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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Presentation Lanterns is a semi-annual publication of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

On the cover, Sister Theresa Doran took part in the Earth Day celebration at Mt. St. Joseph in April.
Dear Presentation partners,

Twenty-five years ago, Presentation Sisters from Newburgh, New York, and Fitchburg, Massachusetts, gathered on July 17, 1997, to celebrate the union of our former congregations, which would become the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose administration center was located in New Windsor, New York. At that celebration, we symbolically mingled waters from all the different geographical areas from where we were gathering. Water from our ministries and our local convents were poured into large jugs, mingled and poured out again as a sign of our union.

The symbolism of our water mingling represented the many differences that were joined as one. Today, we reflect on how profound that gesture was in July of 1997. Our union called for a time of learning and a willingness to listen to the “other” so as to change our perceptions. Did we always agree? No. We still do not to this day. The sacredness of our union and our gift to the world today is still a willingness to listen to the other, realizing that what we hold can be changed by the story of another and the needs of the world. The sacredness of our union calls us to look beyond ourselves to a greater picture of reality and to answer with the same zeal, courage, tenacity of purpose and reverence that our foundress Nano Nagle did in the late 1700s in Ireland.

Our gift, 25 years after unity, is to continue to witness to the graces found in the encounter of another. As our world stands firmly in camps of geographical, cultural, political and religious conflicts that seem unable to be reconciled without an argument or the ability to stay in the conversation, unity continues to call. When people are unable to listen without judgement, to risk being changed and to have respectful conversations, opportunities for unity are missed.

Our commitment to unity 25 years ago is still the profound call of this time. May we continue to risk the call to new ways of unity in this moment. May we ponder the call of synodality in our church. May we be willing to risk, dare and rely on each other as if our very lives depended upon it. May God and Nano bless us as we move forward with our friends, families, co-workers, benefactors and partners in our mission of unity.

In union,
Sisters Mary Catherine, Catherine, Dorothy and Laura
Celebrating 25 Years of Unity

Merriam-Webster defines unity as the quality or state of not being multiples; oneness; a condition of harmony. Twenty-five years ago the Presentation congregations of Fitchburg, Massachusetts, and Newburgh, New York, entered this realm of oneness when they united to form the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, New Windsor, New York.

Though collaboration among the congregations was enhanced after Vatican Council II, the discernment process for unity began in 1990 and culminated with the new congregation on July 12, 1997. According to Sister Catherine Cleary, first president of the new congregation, “In a merger, one congregation is absorbed into another congregation and they don’t keep their own identity. With a union, everybody comes in equally.”

The congregations already shared both a foundress, Nano Nagle, and roots in the United States. In 1874 a group of Presentation sisters arrived from Ireland at St. Michael’s parish in New York City. They became known as the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary of New York. In 1886 sisters were asked to staff St. Bernard’s School in Fitchburg, Massachusetts. By canon law, as a semi-cloistered community at the time, those who did so were required to establish their own community in Fitchburg. Reuniting in 1997, then, was a coming back together for the sake of the Presentation mission.

Even before this formal union the congregations had collaborated in the areas of formation, corporate investments, renewal programs and ministry. The congregation maintains a presence in both Massachusetts and New York and partners with the Presentation Sisters in Staten Island through a covenant agreement with that community.

Twenty-five years after this uniting, a new spirit of collaboration and unity can be felt in the Presentation world. The time of religious institutes merging or uniting is coming to an end, while a time of revitalization through enhanced partnerships with other Presentation congregations and lay partners who share the charism is at hand. “We are at a new moment of enhanced collaboration among our Presentation congregations worldwide,” explains Sister Mary Catherine Redmond, president of the congregation. “We are evolving to include more Presentation people who share the charism, while also welcoming those who are called to vowed religious life.”

Worldwide, there are over 1500 Presentation sisters, with thousands more Presentation associates and partners in mission. Uniting as the International Presentation Association, an association of religious sisters and Presentation people that was founded in 1988 as a global advocacy association to continue the work of Venerable Nano Nagle, we are able to focus on the area of justice with a global perspective. As members of the Conference of Presentation Sisters, we collaborate as Presentation sisters and partners in North America in a variety of ways. Coming together to foster vowed religious vocations in women who are called to this way of life is one of the most recent ways in which we have been called to collaborate.

