multiple keys and her two-way radio. She remarks, "I gain eight pounds in an instant as I put this equipment in place." A ringing clang of the metal doors serving as a barrier between prison property and the "outside" announce that her life on the "inside" has begun for this eight-hour shift. Her radio squawks into action as she receives a message.

Since 1994, Sister has been a chaplain within the federal prison system. She began her training and spent one and a half years at the Federal Correctional Institution in Marianna, Florida, and then transferred to Rochester where she is part of the Religious Services Unit with two other chaplains and a volunteer coordinator/secretary.

Walking briskly across the prison compound, Sister responds to the friendly greetings of staff members and inmates alike. From a staff member, "Thanks for coming to visit in the hospital unit." An inmate adds, "Hi, Sister. I'll see you at the chapel later." These are the voices that illustrate the confidence in and gratitude for Sister Emilie's presence and ministry among 960 inmates and 461 staff.

The rattle of keys punctuates her entrance into the chapel complex and again as she opens the door of her office. Although without powers of speech, the bookshelves speak clearly of the goal of the Religious Services Unit to provide support for the 18 different religions practiced by the inmate population. Copies of the Koran provide the sacred text of Islam, the well-worn Bibles attest to repeated use by Protestant and Catholic groups, print materials on issues of grief proclaim the loss of family and friends experienced by men who come to Sister Emilie because they know that she will listen with her ears and with her heart.

Sister Emilie defines her ministry as one of orchestrating the balance between custody and compassion. "FMC is a correctional institution and I am first a correctional officer and then a chaplain. We house men who have made some bad choices in their lives. What I try to do is to offer them some direction and compassion as they serve their prison sentences."

The inmates greatly appreciate the attention that Sister Emilie gives to them as she meets one-on-one to hear their stories. Some stories are filled with pain, "I have left my seven children behind with no life skills and a 'how-to-go-to-jail-like-your-Dad' road map." Some stories verbalize amazing hope, "Oh, Sister, I am just fine today. I am 'getting short.' I only have four more years here."

The walls of Sister Emilie's office proclaim significant messages. Prominent because of size and placement is Rembrandt's painting of the forgiving father who welcomes his prodigal son with open arms. She reflects, "This painting reminds me of how I carry the light of Nano's lantern here at FMC."

Twice a year, Sister Emilie facilitates a four-day retreat. A team of inmates who have previously made the retreat and volunteers from the "outside" direct the retreat. One inmate gratefully described the weekend as "a crash-course in Christianity."

A frequent sound – a knock on the door – draws Sister Emilie to respond to a request from an inmate for the materials needed for a period of prayer, items as varied as a menorah, a prayer rug or dried sage. An outdoor area houses the frame of a Native American sweat lodge that becomes a place of prayer each weekend. During the evening, the halls of the chapel complex are filled with a myriad of sounds that declare a variety of "prayers in session." Sister Emilie has made arrangements for the rhythmic pulsing of a drumming ceremony, the piano-led refrain of "Amazing Grace" and devout chanting in a meditative mode.

Sister Emilie also offers her compassionate presence to inmates housed in units dedicated to chemical dependency, neuropsychiatric care, medical-surgical patients, and end-of-life comfort care. The click and whir of medical equipment drifts in the background as she visits inmates coming to the end of their earthly journeys. A blessing for her ears is to listen to an inmate's whisper, "Thanks to you, Sister, I am not afraid to die" – a balance between custody and compassion.



Sister Emilie Bormann notes her pastoral visit with an inmate who is living his last days at the Federal Medical Center in Rochester, Minnesota.

WOMEN & spirit

CATHOLIC SISTERS IN AMERICA

over A WORLD FIVE SEEN
LIONS HAVE shared



Visiting the "Women & Spirit" exhibit were "Lantern Flames" Presentation associate group from north central Iowa. Left to right: Maureen Utter, Lisa Zwanziger, Sister Diana Blong, Rita Swinton and Yvonne Kisch (Not pictured are Sue and Dick Baldwin).

Being Present to those in Need

by MARGE HEALY, PBVM

"Energizing others to share in the ongoing mission of the community – to have the community excited about exploring how the parish can grow." That is how Sister Diana Blong, in her 15th year as a pastoral associate, describes the challenge of her present ministry. For three years she has called Charles City, Iowa, home – yet her large heart seems to know no bounds. People from around the world call her friend and, bridge builder that she is, her friends often become friends of each other. She is a community builder.

Sensing life as a journey, Sister Diana is amazed to realize how early ministries of teaching and religious education, together with hospital and hospice chaplaincy and a mission experience, have served to enrich her present pastoral ministry.

As pastoral associate, Sister Diana is called to be a "compassionate presence to those in need." That process begins with meeting the people where they are – greeting them with a smile and listening to their stories. Recipients of Sister's attention and care are persons who are homebound, in care centers and hospitals; families experiencing the loss of a member; and immigrants yearning to be "at home" in a new culture. Each person knows that they are not just "one more" person on a list, but each is loved and respected for who they are. Mutual giftedness is experienced as Sister Diana feels blessed walking with them during their times of special need.

Accompanying adults in the RCIA process, as they explore the meaning of faith life within the Catholic Church, is another facet of Sister's ministry. That aspect enriches the faith life of Sister Diana, the participants, the parish and the Archdiocese of Dubuque as she serves on the Archdiocesan Christian Initiation Committee.

Not working in isolation, Sister Diana, as leader and catalyst in the faith community, accepts and draws forth the gifts of others to join in the mission of the parish. In fact, she is passionate about getting people involved. Sister's participation in the local Ministerium and on the board of Floyd County Emergency Food and Shelter Program open up opportunities for involving ongoing parish commitments to the local Messiah Food Pantry and the Cedar River Community Kitchen.

