



PRESENTATION DOORWAYS

offering hospitality to the world



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The PURPOSE

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

Your THOUGHTS & COMMENTS

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

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Cover PHOTOS

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

PRESENTATION DOORWAYS

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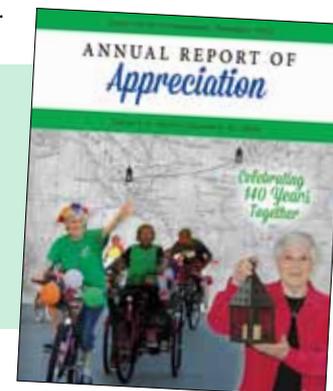


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The Presentation Sisters ministering in Bolivia have been blessed by the generosity of many who contributed to the purchase of nearly 150 water filters for O'Connor Province in Tarija, Bolivia.

Annual Report of Appreciation

Included in this issue of Presentation Doorways is our Annual Report of Appreciation for all who have been part of our ministry efforts in 2014. Because of your generosity – even greater imaginations can be brought to reality. New ways of being present to people in need are unfolding as a result of your partnerships. Your giving spirit continues to encourage us and for that we are grateful.



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Cover PHOTO

During a gathering in Yukimbia, Alida, Lency, Roye, Limber and Jesús gather around the new water filtration system, anticipating a demonstration from Sister Suzanne Takes (above photo) on how the filters will provide clean water for the Guaraní people in Bolivia. Photos courtesy of Judy Takes.

A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP



Your efforts make a difference!

Many of you have shared your experience, your skill, the fruits of your labors and your joyful presence as Partners in Mission. With all working together, unbelievable dreams are being realized. Thank you for sharing your great gifts and passion for mission. Thank you for engaging your families, friends and co-workers in the mission of the Sisters of the Presentation as we join with others to bring about a new way of being in the world.

What is it that we are about? At our 2012 Chapter, a meeting held by the congregation every five years, we assessed our involvement in society, clarified our vision and committed ourselves to engage our passion and strength in the continual creation of a new field of justice, peace and compassion as we strive to realize the dream of Jesus, "That all may be one."

Our Directional Statement, a statement of inspiration and focus for our work together, challenges us to:

Reverence relationships, so that all may be equally and respectfully included in the fruitful blessings of Earth;

Celebrate unity, by forever searching for transformative ways of collaboration, healing, reconciliation and compassion in the midst of division;

Engage in contemplation, praying individually and collectively for wisdom and direction in the midst of violence, chaos and uncertainty. We call upon the Divine energy in the Universe to guide our decision making, and bring us into sync with that which creates harmony and unity. Finally, along with all who are listed in the enclosed Annual Report of Appreciation, we continue to...

Foster partnerships that enliven and deepen our commitment to co-create across nations a new way of living peacefully and collaboratively in our planetary community.

Together, with the generous participation of all as Partners in Mission, we have been able to promote direct ministry with those forced into poverty because of natural disasters, loss of livelihood, violence and displacement. We have been able to partner with those who advocate on behalf of people without options. We seek sustainable, Earth-friendly decision-making in our daily living. And, based on the message of Pope Francis in *The Joy of the Gospel*, we strive to "Wake Up the World" as we strive to stimulate systemic change in service of the common good.

Thank you for your commitment as a Partner in Mission.

Yes, your efforts make a difference!

Julianne Beth Ann Leanne

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.

Our DIRECTION

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

reverencing relationships
celebrating unity
engaging contemplation and
fostering partnerships

to transform ourselves
and our world.

Sisters of the Presentation LEADERSHIP TEAM

Sister Julianne Brockamp

Sister Beth Driscoll

Sister Ann Jackson

Sister Leanne Welch



Sister Jean Ann Meyer visits with her students before they begin computer classes.

SISTER JEAN ANN MEYER

Fostering Partnerships

by FRANCINE QUILLIN, PBVM

One element of the Directional Statement for the Sisters of the Presentation is that we will “foster partnerships.”

Sister Jean Ann Meyer knows a lot about “partnerships.” She has been fostering them most of her life. In her current position as director of the after-school and summer EXCEL learning programs in Okolona, Mississippi, she depends on partnerships to sustain her ministry.

EXCEL is a non-profit, separately-incorporated organization founded by Liz Brown, CSJ, a St. Joseph of Carondelet Sister from St. Louis, Missouri, and Nancy Shreck, OSF, a Franciscan Sister from Dubuque, Iowa, in cooperation with local citizens of Okolona. While the activities of EXCEL began in response to a voiced concern for assistance in the education of children, EXCEL now has many programs which serve the community.

Okolona is a town of about 2,800 people, very few of whom are Catholic. There has never been a resident priest, so parishioners gather for a Sunday Word and Communion Service. The “parish” consists of seven families. Presently there is only one Catholic student in the public school of approximately 500 students.

Life for Sister Jean Ann began in Waukon, Iowa, where she was the first-born of 10 children of Ferris and Mary Lou Meyer, so she first learned “partnering” very early. In Sister Jean Ann’s youth the family moved to West Union, Iowa, where she attended Holy Name elementary school and the public high school. After receiving her bachelor’s degree from the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, she spent nine years in a public school in Western Iowa, variously teaching grades two through four. Her sisters wanted her closer to home, so she returned to the place of her birth to teach for a year at St. Patrick School in Waukon.

We always try to listen to people to see what is happening in their lives. We are always listening and walking with individuals. EXCEL's mission is to further education, promote community building, encourage community service and to foster healthy lives. We do this because we are most certainly all in this together.

Sister Jean Ann Meyer

Late in the fall of that year, Sister Mary Karen Jasper, principal at St. Patrick, stopped at Jean Ann's door one day to ask, "Have you ever thought about being a Sister?" Upon Jean Ann's hesitant response, Sister Karen said, "Well, think about it." And she walked away, leaving Jean Ann with a challenge which she took so seriously that in December she attended a "Come and See" weekend at the Sisters of the Presentation. She entered the community the next August (1982).

