



Sisters of the Presentation  
of the Blessed Virgin Mary

*In Joyful Service*

# Voices & Ventures

SUMMER 2023



*“To plant a garden  
is to believe in tomorrow.”*

AUDREY HEPBURN

## Dear Presentation Family,

Our Presentation Congregation's apostolic mission calls us to go out among the people and spread the Good News of the Gospel. We work collaboratively with others to support justice issues worldwide, promote peacemaking, protect the earth's limited resources and respond to the cry of those made poor.

Throughout this issue of Voices & Ventures, we focus on our Chapter Call to do nothing alone, highlighting ways in which our Sisters have joined others in mission. Our Presentation Family continues to grow and we are strengthened by this communal work. This past September we gathered with Presentation People from across North America, uniting together in creating a vision to carry the charism of the Congregation into the future. This included nearly 200 lay women and men together with vowed religious. Our geographical locations may be different, but we all share a **similar history, charism and mission.**



Sisters Vicky, Roxanne, Pegge and Mary

This June we celebrated our three Jubilarians who have over 215 years of combined service! We thank them for all they have done and how they continue to live the mission in their heart as they support those on the margins of society.

We continue our sustainability efforts, taking steps to explore new ways we can make a difference in our relationships with one another and with our Earth. The time continues to be now! We must step up together to make a difference for the world we want to leave to those who come after us.

As we look to what tomorrow may bring, we invite you to join us as we continue to pray and listen to where the Spirit is leading each of us. Please visit our website at [presentationsisters.org](http://presentationsisters.org) to read about ways to partner with us, helping our sisters and brothers in Christ. Together may we continue to spread peace and love, welcoming people from all walks of life with hospitality, compassion and joy.

**In peace and justice,**

**Sisters Mary, Vicky, Roxanne and Pegge**  
Presentation Sisters Leadership Team

"Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God."

*Corrie Ten Boom*

# Works of *Justice*



ano Nagle often said, “There is no greater happiness in the world than to be in union.” With the mission and charism of Nano burning brightly within us and the tremendous partners joining together, we continue our work of justice and inclusion of all.

## Sister Pegge Boehm receives Pax Christi Ambassador of Peace Award

Pax Christi is an arm of the international Catholic peace movement and collaborates with people from across the country to find ways to advocate and work for a more just world. This past year, Sister Pegge was recognized for her contributions toward furthering the practice of Gospel nonviolence by being named an ‘Ambassador of Peace’ by PCUSA.



## Warming our Neighbors in South Dakota

We are grateful for our continued partnership with Sioux Falls Christian radio station, Life 96.5, First Premier Bank, Coffea Roasterie, Hy-Vee and NyBerg’s Ace, including their Dakota WorkWear location, in collecting over 1,000 warm winter items that were shared with others in our communities.



## Lobbying in the South Dakota Legislature

Presentation Person Judy Blauwet joined Sisters Kathleen Bierre and Lynn Marie Welbig as registered lobbyists representing the Presentation Sisters in the SD Legislature. Of the 450 bills entered into the 2023 legislature, our team followed about 90, mostly in the areas of health care, taxation, and education, which also included Native American issues.



## Presentation Conference Food Drive

Led by a “Dream Group” from the Conference of Presentation Sisters, Presentation Congregations across North America collected non-perishable and canned food items to share with those in need in each local community. This was an inaugural event as we imagine more ways to share experiences in the Conference.





# Jubilee!



We honor these three Presentation Sisters for their combined 215 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: [presentationsisters.org](http://presentationsisters.org).

*faith*  
mission  
**joy** service  
*charism*



**75<sup>TH</sup> JUBILEE**

## Sister Annrita Johnson

Sister Annrita (Rita Mary) Johnson was born in McIntosh, SD, and graduated from McIntosh Public School. She attended Presentation School of Nursing and Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI, receiving a Bachelor's in nursing. She received a Master's in nursing from St. Louis University, St. Louis, MO, and completed post-graduate work at the University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

For 25 years, Sister Annrita taught Nursing at Presentation School of Nursing and Presentation College. She served on the Congregational Leadership team from 1974-1978 and then became the director of Home Health Agency in New Mexico. She, along with Sister Corita Dickinson, founded Barrett House, a shelter for homeless women and children, half-way home for older mentally ill women and thrift store in Albuquerque, NM.

She also ministered at a retreat center in Albuquerque and on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Sister Annrita volunteered at Avera McKennan's Information Desk prior to retiring at Presentation Convent in 2008. She is grateful she could follow the Congregation's Charism and respond to the needs of the poor.