As vowed women religious we believe women are still being called to this way of life and welcome them to consider life as a vowed Presentation sister. We also recognize that the number of women called to vowed life is less than it was several decades ago. Thus, we are at the same time called to extend our idea of unity as we widen the tent to include our non-vowed Presentation lay partners who embody the charism and spirit of Nano.
A Time to Celebrate

It has been a difficult two years for many. The pandemic, civil unrest, escalating cost of living ... all of these have added stress and anxiety to our lives. We invite you to take a break from these challenges and join us for a picnic to celebrate not only our ability to be together again after COVID lockdowns, but also unity. We will celebrate 25 years since the unity of our congregation to form New Windsor, but we also celebrate unity in its many forms.

We celebrate that we are able to be united as God’s people in the midst of challenging times. We celebrate that Presentation people are uniting now, more than ever, to forward the mission of Nano Nagle. We celebrate our uniting with each of you in partnership for the mission and ministry of the congregation. In the words of our foundress, “There is no greater happiness than to be in union!”

Please join us for a picnic in Leominster, Massachusetts, on August 20 or in New Windsor, New York, on August 27. We request that you RSVP by August 10. You may do so in any of the following ways:

**Email** administration@sistersofthepresentation.org

**Online form** at https://sistersofthepresentation.org/events-1

**Phone**
- 508-864-0202 in Massachusetts
- 845-564-0513 ext. 101 in New York

Look for event photos on our social media sites:
- Facebook @PresentationSister
- Instagram @nw_pbvm
“Where are you going with your lantern tonight, Sister?”

These words illustrate the deep sense of mission Sister Mary Catherine Redmond has always felt as a Presentation sister. Though spoken in a time in her ministry as a physician’s assistant at North Central Bronx Hospital this question frames the story of Mary Catherine’s life and ministry.

With a bachelor’s in psychology and hearing and speech science, Mary Catherine completed her master’s in counseling and audiology. After her fellowship, she entered the convent in 1987. She began working as an audiologist at New York University medical center, a cutting-edge facility in Manhattan.

Even then, she wondered where poor people and the homeless got their medical care. “As I was walking to and from work I would walk right by a men’s shelter. I didn’t have money but every Monday I would make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and hand them out to people on the way to the train,” she says.

Mary Catherine credits her visit to Sister Eileen Matthews in her ministry in Guyana, South America, for opening her eyes even more to the need to look at other ways of providing medical care for the poor. “I remember getting a tour of the hospital in Guyana and seeing open windows and mismatched equipment and wondering how this medical care correlated with the medical care that I was a part of at NYU,” she explains. “When I returned to NYU the incongruity struck me.”

As she walked along the streets of New York City, she came to realize the call within her to go back to school to be a physician’s assistant so that she could help the poor. After her training, Mary Catherine began working at North Central Bronx Hospital. Working in this environment was so foreign to her previous ministry experiences, yet “I knew the minute I walked in that this is where Nano would have walked.”

Mary Catherine would go out to the homeless they took care of at North Central Bronx Hospital and bring them basic medical supplies, food and clothing. The trunk of her car was filled with items she could hand out, including clothes she often got her brothers-in-law to donate from their own wardrobes. The staff began to ask, “Where are you going with your lantern tonight?”

Though each shift was different, Mary Catherine continued Nano’s work in this way until everything changed in 2020. “I served for 20 years before the pandemic and it was like two different ministries. The last two years were totally different,” she says.
Before the pandemic they saw a lot of people needing sutures, or to have broken bones set or in cardiac arrest. They had set treatments for all of that. “I was a prepared, seasoned physician’s assistant in emergency medicine, and I knew what I knew well,” Mary Catherine explains. “But here was something we had never seen before, and we had no idea how to treat it.”

Staff would be fully gowned and masked all day and even go to their cars to eat. “There was an intense fear every day but at the same time a desire in me to be there because I knew even if I didn’t have the medical skill, which no one did at this point, I knew I could be with people who were dying and at the end,” Mary Catherine says. “I could be a caring presence for them and be a presence that their family couldn’t be.”

Early this year, on April 16, Mary Catherine reflected on the death of a man with COVID two years earlier. She remembers that day being online using an iPad with his wife and daughter so they could be with him.

She also remembers a night when she went to pick up one of her fellow physician assistants to drive her home as it wasn’t safe to ride public transportation. She was waiting for her to come out and two vans were in the ambulance bay, and they loaded eight bodies. “I was horrified at the number of bodies,” she explains.

During this time of sadness, fear and exhaustion, “my prayer life was profound,” Mary Catherine says. “God was good to me and that kept me strong.” She also points to a strong connection via Zoom with her family as a support. They had a Zoom family ball, Halloween party and other events that were a nice diversion.