The impact on Sister's life are Presentation Foundress Nano Nagle's words, "If I could be of service in any part of the world, I would gladly go," are evident as Sister Diana states, "I treasure my experiences in developing countries, especially teaching in Tanzania for three years and serving with parish groups in Haiti and El Salvador. Getting to know others and their cultures has broadened my world perspective. I am more open to meeting others of diverse cultures, and have been enriched in the past 10 years by the Sudanese, Filipino and Hispanic communities." Sister's present ministry includes walking with the Filipino and Spanish-speaking communities. Today's parishes are diverse and Sister Diana's prayer and strength come from Jesus' prayer that "they may all be one." (John 14, 21)

Two quotations are guiding lights in Sister Diana's life. During formation years the spirit of Vatican II as expressed in the words of Pope John XXIII offered inspiration: "When (we) are animated by the charity of Christ, (we) feel united, and the needs, sufferings and joys of others are felt as (our) own." The second is from the Presentation mission statement urging the sisters/associates to bring "hope and love to our broken world." These words lead Sister to share God's love and move "one pace beyond" – whatever the challenge. Her desire to respond to and invite others

For three years Sister Diana has called Charles City, Iowa, home – yet her large heart seems to know no bounds. People from around the world call her friend and, bridge builder that she is, her friends often become friends of each other. She is a community builder.

to share in responding to the needs of those near and far is both deep and motivating.

Sister's life is not about all work and no play. Her interests are multiple: community concerts, travel, walking, TV's "Dancing with the Stars," C-Span and PBS news (especially "Ethics and Religion"). Her friends and colleagues attest to her deep thirst to learn and to play. Often they hear, "Have you read...did you know...do you want to..." Where Sister Diana is, energy and life abound!

Counting religious life among her blessings she says, "I have been inspired by those in the Charles City area who have explored the life of Nano Nagle and our Presentation heritage, and are now living out the charism as part of the "Lantern Flames" associate group.

Today she treasures both the privilege of knowing and living with courageous women committed to living and sharing life in community.

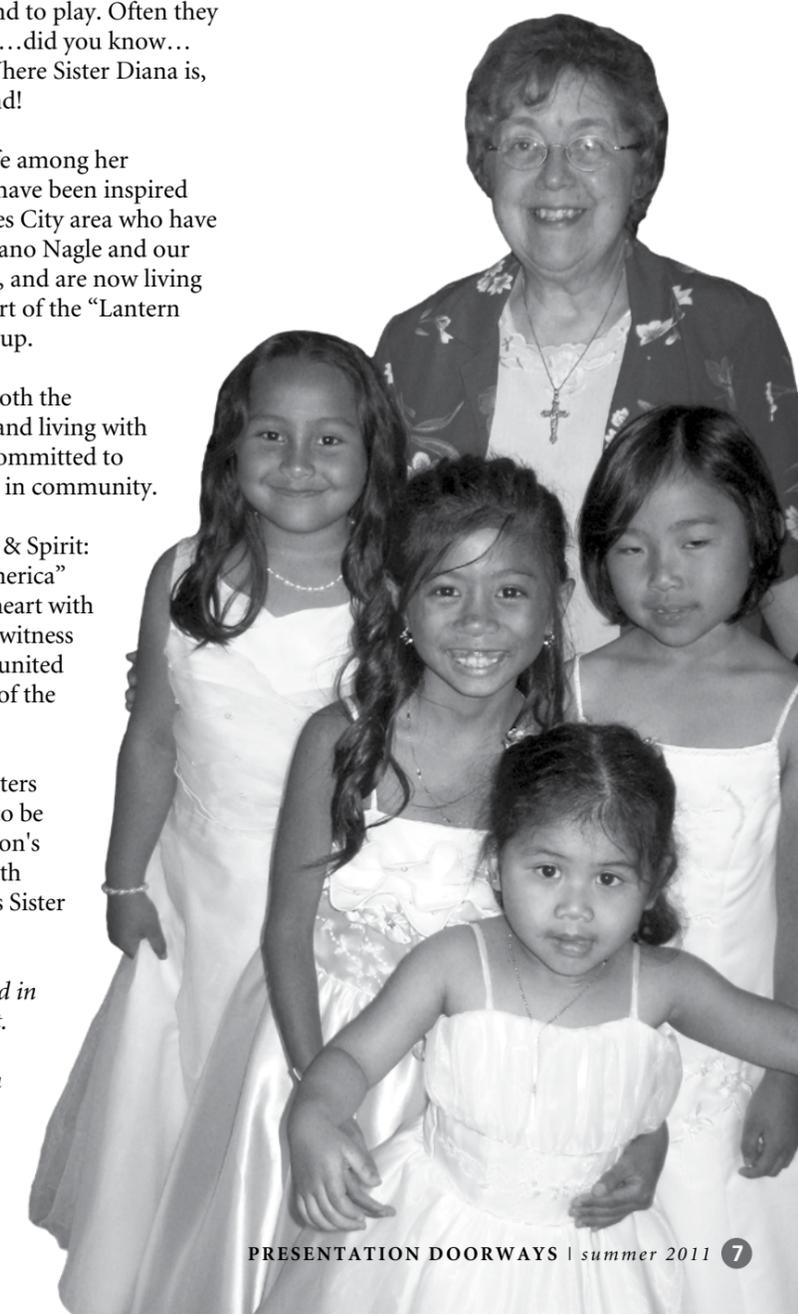
Visiting the "Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America" exhibit filled Sister's heart with gratitude for the past witness of love when women united respond to the needs of the time.

"I admire how our sisters in community strive to be true to the congregation's charism in a world with great challenges," says Sister Diana.

Sister Diana has served in pastoral ministry at St. Henry in Monticello Minnesota; St. Cecelia in Algona, Iowa; and St. Mary in

Marshalltown, Iowa, prior to her present ministry in Charles City, Iowa.

Photo below: Sister Diana Blong celebrates with four little "angels," (left to right) Shemaiah Jasmine Lara, Nicole Concepcion, Aliyah Ortiola and Danica Dejongoy (front) after the procession of the Flores de Mayo, a May Flower festival celebrated in the Philippines in honor of the Virgin Mary.





Left to right: Randy Engler, Jim Richman and John Richman go beyond “cutting” the green to “working” green...a high priority for the Presentation sisters.

Rising to the Challenges of a 40-acre Property

Awesome Threesome Promote ‘Green’

by BETH KRESS, PBVM

If you have questions about water and erosion, the use of herbicides, the maintenance of a detention basin, keeping a swimming pool in tip-top shape or other concerns in property management, then a conversation with the three incredible men who lend their special care to the Mount Loretto property could lead to answers or where to find the answers.