While she was in the novitiate, Sister Jean Ann taught at Resurrection School in Dubuque. Subsequently she taught at St. Dorothy School in Chicago, Illinois, and in Key West, Bankston, and Peosta, all in Iowa.

During the late 1980s, the Presentation community was asking itself three questions: "What would Nano Nagle be doing today?" and "What would Mother Vincent be doing today?" and "What should we be doing today?" A comment from another sister prompted Sister Jean Ann to think, "There may be some place that needs someone (not me exactly, but someone). And there would be many others to teach here in rural Iowa. Maybe there is some other place that needs me more." So she started looking.

In 1993 a member of the Leadership Team suggested that Sister Jean Ann might like to help in the summer school program in Okolona, which interested Sister Jean Ann enough to accept. At the end of the summer, a possible position in EXCEL opened. In the following August (1994) the community approved her acceptance of this position. After about six years at EXCEL, Sister became the director of the after-school program. That position requires that she "put it all together" to see how to help each child. This program involves two hour-and-a-half sessions, beginning at 3:00 p.m., for students in grades one to eight. Two hour-long sessions for older students begin at 6:15 p.m. Weekly Sister Jean Ann confers with the children's classroom teachers to see what each student needs, what their assignments are and what foundational skills need work. Regularly tutors talk with the parents or guardians to inform them of what has been accomplished during the sessions.

What started as summer learning opportunities for children has now grown to EXCEL, Inc., serving 10,000 people a year. EXCEL services include after-school and summer learning programs, ABE/GED instruction, job preparation programs, senior citizen socialization and wellness programs, and computer lab access. In addition, EXCEL hosts a wellness clinic for children, the county meal site program and the Tenn Tom Moving Youth Forward

C.N.A. program. The resale store and the coffee shop are fundraising efforts. There is also collaboration with the Salvation Army Mission, Okolona Food Pantry and Narcotics Anonymous. EXCEL is often called upon for assistance with utility bills, food and furnishings after fires or disasters and crisis counseling. The outreach is multifaceted and interwoven.



Sister Jean Ann visits with a parishioner and former student.

Over the years various groups have come to Okolona to lend their time and talent. Parishioners from St. Edward Parish in Waterloo, Iowa, and St. Dennis Parish in Madison, Wisconsin, have often come to help. But every year for 20 years a group from Resurrection Parish in Dubuque has been spending time in Okolona, maintaining a contact with the former teacher in their school.

Ellen Patch, also a former Resurrection teacher and now the parish pastoral associate, has organized the group for many of those years. The Resurrection volunteers bring items for the re-sale store, funded by donations from parishioners, and Ellen borrows computers from the school to broaden the skills of students in the EXCEL program. The "partners," members of several groups, and individuals near and far, have helped with remodeling or fixing up the buildings, doing yard work, painting and offering help wherever it is needed. But most important are the relationships which are built through this volunteer process.

Sister Jean Ann has now been with EXCEL for 20 years. When asked to explain her longevity, she replies, "I love the children and the families. Parents and grandparents want so much for their children, and they put energy into acquiring that. I am happy and honored to be a part of that, and my hope is that I can make a difference." She continues, "I have grown and changed, and that is humbling, too. It is an honor to be able to be so closely associated with other people. We try to help the college students who volunteer to see the opportunities, and have them take that home so that they can realize what is happening in their own locations."

"We always try to listen to people to see what is happening in their lives. We are always listening and walking with individuals," adds Sister Jean Ann. "EXCEL's mission is to further education, promote community building, encourage community service and to foster healthy lives. We do this because we are most certainly all in this together."

Anyone who knows Sister Jean Ann knows that she is by nature a gentle and caring person, one who would truly live that "listening and walking with." And that explains her successful and long partnership with other people so many miles from home.



During a gathering in Yukimbia, Sister Suzanne Takes (middle) demonstrates how the water filtration systems will provide clean water for the Guarani people. Photo courtesy of Judy Takes.

Clean Water for Bolivia

by SUZANNE TAKES, PBVM

The Presentation Sisters ministering in Bolivia have been blessed by the generosity of many who contributed to the purchase of nearly 150 water filters for O'Connor Province in Tarija, Bolivia.

Through the initiative of last year's Presentation Golden Jubilarians, the water filters were attained from the project, "Water with Blessings," which incorporates a beautiful theology of gratitude to God for the gift of water, the need to share what we have received and the promotion of leadership among women.

Sister Suzanne Takes and her sister, Judy, have been visiting the Guarani communities along the Pilcomayo River, inviting them to participate in the project. This process begins with prayer and includes inviting women to be part of the project by locating a safe place for the water filter and sharing the water with three other families. The women must prayerfully discern who will be the most effective leaders and administrators of the project. Once they have named the women responsible for the management of the filters, they will be trained in the process of implementing, cleaning and maintaining the water filter systems to benefit all families in the community.

Yukimbia was the first community invited to participate. Although there is water piped into the community, it is not always dependable and many times the people must rely on the murky waters from the river. During Sister Suzanne and Judy's first visit

there, Antonia, Pelagia and her daughter, Marcia, were all eager to motivate the others to become involved in the project. Judy carried out a demonstration of the filter and its use to introduce it to the community. One mother, Marina, came forward with a bucket of water to be filtered. The women and children were amazed to see the transparency of the water as it emerged from the filter.

Sister Suzanne explained, "The project goals are to provide safer drinking water, to educate others on the essential care of water supplies and filtering system, and to promote leadership of women, all fostered within a faith experience. Our gathering began with the song, 'Ii ko jae, oyapo Tumpa vae...yasurupi' (Here is the water, we thank you, God.)"

