



Sisters of the Presentation
of the Blessed Virgin Mary

In Joyful Service

Voices & Ventures

SPRING 2022



***“There is no greater
happiness in the world
than to be in union.”***

- Venerable Nano Nagle -

VOICE OF LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends,

As we transition from winter to spring, we notice the growth that surrounds us as we look ahead at our emerging future. Change is always happening, tulips are peaking through the soil, and leaves are budding on the trees, but through it all, their roots remain grounded, ever nurturing, ever growing, ever broadening.

We too are experiencing change. As the photo on our front cover depicts, our Congregation has elected a new Leadership Team that will guide us in implementing the directions set forth by the Congregational Chapter. Together, with all of our sisters, cojourners, employees, and partners, we welcome this new team and invite you to join us as we work for equality and justice throughout the world.

As the Chapter delegates set our direction for the next four years, all of us expressed our commitment to implement our Catholic understanding that all of life is one. We are connected as the Mystical Body of Christ. Together we will explore ways that we have undermined that oneness, celebrate reconciliation, and deepening union. We open ourselves, through contemplative living and dialogue, to the Spirit who will lead us to see and act in new ways. As we grow into this commitment, we continue to invite Presentation People and others to partner with us.

Through all of this movement, it is humbling to see how the Spirit works in each of us. We look to the future, but also remember the legacy of our roots. In the words of our Foundress Nano Nagle, "There is no greater happiness in the world than to be in union." We invite you to join us, as we compassionately care for creation and for our brothers and sisters in need.

In peace and mercy,

Sisters Janice, Mary, Lucille, and Vicky
Presentation Sisters Leadership Team



Sisters Janice, Vicky, Mary, and Lucille formed our Leadership Council from 2018–2022.



Sisters Vicky, Roxanne, Pegge, and Mary will serve as our Leadership Council for the next four years.

As we pass the lantern to the new Leadership Team, we are grateful to everyone for your continued support and prayers for the past four years. **Together "Let love be our lantern flame."**

Sister Lynn Marie Welbig

The South Dakota Honoree of USA TODAY's Women of the Year



This past March, Sister Lynn Marie Welbig was recognized as the South Dakota honoree of USA TODAY's Women of the Year, an annual program that recognizes women across the country who have made a significant impact.

"I was stunned!" stated Sister Lynn Marie of this honor. "I said, would you repeat that? So often public honorees are women who have held prominent positions, are socially/economically accomplished and are already well known. USA TODAY has taken a different approach, and is honoring women who take on issues on the local level that have significant need of resolution and assistance. They are selecting women who courageously step up to heal what needs healing and who inspire others to join them. In biblical terms this is called *forwarding the reign of God*. In my own case, USA TODAY is also honoring the tradition of my Presentation Sisters who have been forwarding caring and just communities since a handful of daring Irish Sisters landed in Dakota Territory in 1880. I have deep footsteps to fill." ◆



Sister Lynn Marie preparing lunch for guests at the Bishop Dudley House.



Sister Lynn Marie helping with fall clean up at the Mary Jo Wegner Arboretum.

How can I get involved and make a difference?

"Recognize meaning and joy are found not in amassing wealth and power, but in building and empowering.

Look for your own strength and finesse, and where there is a need for what you may offer.

Believe you can step up, step out, and give life and light where there is suffering and darkness.

Remember, you don't need to change the whole world, but you can create holy footprints."

– Sister Lynn Marie

Scan to meet and read about the 2022 inspiring women honorees from USA TODAY.





Jubilee!



We honor these three Presentation Sisters for their over 220 years of service to those in need. Daily, they continue living out their vocational call, working for justice, alleviating oppression and speaking out for those without a voice. We thank them for their dedication to making our world a better place for all to live.

To read more about these inspirational women, please visit the *Find a Sister* section on our website: www.presentationisters.org.

faith
mission
joy service
charism



70TH JUBILEE

Sister Lois Ann Sargent

Sister Lois Ann Sargent grew up in Clearfield, SD, and graduated from Notre Dame High School, Mitchell, SD. She received a certificate of secretarial science from Notre Dame Junior College, Mitchell, SD, and earned a bachelor's degree in business education and a master's degree in education administration from Northern State University, Aberdeen, SD.