Randy Engler, director of plant and maintenance at Mount Loretto since 1985, had the encouragement and mentoring of his father-in-law, the late Ken Davis, who was the first head of maintenance at 2360 Carter Road, including when it was Mount Saint Bernard Seminary.

Maintenance Associate Jim Richman has been around Mount Loretto for a total of eight years (1997-2003 and 2010-2011) and his son, John Richman, for seven years (2004-2011).

During Randy’s 26 years at Mount Loretto he has seen change and challenge. He has appreciated that house coordinators have entrusted him with his responsibilities so that he can in turn pass that support along to his staff. Randy has dealt with erosion and wild life issues and welcomed the renovation of the property (1994-1996) so that efficiency and sustainability can continue.

“We used to have one large boiler for the whole plant. Now we have eight ray-pack boilers that spell each other off so that sometimes we may be using only a half-boiler,” Randy explains.

Changing the filters and cleaning the coils on individual room heater/cooling units is a cyclical task on the list of interior jobs that also includes painting, plumbing and patching, among many others.

When working indoors, Jim finds a particular satisfaction that comes daily, “I really like the appreciation the sisters show me for all I do.”

“Working outside is very satisfying,” states John. From the grass, bushes and trees to the leaves and snow and ice, John, who is a real “hands-on” man, likes what he accomplishes.

Randy stays in touch with the City of Dubuque and others in the field of maintenance and engineering in order to keep Mount Loretto a contributing member of the community. “I find that solving the problems and having a variety of every day goals and tasks is most satisfying in my job,” states Randy.

During the four seasons of the year, all three men find the outside work a most rewarding part of their daily responsibilities at Mount Loretto. In April and May they begin the task of treating the crab grass and “creeping charlie” with preventer chemicals. Next comes the big roller behind the tractor to aerate the lawn, followed by thatching or removing old cut grass and weeds and returning them to the earth for mulch, and then planting new grass seed in the “dead spots” where winter took its toll.

“We hear lots of compliments about the beautiful grounds from many who pass by or stop in at Mount Loretto,” states John. “Keeping things looking good is a challenge, especially when we get lots of rainy days.”

Freshly mown grass, meticulously trimmed bushes and trees and a lake scene that makes for a perfect backdrop for photos are the pride of not only the sisters but of Randy, John and Jim.

Yet, this huge outdoor task that begins at one end of the property on Monday and starts over the next Monday presents challenges to the ever growing desire by all at Mount Loretto and the constant commitment to be green and support a sustainable environment.

“Our lake is actually a detention basin receiving run-off water from the driveway, roof and the adjacent part of Carter Road,” comments Randy who is very conscious of how much Mount Loretto is saving the City of Dubuque.

Each year Randy asks the sisters and directors of the property, “Do you want us to spray the grounds?” That translates into, should we use herbicides this year? The alternative would be to apply a fertilizer with earth-friendly components.

Randy has the facts: “It would be costly for one application of a ‘green’ treatment four times a year on the Mount Loretto property,” he remarks. “There’s not that much available in treatments yet to be totally ‘green’ in lawn care but we continue to research the possibilities,” he adds. He keeps asking his local supplier every year in hopes of a new product on the market. Currently he uses a product called *Milorganite*, a biosolids fertilizer that is ideal for low input lawn care.

“Going Green” is not only an expensive enterprise but also a labor intensive undertaking that includes the relationship to all creatures such as deer, geese, ducks, moles and other critters that leave their foot prints on the property.

“We work with them,” says John with a smile as he recalls the large flock of Canadian Geese that settles along the lake, on the lawn and in the lakeside driveway every fall on its way south.

Recycling is another daily and conscious effort toward sustainability for this crew.

“We recycle batteries and light bulbs, we turn off lights when not in use and we compost the lawn, leaves, branches and bushes,” says John. To the list Jim adds oil, cardboard, paper and metal. Almost all light bulbs in the house are fluorescent.

This awesome team continues to learn about alternative sources of energy, look for chemical-free products and return nutrients to Earth as they help the sisters work on decreasing the congregation’s carbon footprint.



PRESENTATION QUEST

IMMERSION & SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

July 19-23, 2011 - Cedar Rapids, Iowa

The Cedar Rapids Rebuild Project helps to rebuild a flood-ravaged community by building simple, decent, affordable houses. Though the majority of volunteers have no prior construction experience, they are involved in most phases of construction. Working side-by-side with future residents, volunteers directly experience the joy created by a family realizing the dream of home ownership.

Visit www.dubuquepresentations.org for more information or contact:

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Two Exceptional Individuals Honored

Nano Nagle Awards

by JOAN LICKTEIG, PBVM

In commemoration of the 225th anniversary of Nano Nagle's death and in the spirit of her desire to serve, the Dubuque Sisters of the Presentation initiated a \$500 Nano Nagle Scholarship to further her legacy of education. Likewise, a service award of the same amount is awarded to a person nominated by a Presentation sister or associate as a person of service. The service award may be used to benefit a service project or in some way aid the nominee in continuing the gift of service.

This year's scholarship is awarded to Stephanie Kajewski, a senior from Bishop Garrigan Catholic High School in Algona, Iowa. Stephanie's application was supported by her teachers: Mary McCall, English department chair, and Annette Vaske, business education instructor.

Described as a hard working student with a positive attitude, Stephanie manifests a penchant for service in school, parish and community. She is, likewise, a person of integrity and responsibility. Involvement in extracurricular activities of choir,

speech, art and multiple volunteer services does not prevent Stephanie from achieving good grades and honor roll status. As Ms. McCall states, "Stephanie Kajewski is not just a typical student but a mature and involved student, deserving of the scholarship." Ms. Vaske describes Stephanie as "always smiling and never criticizing or judging others. She is a quiet girl who would prefer to blend into the background, never seeking recognition." In addition to multiple volunteer/service projects, Stephanie gives of her time to care for her younger siblings at home.

Scholarship assistance will be a boon toward meeting Stephanie's educational goals, a cause dear to the heart of Nano Nagle.

This year's service award goes to Nancy Dolphin from Farley, Iowa. For the past 16 years Nancy has ministered directly to the



Excel Program in Okolona, Mississippi. First visiting Presentation Sister Jean Ann Meyer in her new ministry with African American children, Nancy inquired about their needs. Returning home, she later loaded her van with needed bedding and socks – socks in every crevice of the van, even the cup holders.

