SHINING A LIGHT ON OUR STORIES

PRESENTATION

LANTERN

NEW WINDSOR

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Mission Statement
We, the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, inspired by our foundress, Nano Nagle, commit ourselves to the Gospel values of hope, justice, freedom and human dignity. In union with one another, we pledge ourselves to act for and with the poor and oppressed of our world and to care for the earth.

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Celebrating Unity
Enjoy some pictures from our summer picnics held in Massachusetts and New York.

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Sister Dale McDonald combines her love of education and law in her current role with the National Catholic Educational Association.

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Catholic Scholarships
Read about one of the recipients of our new scholarship and learn more about the effort.

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Donor Report
Thank you to all of our donors who make our mission and ministries possible with their financial contributions.

On the cover, Nora Cronin Presentation Academy students Jasmin Morena and Christyn Nunez designed our 2022 Christmas card, and Stephanie Cruz designed the prayer insert. We value this continued partnership in education ministry and thank these young ladies for sharing their talents with us!
I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.
~Maya Angelou

Dear Presentation Partners,

We all remember a teacher who had a significant impact on our lives. That special person who helped us believe in ourselves, challenged us gently to be more, appreciated the unique gifts that helped us realize our God-given talent and made us feel special. The Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary focused their mission solely on education until Vatican II, when many changes occurred within the Catholic church.

Sisters started and staffed numerous schools in the Tristate and New England areas. Often invited by pastors to staff a parish, the sisters dedicated themselves to the education of children from various ethnic groups, geographic backgrounds, cultures and economic classes. To date, students still reach out to sisters and update them on where they are in their lives. Many remember sisters who have gone before them but had such an impact on their life that they call to share the stories they remember – most importantly, how that sister made them feel.

This past year, we were blessed to reconnect in person with many who have shared our life and ministry in so many ways. Our summer picnics, held in both Leominster, Massachusetts, and New Windsor, New York, connected us with past and present students who shared stories and were thrilled to be in person again. We have come together in many other ways through our Catholic School Scholarship Fund, which connected students and teachers once again; our outreach and companioning families of our deceased sisters; and the Gathering of Presentation People that celebrated who we are as Presentation sisters, associates and partners in mission. Through all of these experiences, we have continued to live the words of our foundress, Nano Nagle, who urged her followers to go “one pace beyond.” We continue to go one pace beyond in love with an assurance of the presence of a loving God who continues to call us to be the light of Christ in the world.

This is a new moment in apostolic religious life. As Vatican II expanded ministries beyond the classroom, this moment invites us again to return to the root of our charism and hospitality of heart. We spend ourselves for the poor, especially focusing on women and children who are impacted by economic, environmental and racial inequity. We are convinced of the future of our Presentation charism and trust that “it is for this very moment we have been created” (Esther 4:14).

We look forward to continued collaboration with you, our partners in mission.

May God continue to bless us as we go one pace beyond.

Mary Catherine Redmond  Catherine Cleary  Dorothy Scesny  Laura Urbano
After two postponements and several virtual gatherings, almost 140 Presentation people from across the United States and beyond gathered in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, for our first Gathering of Presentation People. Sister Mary Catherine Redmond led participants in a process that wove prayer, reflection, discussion, service and dreaming together with a lot of fun and relationship building. Eighteen New Windsor Presentation people were able to be present at this historic event.

Maryann Gisler, New Windsor director of development, exclaimed, “This was an amazing experience to be together with sisters, associates and staff, to share in the future of the Presentation people. The experience let me reflect on all the work the sisters have done over the years and allowed me to look to the future to see a clearer path of how sisters and associates can work together to continue Nano’s mission.”

“It was truly an experience of being called by the Spirit and led by Nano in exploration of how the charism lives in each individual and in the congregations with which they are associated. I was particularly struck by the number of enthusiastic and committed young Presentation people in attendance since they will be the ones to keep the lantern lit for generations to come,” shares Sister Dale McDonald.

On the final day of the Gathering participants identified several ideas, or dreams, they had for the future of collaboration among Presentation people. Dream groups formed around these topics of interest; these groups will keep the work of the Gathering moving forward in the years to come.
A Time to Celebrate

We were so pleased to welcome over 200 people to our properties in Massachusetts and New York in August for our picnic! This summer we were celebrating not only the unity of our Newburgh and Fitchburg congregations which joined together in 1997 as the New Windsor congregation, but we also celebrated religious life and our ability to once again gather as sisters, associates, friends, family, staff and other partners. We enjoyed spending time with family and friends, meeting new Presentation people and enjoying beautiful afternoons in both locations.

