



Sisters of the Presentation
of the Blessed Virgin Mary

In Joyful Service

Voices & VENTURES



*Sustaining
Our Legacy into the Future*

Voice of Leadership



Dear Family and Friends,

As I write this, we are in the last weeks of Lent. I welcome the opportunity this Church season offers to reflect intentionally on the quality of our personal commitment to the Gospel of Jesus. We review our values, attitudes and behaviors in light of the Gospel and our faith community. Where might we be “missing the mark”? What helps us hear the Voice of Jesus calling back to choosing life in accord with Jesus?

The Gospel stories speak to Jesus’ values, attitudes and behavior. Jesus is full of compassion and mercy as he receives all who seek forgiveness. Jesus holds in esteem those willing to embrace others as their sister and brother. Each Lent calls for greater personal honesty. Prayer and fasting move us to this deeper place within where we meet the Divine Lover and our integrity is made whole.

In anticipation of Easter, the Presentation Sisters extend to you their hope for a Blessed Holy Triduum and Easter! In this issue of Voices and Ventures, we are happy to bring you stories of our Sisters’ ministry that have been sustained over many years. Our Sisters have been missioned to provide leadership in responding to gaps in needs. Most often, the people in the community desiring change have voiced these needs to the Sisters.

One can see a clear pattern in our Sisters responding to these requests for service. The good work is to be sustained years after the Sisters leave the area, the people in the community have been engaged and involved in the ministry. In this way, the good work has been able to continue into the future.

Our hope and goal is that the “sisters’ ministry” becomes the ministry of the “local community” as those who collaborated with the Sisters are to carry the ministry forward into the future. Sustainability is the capacity to carry forth the seed planted into the future!

Sister Janice Klein

Sister Janice Klein, President
Aberdeen Presentation Sisters



Front Cover - A few of the Sisters, Cojourners and employees that attended the Women’s Retreat in Sioux Falls, SD this year. Standing (l-r) Sr. Mary Thomas, Sr. Roxanne Seifert, Mary Jane Winter, Sr. Pegge Boehm, Astrid Rosario, Sr. Pam Donelan, Ruth Scherschligt, Sr. Janet Horstman, Mary Ihli, Lori Eckrich, Sr. Elaine Garry, Sr. Marie Celeste Sabers, Sr. Kathleen Bierne, Sr. Lucille Welbig, Laurinda Pribyl and Sr. Francene Evans. Sitting (l-r) – Srs. Joyce Meyer, Gabriella Crowley, Donna Brown and Janice Mengenhauser.

Year of Consecrated Life

The second article in a series being published during the Year of Consecrated Life.

Rejoice!

Recently, Pope Francis wrote a letter to consecrated women and men in honor of the Year of Consecrated Life entitled "Rejoice!" He began the letter with a short preface: "I want to say one word to you and this word is joy. Wherever consecrated people are, there is always joy".

In Joyful Service has been the phrase that describes the Aberdeen Presentation Sisters' presence where ever they are; be it in chapel, working with those made poor or in the boardroom. This motto comes from the story of Mary being presented in the temple and hence our patron feast day, the Presentation of Blessed Virgin Mary. As the story is told, Mary was presented in the temple at age three by her parents Joachim and Anne. Mary danced on the steps with joy at being in the presence of God!

The Presentation Sisters follow Mary's example of being filled with joy in our prayer and service to God and God's people. One aspiration for us is to live simply so that others might simply live. This is one expression of sustainability. How do we both, meet the needs of today without compromising the ability of our children's children to meet their needs in the future? Like Mary proclaimed in the Magnificat, the Presentation Sisters know that all we are and have is given as gift. We share with those who are lowly and hunger for good things, as they are our sisters and brothers.

Throughout this letter, Pope Francis speaks to all who hear the Gospel message, which we are called to live and preach. He reminds us that St. Francis said: "Always preach the Gospel and if necessary use words!" Pope Francis says, "The joy of the Gospel fills the heart and lives of all who encounter Jesus. With Jesus Christ joy is constantly born anew."