Sister Suzanne suggested that they consider recycling as an additional project of caring for the planet. Previously discarded bottles and cans would be taken to the recycling plant. A small fee is received according to the weight of the bottles and cans collected, which in turn would be used for the purchase of large covered containers for the water filtering process.

Sister Suzanne states, "It is hoped that the 'Water with Blessings' project will help each of us to be more conscious of our responsibility to live in a spirit of gratitude and respect, as we care for our Mother Earth and one another."

SISTER PIERRE KOLLASCH

Recipe for Hospitality

by BETH KRESS, PBVM

When Valentine's Day and Mardi Gras fall in the same week, Sister Pierre Kollasch will be there to join in the festivities. When a game of Rap Rummy or Three-deck Euchre is scheduled on Sunday, Wednesday or Friday, she will be there ready for a fun evening. And, Sister will gladly enjoy a good movie on closed circuit television or a "floor party" with sisters in community.

"When I chose to 'slow down' this past year, I began to wonder what I would do," comments Sister Pierre. Until recent months, Sister Pierre has been serving as the "sweets sister" in the Mount Loretto food service department. For her the tantalizing call to relaxation and quiet, extended prayer and reading, and other amenities in community prayer and service, has definitely been a rewarding experience that she has lived joyfully.

While Sister Pierre's journey to retirement has had shifts and curves, so, too, did her journey to entering the Presentation community. "In grade school, I loved saving my coins to support missionaries who would

bring baptism to 'pagan babies,' but I wasn't keen on going to a foreign country to help out," recalls Sister Pierre. "When I thought about becoming a sister, I didn't necessarily consider being a teacher like my cousins Sisters Mary Denise, Ann Marie Kollasch and Presentation Dalhauser. With the example before me of my aunt Sister Mary Matilda Kollasch

who had cooked for the sisters

in Whittemore before entering, I wanted to be a 'cooking sister.' Somehow, I wanted to help the sisters who served in domestic roles to become more connected to the rest of the community."

But Sister Pierre's journey did not take her to the kitchen at first. After teaching kindergarten through third grade for 35 years, Sister

responded to a call to join the team of sisters serving retired priests at the Villa Raphael – then located in the former Presentation motherhouse at 1229 Mount Loretta Avenue in Dubuque. Eventually she became the coordinator of personal care at the Villa serving a total of 15 years.

"Following that I teamed with Sister Gertrude Schmelzer in the Mount Loretto bakery of our present motherhouse," states Sister Pierre. With this new ministry, she came full circle to an earlier ministry dream. Sister brought out her own recipes for delicious cookies, bars and other delectable treats for the community. In time, she became the head baker at Mount Loretto. "I really enjoyed doing this and felt very connected to the sisters who went before me – remembering especially Sisters Mary Modesta, Matilda, Alphonsus, Raphael and Carmelita."

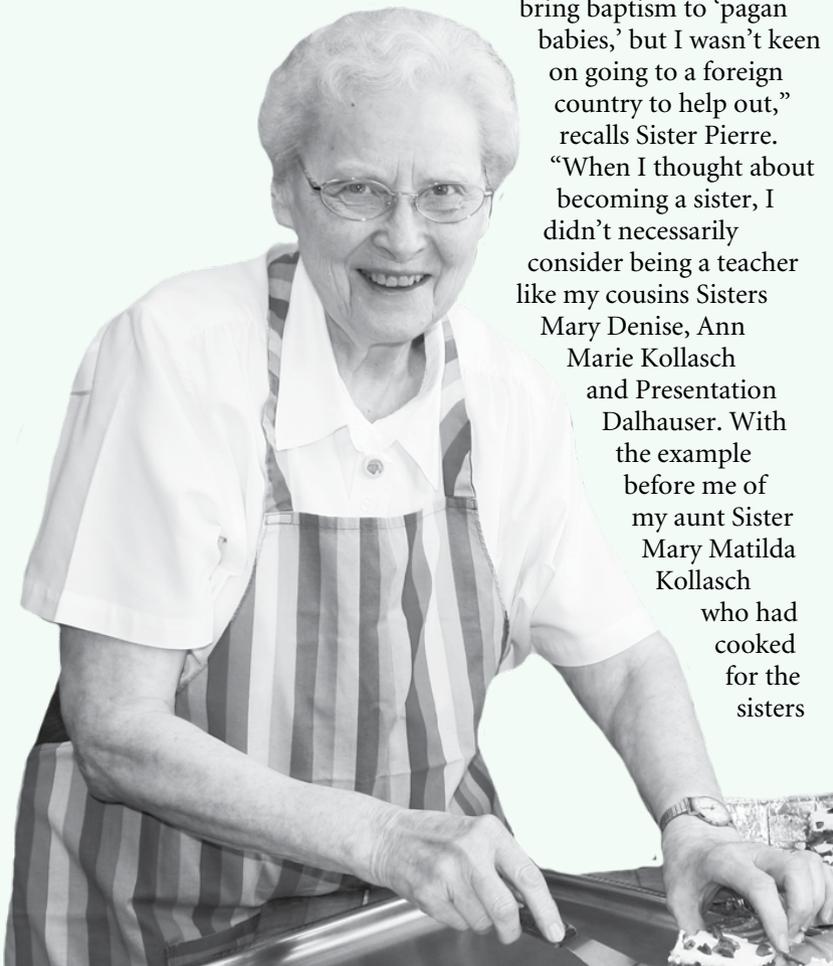
There are many recipes in Sister Pierre's file: Never-Fail Jellyroll, Potato Chip Cookies, Santa's Special Squares, Diet Applesauce Cookies, Self-Filling Cupcakes, Butterscotch Cheesecake Bars, Peanut Butter M&M Cookies. Take any of these, mix them with dedicated service and loving care over 60-plus years of religious life and the result is hospitality in the spirit of Nano Nagle embodied in Sister Pierre Kollasch.