Our picnics were such a resounding success that we have decided to hold Presentation picnics in Massachusetts and New York again in August 2023. Mark your calendars for this time of fellowship and celebration!

At left, Presentation Associates Mary Kate Lowe, with her fiancé, Greg, and Ada Sanchez, with her son, joined the sisters in celebrating during the picnic held at Mt. St. Joseph in August.

Presentation Picnics
A CELEBRATION OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

SAVE THE DATES FOR OUR SUMMER PICNICS

AUGUST 19, 2023
Presentation Convent
Leominster, Massachusetts

AUGUST 26, 2023
Mount Saint Joseph
New Windsor, New York
“Education, especially Catholic education, is a pathway to a dignified and successful life for children, particularly those of low income or minority status whose families struggle to provide for them.”

Growing up in a family that subscribed to several newspapers daily, with parents that instilled the value of both education and awareness of current events, Sister Dale McDonald always knew she wanted to be either a teacher or a lawyer. “I did take the law exam and was admitted to law school,” she explains. “In the end, I decided to stay with education.”

In her current role as director of public policy for the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA), Dale has found a combination of both of her passions. “I do a combination of education and law,” she explains. NCEA is the largest private professional education organization in the world, representing 200,000 Catholic educators serving 7.6 million students.

When Dale was in her teens her mother met a neighbor in their Astoria, New York, neighborhood who told her about St. Michael Academy in Manhattan, New York, which was staffed by the Presentation Sisters. Soon after, following nine years of public school, she and her twin sister began Catholic education at St. Michael’s. Though not excited for the upheaval, “After a week we loved it,” she says. “We had great interaction with the sisters; they spent a lot of time with us. They were engaging and you knew they had your best interests at heart.”

One of the sisters brought up the idea of a religious vocation to Dale in her first year at St. Michael. She thought about it over the next few years and joined the order after high school. At this time in history, joining the congregation also meant choosing to be a teacher, a role she embraced.

Teaching at Cathedral High School in 1967 was a turning point in Sister’s life. Her immersion into the diverse culture of the school made the high school a place of transformation in her life. “My encounters with students of different races and cultures helped to develop my sense of social justice,” she states.

Sister Clementine, a Sister of Charity, was the principal and influenced Dale, reminding teachers “for many of these kids this is the only place for some order and discipline in their life. It is our responsibility to use this wisely.” She reminded teachers that these young people did not lack intelligence but rather they lacked educational opportunity; it was the responsibility of the educators to provide this opportunity.

Teaching in a politically charged time of turmoil including the Vietnam War, drug culture and rising Black Power movement, was challenging, particularly in a school situated mere blocks from the United Nations. Though demanding, this time helped Dale to
become more engaged in justice issues at a corporate level,” she says. “In our 1979 Chapter we committed to sponsoring one of thousands of Vietnamese families escaping after the fall of Vietnam.”

Earning her doctorate in education administration at Boston College following her congregational service, Sister stayed on at the college to administer the Catholic School Leadership Program, a training program for principals and superintendents. She soon realized that she was called to get more involved in national policies.

This realization has led her to 28 years in her current role. As director of public policy for NCEA, Dale’s work involves policy analysis, advocacy and lobbying. She has dealt primarily with public policy with federal programs and helping individuals and groups who are trying to get their legislators to pass school choice bills. “Catholic education, first and foremost, is an essential component of perpetuating the faith,” she shares. “Studies have also shown that Catholic school students come to society well prepared for civic engagement. They bring a set of moral values that is important for our society.”

Sister has worked with seven different United States Secretaries of Education, advocating for private education in general and Catholic education in particular. She has been a presenter at conferences and workshops on educational policy issues at various colleges and universities across the United States as well as NCEA conventions and those of other professional organizations. In addition, she has served on committees convened by the White House, United States Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and other national educational associates. She also has testified at Congressional hearings on private school issues.