In addition, “My community was extremely helpful. I lived in a house with sisters who were okay with me being in the house,” she says. A Zoom community for Mass was also a haven of support.

When the elections for new leadership for the congregation were occurring in 2021, Mary Catherine recalled a gathering of younger Presentations she attended some years ago. “I remember one of the sisters asking, ‘Is there anything the community would ask us that we would say no to?’ That was always a part of the example of Nano for me,” Mary Catherine says. “Whatever the challenges were she always said yes.”

Though she struggled with a concern that she would feel guilty leaving people who were having such a difficult time, she accepted the call to leadership and became president of the congregation in late 2021. “I believe in religious life. I believe in our future. I

“believe in the gift that our mission is to the world. If I could do something to further that I didn’t feel I could say no to leadership.”  

Also having trained for the past few years to be a group facilitator, Mary Catherine has been able to bring that background into her role as leader. Lessons from her time as a physician’s assistant are also instrumental in her leadership style. “Being a physician’s assistant is a sacred position because people will tell you things that they wouldn’t tell their best friend or their family,” she explains. “Through that experience I grew in my love of the story and everyone’s story being so important to who they are.” She has created a space in her office that invites people to come tell her their story as knowing a person’s story is critical to knowing them.

As Mary Catherine continues to carry her lantern in this ministry of leadership, she finds life and fulfillment in staying connected to the ministry that has shaped her. She occasionally can be found picking up a shift in the emergency room at North Bronx and continues to minister with young people at Fordham University, a ministry she started while living in the Bronx.

“I am a member of a team, and we work very much as a team,” she says. “Nothing should rely on only one of us. That gives each of us the freedom to do what gives us life as well so that we can be more whole for the ministry that we provide with our sisters, staff and associates.”

As a vowed woman religious, Mary Catherine has found “the gift of community is that you see gifts in people, and you invite them to use those gifts. The sisters invited me to use my gifts in different ways and I was able to do that and develop more of who I am.”

Daughter, sister, audiologist, physician’s assistant, facilitator, vocation promoter, leader ... all of these are a part of the whole as Mary Catherine uses her gifts and experiences to shine her lantern in the spirit of Nano Nagle and for the mission of the New Windsor Presentation Sisters.
When she finished her term in leadership the staff gave Sister Mary Byrnes a mug with the saying, “I’m fantastic” printed on it. This saying sums up Mary’s approach to life. When someone asks how she is, she will most likely reply, “Fantastic!”

Mary tries to write three or four things in her gratitude journal every day. “I honestly live with a heart filled with gratitude,” she explains. “It’s not because of my faithfulness; it’s because of God’s faithfulness to me. God invites me every day.”

This path God led her on included over 40 years in education ministry as a teacher and a principal. “I am drawn to teaching. I love children!” she states.

Community life has been a gift for Mary. “The main thing is we all have the same belief and the same love of God and the same desire to serve God and God’s people,” she says.

After 12 years in leadership Mary is enjoying her volunteer work at St. Marianne Cope, a local parish. If she could give any advice to a newly professed young woman, it would be, “Always remember why you came … because of a relationship you have with the Lord. Also, be open to the unexpected. Our God is a God of surprises.”

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS

Sister Theresa Doran worked as a nurse’s aide throughout high school and always felt called to that profession. During a retreat something within her sparked and she felt called to vowed life as a Presentation Sister. While most of the young women entering at the time were teachers, Theresa was hopeful that she would eventually find her way to nursing.

“I taught for three years and then our mother general put out a call to see if anyone would be interested in nursing,” she shares. “I told her I had worked as a nurse’s aide. There had been a few LPNs in the community, but I was the first registered nurse, and I went on to get my bachelor’s in nursing.”

Health care ministry brought many challenges and changes, but she enjoyed getting to meet many different people. Perhaps the most meaningful work she did was during her two stints at the Dwelling Place. “That was the best school to learn in,” she explains. “You learned so much from the women and (from the others in ministry). We were doing nursing, but we were doing so much more.”

Theresa’s advice to anyone in ministry would be to “stay with what’s happening and meet the needs of the world today. When things change, you have to change with the times.”

Education 1966–69

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS

Sister Kathleen Harrington didn’t consider vowed religious life as a youth. However, her twin sister always wanted to be a vowed religious sister. “That’s probably God’s way of communicating to me that it was a possibility,” Kathleen says. “I used to say to her, ‘That’s crazy! They’re not real people.’ And it was me who became the sister.”