Pope Francis also calls out to those in consecrated life in a particular way...."religious women and men follow... in a prophetic way." Religious, aware of their own struggles, stay faithful and let joy rise from their intimate listening to God and from the calls of their brothers and sisters. By the grace of God, we are to be faithful witnesses, effective proclaimers, companions and neighbors especially of those lacking justice in our society. We stand in solidarity with them. Our lives are affected by their struggle. God calls us to live on the edge so we can hear the Voice of God in and through the voices of our neighbors in need.

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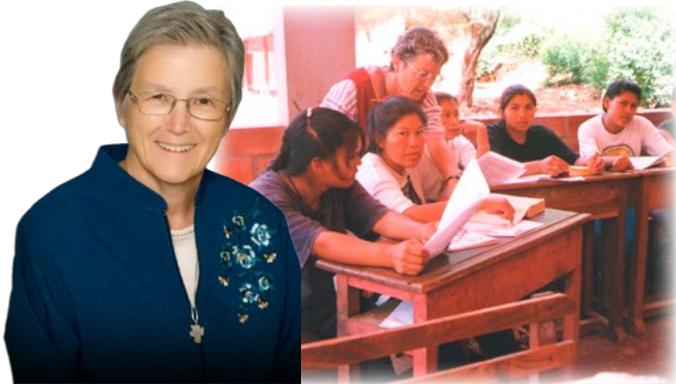
We stand in solidarity with them.

We are humbled to follow such a namesake as Mary, our Blessed Mother. We hope she sees in us daughters after her own heart, and that we are responding with a similar Fiat as she did. We are blessed to have Mary as our inspiration and constant guide.



Voices of Sisters

Sister Myra Remily



Sister Myra Remily in the Chapel of Ñarinda, Bolivia teaching and training students to be Catechists .

Living the vowed life has freed Sister Myra to be of service to others and deepen her spiritual life. She spent 15 years abroad serving and building sustainable communities in Guerrero, Mexico and Entre Rios, Bolivia.

While in Mexico, Sister Myra served with other Presentation Sisters and Cojourner Diane Young to help the people of Tlacoachistlahuaca. After 17 years of Presentation Sisters serving the community, the Franciscan Sisters of Mexico City continued the mission. The Catechesis training and dorms for students pursuing an education continues to operate successfully. Sister Myra says, "They are truly living on their own. [The parish is flourishing, and the seeds we planted are bearing fruit!](#)"

In Bolivia, Sister Myra assisted the Dubuque Presentation Sisters' Hispanic Ministry. With very few vehicles, Sister once walked 11 hours, reaching her destination well after dark. Projects developed in Bolivia were an Education Center within the parish and the continuance of alleviating medical issues. A fundraising project to purchase one cow raised enough funds for 13 cattle. Two years later, the successful project allowed the making and selling of cheese and beef for consumption. Sister aided the Guarani community in constructing a Chapel built in Ñarinda, thanks to the generosity of Leo Gisi.

Sister Myra now assists Hispanic immigrants in the Aberdeen, SD area find work, good health care and housing. She works with medical staff on translating forms into Spanish and accompanies families to school conferences, doctor appointments and other offices, offering translation services.

Sister Consuelo Covarrubias



Sister Consuelo Covarrubias teaching Bilingual Education to Veau Elementary students in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1974.

Sister Consuelo's 60-year vocation as a Presentation Sister began as a teacher in SD, MN and WI schools for the first 20-years. Then inspired by the Spirit, she served in parishes as a translator to Hispanics and encouraged personal growth to them for 40-years.

While Director of Hispanic Ministry for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, MN, she started the first all-state Hispanic Conference. Sister used community-organizing skills to train Latino leaders to be involved in civic issues in their area. In Indiana, she helped train leaders of the Small Base Communities in local and area parishes to lead prayer groups and reach out to other Latino families. Together they created a Christ conscious neighborhood, which still continues today.