An avid Minnesota Twins and Vikings fan, Sister Annrita enjoys watching sports and a great game of Bingo.



**70<sup>TH</sup> JUBILEE**

## **Sister Gabriella Crowley**

Sister Gabriella Crowley was born and raised in Henry, SD. After graduation, she attended Presentation Junior College and then St. Catherine College in St. Paul, MN, earning a Bachelor's Degree in Foods and Nutrition.

Sister Gabriella served as a dietitian for 14 years at Presentation sponsored hospitals in Montana and South Dakota. Her ministry work transitioned and for the next six years, she ministered to the Native American people around Mobridge, SD.

Sister Gabriella's ministry led her to catechetical missionary work in Guerrero, Mexico. For 17 years, she shared her compassionate spirit while training men and women to carry out the faith in their villages.

In 1997, upon returning to Sioux Falls, SD, she ministered as an Assistant Director at the Good Shepherd Ministry Center, serving the poor and homeless with her loving smile and welcoming heart.

For the next thirteen years, Sister Gabriella welcomed and walked alongside newly arriving Latinos at Caminando Juntos, the Sisters' sponsored Hispanic Ministry. Now retired, Sister Gabriella continues her love and compassion for all through her prison ministry work.

In her spare time, she enjoys reading and writing letters.



**70<sup>TH</sup> JUBILEE**

## **Sister Paulette Garry**

Sister Paulette Garry was born and raised in Huron, SD, graduating from Huron High School. She went on to earn a teaching certificate from Presentation College, Aberdeen, SD, a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and a Master's Degree in Education from Northern State University, Aberdeen, SD.

Sister Paulette's dedication and love of education was evident throughout her life, often referring to her students as "cherubs". For over 45 years, she shared her warm smile and enthusiasm for learning with elementary and junior high students in Catholic Schools in Mound and Willmar, MN; Madison, Woonsocket, Sioux Falls, Aberdeen, and Dell Rapids, SD. She also served as principal of Sacred Heart, Aberdeen, SD from 1972-1978.

Upon retirement, Sister Paulette returned to Presentation Convent in Aberdeen. She continued serving others as the Community Life and Hospitality Director, as well as Sacristan and as a member of the Sisters' Care Team. Her welcoming and joyful spirit was seen and felt through her daily actions of caring for others.

Currently fully retired, Sister Paulette is engaged in prayer ministry. She also enjoys puzzles, Bingo and visiting with family and friends.



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## Embracing a ***Sustainable*** and Sacred Trust

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In March 2022, in conjunction with our Congregational Chapter of Affairs, delegates established our directions for 2022-2026. Discernment determined that we will continue building 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.**

This past year has led us to live into this Chapter Call. Understanding the important work that continues to lie ahead, we have also begun to take new steps in ways we can make a difference in our relationships, including the one with our Earth.

When conducting a philanthropy study in 2021, Maximizing Excellence, LLC, heard from one donor that they receive an average of 30 pieces of direct mail a week, of which 90% ends up in the trash. Not wanting to ignore this staggering reality (possibly for many), of oversaturation and waste, we look for alternative, more eco-friendly ways of sharing our news with you.

This issue of Voices & Ventures has printed **90% fewer copies** than previous issues. We feel this is one way we can step-up and take a lead in reducing the footprint we are leaving in this world. While fewer print materials will be mailed, we are striving to keep our information even

“Human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: **with God, with our neighbor and with the earth itself.**”

– Laudato Si’ 66



more accessible in electronic formats. Information is always available on our website, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and through QR codes. We know these alternative forms of communication may not be the best option for everyone, so if you, or someone you know, would prefer a hard copy of materials, we welcome the opportunity to provide this to you.

We invite you to partner with us in this justice effort to reduce, reuse and recycle to our best ability. In the years ahead, continue to watch for stories how we are

moving into intentional right relationships with our Earth, sisters and brothers, as we lean deeper into the Chapter Call. The Spirit is moving in and around us, challenging us all to think and act differently. This is our time. We pray that we can all continue to find adjustments to the way we live, work, play and pray as we remain in right relationships the way we each know best. We invite your feedback for ways we can continue to love our Earth and share meaningful stories with you. ◆

## LET'S CONNECT

We invite your feedback for ways we can continue to love our Earth and share meaningful stories with you. Please reference the information listed here. You may return your preference(s) to us via the enclosed envelope, scan the QR code which will direct you to our website, or go directly to the homepage on our website at [presentationsisters.org](http://presentationsisters.org).



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# Forwarding the Legacy of *Mission*



We commit ourselves to ... widening the tent by providing contemplative, transformative formation experiences for Presentation People.