As an elementary teacher and principal for 36 years, Sister Lois Ann shared her loving smile and giving spirit with students and staff in Anoka, MN; Jefferson, Sioux Falls, Madison, Huron, Aberdeen and Dell Rapids, SD. Upon moving back to Aberdeen, she devoted her talents by assisting in the Presentation Sisters Development Office for eight years.

In 1991, Sister Lois Ann became the Congregational Archivist. Her love of history and great organizational skills made her a natural fit for this ministry. She decorated beautiful displays of artifacts, carefully attending to each detail and bringing thoughtful care for preserving the Presentation heritage into the future.

Always wanting to help those less fortunate, Sister Lois Ann assisted our sisters and brothers in need through our Good Samaritan Ministry. Now fully retired, Sister Lois Ann enjoys sewing, crocheting, listening to classical music, and reading.



75TH JUBILEE

Sister Virginia Hallauer

Sister Virginia (Mary Lucille) was born in Wallace, SD, and graduated from Watertown High School. She received an associate teaching degree from Presentation Junior College, Aberdeen, SD, and bachelor's degree in elementary education from Northern State University, Aberdeen, SD.

Sister Virginia loved teaching, especially reading. She taught primary students for over 50 years, nurturing and educating children in Jefferson, Bridgewater, Dell Rapids, Mitchell, Madison, Aberdeen, and Watertown, SD; and Willmar, MN. She touched the lives of thousands of students in both the classroom and CCD, witnessing the love of God to each of them. She is delighted and enjoys reconnecting with these former students when they stop in to say hello, even many years later. In 1991 she began a ministry to the homebound at Immaculate Conception Parish in Watertown. By sharing stories, smiles, laughter, and tears, Sister Virginia brought the love of Christ into the homes of those she would visit.

In 2006, she retired from her ministry work and returned to Presentation Convent in Aberdeen where she is active in the congregation's prayer ministry. Sister Virginia enjoys puzzles, Bingo, a great game of cards, and sharing a good joke with others.



75TH JUBILEE

Sister Elizabeth Remily

Sister Elizabeth (Mary Laurence) grew up in Turton, SD. After receiving her education in nursing, she became a surgical supervisor at St. Joseph's Hospital, Mitchell, SD, and (Avera) St. Luke's Hospital, Aberdeen, SD.

In 1965, she answered Vatican Council II's call to respond to the growing needs of the rural poor throughout the world. In collaboration with the Presentation Sisters in San Francisco, she traveled to Chiapas, Mexico, and founded Hospital San Carlos. She then established Hospital San Antonio in San Luis Potosi, Mexico. Sister Elizabeth returned to the United States in 1992 and was the principal founder of Berakhah House, a ministry to those living with HIV/AIDS. Wanting to do more, at age 70, she established medical missions in Guatemala, first in the Department of Solola and then at age 80, in the Department of San Marcos.

At each medical mission, indigenous staff were trained to fulfill medical department needs. Each mission is still in operation and now overseen by Mexican and Guatemalan Sisters. In 2015, Sister Elizabeth returned to the United States and is enjoying an active retirement in Sioux Falls, SD, where she stays involved in politics, justice issues, and enjoys cooking and reading.



Movement

All Around Us

“If you can’t fly then run. If you can’t run then walk. If you can’t walk then crawl. But whatever you do, **you have to keep moving forward.**”

– Martin Luther King Jr.

... and moving we have done. It has been a central theme for us recently. As we take these next steps, we are excited to listen to where the Spirit is calling us. We are led by our mission in all that we do and this is no different. Over the last year and a half, our sisters have all moved out of the Convent in Aberdeen. As they transitioned from the Convent, many moved into Presentation Place in Aberdeen or Presentation Center in Sioux Falls. The ministries and employees are now moving into spaces that better fit their needs too, as we continue to focus on serving the mission.

