



October 3, 2016

We are beginning another month of school, and tomorrow (October 4) is a special day for us as Presentation Sisters. We call it our 'Foundation Day', the anniversary of when our Sisters arrived in Aberdeen in 1886 to begin a new school.

You may have heard that Bishop Martin Marty went to Ireland to invite the Presentation Sisters to come to Dakota Territory to teach both the Native and immigrant children here. The Sisters arrived in 1880 and settled first in Charles Mix County. That first winter in Dakota Territory was a hard one, and with the melting snow and the spring rains, their sod hut fell to ruins. They had to find another home. In 1882 they were invited to start a school in Fargo, North Dakota. Four years later, three of the Sisters from Fargo came to Aberdeen to begin a school here.

That was the beginning of Presentation Sisters here in Aberdeen. Part of our legacy is that we try to respond to needs; we had first responded by coming to Dakota Territory to teach. In the early 1900's a diphtheria epidemic hit the Aberdeen area. Again responding to a need, the Sisters temporarily cancelled classes, and set up cots in the classrooms to take care of the sick. When the epidemic was over, the Sisters moved desks back into the classrooms to begin having school again. Then the people of Aberdeen came to the Sisters saying that they realized that we needed a hospital here in Aberdeen, and they asked the Sisters if they would consider staffing a hospital. Soon some of the Sisters who were originally teachers went away to school to become nurses. That was the beginning of what later became St. Luke's Hospital. Hence, teaching and nursing have been part of our ministries ever since. It is not surprising that some of our educational programs here at Presentation College have a health care component to them.

May your school year be successful, and may your Fall Break be a joyful one.

God bless all of you!

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