*—from the 2018 mission statements for the Conference of Presentation Sisters*



**The Conference of Presentation Sisters began in the 1950s as a way for the Presidents of each Presentation Congregation in North America to share ideas. For 50 years, the Conference filled this supportive role for the leaders of congregations.**

In the early 2000s, however, the Presidents recognized a need to expand their group and looked at new ways of collaborating in mission. From the early part of that decade, the group evolved to include additional leaders on each Congregational Leadership Team. In September 2005, this group also initiated the sponsorship of a collaborative ministry in New Orleans. One of the most significant experiences during this time was the 2006 Convergence that brought over 400 Sisters and lay associates together for a historic gathering in St. Paul, MN. This event allowed Sisters and associates to meet and share their experiences.

Since that 2006 Convergence, there have been several smaller events and projects, but none as big as the Gathering of Presentation People that was held in Sioux Falls, SD in September 2022. The planning team, which began its work in 2019, included a mix of Sisters, associates and employees working together on all aspects of the gathering. This was the first time that Presentation Sisters were joined in full participation by associates, employees and other partners in mission.





As COVID-19 pushed the event from 2020 to 2022, the Conference hosted several Zoom interactions for Presentation People to get to know one another and prepare for when they could finally be together to share in dreaming for the future. While together in Sioux Falls, participants shared in prayer, reflection, small group sharing, large group conversation and future planning. Individuals also took part in service projects and had an opportunity to get to know one another better and enjoy some fun during evening social events.

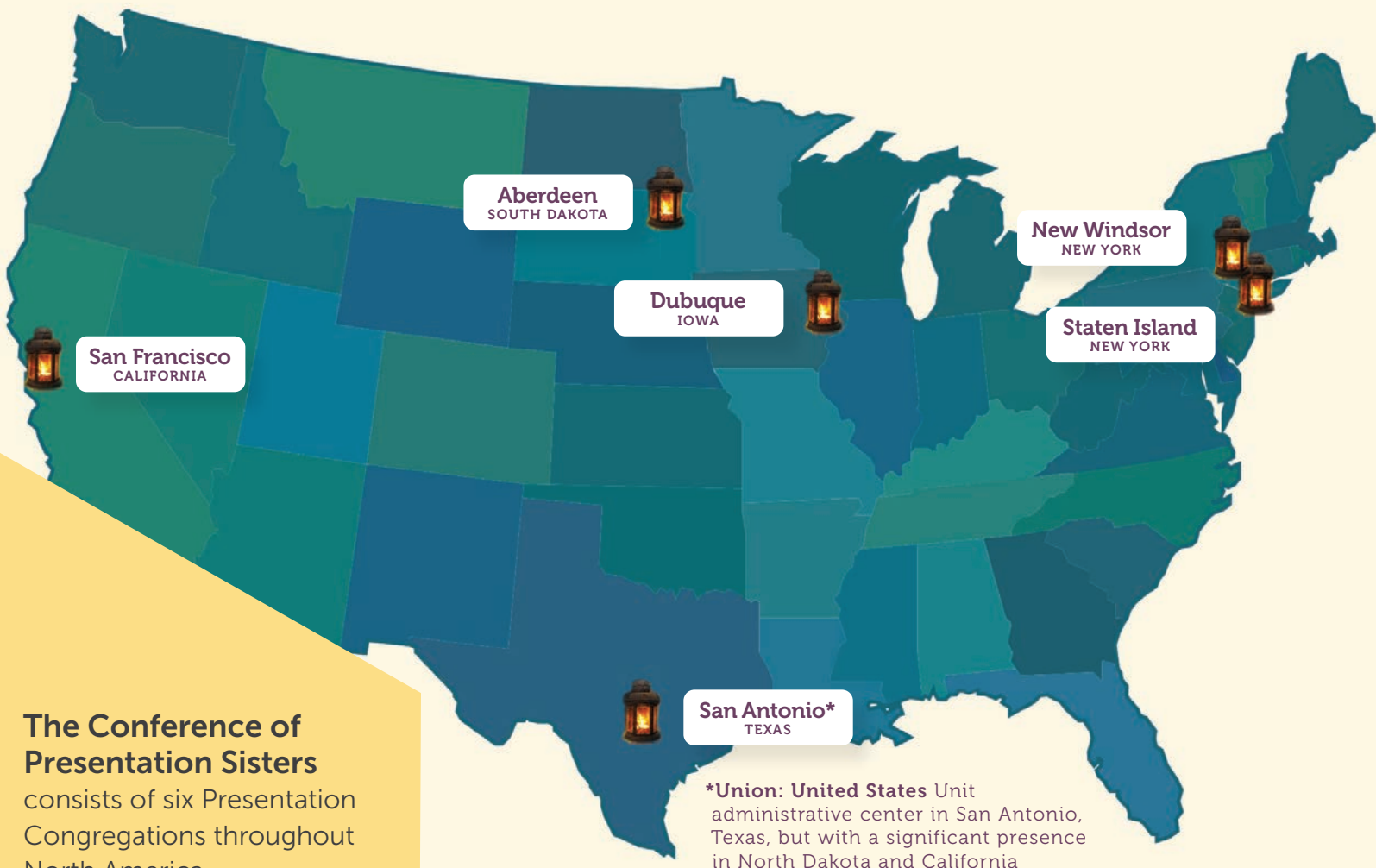
For some, the event offered an opportunity to meet in person those they had gotten to know virtually through these Zoom events. For others, it was a new experience of thinking beyond their local congregation to who we are as a Presentation