From van to trailer to a semi, the project grew and grew, and trips doubled from one a year to two. With Roger Simon providing driver, gas and truck, community involvement continued and grants were received. Volunteers joined in, painting, cleaning and building in Okolona. Those who stayed at home in Farley fixed furniture, packed clothing, washed and sewed items.

To date more than 150 volunteers have gone on these trips, and no doubt an equal or larger number have worked at home. The generosity and commitment of one person was contagious; it has transformed the life and educational opportunities for a multitude of students hundreds of miles from Farley, Iowa.

As stated by Sister Sharon Kelchen, in her nomination letter, "A small request for socks led to semis of donations; so can the passion of one person create relationships between two diverse cultures."

Left to right: Left photo: Sister Sharon Kelchen awards Nancy Dolphin with the Nano Nagle Service Award. Below photo: Stephanie Kajewski receives the Nano Nagle Scholarship from Sister Janet Goetz.

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.

The Lady of the Lantern

NANO
Lives



by JOAN LICKTEIG, PBVM

Mother Benedict (Julia) Murphy, Superior 1907-1913/1916-1919

Entering at St. Vincent's convent in 1886 from the New Melleray Parish, outside Dubuque, Mother Benedict taught music for 18 years after her profession. Although Mother Benedict was the sixth superior of the community, she had entered only 12 years after the original foundation, affording her close ties with the early founders. She knew every community member except four: Mother Vincent Hennessy and three young sisters who died before her entrance.

Four months after her election, Mother Benedict emptied the community treasury to purchase land for a much-needed new motherhouse. Unable to afford an architect, she directed much of the construction. The new building, home to the Presentation sisters for 30 years, was dedicated only one year and three months following the ground breaking. The dedication sermon was delivered from the rostrum of the balcony on second floor, over the main entrance of the building.

Saddled with a total loan of \$40,000 plus interest and with all their property mortgaged, the Presentation sisters were poor. Community membership was small, and the 11 schools brought in minimal salaries. The sisters relied on "in-kind" gifts, primarily food. Credit goes to the music teachers for their efforts to increase funds.

For Mother Benedict one monumental task was soon followed by a second: the revision of the Irish Presentation Rule to meet the needs of American communities. During her last two terms, she completed the revision of the constitution and sent it to Rome for final approval. Mother Benedict opened seven new schools, including schools in Nebraska, Colorado and South Dakota, and Iowa.

Mother Benedict was not eligible for re-election after serving two consecutive terms. After Mother Columba's three-year term of office, however, Mother Benedict was again elected for two more terms as congregational leader. She is the only Presentation sister who was elected to four terms as superioress.

Death came many times from 1918-1921, including the deaths of the three Iowa foundresses. In one seven-month period, several of the most experienced and active community members died. At the conclusion of Mother Benedict's fourth term, 33 community members rested in Mount Olivet Cemetery. It seemed a high number for a 40-year old community of young women.

Presentation sisters owe much of their progress to the initiative, energy and persistence of Mother Benedict. Her willingness and zeal in confronting difficulties earned the respect and gratitude of the sisters. Upon completion of her 12 years of leadership duties and three years of service as elected bursar, Mother Benedict once more joined the teaching roster. A final contribution was the writing of the community annals through its 75th anniversary, which she completed in 1949 at the age of 83. Free of duties for six years, she died in 1955 at age 89.

A Discernment Process Ignatian Spirituality

by JEANINE KUHN, PBVM

The process of developing a personal relationship with God and the ongoing deepening of this relationship is the foundation for discernment. This foundation begins early in life when we are baptized and our spiritual journey begins. It is a gradual process of growth – coming to know God and self. Contrary to our human desire for immediate results and answers, discernment is a “way of life” that, indeed, takes a lifetime.

Fundamentally, there is only one Christian spirituality, one movement through Jesus Christ to the Father. Over the centuries, as people longed to follow in the footsteps of Jesus in the Gospel, various “schools” of spirituality developed. Great Christian spiritual writers wrote of their religious experiences, lived contemplatively and guided the faithful in their search for God. One of these writers was St. Ignatius of Loyola who was born in 1492. Ignatius experienced a deep conversion of heart in his early years and spent his lifetime composing and praying over what is known today as the Spiritual Exercises, an approach to prayerfully living the Gospel message entering into the very heart of Christ.

Many in religious life were introduced to the Spiritual Exercises early in life. Retreat directors often followed the pattern and dynamic of these Spiritual Exercises and Rules for Discernment. After Vatican II, there was a return to this practice, not so much in preached retreats as in individually directed retreats. The Exercises remain popular to this day. Ignatius emphasized the importance of certain dispositions, as was shared in a previous article in Doorways. A realization that we are called by God to be holy and the desire to follow that call.

On a practical level, we discern things everyday – What shall I eat for dinner? Where shall I attend Mass? – simple things in our daily experience. More significant decisions take us to our knees in prayer over a period of time; pondering and listening to know God’s will and our true self. We do this by becoming more attentive to God’s presence in our daily life as well as in prayer. A theme running through the writings of Ignatius is: finding God in all things. He believed that a review of the day, an Examen, was one of the best tools we can use to be in touch with God and self. Ignatius provides two sets of Rules for Discernment of Spirits. These help the spiritual director and directee grow in the art of

spiritual discernment. We look at such areas as good and evil, consolation and desolation, the need to share with someone what lurks in the darkness of our interior being and expose it to the light so it can be discerned. We look at patterns of grace or patterns of deceit in our lives.

Ignatius was well aware of his own humanness as he stressed the importance of becoming aware of and attentive to interior movements – inner feelings, and emotions as well as our mind and will. We are seeking God’s will, yes, but we also need to take into consideration our felt needs, wants, concerns, hopes, talents and gifts. For example we can ask questions such as: What am I feeling? How would I describe these feelings? Where is this feeling coming from? Am I resisting something? Why am I feeling so peaceful at this time? The crucial matter, through discernment, is to recognize which of the interior movements lead us to God and which take us away from God.

Ignatius wrote, “We are what we desire.” As we make the effort to develop a discerning heart, it is our desire to be in relationship with God and to grow in that relationship. The desire of our heart is to be and live like Jesus, whose love encompasses and redeems all of creation.