Kathleen attended St. Michael’s in Manhattan. “I liked the sisters; they were very special, and I was taken by their kindness. They were attentive to the whole life of the students and would take time to get to know the students before and after class,” she explains. “Sister Mary Martin influenced me very, very much. She died just 10 days before I entered the convent.”

After teaching for a few years, serving as novice director became a blessed time in her life. Many of the novices she had remain close friends, and she is proud of what they have done in their lives.

Though afflicted with multiple sclerosis in 1964, Kathleen hasn’t let that slow her down. A recent cancer diagnosis also illustrates her positive outlook. “I am truly blessed,” she explains. “God has been very good to me and I’m grateful to God for every moment of my life.”

Mistress of novices 1976–1983
Leadership 1997–2009
Sister Eileen Matthews felt called to religious life when she met the Presentation Sisters at St. Michael’s High School. “That’s really when I started thinking about becoming a sister,” she says. “I’ve been really very blessed and I’m happy where I am.”

After over 20 years in education, a ministry she loved, Eileen decided to begin a new adventure. “There was a publication that went out to religious orders,” she explains. They were looking for sisters to travel to Guyana, South America, and minister with the Sisters of Mercy. “I said, you know what, I’m going to follow through on this and see.”

“I always had my foot in the finance area,” she explains. During her time in Guyana, she was an assistant administrator and took care of the finance office while also teaching some English and communications classes. “The people of Guyana are uncomplicated and were grateful for outside visitors.”

Prayer has played a central role for Eileen. “I always try to pray in the morning, before my head gets filled with the work,” she says. “I’ve been very happy as a Presentation sister,” Eileen says. “I’ve had different ministries in the course of time, and I feel very, very lucky.”

Education 1966–1987
Admin assistant 1991–1995
Youth services 1995–1997

Sister Pat Reills first met the Presentation Sisters at St. Michael’s in Manhattan. Entering the convent was not a difficult choice for her. “In the area where I grew up (Queens) a lot of people joined religious orders,” she shares. “My parents and their friends were very active in the church, and I think that rubbed off on the kids.”

Trained as a teacher, Pat spent 25 years in elementary and religious education classrooms. She has fond memories of her nine years in New Orleans, Louisiana. “My experience in Louisiana was wonderful and I still keep up with the people,” she shares. “They are such wonderful people.”

Pat started working more with families as a social worker and family therapist, and that opened her eyes to how much she loved this broader connection. “You always have to see the goodness in people,” she says. “If you are flexible, people are willing to talk to you more because they feel comfortable with you,” she adds.

For Pat, relationships are key to both community life and her ministry. She says, “If you work with people and they work with you, then there are bonds that are built and that’s the beautiful part. It was a wonderful experience working with the different groups of people that I have worked with, and they’ve taught me as well.”

Education 1966–1982

Sister Dorothy Scesny comes from a long line of vowed religious. There are two priests and five other women religious in her extended family. “I always knew I wanted to be a Presentation sister,” she explains.

Dorothy “could not get to the classroom fast enough in the morning” for her first teaching assignment. “I came to know God a whole other way through children.” Though she loved teaching, a part of her always wanted to work in a parish.

Dorothy followed the example of two of her Presentation sisters when she began parish ministry. While serving as justice promoter and in leadership, Dorothy stays grounded in her work to “bring the compassion and joy of a relationship with God” by helping to lead prison retreats.

Dorothy recognizes religious life is different today but encourages women to trust that God is there. “I’m not terrified by the future,” she says. “I have no idea what it is, but I do trust that the spirit of God is working among us.”

Urban ministry 1980–1982
Parish ministry 1984–1992
Pastoral care 2009–2019
An educator for over 25 years, Sister Joan Mary McDermott finds great value in all levels of education and served as a classroom teacher, in religious education and as a librarian, but she also served retired sisters in the congregation and was a board member of the Intercommunity Retirement Board.

Joan Mary took part in a program in Mexico that deepened her love for the poor. This experience also helped her to learn to accept things as they are and to work toward what could be. She was so moved by this experience that it was an easy “yes” for her when she had the opportunity to go on a mission trip to Jamaica and to Trinidad.

Joan Mary went on to answer the call to serve as director of the Christian Life Center in Keene, New Hampshire. She was uniquely qualified to move from teaching to assisting in new ways as she earned several certificates in gerontology and geriatric nursing after completing her bachelor’s and master’s.

Wherever called, Joan Mary always felt the presence of God. She found that the grace of the Presentation charism sustained her and continues to sustain her during her retirement years.