Potato Chip Cookies
From the Bakery of Sister Pierre Kollasch

Cream together:
2 eggs beaten
1 cup white sugar
1 cup shortening (oleo)
1 cup brown sugar
Add to cream mixture:
2 cups flour
1 tsp. soda (baking)
1 tsp. vanilla

Mix in:
2 cups crushed Lays potato chips
1 pkg. butterscotch chips

*Chill 2 hours. Drop on cookie sheet.
Bake at 350 degrees until golden brown
in about 12 to 15 minutes.*



Presentation Associate Shares Her Experience Ministry on the Border

Reflection by BILLIE GREENWOOD, ASSOCIATE

Associate Billie Greenwood and her husband, Paul Allen, volunteered from December 2014 through March 2015 for the Kino Border Initiative (KBI) on the United States-Mexico border. There, they provided humanitarian relief to migrants, offering food, clothing and other assistance. The vast majority, probably 90 percent, of the thousands served were U.S. deportees. An interview with Billie follows:



Associate Billie Greenwood helps with clothing distribution to migrants.

Explain your work with the Kino Border Initiative.

The KBI is a bi-national project of the Catholic Church, a singular collaboration between Mexican missionary sisters, U.S. Jesuits, dioceses in two nations and a host of people from both sides of the border of Nogales: Arizona, U.S. and Sonora, Mexico. KBI serves migrants two hot meals a day, gives them clothing and personal products and advocates on their behalf. Networking with other agencies, they provide migrants medical attention, phone calls home and help them reclaim resources rightfully theirs.

Did your work at KBI connect to the Presentation mission?

It sure did! My life was thrust into the reality of people made poor by circumstances beyond their control. Working in the context of KBI let me experience the tremendous power of partnerships in ministry and working internationally. All these elements are congruent with the Presentation Directional Statement. I have never seen the corporal works of mercy more obvious: feeding, clothing, nursing, comforting the most vulnerable people on earth – all happening right before my eyes.

Dubuque Presentation Sisters and associates promote justice and alleviate oppression. Did you experience that at KBI too?

Treating migrants with respect and dignity is a high priority at KBI. They ensure the environment is safe, free of anyone preying on migrants. They work hard to make everyone experiences their value as a person because the message migrants usually receive is that they are not important. Every day KBI explicitly educates the migrants about their human rights.

You mentioned advocacy. What did that involve?

We asked each migrant to report to us any maltreatment they had received. Sometimes that was perpetrated by officials of the U.S. or Mexico. Complaints were filed in those cases.

Kino also files complaints of systemic problems affecting migrants. For instance, the U.S. used to deport during the middle of the night, a dangerous situation since all shelters were closed and migrants were vulnerable to all kinds of attack. Due to KBI and others lodging concerns about this practice, it has been stopped.

Did anything surprise you while at KBI?

Their small facility is extremely makeshift – a tin room, only partially enclosed with walls – yet serves over 36,000 meals a year, thanks to workers' resourcefulness.

My first week I met one man who had lived in the U.S. for 40 years, now finding himself all alone in Mexico, a country he didn't know. Everyone we served was at an important turning point in his or her life. We provided information, but not advice.

Did you encounter any sad stories you can share with us?

The sound of the muffled crying of grown men during Christmas Mass will haunt me for the rest of my life. Certainly the most painful stories shared with me were those of families irrevocably separated. I watched a woman dissolve into tears the instant she heard her daughter's voice on the phone. And to me it is sad that migrants do not receive fair treatment, even from governments. Cheating them of their own money is built into the penal system. Fortunately groups like KBI are working hard to right those wrongs. At least in some ways, they are succeeding.

What can one do to help?

Working for comprehensive immigration reform is imperative. So many families and lives are shattered by a U.S. immigration system that everyone acknowledges is broken. Offer financial support when you can. My husband and I like to support projects of the Dubuque Presentation Sisters and organizations with whom we volunteer.

With Gratitude

After 10 years of service as co-director of the Associate Partnership, Sister Lynn Mary Wagner has stepped down. Her leadership, example, guidance and especially her love for the Associate Partnership will be deeply missed. She has contributed much to the development of the Associate Partnership over the years.



Carol Witry, co-director with Sister Lynn Mary, acknowledges that she has been a grateful recipient of much guidance and wisdom during the time that she has worked with Sister: "Sister Lynn Mary has been a wonderful mentor for me and a pleasure to work with. She has a "heart" for the Associate Partnership and knows it through and through. I'm thankful for her leadership and patient mentoring."

Associate Mary Stanton, Associate Partnership Advisory Committee member, speaks for all sisters and associates as she expresses gratitude for all Sister Lynn Mary has done: "Thank you, Sister Lynn Mary, for your 10 years of dedicated service. Your gentle, caring ways have been a gift for all of us. Your visits to many groups of associates and your willingness to listen when we needed guidance were wonderful. Your wisdom, hospitality and action has helped us all."

A Warm Welcome

The Sisters of the Presentation are delighted to welcome Sister Joan Brincks as the new Associate Partnership co-director.

A native of Lawler, Iowa, Sister Joan became a Presentation Sister in 1978 and served as an elementary teacher. She holds a certificate in Healing Touch spiritual ministry and a certificate in the Lay Formation program.

Sister Joan has been a strong supporter of the Associate Partnership over the years. "Being a part of the Cities of Faith associate group for 13 years, I am excited to be present with and serving the sisters and associates in a new way. Bringing my contemplative spirit and gifts of compassion and joy, I look forward to joining Carol Witry in furthering the Presentation Associate Partnership."

In addition to her role as co-director, Sister Joan will continue her participation in the Collaborative Leadership Development Program which provides education and support for future leaders of community and ministry.