In the Aberdeen Area Hispanic Outreach ministry, Sister Consuelo assists Sister Myra Remily with outreach to Latino's and as an interpreter. The ministry's primary purpose is to help create a welcoming presence and to respond to the needs of newer Latino immigrants as they seek to integrate into our American culture and make a home among us. Sister helps sustain people's faith life by taking time to pray with and for the families she serves.

[As Sister Consuelo reflects where her ministry has taken her she says, "I continue to learn that my bilingual gift is needed with our Latino population, and I am always rewarded with love and care from the families with whom I walk."](#)

Faith in Presentation Mission



Diane Young with some of the children she served in Mexico.

Diane Young lived a fulfilling life at an early age and many thought it was complete. Yet, Diane felt there was something missing and there was an unwritten chapter longing to be fulfilled. After being married and achieving her goal as a mother with grown children, who had their own happy, gratifying lives, it was time for Diane to leave Nevada and experience a new adventure. Since Diane was acquainted with the Conventual Franciscan Sisters of California, she visited their Tlacoachistlahuaca, Mexico mission in 1988. During this visit, she experienced a call to dedicate her future to helping others. Diane returned to the mission a second time as a volunteer and lived with Presentation Sisters, Gabriella Crowley, Helen Nemmers and Myra Remily, who were missioned to serve the poorest of the poor.

During this time, Sister Helen initiated the catechetical ministry and established dorms for students, which continues to operate successfully today. *Sister Helen says, "Diane's lightheartedness and laughter do much to lighten the hearts of the people."* When Diane began with the mission, she had no experience in speaking Spanish. *"Diane communicated without knowing the language by portraying love, concern and compassion. Her efforts in Mexico helped the people begin to prosper, and they all loved her,"* said Sister Myra. Diane's dedication in sustaining the mission was successful as she served infants and children and taught mothers how to keep children healthy and clean. The ministry continued to flourish as she brought in surgeons to care for children with harelips, cleft palates and cataracts and worked with individuals in obtaining government aid for different illnesses. She then went on to find ways to help improve the quality of human life and initiated the much-needed programs of Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon and Natural Family Planning that remain in operation today.

Feeling called to nourish the sick and shut-ins spiritually, Diane offered Eucharist during home visits to bring them closer to God. She also encouraged young seminarians to persevere in their seminarian formation. Today, these same young men serve their home parishes as priests. Diane continued to bring a Presentation Cojourner "presence" to the people of Mexico for 27 years, and said, *"I feel very blessed to be part of God's plan. I am very grateful to be of service with God's people in Mexico and serve with the Sisters. They strengthen me and give me purpose."*



Sister Gabriella Crowley, Sister Helen Nemmers, Sister Myra Remily and Diane Young while serving in Mexico.

The mission continues today and is served by the Mexican-based community of Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph.

Diane began her Cojourner journey in 1990 with Sister Helen Nemmers as her companion Sister. Her hopes were to increase and strengthen the support, guidance and understanding of the needs of the local people of Mexico served by the Sisters and Priests. She also yearned to experience continued spiritual growth within herself as part of her journey. In 2014, Diane Young received the opportunity to enter in a Lifetime Commitment as a Cojourner with the Presentation Sisters! Her obligation to the people of the Mission and continued Presentation "presence" in Mexico is greatly valued by the Presentation Community.

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a Presentation Cojourner, contact Sister Darlene Gutenkauf at 605-229-8315 or darleneag@hotmail.com.

www.presentationisters.org

Sustainability

The Presentation Sisters' mission says they **willingly go forth to any part of the world to work for justice, alleviate oppression and promote human dignity, especially among the poor.** Through a partnership, Sisters, Cojourners and donors enthusiastically offer skills, resources and education with local people to create sustainable development of the present communities without compromising the ability of future generations meeting their own needs. As an apostolic congregation, the Sisters minister and live among those in need by offering education, health care and a sense of safety that allows for personal growth within the communities ultimately achieving sustainable living.



Sister Joanna Bruno and Sister Elizabeth Remily in the early days of the Clínica San José medical mission.