One process for personal discernment in making a decision is:

- Pray: to the Holy Spirit for wisdom, openness and light to see.
- Clarify: the decision to be made
- Prayerful Reflection: Why am I doing this? How will this change my life? How will circumstances, family, friends, ministry and community be affected?
- Listing: reasons - advantages, disadvantages
- Consider: weigh advantages and disadvantages, God’s will plus my needs, needs of the community, family...
- Make use of imagination: awareness of inner feelings over days, weeks, months - repeat, add to...
- Election-Decision: decide and wait for
- Confirmation: interior signs - peacefulness, less anxiety; exterior signs - seems to fit with state of life, circumstances, commitments, a freedom to move with the decision

.....
Coming Next Issue...
.....

Quaker Clearness Committee

Friend and Benefactor Giving from the Heart

As told by JEANETTE McCARTHY, PBVM

“The more you have, the more you can/must give”

“A bull or cow is worth the same as an acre of land,” is a saying quoted on James M. Michels’ business stationery. This simple statement tells how Jim has valued his farming in Stanley, Iowa. Throughout his life as an Iowa farmer, Jim has also been a friend and benefactor of the Dubuque Presentation sisters.

The brother of deceased Presentation Sister Dianne Michels, Jim has known farming all his life, beginning at home with his parents, Andrew and Mathilda Michels, and his two sisters Donna (Sister Dianne) and Leona Michels Kleitsch. Eventually, Jim owned a large farm between Stanley and Hazelton, Iowa, where he raised a large herd of Angus cattle and a lot of corn, beans and hay, including acres of sweet corn.

“Very often Jim would arrive at Mount Loretto with one-half a beef, or a truckload of sweet corn picked and brought directly from the field,” comments Sister Jeanette McCarthy who was Sister Dianne’s classmate. “Throughout the years Jim’s generous donations took a lot of effort and good will and have been very much appreciated by all who dined on fresh corn-on-the cob and tasty beef at the Presentation motherhouse.”

A life-long Catholic, Jim appreciates his faith. “We were brought up in a good Christian family,” says Jim modestly. “Our parents were loving people; they passed this value on to their children. I also learned from my parents that faith is an everyday thing. The more you have, the more you can/must give.”

As a great devotee to Our Blessed Mother, Jim regularly prayed the Rosary while on his

tractor. He went on tours to honor Mary at Medjugorje (former Yugoslavia, now western Bosnia and Herzegovina) in 1988 and 1999, and later to Betania, Venezuela, where many others honor Mary.

Jim is now retired, but still buys truckloads of sweet corn every year in the summer and quality beef to bring to Dubuque for the sisters. He says that the reason he keeps on with this generous support is because “The Presentation sisters are doing God’s work.”

“The sisters do a lot to help other people. They are a happy group and they spread joy to everyone they meet,” states Jim who also gives in honor of his beloved sister, Sister Dianne.

“Wherever Sister Dianne lived, Jim recalls that he met many wonderful sisters who led special lives and were very interesting individuals. We know he enjoyed sharing with the sisters and appreciated their hospitality many times,” comments Sister Jeanette.

Jim Michels is a forever-friend, benefactor and brother to the Presentation sisters.

The Gift of Memorials

.....
One way to honor loved ones is to remember important values and hopes that were dear to them. When you make a gift in memory of a loved one to the Sisters of the Presentation, you are keeping their values and hopes alive through the sisters’ works of charity, education and service.

If you are interested in making a memorial gift, send your donation to:
Sisters of the Presentation
2360 Carter Road
Dubuque, Iowa 52001

Left to right: Jim Michels enjoys a visit with Sister Limus Coyle.



Midwest Associates and Religious Gather Our Spirits Journey with God

by KARLA BERNS, ASSOCIATE CO-DIRECTOR

On April 2, 2011, 290 associates and women and men religious from 16 different congregations met in Dubuque, Iowa to hear Edwina Gateley speak on her own spiritual journey throughout life as she led the group in "taking a vacation with God" and "sinking into our own experience of God and of connecting to our own stories." It was the 9th Bi-annual Gathering of Midwest Associates and Religious.

Author of "In God's Womb: A Spiritual Memoir," and several other books, Edwina Gateley divided her day-long presentation into the three basic human experiences of our spiritual journey with God: childhood, adulthood/discipleship and the wisdom years. She encouraged the associates and religious to recall and name the symbol they each carried for God in those different stages of their lives. She asked the group to be silent and empty themselves before God as she used music, visuals and her own poetry to set the stage. "Say nothing, ask nothing, just let your God love you and look on you and BE in you," she said.

"Listen to the God who never leaves us," Gateley urged the gathering. "We do not have to seek God. God is not lost! God is within us. It is we who went out for a walk!" she reminded the group. She exclaimed, "God never leaves us but rather is ever seducing us to remember who we are: the seed of God which must reflect God; we must reflect God wherever we are. Do we shine forth God's love?" she asked.

"Most of us see God as teacher and judge," Gateley said, "instead of seeing God as the ultimate parent. We try to be faithful and save the world but face risk and failure. We need to trust as we experience pain, grief, loss and failure." She asked the group to pray for courage and comfort in the face of darkness, disappointment, fear and weakness; to seek refuge at the source of life, grace, comfort and security; to seek hope and to be aware of the silent God who stands by us.

Gateley described the adult journey of discipleship and mission as trying to be faithful even when feeling abandoned. These are the "dark nights of our souls," she said – "whether a divorce, loss of a job, the death of a dear one. These dark nights don't just go away. It's how we

deal with them that makes us shrink or grow." She reminded the group that God says, "Be still, beloved. You will not be left alone. You are My love and My hope. All are gathered in My arms." Gateley added, "The God, who is always with us when we are 'in the desert,' is calling us to faithfulness."

As she moved to the "wisdom stage" of life, Gateley proclaimed that we are all called to divine union; to mysticism. "It's not just for saints and dead people. Mystics know they are loved by God and it makes them rather eccentric! Wise men and crones have a deeper, wider vision of creation. They hunger for the wilderness and for quiet space. They see God as the Lover," she said.

She assured those gathered that "God is rooted in our being. God's grace is like a great dance held back in us, waiting to break free. Our call is to put our roots down into God who will give us strength to withstand violence and adversity. We are not feeding our people with bread," she decried. "We must claim our role as teacher, prophet, saint, daring to preach the Word of God in faith and with the serene consciousness that all will be well."

