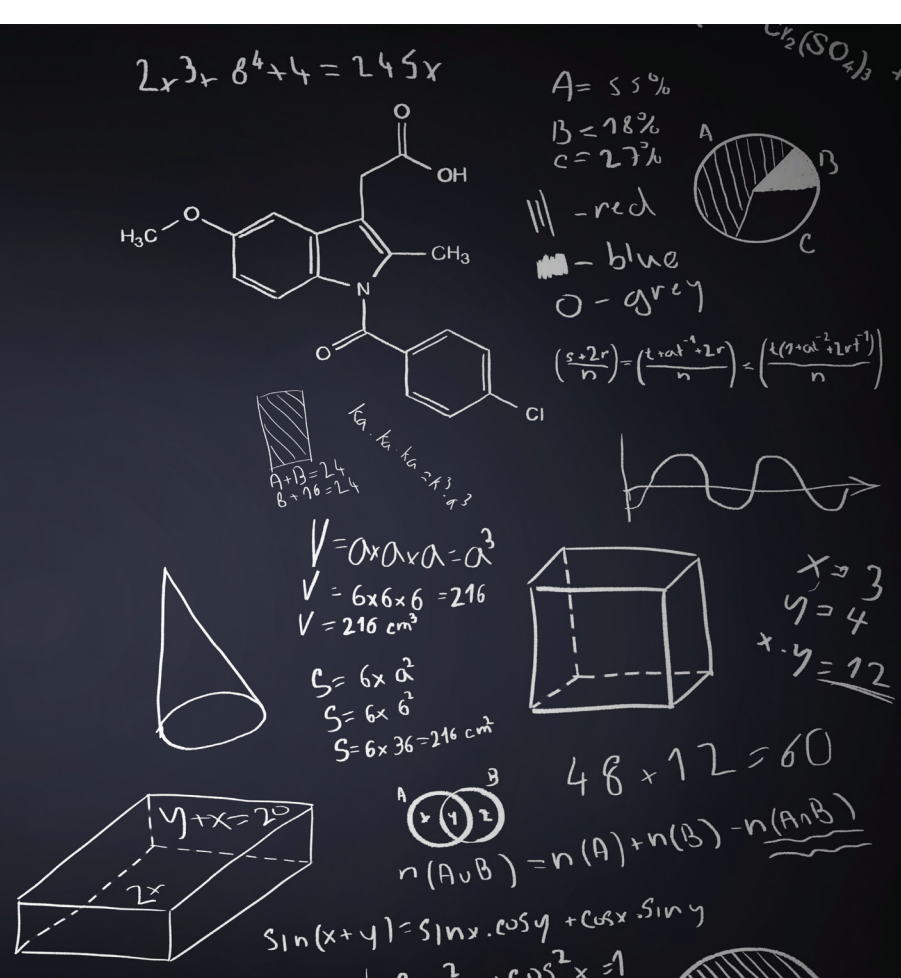




PRESENTATION SISTERS

Sharing the Joy of Education

By Natalie Slieter



"The Presentation Sisters have long been committed to serving in rural missions, through education. Many callings have been answered by the Sisters and many students have been impacted by them. For myself, it is the mission of educating nurses, of which I am proud to be an alum of Presentation College. My education has helped me deliver a broad spectrum of health care in South Dakota."

— Esther M Preszler, CNP and Board of Trustees for Presentation College

Nano Nagle set the stage for the value of education amongst the Presentation Sisters back in the 1700s. That led six sisters and novices to leave Ireland and travel to America in the 1800s to establish themselves in Dakota Territory and begin the work they continue to this day. Today, this includes sponsoring Presentation College in Aberdeen, South Dakota, offering Catholic School Scholarships and serving as mentors through various educational opportunities, including an internship program.

Sister Suzanne Cotter understands the importance of education. She was an educator throughout South Dakota, with the majority of her time spent teaching English and Latin at O’Gorman High School in Sioux Falls. She retired in 2005 after 45 years of educating the Catholic youth in the state.

If it weren’t for her receiving an education from sisters, Sister Suzanne says she may not have considered becoming neither a teacher nor a sister. Despite coming from a family of teachers, she had plans to become a nurse, but was too young to enter the field after high school.

Instead, she attended junior college at Notre Dame in Mitchell, South Dakota. Her interest in becoming a teacher was sparked, thanks to the influence of the sisters at the college who were teaching her.

"I wanted to be what they were," shared Sister Suzanne.

To her they were friendly, passionate about their vocation, and overall, joyful people. Sister Suzanne hoped to emulate the qualities she saw in the sisters to her students, as well as help them develop leadership skills and life skills to take with them once they left her classroom.

During her years of teaching, she was also able to take students to Mexico on various mission trips, which opened up their eyes to the world.

"I hope they saw that I valued education and that I enjoyed it," said Sister Suzanne.

Like Sister Suzanne, the Presentation Sisters continue to connect educational experiences with other cultures. One way they do this is collaborating with other organizations through Prayer Bus Tours and Prayer Vigils in Sioux Falls. These events give people the opportunity to

pray together in different ways and visit locations where they can encounter and learn from people of different cultures and religions.

We can follow the lead of the Presentation Sisters by being lifelong learners and always choosing to learn from one another. Our education doesn’t need to end once we leave school. We can continue to grow and learn to understand each other, especially those from cultures unlike our own.

In the past, some Prayer Bus Tours have included visits to our Buddhist, Hindu, Latino, Muslim, American Indian and Somalian neighbors. To check out the next Prayer Bus Tour or Vigil, please visit the events page at presentationsisters.org or email marketing@presentationsisters.org.



Sister Suzanne Cotter is passionate about education. She shared her smile and zest for life with students and staff in South Dakota Catholic Schools for nearly 45 years. She enjoys making learning fun and encouraging others to be life-long learners, in and out of the classroom. To learn more about Sister Suzanne or the Presentation Sisters, please visit www.presentationsisters.org.