Sister Elizabeth (Aberdeen PBVM), Sisters Reyna, Cruz Amelia and Blanca (Franciscan Sisters) and Sister Joanna (San Francisco PBVM) with Tekawitha.

“We go where we are needed, and invited, and stay until we are wanted, but not necessarily needed.” This is the philosophy of Presentation Sisters Elizabeth (Liz) Remily, Aberdeen PBVM and Joanna Bruno, San Francisco PBVM. These two professional nurses spent the past six years serving rural families in the western highlands of Guatemala where they established Clínica San José. The Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, also nurses, now continue the mission that Sisters Liz and Joanna started at Clínica San José.

Sisters Liz and Joanna's ministry began in 1965 bringing affordable health care to the less fortunate in foreign countries as a response to the call of world Bishops. Before beginning this mission, they received an invitation, and met with local representatives to hear their ideas and needs. When Sisters Liz and Joanna began Clínica San José, they provided prenatal care with ultrasound and general consults. Due to lack of space in the garage that served as their clinic, hospitalization was outside on the patio with folding beds. This location was used until a permanent, more functional structure was built.

The Sisters developed relationships and established a presence in the community with the Mayan Mam speaking natives. **“By doing this work alongside the local community and other missionaries, we hoped to encourage a sense of dignity while fostering courage and peace,”** said Sr. Liz. Normal living conditions of their patients included living in a one-room adobe home while enduring severe earthquakes, hurricanes and extreme cold. The Sisters would travel three hours to the nearest city to purchase basic medical supplies. On average, Clínica San José had 30 patients per day. The patients, mostly mothers with children and the elderly, traveled miles by foot, horse and occasionally the infamous chicken bus, before arriving at the clinic. However, without Clínica San José, the natives may not have access to even the most basic health care.

Sisters Liz and Joanna's medical ministry history together began when they were invited to serve at their first clinic, Clínica San Carlos in Chiapas, Mexico. This was the first mission in Latin America founded by the Presentation Sisters and is continued by the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul from the Mexican Province. Their second invitation led them to establish Clínica San Antonio de Padua in San Luis Potosi, Mexico, which is now being served by Josefina Sisters from Mexico City. The invitation to serve the medical needs in Latin America continued with the call to start Clínica Santa Clara in Solola, Guatemala. Sisters trained the native staff in dental, clinical laboratory, nursing, ultrasounds and audiology. The Guatemalan Sisters continue the third mission. As with all their missions, Sisters trained the indigenous population to assist in the clinics.



Sisters Liz and Joanna with a patient at Clínica Santa Clara in Solola, Guatemala

Sisters Liz and Joanna returned to the United States after their long journey across Mexico, 10-days and 3,000 miles in a jeep without cruise control. They continue to appreciate your prayers as they take this time to transition and reconnect with other sisters, friends and family. When they are not reading, relaxing and reflecting, they are seeking volunteer opportunities. Even though the two of them were successful in all their medical missions, they are now taking full advantage of the wonderful health care facilities at Avera McKennan.



Blessed by generous donations that supported the start and furtherance of all four of their foreign missions, Sister Liz and Joanna are humbled by the many repeat benefactors. Their mission of helping others in foreign countries would not have been possible without the continuous funding of these gracious individuals. "All these years have been a gift and a blessing, even the hard times, and only possible with the help of our faithful donors," said Sisters Liz and Joanna. The Presentation Sisters and the foreign communities, forever express their gratitude for you.



Clínica San José



Guatemala

Sustaining Our Gift of Person

Personality and Human Relationships offer a positive and constructive approach to inner exploration and growth



Sr. JoAnn Sturzl (standing) assists PRH program attendee Mary Jane Winter, PBVM Cojourner.