Famous for her lay missionary work and in helping women break free from the bonds of addiction and prostitution, Gateley encouraged the listeners to follow their call to spread the love of God to all the world. She said, "The world is hungry for spiritual wisdom. We are often obsessed with our brokenness, frozen in guilt, instead of rejoicing in spreading God's word and love. God as Lover is longing for us to come home to God. It is the fire of the Holy Spirit that will thaw God's people and allow us to see and heal the brokenhearted."

Acknowledging that commitment to the Lover God is not shared by all, she closed by saying: "Those who danced were thought insane by those who could not hear the music."



Presentation Associate Deb Jasper thinks Gateley is a woman of courage and a model for anyone wanting to grow in their spiritual life. So too, Carol Witry, a Presentation associate, appreciated the opportunity for shared silence and found Gateley's reflection on being in union with God exciting, empowering and challenging. "I found myself filled with awe and gratitude for God's presence in my life," she stated.

The Midwest Gathering brought associates and religious from across the country stretching as far as North Carolina, Texas and California to make the 9th the largest Bi-Annual Gathering. The Dubuque Sisters of the Presentation had 15 sisters and 30 associates in attendance.

Left to right: Top left photo: Dubuque Presentation sisters and associates gather for a group photo during the Midwest Gathering. (Seven participants not pictured). Bottom photo: Associate Deb McClimon, Sister Annette Skyles and Sister Benjamin Duschner take a break to smile for the camera.

Annual Benefit Garage/Gym Sale

There was a tremendous response again this year to the call for gently-used items for the 7th annual "sale of the year" event on April 28-30 and May 5-7, 2011. As the gym and garage at the Sisters of the Presentation opened for business, shoppers came and exclaimed, "Wow! Look at all this stuff." "It's so organized!" "This is the 'sale of the year' that I wait for." And then they began filling bags and boxes. Many also enjoyed a roll and coffee or purchased baked goods to take home.

This year's sales yielded \$16,000, all of which will be distributed to the following ministries:

- Presentation Lantern Center, Dubuque, Iowa
- Caminando Juntos – Aberdeen Sisters of the Presentation Hispanic Ministry, Sioux Falls, South Dakota
- Student Tuition Assistance, Seton Catholic School - Farley, Epworth, Peosta, Iowa

The Sisters of the Presentation express gratitude to those who contributed, unpacked and organized items; directed traffic; made signs; assisted shoppers and shared hospitality. Thanks to those who brought in fresh baked goods. The homemade aroma from the bake sale corner attracted many customers. See you again next year.

SISTER LINUS COYLE

A Woman of Prayer

by JANICE HANCOCK, PBVM



Sister Linus Coyle enjoys the quietness and serenity of retirement while surrounding herself with community and prayer.

After celebrating her 60th jubilee of religious life in the teaching field as a computer instructor in Charles City, Iowa, Sister Linus Coyle came to Mount Loretto in August 2001. When Sister came to Dubuque, she volunteered to work with the sisters in the computer lab. Since prayer is the main priority for Sister Linus, she always scheduled her computer assistance after her prayer time. In addition to offering computer help, Sister Linus also gave her time accompanying sisters to their medical appointments or spending time with them outside enjoying the beautiful motherhouse grounds.

As life continues to change and progress, Sister Linus has asked others for help with her own assisted living needs. Trying to remember the frequent changes in the daily schedule is most challenging at this time for Sister in her retirement. Both hearing and inadequate balance slows Sister Linus down a bit and prevents her from full participation at some events. As Sister Linus states, "We only go through old age once."

Sister enjoys participating in art and writing classes. Currently Sister Linus utilizes the Internet to keep abreast of civic and religious events.

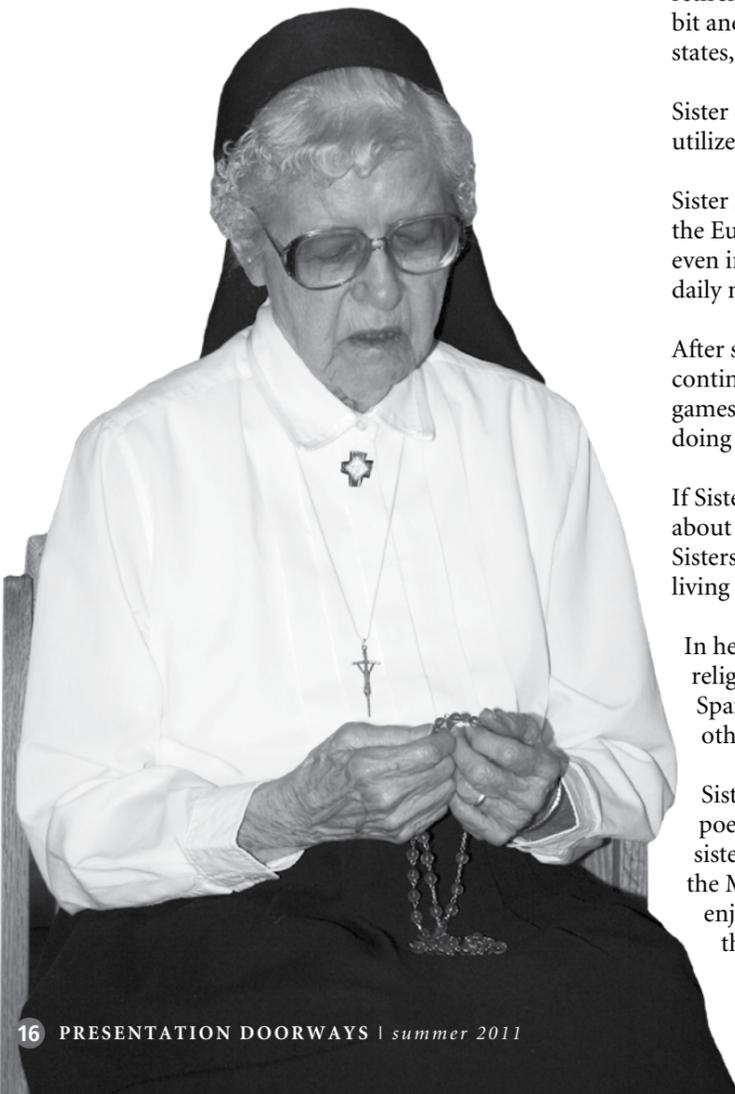
Sister Linus shares morning and evening prayer and the daily celebration of the Eucharist with the sisters. At other times during the day and night, and even in the wee hours of the morning, Sister Linus makes a difference by her daily ministry of prayer.