Annual Benefit Garage/Gym Sale

The 2015 Presentation Garage/Gym Sale is right around the corner and work is already underway! The 2014 sale raised \$22,000. For the past 10 years, many of you have helped support the sale and 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 23, 24, 25, 2015

Thursday, Friday, Saturday
April 30, May 1, 2, 2015
(Thursdays, Fridays 8 a.m.-dusk; Saturdays 8 a.m.-1 p.m.)

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

WHAT:
Please bring 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 be sold.

WHY:
The proceeds from the 2015 sale will assist the following ministries/charities:

- Opening Doors, Dubuque, IA
- Student Endowment Fund, St. Mary School, Storm Lake, IA

The gym behind the Sisters of the Presentation will be open for drop-offs of usable items from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily EXCEPT Sundays beginning Monday, March 23 until Monday, April 20. **No items will be accepted after Monday, April 20.** Larger items such as furniture, desks, large lamps, etc. should be dropped off at the garages across from the gym.

Wrapped baked goods may be brought to the gym on April 23-25 and/or April 30-May 2.

For more information, contact:
Office of Associate Partnership
2360 Carter Road
Dubuque, Iowa, 52001
563-588-2008
associates@dubuquepresentations.org

EARLY BIRD
Thursday, April 23
7-8 a.m.
\$10 donation

Remembering Humboldt, Iowa

1920-2010

by MARY HERMANN PLATT, PBVM

“In 1920, the Reverend Thomas Davern saw the completion of a parish school at St. Mary’s made possible by the generosity of Mr. Denis Hessian, who donated funds for its erection.” (*Early Missions Annals #223C*) Thus began the Catholic school system in Humboldt, Iowa.

According to an article in the *Humboldt Independent* dated March 14, 1996, Denis Hessian grew up poor and felt deprived of religious training in his youth. Having no wife or children, he wished to provide for other children what he lacked in his own childhood by giving money to build and maintain a Catholic school at St. Mary Parish.

The first Presentation Sisters to minister in Humboldt were Sisters Mary Joseph Kennedy, Evarista Powers, Gerard Murphy and Benigna McCarron. They arrived the week of August 20, 1920, and met their first students on August 30. An enrollment of 50 pupils in grades 1-10 bolstered Father Davern’s confidence that he had made the right decision in building a parochial school in an area where the Catholic population was in the minority.

The school began, as did many in that era, as a boarding school. The dormitories on third floor accommodated 20 girls and 20 boys. First floor served as the sisters’ quarters and the music room. Second floor was designated for use as school rooms.

By 1934, grades 11 and 12 were added to the school which received state accreditation in 1935. The four grades of high school continued until 1942. Today St. Mary’s serves preschool through sixth grade. A total of 94 Presentation Sisters ministered on the faculty over the years, the last of whom was Sister Louise Scieszinski who retired in 2010. A capable staff of a lay principal and teachers carries on the mission begun by the four pioneers in 1920.

In a speech delivered on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the school, Former Student Joe Ennis praised the sisters for their “dedication and concern for the spiritual and material welfare of all students, their teaching by precept and example, of respect and responsibility, along with the other three Rs of education...” He commended early parishioners who took turns providing wood



Original St. Mary School in Humboldt, Iowa

from their own farms to stoke the furnace, and whose children took their turns at janitorial services along with their fathers.

Sister Benigna McCarron related in an interview for the oral history archives that at first the original three-story school/convent building had two electric light bulbs: one in the bathroom and the other in the kitchen. Camp chairs served as pews in the chapel. Sister praised Father Davern’s generosity in providing needed items, food and even textbooks which he traveled to Chicago to purchase.

Sister deLourdes Verhey recalled forming lasting friendships in Humboldt, most notably with Dr. Beryl Michaelson who became a generous benefactor of the sisters. Sister Lawrence Mulligan, principal from 1960-1967, recalled the good relationships with public school officials, one of whom commented on the excellent quality of students entering high school from St. Mary School. To quote Joe Ennis “...the honor students at St. Mary’s continued to be honor students at Humboldt High.”

Card playing was a favorite pastime in the community, according to Sister Pierre Kollasch who dubbed her first mission, “my first love.” Father Fitzpatrick, pastor during her time at Humboldt (1948-1952), would play cards with Sister Roberta Burke and the other sisters on Saturday afternoons. If things got slow and players hesitated too long, Father would say, “Masses are at 8:00 and 10:00” to hurry things along. Sister Pierre also described an incident during her second tour at St. Mary’s in 1974-1975. A former pupil whom she had helped in first through third grade returned as an adult to thank her for her assistance, and he brought with him a chicken for the sisters’ dinner.

Another former principal, Sister Dianne Michels (1981-1989) added kindergarten and a computer lab, as well as shared time in grades 7 and 8. She expressed her admiration for the thriving parish community in which the Knights of Columbus and the Ladies’ Society worked together for both parish and school.

Sister Ruth Ann Takes described Humboldt as “a little bit of heaven” when referring to her work with adult choir, funeral choir and liturgy planning, along with giving private lessons in piano, organ and guitar.

The tradition of excellence in education and faith formation continues to thrive at St. Mary School.

Presentation Lantern 2014 Service Award

by BETH KRESS, PBVM

Presentation Lantern Center and the board of trustees hosted the Presentation Sisters Leadership Team and volunteer tutors at the annual appreciation dinner on December 7. Volunteer tutor Dianne Roche received the 2014 Presentation Lantern Service Award at this event.

“Dianne has donated over 300 hours of service and has maintained a very flexible schedule by rotating the days she came, Tuesdays or Thursdays depending on the work schedule of her student,” comments Executive Director Sister Corine Murray. “We call her the ‘Queen of Flexibility.’”