Sister JoAnn Sturzl writes: *What a gift it is to have accompanied persons in their growth for more than 25 years, and to realize the sustainability of the great gift given by God: our person! From the moment of our conception, we are created to grow and evolve! The Gospel tells us of Jesus' growth: "Jesus increased in wisdom, age and grace." Luke 2:52.*

PRH (Personality and Human Relationships) is a holistic Growth Program, offering many concrete means to foster and assist persons in their growth. Our psychology of the person, based on research, highlights the most important part of the person: the being, which is our unique identity and all that makes each person uniquely created by God. It is at that level of ourselves that we experience God. We teach people a method of exploring their inner feelings and sensations, in order to understand themselves better. People learn how to consciously participate in their ongoing growth, to understand what prevents them from living their best selves and to make choices that foster inner harmony and peace.

One means of accomplishing that is the monthly Growth Group on Saturday mornings in Sioux Falls, SD. Different themes for growth are offered in a nurturing environment, giving the participants quiet time to write, followed by sharing and input. We leave with a deepened desire and motivation to

have a positive impact in our families, communities and the world. Growth is a life-long process, spurred on by the satisfaction that people feel when they live with more love, authenticity, inner freedom and peace.

Sister JoAnn says, "For as long as I can remember, I have been interested in people, and how we could lead our lives in a more peaceful and loving way. I've always believed that persons are basically good and I have read many books about human persons. Then PRH showed me how to read my own book! I discovered and am learning how to live the best in me. I live a passion to help others do the same and to continue on a journey of self-discovery."

Increasing Spiritual Growth

Women invest a lot of time and energy into their families, churches, communities and work, sacrificing their own needs for others. In an effort to increase and deepen the need for spiritual growth among these women, the Presentation Sisters have hosted a women's retreat and conference every year for the last 20 years.

Through the women's retreat, conference and other events, the Sisters reach out to women and give them an opportunity to empower themselves through supportive networks. They committed themselves to improving the condition of women's well-being. These spiritual experiences are provided to women through spiritual input by a speaker designed to help them explore their own sense of belovedness and understand their vocational call that comes from God's love.

All Sister sponsored retreats offer a special time for personal reflection, prayer and sharing and continued opportunities to develop networks of mutual support. Over the years, the retreats have been provided in five different cities. Attendees are recharged, encouraged and spiritually fed by one another. Women empower each other in a way that is truly inspiring.



Sr. Elaine Garry and Teresa Schliesman at the 2015 Women's Retreat in Sioux Falls, SD.

The Bright Future of the Catholic Church

If you had access to Sister Roxanne Seifert's baby book, you would see that her first favorite song was the jingle for Wrigley's Spearmint Gum. At eight-months old, her mother documented that she danced and sang each time she heard the advertisement. She eventually learned to play the violin, French horn and mellophone, taught herself to play piano, and found herself singing from the church pews; however, it wasn't until she became an adult that she moved from the pews to the choir and not until she was introduced to the Presentation Sisters that she developed as a cantor. So the point is: music has always been a part of her life and as an avocation she hopes sharing her gifts and passions will inspire another generation of pastoral musicians.

The fire for deeper understanding of the ritual action of the Catholic Church began during her apostolic novitiate year as she studied Sacramental Theology at Creighton University. In fact, she considered graduate study in liturgical ministry but discerned it was not feasible at the time. Her love of the sacramental church has continued to deepen and develop, and in 2007, while a graduate student at the College of St. Catherine, liturgical composers, David Haas and Lori True, invited Sr. Roxanne to attend Music Ministry Alive! (MMA).

Founded by David, MMA's tagline is "Fostering the growth of young pastoral musicians – one saint at a time!" The mission is "to engage and empower young people to serve as liturgical music leaders in the church." Although Sr. Roxanne was beyond the definition of "young," David and Lori knew she assisted with Presentation Leadership Camp and was in a position to inspire and influence young women in the church; not just the church of today, but that of the future. Because MMA consists of two distinct educational tracks, the Youth Track and the Adult Track, yet a single intentional community, Sister would fit right in, and she did.