After spending many years teaching and in service to others, Sister Linus continues this same spirit in her retirement. She finds enjoyment in Scrabble games, jigsaw puzzles and just appreciating others in their own dedication of doing God's work here on Earth.

If Sisters Julie Siggelkov and Dianne Michels were alive to give a few thoughts about Sister Linus this publication size would increase significantly. Both Sisters Julie and Dianne would agree that their lives were greatly enriched by living in community with Sister Linus.

In her early formation and the first 25 years of religious life with another religious community, Sister Linus worked with American Indians, Chinese, Spanish and African-American. She readily loved and respected those of other ethnicities and learned to better understand their cultures.

Sister Linus has a special talent and appreciation for reflecting the Word poetically. In the course of one year, Sister wrote a poetic verse about each sister for her day of celebration affirming the contributions of the sister to the Mount Loretto community that she compiled in a notebook for all to enjoy. Each day Sister Linus continues to be drawn by the power of words through her poetry, her prayer and her gratitude for community.



Remembering West Dubuque & Ackley

by HERMANN PLATT, PBVM



West Dubuque School, later named St. Anthony School.

Expanding to West Dubuque

Dubuque foundress, Mother Vincent Hennessy, and the three women who accompanied her from Ireland to Iowa wasted no time in expanding their services beyond their initial school in Key West. Two years after arriving in Dubuque, Mother Vincent's group of sisters had grown to seven. A few days after the initial profession ceremony of the three young women who came from Ireland, Archbishop Hennessy requested that Mother Vincent send three of her sisters to staff a school in West Dubuque (today it is called St. Anthony's). The pastor had a small house built, and in September 1876 the first foundation outside of Key West was established.

In the ensuing years, West Dubuque grew in population and became a well-organized parish. The school remained in the hands of Presentation sisters until 1899, when, again at the request of Archbishop Hennessy, the sisters withdrew to make room for the newly-established diocesan community of Holy Ghost sisters.

Nearly a century later, Sister Barbara Rastatter began working at St. Anthony's as pastoral associate in 1993, until Sister Margaret Anne Kramer replaced her in 2000, the year the parish celebrated its centennial.

Transition to Ackley, Iowa

In January 1877, Mother Vincent received a sudden visit from Archbishop Hennessy and Reverend Peter O'Dowd, pastor of Ackley, requesting that she send sisters to start a school in Ackley, Iowa. The annals read:

"...her dismay was unconcealed at the serious inroad which a second colony of missionaries would make on her small community. Not yet six months since her first little band was sent to West Dubuque! Observing Mother's distress, the bishop proposed only two be sent, adding, 'Have them go with Father O'Dowd tomorrow morning.'"



Sister Josephine Howley

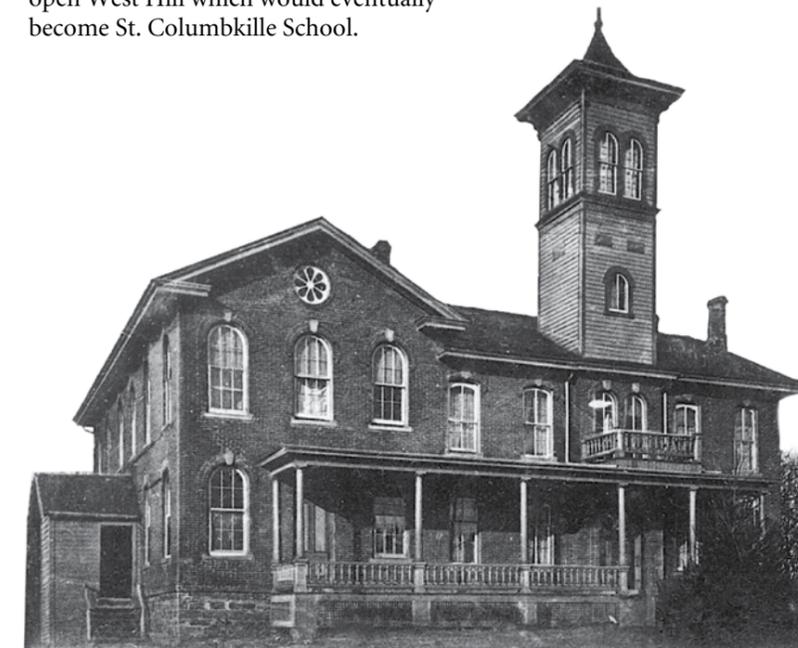
Finding it as hard to leave Key West as they did to leave Ireland, Sisters Mary Josephine Howley and Mary Rose Pius Murphy packed their things and left in the morning.

Sacred Heart Academy opened in 1877, staffed by two Presentation sisters and two lay women. "On the first day, 163 boarders and day students were enrolled. The following fall three more sisters were added to the faculty.



Sister Rose Pius Murphy

Presentation sisters ministered in Ackley for only one and one-half years before they withdrew to better staff the schools in Key West and West Dubuque, and to open West Hill which would eventually become St. Columbkille School.



Sacred Heart Academy, later named St. Mary School in 1951, in Ackley, Iowa.

WOMAN OF INFLUENCE

Sister Mary Eugene Goss

June 19, 1923 - May 7, 2011

by JOAN LICKTEIG, PBVM

Born in Lawler, Iowa, daughter of Ambrose and Florence (Canty) Goss, Margaret Mary joined the Sisters of the Presentation in 1941, receiving the name Sister Mary Eugene. She professed her perpetual vows on May 16, 1947. Sister earned a bachelor's degree from Loras College and a master's degree from the University of Notre Dame; her teaching career spanned 52 years. Her students remember her for her high standards and expectations. Following her 15 years of retirement, Sister Mary Eugene entered eternal life on May 7, 2011, joining her parents and three siblings.

Sister Eugene was both a private and a complex person, but in spite of that, one never had to wonder what she thought or where she stood on a community or a political issue. She knew her mind and spoke it.