People. For all, it offered a new and deeper perspective of what it is to be a Presentation Person, to carry the charism of the congregations into the future ... lay women and men together with vowed women religious.

Aberdeen Cojourner Coordinator Carrie Hansen shares, “The dreaming about what the future could look like, while appreciating our individual and shared history, was powerful.”

On the final day of the Gathering, participants organized into several groups to address the dreams that were voiced during the event. Groups were energized as they gathered together, sharing ideas to shape these dreams and build a collaborative future. Even though attendees were



## The Conference of Presentation Sisters

consists of six Presentation Congregations throughout North America.

from throughout the US and Canada, there was a sense of community. Geographical locations may have been different, but all shared a **similar history, charism and mission.**

Aberdeen Presentation Sister Lynn Marie Welbig summed up how the 2022 Gathering of Presentation People helped to expand her idea of Presentation People and our interconnectedness, saying, “The enthusiasm and Nano’s spirit, especially as it is manifested in our Presentation People, was so inspiring! The legacy lives on!” 🍷



## Online Learning Course

To widen the tent even further, an online learning course has been created, offering participants an opportunity to grow in their understanding of the mission and ministry of the Presentation Sisters and in their role in carrying it into the future.

Made possible through a grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, this project provides online classes through the Presentation Sisters Conference website. Online learners can register for classes in the areas of foundress Nano Nagle, history, spirituality, justice, Presentation connection and Mission. Each six-week class includes learning activities such as readings, videos, sharing through discussion forums and a Zoom conversation with other online learners.

Three class sessions will be offered in 2023 and courses are continually being developed by Presentation People across the Conference and added to the online platform. To learn more, visit [pbvmconference.org](http://pbvmconference.org) and go to the PBVM People tab for online learning information.

*Scan here to learn more about our online learning course!*



# *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 hand to lead them home. We lift up our hearts for they received faith's reward, the fullness of life with God.

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## *Teresita Schaeftbauer*

Born to Life April 5, 1935  
Born to Eternal Life May 22, 2022

Sister Teresita grew up in Herried, SD, surrounded by a loving and fun-filled family. Her outgoing personality was evident as she served in various ministries. Whether working as a receptionist, bookkeeper or teacher, Sister Teresita's hospitality shone through. Her smile lit up a room and she joyfully greeted everyone with kindness and compassion. Always centered in prayer, Sister Teresita's selfless love was evident through her pastoral ministry work in Mobridge and Madison, SD. She listened and treated each person with dignity and respect. Sister Teresita didn't just read the Word, she lived it! After retiring to Presentation Heights, her loving presence and Presentation Hospitality continued through her volunteer work, as she always wanted to be in service to others.



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## *Sister Armella Stratman*

Born to Life October 17, 1924  
Born to Eternal Life June 25, 2022

Sister Armella loved learning. A South Dakota native, she was inspired by her family and always knew she wanted to be a Sister. She attended Presentation College and went on to earn her Bachelor's in Education from Northern State University in 1969. For more than 50 years, she taught elementary students in SD Catholic Schools. She expressed finding love, joy and many challenges in teaching, and generously supported younger Sister-teachers. Sister Armella loved to craft and used everyday items to make beautiful crafts for others. Her kind and compassionate heart shown through her acts of service, prayer and by speaking up for those without a voice. She enjoyed cooking for others, sewing and playing checkers. "If you live a good life and share it with others, it will bring you joy."