Sister Roxanne says, "Over the years, I have had the opportunity of being enriched with hope in the future of the church, musically and pastorally. It has been a privilege to meet and walk with the adult mentors of these young people. While the Youth Track is around 175 participants strong, the Adult Track has only around 50 participants, who most often are the music and youth directors of the parishes of the youth attendees. Looking back I see that my immediate role has been a ministry of presence and support for the adults. We have taught each other through our questions about liturgy, theology, scripture, current church environment, etc. These men and women are mentors and coaches to the young musicians. These young musicians are members of the current church and will be instrumental to the future of the church. Although I am energized and inspired by the youth due to their incredible talent and engagement, God invited me to MMA to exercise the ministry of presence with the adults. God invited me to be present in a way that will continue to build up the Reign of God for centuries into the future. I look forward with excitement and joy to God speaking to the world through the more than 2750 MMA saints sharing the Gospel through their prayer and music."

www. MusicMinistryAlive.com

Promoting Human Dignity

Inspired by the Presentation Sisters' Foundress, Nano Nagle, Sisters Annrita Johnson and Corita Dickinson assisted in the beginnings of a homeless shelter in Albuquerque, NM. The Barrett House is part of a solution to homelessness where women and children receive the gift of independence by achieving sustainability. Sisters Annrita and Corita were invited by Brother Mathias Barrett, a legendary friend of the homeless, to offer support to those needing a bed, a meal or a change of clothes. Many Presentation Sisters helped the Barrett House flourish over the years because its mission carried similar values as Presentation Sisters: "to share in the Lord's mission of alleviating oppression and promoting human dignity."



Sisters Annrita assists with the mail at the Barrett House.

Originating in 1985, the Barrett House was a simple 10-room house. After five short months of renovating and efforts of dedicated volunteers, the Barrett House accepted its first guest. The Barrett House assisted 20 women and children daily with Sisters Celine Kelly, Helen Deis and Bernadette Farrell serving as night managers. Needing revenue to keep the shelter's doors open, Sister Mary Denis Collins established and managed a thrift store called "Barrett House Attic" in 1986. These proceeds successfully fulfilled many needs of the shelter. A few other Sisters providing various volunteer services at the shelter include Sisters Jean Huntimer, Abbie Kennedy, Patrick Leonard Murphy and Theodore Paul.

As the needs of the shelter grew, Sisters Annrita and Corita recognized a necessity to help not only their guests' physical needs, but also their emotional and social needs resulting in an in-depth rehabilitation program. This program received a grant that allowed the Sisters to open a second shelter for older mentally ill women, the Presentation House, Inc., which is now utilizing apartments called Casa Milagro. While at the facility, these guests received an 18-month program aimed to stabilize and manage their own lives.

As Barrett House matured, the program Bridges to Self Sufficiency was created in 1994 to provide opportunities for the previously homeless to find employment or return to higher education to become financially and emotionally stable.

Today, thirty years later, the Barrett House serves more than 800 homeless women and children yearly providing an average of 22,000 meals, 7,000 bed nights and over 1,000 hours of case management a year. Bridges offers housing opportunities for 19 women and a new program, Casa Socorro, serves mentally disabled women. Volunteers and the community of Albuquerque continue to step forward with material and financial donations to keep the Barrett House ministry. Sr. Annrita says, "We had such dedicated employees, and the financial support we received was tremendous. I am truly grateful that Barrett House is still meeting the needs of the homeless in Albuquerque today. For more information visit www.barrettfoundation.org



Collaborating to end Homelessness

Sustaining Earth

The work of loving, protecting, healing, celebrating and taking care of God's creation is foundational to the sisters' mission and central to the church's mission. Even though the Presentation Sisters have cared for the Earth for many years, their efforts increased significantly as a direct response to the Conference of the Presentation Sisters' goal, "Purchasing and utilizing products from companies that are sensitive to Earth in the entire life cycle of the product. Implementation will include spirituality, education and advocacy within and beyond our congregations, associates and employees."

The Presentation Sisters empower each other to make purchasing and investing choices in green efforts that promote social justice and environmental sustainability. Whenever they recycle, reuse or reduce, they have a share in protecting Earth's environment. By choosing to use "green" products, they have a positive impact on creating a safe atmosphere and contribute to the preservation of the entire environment that surrounds us.