October 2021

Caminando Juntos, our sponsored Hispanic ministry in Sioux Falls, expanded into a larger office space on the edge of downtown Sioux Falls. They continue to see an influx of clients as they walk with the newly arrived Latino immigrants in the community. Many clients have said this new space feels “like home” as they are welcomed into the ministry.

In addition to the physical move, they have increased their team to better serve the growing needs. In the last two years, they have hired more staff to help assist in the intake of the high volume they are experiencing each day, including someone to help with the large amount of immigration cases they receive. The ministry can experience up to 50 calls a day for assistance.

New life and movement will continue to find its way into Caminando Juntos as it grows for the future needs. April Ross, current director, will be moving to full time education director for the ministry. Education is a passion of hers and the ability to



The note and artifacts (pictured left) were recently uncovered in our Presentation Archives. We discovered a small box with the following inscription written on top, "From under the cornerstone St. Luke's building (1906)". The box included a Mary with child Jesus statue, St. Anthony/St. Francis medal and a Sacred Heart of Jesus pocket statue. Also included was a note handwritten in pencil with the inscription, "Sacred Heart of Jesus bless and protect this building and everyone in it." It is signed with the initials MJB. We are assuming these initials represent Mother Joseph Butler, Mother Superior of the Presentation Sisters from 1894–1915.

NEW LOCATIONS

Aberdeen:

Presentation Place
home to the Sisters and Administration offices
405 9th Ave NE
Aberdeen, SD 57401

Presentation Sisters
home of Finance, Mission Development, and President's office
815 1st Ave SE
Aberdeen, SD 57401

Sioux Falls:

Caminando Juntos
311 East 14th Street
Sioux Falls, SD 57104

Presentation Center
home to the Sisters
1702 South 7th Ave
Sioux Falls, SD 57105

Presentation Sisters
home of Integral Ecology and Mission Development
629 S. Minnesota Ave,
Suite 101
Sioux Falls, SD 57104

fully focus on this area will be a benefit to those they serve. With April's move to education director, we are excited to welcome a new Executive Director who will be joining the ministry in June.

March 2022

In Sioux Falls, the Integral Ecology and Mission Development Teams found new space to meet their growth and expansion. This group was grateful to have a short move up the stairs, landing on the main level of the same building they have been in for the last 9 years. Some beautiful art pieces from the Convent fill the space, making it feel like a wonderful extension of Nano's legacy and centered in mission.

May 2022

This May, the remaining teams at the Convent (in Aberdeen), moved across town and found new space above the Avera Performance Center. Although the physical Archives will remain at Presentation Heights for now, the following departments have moved: Finance, Mission Development (which includes the Archivist and Cojourner Coordinator), and the assistant to the President.

Along with this move, there has been discernment on what to do with all of the beautiful statues and artifacts in the Convent. Our archivist has been working diligently to rehome precious statues, religious items, art and so much more. Many of the beautiful statues are finding their way to South Dakota parishes and we are grateful they will be treasured and enjoyed in years to come. With this transition, we have discovered new treasures and found ourselves pausing and reliving beautiful memories in this process. We remember our sisters who have gone before us, and are guided by their love and foresight as we continue stepping forward in this process.

Archivist Kathleen Daly, pictured on the right, worked with Father John Rutten and Deacon Glenn Ridder in re-homing some of our beautiful statues that had called the Convent their home for decades.



Future

One of our most asked questions remains, what will happen to the Convent and the land? In Aberdeen, Presentation Convent sits on the Presentation Heights 125-acre campus, which includes Presentation College. We continue to strive for places of collaboration to enhance both missions. Presentation College will remain on the campus.

Our Presentation Mission calls us to joyfully incarnate the compassion and justice of Jesus, as Nano did, so that our neighbors locally and globally might live with hope. Our mission guides our ministry and underlines our spirituality. Our focus on promoting justice and alleviating oppression helps us to determine which of the many needs of God's people we might best be able to meet through our ministry efforts. This guidance is essential as we minister to those in need all over the world.