Dale’s ministry connects to the Presentation mission as she provides resources to help students, especially those who can’t afford it, access resources for education and teachers to get the professional development they require to meet the needs of their students. “Education, especially Catholic education, is a pathway to a dignified and successful life for children, particularly those of low income or minority status whose families struggle to provide for them,” she explains. “All of this is very much in keeping with our Presentation tradition of educating children, especially the poor and underserved, as well as our current Chapter commitment to address the needs of women and children, especially as they are impacted by economic, environmental and racial inequity.”
Spirit of Nano Shines in Student

“I am so blessed,” beams Stephanie Lara. “Everything the Sisters have done for me ... I really, really appreciate it. Being close to the sisters has brought me peace.”

Stephanie, currently a freshman at Burke High School, was one of the recipients of our 2022 Catholic School Scholarships. These scholarships were given to five students who reflect Nano Nagle’s qualities of kindness, helpfulness, integrity, awareness of the needs of others and reaching out to help those in need. In addition to this honor, Stephanie was also recognized with the Nano Nagle Award from Nora Cronin Presentation Academy (NCPA) last year as an eighth grader.

Going to NCPA helped Stephanie grow closer to God and to grow in her faith. “I became really close to God, which helped me in my life,” she explains. “I know that there’s somebody above helping me. It gives me hope.”

As she grew in her faith, Stephanie also learned more about Nano Nagle. She noticed that Nano helped to provide education, just like Sister Yliana (Hernandez) was doing. She also learned that Nano was a caring person who liked helping others, just as Stephanie does. “I’m pretty nice and I care about others,” she says. “I like helping people because that’s just who I am. I always volunteer because I’ve always just loved helping others.”

Above, Associate Natalys Kavallaris, Kassandra Lara, Sister Eleanor Joyce, Stephanie Lara and Diana Lara reconnect at the summer picnic.

Sister Yliana Hernandez with Stephanie, Diana and Kassandra Lara.

Stephanie’s mother, Diana, feels fortunate to have found NCPA. During elementary school, Stephanie and her older sister Kassandra attended public school. Through a coworker she learned about the school and the opportunity to send her girls to receive a Catholic education, with a requirement to provide service hours at the school. Diana explains, “Whatever I have to do for my girls, that’s what I am going to do.”

Diana is now an associate of the Presentation Sisters. “I used to work part time so I was able to be at the school a lot,” Diana shares. “I covered for those who couldn’t come in and I became very close to the school. Sister Yliana asked if I wanted to be an associate and I said ‘Why not? It’s going to be an opportunity to meet new people and to be closer to God and my faith.’”

NCPA has made a lasting impression on Stephanie, and she plans to pursue a career that lets her stand up for others and make an impact, such as being a lawyer or speech teacher. “Teachers have a big impact on students because they can develop a personnel connection with them,” she explains. “I developed such nice relationships with my teachers, and I would love to have this with my own students.” One of Stephanie’s favorite teachers was Sister Eleanor Joyce. “I just love her so much!” she exclaims. “She is so caring and gives off such a nice vibe. She would always sing to us, which I really enjoyed.”

No matter where life takes Stephanie, she will treasure the values instilled during her time at Nora Cronin Presentation Academy and will carry the mission of Nano Nagle with her into the future.
Commitment to Education Continues

Drawn into deep contemplation, Nano's life experienced a profound awakening. She was radically changed. Stepping away from and leaving behind the comfortable nest of position and privilege, Nano deliberately moved, in the words of Pope Francis, to the ‘peripheries’ and ‘frontiers’ of the Cork of her day. She aligned herself with the ‘caravan of the peoples,’ the poor of the city, who daily trudged its winding lanes and filthy hovels. Entering into communion with people who lived in conditions of rampant hunger, disease and ignorance, she spent herself for the poor.

Today as Presentation Sisters of New Windsor, New York, we can look back on our many years of service in Catholic education, academic and religious. Arriving in Manhattan, New York, in 1874 to staff a new parish school, our commitment to education in the Northeast spans nearly 150 years.

Many of us lived Nano’s words, “If I could be of service in serving souls in any part of the world, I would gladly do all in my power.” The inspiration and courage that Nano instilled in our hearts burns within us as we honor our foundress, Nano Nagle, by offering $1,000 scholarships to students who reflect those qualities exemplified in Nano’s life. We awarded five of these scholarships in 2022 and will continue this commitment in 2023.

Early in 2023 a letter will be sent to schools that are connected to our congregation with more information about how students can apply for these scholarships. With the help of our generous donors who have contributed to our Catholic education fund, we continue our legacy and expand our commitment to Catholic education and meeting the needs of those we serve.