Recently Dianne has worked with two students, Nasrin from Iran and Erazmo from Mexico. “I have learned about their food, family life, holidays, movies, music and what it is like for them to live in their societies, both the good things and the not so good,” states Dianne who has visited Nasrin’s home for holidays and attended Erazmo’s wedding. At present she works with a student from Ukraine.

In her own family Dianne is aware of all that her immigrant son-in-law has gone through, “the hurdles, the cost, the time and frustrations he met along the way to get his Green Card. With all of my students, I have learned to have tremendous respect for their courage, hard work and ability to enjoy life even in the midst of some real challenges. Often my students have struggled with limited financial resources, but they are generous, and grateful beyond my expectations,” she comments.

This former preschool teacher has truly found new joys in working with adult English language learners.



Tutor Dianne Roche (left) recently received the 2014 Presentation Lantern Service Award. Dianne is pictured with her student, Nasrin.



DUBUQUE'S got SISTERS

Join us for an inside
look at religious life!

April 10-11, 2015

Are you interested in religious life?

Then join us for a 24-hour tour of four tri-state area convents to share life through praying, dining and storytelling. Local transportation will be provided, and there is no fee to attend.

Event starts Friday, April 10 at 5 pm to 6 pm on Saturday, April 11.



**To register or
for information:**

Contact Sr. Rita Cameron
at [vocations@
dubuquepresentations.org](mailto:vocations@dubuquepresentations.org)
or call 563-590-8144.

Sponsored by Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Dubuque Franciscan Sisters, and Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters.

Sababu Ya Kusherekea

A Reason to Celebrate

by KAREN TUECKE, PARTNERS IN MISSION COORDINATOR



Sister Diana Blong (middle back) helps prepare vegetables with the Holy Spirit Sisters the day before the Jubilee celebration.

As Partners in Mission, our goal is to work together to broaden our horizons and deepen our spirituality through prayer and service. Our charism calls us to bring the hospitality of God to others. That is what Sister Diana Blong has done since 1986, in collaboration with a country other than her own. In 1986, she was given a gift from her father to travel to Tanzania, East Africa, on a three-week mission. This trip was the beginning of a friendship with the Holy Spirit Sisters that would lead to an amazing 50-year celebration.

Upon her first arrival, she discovered many new realities in this country of over 40 million people, composed of numerous ethnic, linguistic and religious groups. Travel was difficult due to few vehicles, high fuel costs and roads in need of repair. While there was limited transportation, most traveled hours on foot. Many in the village struggled for access to water, electricity and telephone service.

Twelve years later, Sister Diana was invited to discern a calling to return to Tanzania, to serve the next three years as a faculty member of the Theological Pastoral Centre.

In 2005 Sister Diana returned again to Tanzania for two weeks with six missionaries to explore life in a developing country, and share their gifts of service. During this trip, there was talk of an upcoming celebration and discussion of needs and dreams, including improvements in medical clinics and construction of new schools.

The celebration was the Golden Jubilee of the Holy Spirit Sisters' foundation in Tanzania, 50 years since they began sharing God's

good work with the people of East Africa. This milestone was "sababu ya kusherekea," Swahili for a "reason to celebrate!" – and a reason for Sister Diana to return to Tanzania and bring gifts to support their goals.

In December 2014, nearly 30 years from her first visit, "Karibu!" (Welcome!) resounded at Kilimanjaro Airport from former students, including Sister Inviolata Kessy, the regional leader of the community. Traveling to their community center, progress was evident on the smooth highway, numerous cars, electricity and water, better built homes, motorcycles and cell phones everywhere.

When Sister Diana exclaimed that "everything looks new," Sister Inviolata quickly responded, "With Jubilee, everything is NEW!"

The celebration was to begin in just days and the entire community prepared: a new guest house, party tents, tables and chairs, a stage, new linens and tableware, new clothing, choir practices, food preparation, dozens of roses and students choreographing dances.

On the day of celebration, over 200 Holy Spirit Sisters gathered as three bishops celebrated the Mass. Guests included visitors from India, Germany, United States, sisters and priests from East Africa, present and former students, parishioners, co-workers and neighbors. The "furaha" (joy) of the liturgy continued with the blessings of a new Marian grotto, planting of trees, feasts, speeches, singing and dancing by parishioners and students.

Sister Diana came to celebrate and had a gift to present as well. Through her ministry, family, community, area parishes and the friendships she developed over the years, she was able to present \$20,000 to the Holy Spirit Sisters for the construction of a well, cistern, collection tanks and pipes for close to 500 students at Magnificat Secondary School in Sanya Juu. This gift will impact the students, dozens of teachers and staff members and the community as a whole.

"The well has been started and will be completed, thanks to the generosity of many. Plans are to finish the water harvesting project before the spring rains," states Sister Diana. Additional funds will assist in the purchase of books for the library.

Sister Diana felt blessed to rejoice with the Holy Spirit Sisters in their celebration, and to renew friendships with both her students and friends, especially Sister Epiphania (Eppie) Shirima. Sister Eppie enjoyed hearing about many Presentation Sisters with whom she lived in 2005 during her sabbatical, following her ministry in Carroll, Iowa. As individuals and as a community, may we explore ongoing ways of being Partners in Mission, both near and far.

A WOMAN OF EXCEPTIONAL STRENGTH

Sister Concepta Joseph Milinski

October 17, 1919 - January 18, 2015

by JOAN LICKTEIG, PBVM

Sophie Margaret was born to Michael and Pauline Urbaniuk Milinski on October 17, 1919. She entered eternal life on January 18, 2015 – age 95!

She probably needed broad shoulders to carry her long name: Sister Mary Concepta Joseph Milinski. And she needed broad shoulders to carry the burdens of her life's challenges. Diminutive in physical height but lofty in personal stature, she demonstrated exceptional flexibility in her acceptance of life's vicissitudes. The personal cost of on-going transitions characterized nearly every dimension of her life.