The discernment began over two years ago for how Presentation Heights can best serve our Mission into the future. We have a desire to enhance our property with more of its natural beauty and imagine how this could be enjoyed by the Aberdeen community and region. We are using *Laudato Si'*, an Encyclical written by Pope Francis, which calls us to care of creation and for our brothers and sisters in need. This letter guides our discernment process. We have also formed our most recent Chapter Call around this important work and look forward to our Presentation People walking with us on this journey (see pages 9-11 for the complete Chapter Call).

Although we don't know our exact path, we do know that the land will continue to evolve and grow in the year(s) ahead. "Together, we continue to look ahead with our partners, as we have always done, in regards to our future and to addressing needs both locally and globally," shares Sister Janice Klein. ●

Presentation Sisters Set Direction and Elect New Leaders for the Next Four Years



For the past six months, in preparation for the 2021-2022 Chapter of Affairs and Chapter of Election, we, along with accompanying Presentation People have been invoking, through prayer, the spiraling breath of God, Christ and our foundress, Nano Nagle. This has “drawn us into the Christ mystery of life, death and resurrection,” inviting the lifegiving Spirit of Nano into our hearts, recreating her “spirit within to attend to cries of earth and cries of those made poor.” As we were drawn inwards, we called upon the spiraling Breath of God to be animated “outward to incarnate the mission of Christ in a world crying out for goodness, justice and peace.” Together, we read a variety of articles, drawing us closer to each other and those made poor. We were able to see the interconnectedness and how the impact of injustice to people is connected around the entire ecosystem.

Held in a contemplative and reflective manner, our Chapter of Affairs sets the Congregational direction for the next four years, 2022–2026. From these direction(s), the Chapter of Election is held, where we elect new leaders who will forward our newly set Congregational direction(s).



Per our Constitution, #57, the deeper outcome of “Chapter” is to create “spiritual unity and apostolic vitality in the Congregation.”

The Chapter delegates include Sisters who are willing and able to be a part of the discernment of the Chapter of Affairs and then the Chapter of Elections. Other Sisters and Presentation People were invited to a supportive and prayerful role. Those involved overwhelmingly experienced unity and vitality throughout the week of Chapter, which was held March 8 through March 12. The prayerful and contemplative spirit was nurtured in a variety of ways, including Mass of the Holy Spirit on March 8, the Feast of St. John of God (the religious name of

Nano Nagle) and the prayer rituals in remembering our Presentation Sisters, not only from Aberdeen, but from around the world, who have gone before us.

The three movements of Mary’s Annunciation, Visitation, and Presentation guided the nominating and election process, with delegates going even deeper into this sacred process of calling forth those who could implement the Chapter call. A 24-hour retreat day gave everyone, including the nominees, an opportunity to prayerfully contemplate the four Sisters who have the gifts to lead the congregation into the future. The Spirit spoke and we look forward to our newly elected Leadership Council being installed on June 2, 2022 at Presentation Heights. 🍌



Sister Mary Thomas, President

Presently serving as Senior Vice President of Mission Services at Avera McKennan Hospital in Sioux Falls, SD, and Vice President of the Congregation, Sister Mary will add Congregational President to her list of duties. “I look forward to networking with others, linking our story to the larger story that is unfolding in our Church and world, namely synodality. Together may we strive to joyfully incarnate the compassion and justice of Jesus, as our foundress Nano did, so that our neighbors locally and globally might live with hope.”



Sister Vicky Larson, Vice President

Currently an Associate Professor of Nursing at Augustana University in Sioux Falls, SD, Sister Vicky just completed her first term as a Leadership Council Member for the Presentation Sisters. In her new role as Vice President, she is “looking forward to discerning our next steps with the new team. We live in a world of change and uncertainty. None of us, individually, has all the answers to the questions; however, coming together for discernment is the way to discover a graced path forward.”





2022-2026 CHAPTER CALL SUMMARY

In March 2022, the Chapter delegates discerned that the Presentation Sisters will build on the Chapter Calls of 2018 over the next four years. We expressed our commitment to live into the Catholic understanding that earth and all its people are one, sacred, and interconnected and in right relationship with the Mystical Body of Christ. Where we have broken this sacred trust of unity, we ask forgiveness, seek reconciliation, and celebrate restoration. Through contemplative living and dialogue, we open ourselves to the Spirit, who will lead us to see and act in new ways. As we grow into this commitment, Presentation People and others will be invited to partner with us.