2022 Scholarship Recipients

Stephanie Lara
Nora Cronin Presentation Academy
Newburgh, New York

Ekaterina Rau
St. Bernard’s High School
Fitchburg, Massachusetts

Kyle Sun
St. Bernard’s High School
Fitchburg, Massachusetts

Jayden Mwaura
St. Leo School,
Leominster, Massachusetts

Sisters Dorothy Scesney and Irene Goguen present Kyle Sun with a Catholic School Scholarship. Kyle was one of four students awarded $1,000 scholarships for the 2022-2023 school year.
In Loving Memory

We remember our sisters who have died in the past several months. May the example of their lives and dedication to the Presentation mission live on in our Presentation people today and always.

July 24, 1940 ~ July 7, 2022

Sister Eleanor (Mary Honora) O’Malley was born in Clinton, Massachusetts. She entered religious life on September 15, 1961.

Sister taught at Holy Family Elementary and High School in Fitchburg and St. Leo’s in Leominster before beginning ministry as an adult religious educator on both the diocesan and parish levels.

Remembrance Celebrations

In honor of All Souls Day, the Presentation Sisters hosted celebrations of remembrance in both New York and Massachusetts. Family members of sisters who had died in 2021 and 2022 were invited to join the sisters in celebrating the lives of these women on November 5. In New York, guests enjoyed a beautiful ceremony in the cemetery at Mt. St. Joseph, while guests in Massachusetts joined the sisters in the chapel.

This will be an annual event for the congregation as we honor those who have lived their vows and mission for so many years.
New Associates Welcomed

Seven new Presentation associates were welcomed in celebrations that coincided with the annual feast day of the Presentation of Mary in the temple. In Massachusetts, Kathleen Boudreau and Jane Hall became associates of the congregation. Sisters and associates in New York welcomed Julia Pickles, Yoselyn Perez, Noelle Molloy, Marichen Montiel Hertling and Ashley Leonor. We rejoice as we welcome these women to join us in carrying Nano’s light into the future by sharing our mission and charism in their daily lives.

The feast day honoring the Presentation of Mary in the temple, also known as Presentation Day, is a special time in our congregation. While not written in scripture, according to apocryphal text, Mary danced with joy when her parents, Anna and Joachim, presented her in the temple at age three. We celebrate the feast of the Presentation of Mary to honor Mary’s dedication to God and to remind ourselves to emulate Mary as we carry out God’s mission with joy and dedication.
Sisters donating school supplies Earth committee members at Newburgh event

Welcoming Damien Messer, educator from Tasmania

Donating to the Country Store Thrift Shop

Enjoying National Ice Cream Day

Sisters and Presentation H.S. students at justice event

Shining a Light

Follow us on Facebook @PresentationSister and Instagram @nw_pbvm for more photos of Presentation people!
Thank you to our partners in mission!

We are grateful to our partners for sharing in and supporting our mission to serve those in need. With your support we have been able to continue our efforts to shine Nano’s light in our world. We appreciate not only your monetary gifts but also thank those who have volunteered, who serve alongside us in carrying forth the mission and those who remember us in prayer.

This year we have listed all donors in each giving category in alphabetical order. It is our intention that this report accurately lists those who made donations from January 2021 to August 31, 2022. We also honor those who opted to remain anonymous in their giving.

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Giovanna Accolla
Janet Ackerley
Paula Acutí
Barry Adams
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Louise Adipietro
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<td>Rose Cella</td>
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<td>Patricia Cempa</td>
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<td>Rosalie Ceriale</td>
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<td>Michael Cervine</td>
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<td>Maureen Cestare</td>
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<td>Wilfred Chadwick</td>
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<td>Debra Chapdelaine</td>
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<td>Joan Marie Charkin</td>
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My wife Susan and I are decades-long supporters of the Presentation Sisters. We have supported the Sisters through the years to help them continue their mission and to honor the memory of my late sister, Nora Cronin. Nora joined the Presentation Sisters in 1959 and was a remarkable individual. There have been dramatic societal changes over the years, but the Presentation Sisters have adapted to these changes as they remained steadfast to their mission of educating and helping the less fortunate.