As advocates, the sisters would like to educate and bring awareness to the fact there are safe, non-toxic alternatives available, which replace toxic and potentially hazardous products the average consumer is using. The Sisters are becoming energy efficient and sustainable role models within their community, because they are committed to sustainable living and raising concerns of environmental issues. Walk with the sisters as they continue to take steps toward a better environment for our children and future generations. For more ways to sustain the earth, visit www.presentationisters.org



In Loving Memory

Born to Life - Aug. 15, 1921
Born to Eternal Life - January 12, 2015

Sister
Bernadette
Farrell



Sister Bernadette Farrell, a Dell Rapids, SD native, dedicated more than 70 years to religious life. She served as an obstetric nurse at (Avera) hospitals in Aberdeen and Mitchell, SD where she assisted with the birth of hundreds of babies. She continued her ministry of nursing by teaching obstetric nursing students at Presentation School of Nursing for more than 20 years. Sister ministered as a midwife in the southern part of the country as well as in missions in Mexico and helped provide tools for those communities to become independent. Sister Bernadette also helped women and children overcome homelessness when she volunteered at the Barrett House shelter in Albuquerque, NM.

The basis of Sister Bernadette's vocation came from her extremely religious mother who took her to Mass with her every day. Family and friends will remember Sister Bernadette as being holy, friendly and patient and for her many years of service in health care as nurse, instructor, midwife, volunteer and her pastoral work. She loved her family and touched many, many lives with great care and compassion. Sister Bernadette's favorite biblical quote was, "Be still and know that I am God." *Psalm 46:11*. Sister Bernadette lived this and left this legacy for all of us.

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Voices and Ventures is published by the Presentation Sisters' Public Awareness Office to communicate the ministries and mission of the Presentation Sisters. We invite your comments as well as your prayers.

You may send any correspondence to:
Public Awareness Office,
Dawn Maas, Director of Public Awareness
1500 North Second Street, Aberdeen, S.D. 57401-1238
Phone: 605.229.8317 Email: dmaas@presentationisters.org



Sisters of the Presentation
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May 9, 2015

Cinco de Mayo
Sioux Falls, SD

June 15, 2015

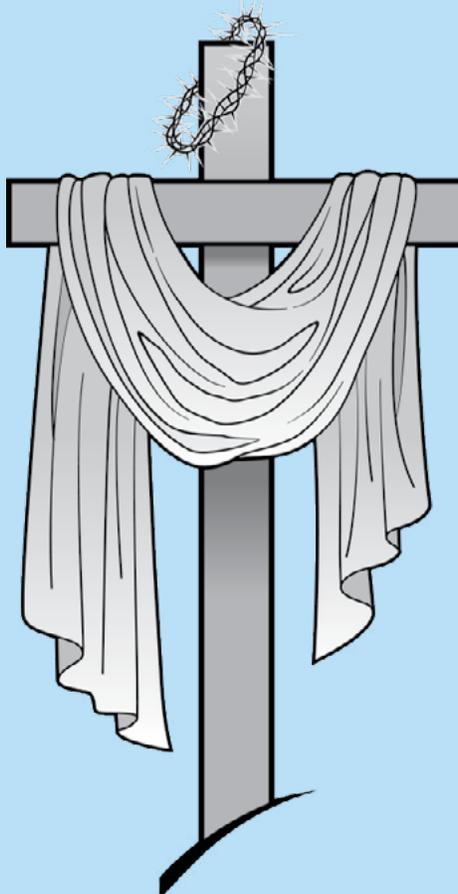
Women's Golf Tournament
Moccasin Creek Country Club
Aberdeen, SD

June 23-27, 2015

L.I.V.E Camp
Creighton Retreat Center

July 13-17, 2015

Leadership Camp
Storm Mountain



*Celebrate
the Resurrection
of the Lord!*

Happy Easter

For more information, please contact:
Public Awareness Office: 605-229-8317
Vocation Outreach Office: 605-229-8414
Development Office: 605-229-8337
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