Sister Roxanne Seifert, Councillor

Since 2003, Sister Roxanne has served as Vice President of Mission at Avera Queen of Peace, Mitchell, SD. Throughout this region she provides spiritual leadership, promoting Mission integration and unity through persons, policies, programs, and structures related to the direct and indirect delivery of health care services. Feeling blessed, she states, "I most look forward to learning with this team as we reach out with openness, joy, and hope to a world in need."



Sister Pegge Boehm, Councillor

By serving in many Congregational ministries including parish ministry, teaching ESL classes, and involvement with Socially Responsible Investing, Sister Pegge is excited for her new position as a Council Member of the Leadership Team. "I feel humbled to be able to serve my religious community. As I continue to nurture my relationship with God, I desire to nourish my relationship with my sisters and other partners on the journey into the future. I look forward to working on a team with three amazing women!"

In the Footprint of Lobbying Nuns

Reflection by Sister Lynn Marie Welbig



When Nano Nagle said her Sisters should be willing to go anywhere in the world to be of service, it is unlikely that she had in mind the halls of the South Dakota Capitol. Nano herself was surely an “edgewalker” as she wrestled the injustices of her day, but...

It was a daunting moment when, on what had been a peaceful day in 2015, Sister Kathleen Bierne and I were ‘invited’ (as in ‘sent’) by our President to spend six cold weeks in Pierre engaging the 2016 SD legislature. As we have learned in these seven years of lobbying, advocating for justice and mercy can be addressed in places where Sisters are not typically found.

A combination of shock and awe was evident among the legislators when two Catholic nuns appeared stalking the halls and chambers of the capitol. Some welcomed us while others thought we should stay in church where we belong. Many lobbyists welcomed us and over the years we have gained friends among the legislators. In our lobbying we have collaborated with other interest groups which enriched our understandings and our influence. Recently Judy Blauwet, retired Avera nurse, has joined us and is a most valuable addition to our Presentation lobbying team.

Politics is firmly embedded in legislating and lobbying, and is often seen in a negative light. What are nuns doing in this arena? However, Pope Francis says, politics is a sacred calling. Seen in the proper light, the activities in the capitol are about ordering



Sister Kathleen, Rep. Linda Duba, Sen. Wayne Steinhauer, and Sister Lynn Marie at the SD Capitol.

our lives together such that every person has meaning, and has the opportunity to live and thrive in community. Thus the halls and chambers in Pierre might be considered places of sacred work...holding proposed legislation up to the light of the gospel, as well as to our Constitutions.

A day of lobbying begins in the evening with searching out bills we’d like to address in committee the next morning. We focus on bills which impact the poor, exploited workers and undercut the common good. We have lobbied these respect life concerns: needs of Native Americans, immigrants, minimum wage, sales tax on food as it burdens the poor, environmental degradation, access to health care, voter suppression, politicizing public education, as well as the right to life itself.

Research and thoughtful rhetoric drive an effective lobby, plus prayer to the Holy Spirit that the Spirit’s voice might be spoken and heard as we address the legislative committees each morning. At times I have



Sister Kathleen testifying.

"In my grade and high school years I practiced 'being' in the legislature through YCL, 4-H, and the debate team. Needless to say, these last seven years lobbying for justice issues have enhanced my experience of how complex the legislative process is. It is difficult work to reach across the aisle of Party affiliation and pass laws that promote the common good. I have seen examples of success when that work is done and disappointment when it is not."

– Sister Kathleen Bierne



Judy lobbying from home.

"The work of the Presentation Sisters in the South Dakota legislative process is difficult and at times can seem futile. But every so often a ray of hope presents itself where our input does sway a vote. It's enough to keep us energized!"

– Judy Blauwet



Sister Lynn Marie testifying.

nudged legislators with scripture references from the Torah, Quran, and the Christian Bible, which gets interesting attention. One of my favorites is to quote Jesus' two Great Commandments spoken to a lawyer, and Jesus concludes with, "On these [two great commandments] depends the WHOLE LAW and the prophets."