Orphaned as a child, Sophie learned early in life about God's providence. She was no stranger to extenuating circumstances, and the changes these circumstances brought. As a child, the illness and death of both parents disrupted the lives of this young family, when the four children went to separate homes and families.

As a small child Sophie had lived in one of New York's Polish neighborhoods. Though steeped in her Polish tradition, it was the Irish Presentation Sisters in Staten Island, New York, who received Sophie and her siblings into the orphanage the sisters had founded. Later, as a young adult she joined their community. Living with the sisters she knew and loved in the Staten Island community was, however, short-term.

A group of four Staten Island Presentation Sisters responded to the invitation received by their community to establish a foundation in Oregon, Illinois. New-member, Sophie Milinski, was invited by Mother Regis to join them. She became the fifth member to travel to Oregon, ever so far from her family in New York.

The Oregon venture, too, proved to be somewhat short-lived when circumstances necessitated the group's transferring to the Dubuque Presentations. These multiple moves pulled on Sister Concepta's heart strings and, practically speaking, meant disruptions in plans, programs and colleges as she worked to obtain a degree.

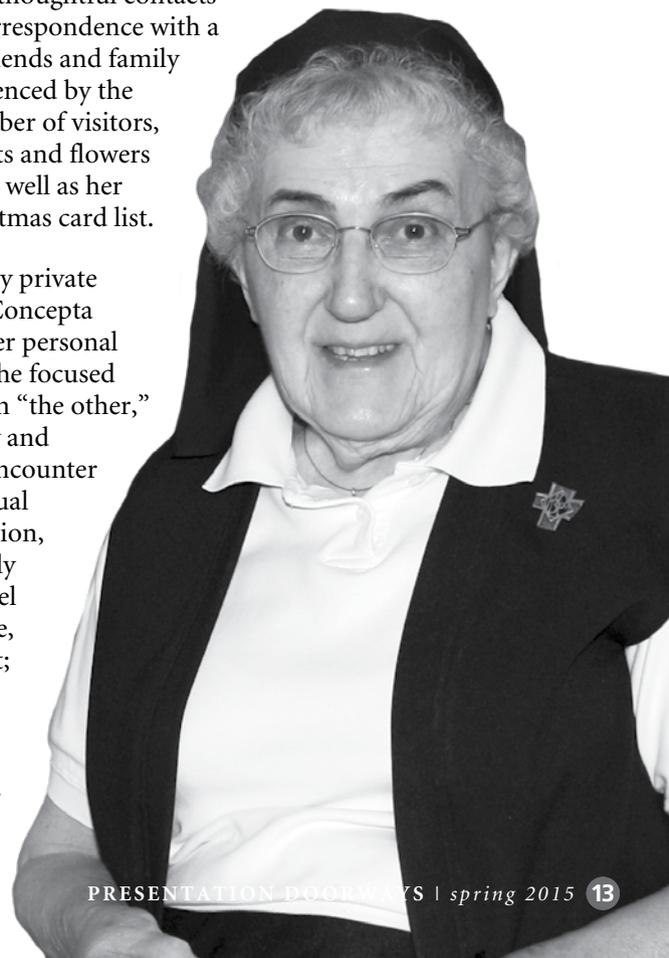
As time went on, like many of her peers, Sister experienced ministry in a variety of parishes, taking her to 12 different locations in four midwestern states, marked also by a diversity of ministries: kindergarten teacher, middle-school teacher, religious education director. In retirement she volunteered for the foster grandparent program in several different schools and ministered to severe and profoundly-disabled children at the Hills and Dales Child Development Center in Dubuque.

More transitions were in store after Sister completed her active retirement ministry. There were the transitions that were part of community living and updating. She, likewise, changed rooms within the house four times and underwent 10 major surgeries in the last 15 years. Transitions stalked her at every turn. And through it all God groomed her soul to reflect God's self.

Some things, however, perdured with Sister Concepta: her warm, sparkling brown eyes and one raised brow, her characteristic speech patterns tinged with a Polish accent, her prayerful hands and heart, her creativity and motivation in the classroom and her gentle, humble manner.

Wherever Sister Concepta ministered, she surprised herself by the long line of friends she gathered, each one being quite certain that she or he was her best friend, because each was treated with respect, attention, appreciation and affection. She was an excellent communicator, thus endearing herself to others. She kept in touch through thoughtful contacts and faithful correspondence with a multitude of friends and family members, evidenced by the reciprocal number of visitors, phone calls, gifts and flowers she received, as well as her extensive Christmas card list.

An exceptionally private person, Sister Concepta rarely shared her personal story. Instead she focused her attention on "the other," manifesting joy and delight in the encounter of each individual friend, companion, student. Actively living the Gospel mandate of love, she reached out; that's how she lived her life. And she was loved in return.



A CHAMPION OF JUSTICE

Sister Mary Bernard Mauss

August 18, 1925 - December 14, 2014

by JOAN LICKTEIG, PBVM

Mary Eva Mauss, daughter of Joe and Julia (Blake) Mauss, was born on August 18, 1925. Twenty years later she entered the community of the Dubuque Sisters of the Presentation.

Having received a bachelor's degree from Loras College, and later a master's degree from Clarke College, Sister Bernard served in Iowa schools and parishes: Placid, Algona, Mason City, Lawler, Clare, Dubuque (St. Columbkille), Sheldon and Dayton, as well as in Winner, South Dakota, and Oak Lawn, Illinois. Her ministries included elementary and middle school teacher, principal and parish visitor.

During her 14 years of retirement Sister Bernard enjoyed reading, puzzles, card playing and spending time in prayer, as well as visiting and entertaining family and friends. Shortly before her retirement Sister was named "Champion of Justice" for her faithful endeavors in the causes of justice and peace; she received the first award for this title from the Sioux City Diocese. During her retirement years she continued to be concerned about and involved in social justice issues with a focus on rural life: family farms, rural poor and the environment, particularly through her participation in the ecumenical organization of the Churches' Center for Land and People (CCLP).