Susan and I have received many blessings in our lives. One of those blessings is the wherewithal to support the Sisters financially in support of their much-needed mission and ministries.
Memorial Gifts

Each year we are blessed to receive gifts in memory of your loved ones. Donating to our mission and ministries is a beautiful way to remember those who have died and to continue their legacy. From September 1, 2020, to August 31, 2022, one or more memorial gifts were made in memory of the following:

Pegge Boehm
Mother Carroll
Mr. John Cerullo
Sister Mary Daniel
Roy Defranco Sr.
Mr. James Dennehy
Sister Mary Anne Duva
Sister Geraldine Marie Fennelly
Sister Mary Edward Flynn
Sister Elizabeth Fortune
Michael T. Gillan
Mrs. Elizabeth Heffernan
Sister Maureen Hickey
Ms. Beverly Killelea
Sister Veronica Liegey
Sister Mary Lusk
Sister Mary McCarthy
Irene McHugh
Sister Pat Morrison
Sister Mary Andre Murphy
Sister Eleanor O’Malley
Phyllis O’Melia
Sister Josephine Ortner
Bill Palmer
Greg & Anthony Poli
Gerald Rubenstahl
Richard Selandor
Mr. Richard Schmidt
Ms. Grace Stegen
Sister Enid Storey
Sister Eileen Treanor

Honor Gifts

Offering a donation to our mission and ministries in honor of someone is a wonderful way to recognize them. We are grateful to all those who chose to pay tribute to our sisters with donations in their honor. From January 2021 through August 2022, gifts were given in honor of the following:

Sister Virginia Wilkinson
Sister Chris Liegey
Sister Janet Brisky
Sister Lorraine Dougherty
Sister Josephine Ortner
Sister Ruth Abrams
Sister Maureen Ahlemeier
Sister Norma Carney
Sister Kathryn Geisel
Sister Katherine Mckenna
Sister Eleanor O’Malley
Sister Sheila Moroney
Sister Mary Eileen Troy
Sister Grace Gately
Sister Mary Andre Murphy
Robert Santini
Sister Kathleen Cusack
Anna and Harold Leghorn
New Director of Development

We are pleased to welcome Maryann Gisler as the new director of development for the New Windsor Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

With a background in business administration and marketing, Maryann began working with the congregation as an administrative assistant in October 2019. Recognizing her skills and commitment to the mission, she soon began to be asked to take on new tasks. Early in 2022, Maryann was asked to work more closely with the development and communications departments for the congregation. Her skills and passion for the mission of the congregation made her a natural fit for the role of director of development, which she began in September.

“I believe in the mission and feel strongly that we can make a difference,” she shares. “I look forward to building relationships with donors and others who have a relationship with the Sisters of the Presentation. I feel blessed to be working for an amazing group of sisters; I have built relationships with the sisters that I truly treasure.”

Maryann and her husband, Scott, have three daughters.

Support Mission and Try Your Luck

In 2023 we will be offering two new raffle opportunities. These options offer our partners a chance to financially support our mission and ministries while also having a chance to win money or prizes.

In the past we held a Give from the Heart raffle in January and February. This will be replaced with our Sharing the Light raffle which will celebrate Women's History Month. The drawing for this raffle will be held March 31, 2023. A mailing will go out in January 2023, and you will also be able to purchase raffle tickets on our website. Coupling this effort with Women's History Month offers us an opportunity to focus on the rich history of our foundress, Nano Nagle, and the many Presentation sisters who have gone before us, as well as the legacy of our current sisters.

Our annual summer/fall raffle will be replaced with a car raffle. By offering a chance for our partners to win a 2023 Toyota Corolla hybrid we will be able to continue to promote our commitment to caring for the Earth while we raise funds to further our mission and ministries. Tickets for this car raffle will be limited in number and sold beginning in April 2023. The drawing for this car will be held at our Presentation picnic in New York on August 26, 2023. Look for more information on this raffle in the spring.
Prayer Association

Our sisters pray daily for the intentions of our friends and partners. We invite you to order our prayer cards to let your loved ones know you are thinking of them and have included them in the sisters' prayer intentions. The usual donation is five dollars, to be sent after you have used the card.

Send your email requests to sisterhcox@gmail.com or write to Development Office Mt. St. Joseph 84 Presentation Way New Windsor NY 12553

We invite you to join us via Zoom for a time of prayer and reflection on the first Thursday of each month at 8 p.m. Eastern time. To receive the Zoom link, please sign up by filling out the form at https://sistersofthepresentation.org/join-us.