Afternoons are spent observing legislators in caucus and in the senate or house chambers, tracking the points of view and the disposition of bills.

Most recently COVID required that we lobby from home, following legislative deliberations which are livestreamed by SD public broadcasting. We testified in writing, by phone, or by Zoom. However, as COVID relinquished a bit, we were able to spend some time in Pierre in 2022, where we were warmly greeted by lobbyists and legislators.

Has our lobbying won many votes? It's most important that legislative issues are held up to the light of the gospel, which is our benchmark. ◆

In Loving Memory

As we say farewell to our dear Sisters, we remember them with joy. While their time with us seems all too brief, they followed the path God laid for them, and God has taken their hands to lead them home. We lift up our hearts for they received faith's reward, the fullness of life with God.

Sister Mary Pius Gutoski

Born to Life August 28, 1926

Born to Eternal Life November 15, 2021

Eufryne Frances Gutoski was born in Chicago, IL. She graduated from Providence High School in Chicago and entered Presentation Convent January 22, 1944. She received the religious name of Sister Mary Pius and professed vows on August 10, 1946. She earned a bachelor's in education from Northern State University and a master's in education from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. For over 20 years, she shared her love of education with primary students in Milbank, Dell Rapids, Sioux Falls, Madison, Mitchell, and Aberdeen, SD, and an additional 22 years of education in the inner-city public schools in Flint, MI.

In 1991, she received training and certification in therapeutic massage, serving an additional 12 years in this ministry in Flint, MI. Sister Mary Pius said, "I asked the Lord to work through me. When I work, I pray. A massage helps one heal; if you feel better physically, you feel better mentally and spiritually."





Sister Elaine Goodell

Born to Life October 24, 1925

Born to Eternal Life March 27, 2022



Mary Nadine Goodell was born in Reeder, ND, and graduated from Parker High School, Parker, SD. She entered Presentation Convent July 26, 1944 and professed vows on August 10, 1947 receiving her religious name of Sister Elaine. She received a bachelor's of music education from Alverno College, Milwaukee, WI, and masters and doctorates of music from Catholic University, Washington, DC. Sister Elaine shared her love of music in schools in Huron, Mitchell, and Sioux Falls, SD and served as Chair of the Presentation College Music Department from 1972–1980.

Sister Elaine's call led her to chaplaincy study and work. This ministry began in Austin, TX and Aberdeen, SD. At age 60, she began a 33 year career as a staff chaplain at Healthcare Chaplaincy, Inc., and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, New York City, NY. Her bubbly spirit and compassionate heart was seen through her selfless care. She believed listening was one of the greatest gifts to give to another.



Sister Gayle Volz

Born to Life September 23, 1938

Born to Eternal Life April 7, 2022

Gayle Rosemary Volz was born in Sioux Falls, SD and graduated from Notre Dame, Mitchell in 1956. She entered Presentation Convent September 2, 1956 and professed her vows on August 10, 1959. Her religious name was Sister Laura Ann.

Sister Gayle attended Presentation College and earned a BS in Education and Special Education from Northern State College in 1970 and a MA in Pastoral Education in 1995 from Loyola University, Chicago.

Sister Gayle served in education ministry for 26 years, teaching in Mound and Anoka, MN; Sioux Falls, Mitchell and Milbank, SD; and Miles City, MT. Over the next 30 years she served in religious education, home health ministry, and pastoral care in South Dakota, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. She served with both elderly and special needs individuals. Sister Gayle opened her heart and shared her compassionate spirit, showing hospitality and dignity to all. She loved reading, good food, and playing bingo.





Sisters of the Presentation
of the Blessed Virgin Mary

In Joyful Service

1500 North Second Street
Aberdeen, South Dakota 57401-1238

A PRAYER FOR OUR EARTH

by Pope Francis*

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.

***Pope Francis published this prayer in his *Laudato Si'*
encyclical, and is meant for sharing with all who believe in
a God who is the all-powerful Creator.**