As a product herself of a small family farm and rural upbringing, Sister was passionate in her love of nature and her "Willa Cather" kind of devotion and care for the land. In conversations and in written communication, she made her ideas known, while not the least intimidated by politicians.

Sister Bernard was a no-nonsense person, a woman of substance, with both feet planted firmly on the ground, dutiful and unassuming. She followed the guidelines of the prophet Micah to live justly and to walk

humbly. There wasn't any place she couldn't go in her black skirt and simple white shirt-waist blouse. Vanity claimed no part of her.

Her classmate, Sister Sheila Kane, shared that their group of novices had been self-named "The Seraphic Seven," admitting that Sister Bernard was probably the only one who came close to fitting the name. Steadfast in faith, conscientious and rule-following, Sister Bernard had a calm, reflective, unhurried demeanor. She walked slowly and talked slowly, and it took her forever to tell a story or recount an incident.

She might be further described as a woman of soul-strength and simplicity, she had an endearing openness to God and to all those she met. Outgoing and friendly she reached out to others; no one went unrecognized because hospitality was important to Sister Bernard. She made a concerted effort to greet and meet any and all Mount Loretto guests with her well-used introduction, "I see we have some important people here today," at which point her smile would be returned and she would learn the names of the guests and from where they came. If they happened to be from Dubuque she would mention that she had a brother in Dubuque, John Mauss, Chief of Police, whom they might happen to know – and they usually did. And so the conversation would continue. Her outgoing, cheerful and friendly demeanor was rewarded when she celebrated her jubilee in Dayton, Iowa; the whole town turned out, though Catholics made up the minority in this small Iowa town.

Another of Sister Bernard's well-used reminders offered inspiration: "I loved every minute of my teaching but I made up my mind when I retired that no matter what, I wasn't going to complain." And she didn't! Her example endures.

Making a Memorial Gift

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. Memorials may be sent to Sisters of the Presentation, 2360 Carter Road, Dubuque, Iowa 52001.

For information, contact the Partners in Mission Office at 563.588.2008 or email development@dubuquepresentations.org.

Mount Loretto AND BEYOND

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



Reverencing Relationships

During a December Christmas concert at the Five Flags Theater in Dubuque, Sister Damian O'Brien was reacquainted with Jim McDonough. Sister Damian first met Jim as a young man when he would play the piano and organ at Sunday Mass in Monticello, Iowa, where Sister would help out frequently. In 2010, Jim was honored by the legendary piano maker, Steinway & Sons, as a Steinway artist and joins an exclusive international list of the most accomplished and discriminating performing artists.

Learning to Basket Weave

The Mount Loretto housekeeping staff expressed a great interest in learning how to weave baskets. Sister Dolores Zieser, the resident basket weaver, conducted a beginner's class where they each made a basket. They were very proud of their accomplishment and received many compliments from others. Left to right: Linda Brown, June Hancock, Sister Dolores Zieser, Leigh Ann Lynn and Amanda Kirk.



Celebrating 25 Years of Partnering

On January 8, the Presentation Sisters and employees celebrated Kathleen Hochrein's 25th Anniversary of employment at the Sisters of the Presentation. It was exactly 25 years to the day that Kathleen started working for the sisters. A delicious lunch with a cake was shared in Kathleen's honor. Kathleen received flowers and lots of cards. In the sharing that day, Jean Lange, house coordinator, stated, "I know Kathleen is a great walker. Most days, for all these years, she has made the trek to work from lower Kaufmann on foot!"



Linda Brown, director of housekeeping, added, "Kathleen, you can feel very proud of this milestone in your life. Thank you for all your hard work for the sisters."

Kathleen thanked all the sisters for taking good care of her when she had cancer and expressed how much she enjoys working at the motherhouse. She also added, "God willing, I will still be working here for a few more years."

You are invited to join us.

April 10-11, 2015
Dubuque's Got Sisters
Discernment Weekend
Area Motherhouses
Dubuque, Iowa

April 23-25, 2015
April 30-May 2, 2015
Garage/Gym Sale
Sisters of the Presentation
Dubuque, Iowa

April 27, 2015
May 25, 2015
June 22, 2015
Centering Prayer
6:15-7:00 p.m.
Sisters of the Presentation
Dubuque, 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.

April 25, 2015
Conference of Associates and Religious of the Midwest Area
Dubuque, Iowa

April 26, 2015
World Day of Prayer for Vocations

June 6, 2015
Presentation Pacers
Relay for Life
Dubuque, Iowa

21st of each month
Pray for Vocations

25th of each month
Mass for Benefactors

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Relationally SPEAKING

Sisters, Associates, Family, Friends in Brief



Sister Beth Kress has been elected treasurer for the Communicators for Women Religious (CWR), an international professional organization of personnel responsible for communications for congregations of Catholic sisters. CWR is comprised of professional communicators serving nearly 200 religious congregations across the United States and in Australia, Canada, Ireland and Italy. As treasurer, Sister Beth oversees financial records, investments and budget preparation. As a member of the executive committee, she gives leadership in articulating the vision and strategic planning for the next phase of organizational development as CWR starts its 21st year.

On February 8, the Presentation community gathered with visitors from the Dubuque area for a prayer service during an open house in celebration of World Day for Consecrated Life. The six congregations in the Dubuque area each sponsored an open house at their motherhouses. The Sisters of the Visitation co-hosted the open house with the Sisters of the Presentation, a fitting way to celebrate their sister-hood for 140 years.

Scholarship Opportunities Deadline April 1, 2015

In the spirit of Presentation Foundress, Nano Nagle, and her desire to serve, the Sisters of the Presentation 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
SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Do you have news to share?

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