As a social studies teacher, with a particular interest in government, Sister Eugene demonstrated an exceptional affinity for politics. She was an informed and engaged citizen, an esteemed and keen politician. Candidates for political offices sought her endorsement and acknowledged her influence.

Sister Eugene's personality had many facets. With her green thumb and gentle care, houseplants thrived. For special community celebrations, she treated the sisters to homemade candy and walnut-filled dates, covered with powdered sugar. No matter the hours or the "cost" to herself.

Service of others often occupied her thoughts and actions. She enjoyed giving individual gifts, and with her artistic touch she loved decorating fifth floor lounge or common areas in the house. Energy, industry and enthusiasm marked her commitments. She gave 15 years of leadership to projects of the American Cancer Society and the Alzheimer's Association – and expected the rest of the sisters to promptly submit their donations.

Sister Eugene had a good sense of humor. One of the receptionists, Sue Murphy, shared that when she dialed her room, #512, for a message, Sister Eugene would answer, "Joe's Place." She gave some of the sisters special attention with unique nicknames. Her morning greeting often was, "How are you, Joni Bug?"

Sister Eugene arrived in chapel early each morning, and many sisters and friends looked for her when they came to Mass. She was there, in the last row, the last chair, in her reserved seat –

praying her rosary. Following the example of her beloved mother, no doubt, she was faithful to the rosary. And even when she wasn't in the chair later in the day, her rosary was draped over the arm of her chair, ready for her return. Sister Eugene's dad died when she was a baby, but there was no doubt about the admiration and devotion she had for her mother.

When Father Cecil Friedmann, former superintendent of Bishop Garrigan Catholic High School, Algona, Iowa, and longtime friend of Sister Eugene, contributed to the sharing of memories at Sister's wake, an initial and enthusiastic comment was, "She was really something else" And she was!

Sister Eugene worked hard and played hard. She knew pain and loss, solitude and the public eye, contemplation and celebration. She faithfully cared for her aging mother – and hobnobbed with presidential candidates. Amazingly she could "walk with kings" and never "lose the common touch." (*Kipling*) One might conclude that she lived life to the fullest, as Jesus directed when he said, "I have come that you might have life, and have it abundantly." (*John 10:10*)



Mount Loretto AND BEYOND

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



Formation Gathering

Members in initial membership and formators of various North American Presentation communities gathered in New York to expand the awareness of Presentation efforts to co-create systemic change through the International Presentation Association's NGO status at the United Nations. The group left with new learnings, new insights and new invitations to address the root causes of poverty.



Conference of Presentations

The Conference of Presentation Sisters of North America held their annual meeting at Mount Loretto in June. (Top photo) The leadership of the conference is comprised of the leadership teams of the eight Presentation congregations in North America: St. John's, Newfoundland-Labrador; San Francisco, California; Aberdeen, South Dakota; Fargo, North Dakota; New Windsor, New York; Staten Island, New York; Union of Presentation Sisters, United States Province; and Dubuque, Iowa. (Bottom photo) The justice contacts from each congregation also met at this time.



You are invited to join us.

July 19-23, 2011
QUEST Service Opportunity
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

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 or call 563.588.2008.

Please pray with us.

July 14-16, 2011
Community Days

21st of each month
Pray for Vocations

25th of each month
Mass for Benefactors

DUBUQUE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



OLD JAIL
MUSEUM

MEMORIAL DAY – LABOR DAY
(MAY 28 – SEPTEMBER 5)

Featuring "CATHOLIC SISTERS OF THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER VALLEY: GREAT RIVER, GREAT NEEDS, WOMEN OF GREAT SERVICE"

Since 1843, Catholic sisters have founded numerous clinics, orphanages, schools and other facilities in the Upper Mississippi River Valley. Today, Catholic sisters' colleges, universities, hospitals and eldercare facilities still thrive throughout the region. The exhibit includes artifacts, photos and the incredible stories of these determined women of service.





OLD JAIL
MUSEUM

8th Street & Central, Dubuque, IA 52001
563.557.9545
www.mississippirivermuseum.com

HOURS
11 am – 4 pm
Open Memorial Day – Labor Day [Wed. - Sun.]

Adults \$5.00, Youth (Ages 7 – 17) \$3.50
Children (6 and under) Free
Group Rates and Field Trips Available
Free to Historical Society members

STUDENT/YOUTH TOURS
Your group will love going on an educational treasure hunt through the halls and cells of the Old Jail. Learning has never been so captivating. As your group explores, they will get the answers they need to "break out of jail."

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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.

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 Misspelled Name
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 Remove my Name
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(please indicate which is correct)

Relationally SPEAKING

Sisters, Associates, Family, Friends in Brief



Congratulations to **Associate Sister Virgie Luchsinger, SFCC**, from Chicago, Illinois, who passed the national gerontological nurse certification exam. Sister Virgie is a registered nurse on night duty shift at St. Joseph Hospital in Chicago, Illinois for the past 15 years. Sister Virgie has ministered in nursing for 35 years.



Sister Rita Cameron and three women from the Dubuque area participated in a service trip to New Orleans in March. They were joined by other North American Presentation vocation directors from Aberdeen, South Dakota; New Windsor, New York; and San Francisco, California and women interested in pursuing religious life.

The Sisters of the Presentation were among the Catholic women religious communities recognized at the 16th Annual Bishop Maurice J. Dingman Peace Award celebration on April 2, 2011, in Ankeny, Iowa. Catholic Peace Ministry, based in Des Moines, presented the award to recognize women religious who have dedicated their

lives and ministries to justice and peace efforts. For over 150 years, Catholic sisters have actively served in the Des Moines area in education, healthcare, housing, poverty and other social service areas.

On April 28, the Opening Doors' "2011 Volunteer Award" was awarded to the Sisters of the Presentation, Sinsinawa Dominicans, Sisters of Charity and Dubuque Franciscans, who together initiated and have remained involved in the lives of women and children since the beginning of Opening Doors: Maria House and Teresa's Shelter. Many Presentation sisters and associates have volunteered at the shelters and/or on boards/committees throughout the years.

Do you have news to share?

**We would love to publish it.
Please send your news items to:
doorways@dubuquepresentations.org.**