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## ***Sister Loraine Brown***

Born to Life February 22, 1934  
Born to Eternal Life July 21, 2022

Sister Loraine lived life to the fullest. Her joyful spirit was seen through her love of music, dance and nature. She created community wherever she went, creating a happy place for her and for those around her. A teacher in her early ministry years, Sister Loraine inspired her students with her high energy and enthusiasm. Her ministry then led her to share her gifts of healing through massage. She often prayed while she worked, healing both body and soul. A Sister for nearly 70 years, Sister Loraine never wavered in her vocational call to be a Sister. She always wore a butterfly pin on her shoulder symbolizing the transformation and Resurrection. She took the words of her Lord to heart, "Behold, I am with you always, even until the end of time."



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## ***Sister Suzanne Cotter***

Born to Life December 5, 1928  
Born to Eternal Life September 18, 2022

Sister Suzanne grew up in Dell Rapids, SD. She attended Catholic schools throughout her life, as a student and then teacher. She shared her smile, quick wit and zest for life with young people, showing an interest in each person's life. She supported many community and student activities, especially those at O'Gorman High School and Notre Dame University. Her beautiful heart carried the love of Christ to all she met. From hosting retreats or mission trips, to ministering in Mission at Avera, to serving on boards and committees, Sister Suzanne made an impact. She was proud of her Irish heritage and her life as a Presentation Sister. Devoted to prayer, she expressed that she hopes people will remember her for, "Who I am, rather than what I have done!"

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## ***Sister Darlene Gutenkauf***

**Born to Life August 2, 1938**

**Born to Eternal Life October 31, 2022**

Raised on a farm near Faulkton, SD, Sister Darlene lived life with zeal and passion. A teacher for over 20 years, she shared her welcoming smile with each student. Her deep spiritual life led her to pastoral ministry. She formed numerous friendships through her work in parishes in South Dakota and Minnesota as she helped develop, implement and facilitate intergenerational faith formation programs, preparing people for parish ministry. Her fellowship continued through her work with Vocations and the Cojourner (lay associate) program. She served on many committees and boards and was an active member of a Parkinson's support group. She never let any limitations define her. Her hospitality was evident. Whether she was planning a party, singing at Mass or visiting with relatives and friends, she inspired people to live life to the fullest.



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## ***Sister Joan Reichelt***

**Born to Life August 18, 1938**

**Born to Eternal Life February 26, 2023**

A servant leader, Sister Joan lived the Presentation Charism through her ministries, prayer and presence. Growing up, Sister Joan always knew she wanted to work in healthcare. Her kind and tender heart were witnessed as she served as a medical technologist, RN and as the Director of Mission Effectiveness at St. Luke's Hospital. She enriched the lives of others with her smile, humor and joy. A woman of faith, integrity and compassion, she served on numerous boards and committees and was instrumental as the Benedictine and Presentation Sisters collaborated to form Avera Health. The Chief Culture Officer at Avera Health for over 20 years, Sister Joan shared her hospitality and love with all. She loved to try new things, from recipes to books to projects, always with smile.





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## ***Sister Jean Huntimer***

Born to Life June 7, 1927

Born to Eternal Life June 4, 2023

Knowing she wanted to teach children about God, Sister Jean followed her heart and became a teacher. For 45 years, she shared her love of learning by enriching lives of students, both as a teacher and a principal, in Catholic schools throughout SD, MN, MT and NM.

Faithful to prayer and God's call, Sister Jean transitioned to parish ministry in Huron, SD, sharing her compassionate spirit through bible studies, hospital visits and taking communion to the homebound. Feeling called to do more, she started a thrift store called St. Francis Shop. Her service to others continued through volunteering at Avera St. Luke's Hospital's Auxillary Guest House and the Convent Library. She enjoyed puzzles, playing the piano and cards, and her gift of hospitality opened her heart to lifelong friendships.



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## ***Sister JoAnn Sturzl***

Born to Life January 20, 1933

Born to Eternal Life June 6, 2023

A Presentation Sister for nearly 70 years, Sister JoAnn was an instrument in the hands of our Lord. Always optimistic, her joyful spirit never faded. She dedicated her life to faith and ministry, sharing her gifts of service through her work as a nurse, in pastoral ministry, leader of the Presentation Congregation, and as a Personality and Human Relations (PRH) educator. Sister JoAnn answered God's call to love with generosity and joy. She had a beautiful smile, infectious laughter, peaceful presence, and deep wisdom. She delighted in adventure and was at home in nature. Fascinated by the uniqueness of each human being she desired to be remembered as "being true to who I am." Sister JoAnn believed and hoped that our world would be transformed if each person discovered and lived into who God created them to be.





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*In Joyful Service*

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“Saint Francis, faithful to Scripture, invites us to see nature as a magnificent book in which God speaks to us and grants us ***a glimpse of his infinite beauty and goodness.***”

LAUDATO SI' 12