Religious education 1966–1977
Congregational service 1977–1984
Adult faith formation 1986–2004
Pastoral associate 2005–2015

When she was young, Sister Catherine Hannigan’s family moved from Vermont to Fitchburg, Massachusetts. Starting elementary school with the Presentation sisters is the “beginning of my story as a Presentation,” she says. “It’s been a good story. I’m grateful for every part.”

Catherine’s brother was killed in a gun accident when she was in high school. Living through that experience and witnessing the sisters’ kindness toward her and her family during this time made an impression on her. “I loved the sisters I had in school,” she explains. “They were so good to me and so kind and happy.”

Though her father thought her too young, she entered the community at age 17 and never had a regret.

Beginning her ministry as a teacher, she served as an educator for over 20 years. After this, Catherine became novice director and then formation director. In 1976 she was called to leadership ministry. “I enjoyed meeting new people and just having a greater appreciation and understanding of the greatness of the women with whom I lived,” she says.

Catherine says “I’ve never looked back with regret. That’s a gift and a grace from God. I couldn’t be happier. I entered a community of very happy women and have never regretted my choice.”

Novice director & formation 1969–1976
Spiritual direction – 1997–2015
“I’ve had a beautiful life. I’ve met lovely people. I have experiences that I never would have had if I wasn’t a sister,” Sister Hannah Cox says. “I can never forget my students. They came into my life and never left. They became part of me and still are.”

During her time as a teacher and principal, Hannah learned the value of listening. “Somebody has to have time to listen, especially with children,” she says. “The problems that children have often aren’t big if someone would listen. It taught me a lesson that when you listen to people and walk in their shoes you understand them a little better.”

Still active at age 99, Hannah says, “There shouldn’t be a word ‘retirement.’ It should just be ‘ease up a little.’” After serving as a pastoral assistant, she began volunteering at a nursing home. “I loved teaching, but I also loved being with the elderly,” she says. “It gave me a feeling of being needed; I think all human beings have to feel needed.”

“I don’t regret anything,” she says. “I really feel that I’ve had a nice journey. When I had obstacles, they gave me experiences and a way of correcting what I did wrong. As you go along one chapter closes and another opens. My book is so thick because I’ve had so many chapters, so many different experiences.”

Education 1945–1985
Pastoral associate 1985–2009
Mission advancement 2014–present

A lady to her fingertips, as described by one of her Presentation sisters, Sister Mary Luke Mulraney lost both of her parents as a young girl in Rhode Island. An aunt took Mary Luke and her sister in and sent them to schools staffed by the Presentation Sisters.

Mary Luke inherited a compassionate heart from her parents, whom she remembers as hard-working. “From early childhood, my parents taught us to help others,” she says. She tells stories of her parents, who owned a grocery store, packing extra groceries for families in need. The lessons she learned at home were reinforced at elementary school. “The wonderful sisters taught us to look for and to be generous to those in need,” she adds.

Trained as an educator and librarian, Mary Luke found a true passion in retirement when she took on the role of archivist. “My definition for retirement is ‘called to another ministry,’” she explains. In this role, Mary Luke spent hours clipping articles about the congregation to add to her scrapbooks. An avid reader and life-long learner, she would also often send newspaper clippings of interest to friends.

“Last, but by no means least,” Mary Luke shares, “I must make time for my spiritual life; prayer said by all the congregational members, private devotions and spiritual reading enhance my own life.”

Education 1946–1974
Librarian 1974–1998
Archivist 1998–2007
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.

June 17, 1934 ~ November 10, 2021

Sister Elizabeth (Mary Padua) Fortune was born in New York City and professed final vows in 1959. She attended St. Michael's High School and graduated from Fordham University with a bachelor's in education.

Over the course of 58 years, Elizabeth taught at Holy Rosary and Our Lady of Solace, the Bronx; St. Mary, Kingston; St. John, Goshen; and St. Andrews, Clifton. In 1989, Elizabeth began service as secretary and bookkeeper for the Capuchin Friars development office until her retirement in 2014.

April 5, 1928 ~ December 16, 2021

Sister Josephine (Mary Conrad) Ortner was born in New York City and educated at Manhattan College, St. John University, Fordham University and Wesleyan University. In 1946 she entered the Sisters of the Presentation.

Josephine taught at Holy Rosary and St. Frances of Rome, the Bronx; St. Paul's, Yonkers; St. Michael's, Manhattan; and Burke Catholic, Goshen. She later became principal and served in this ministry from 1983 until 1999, when she retired. After retirement Sister assisted at the Burke Catholic Learning Center.

November 22, 1940 ~ December 28, 2021

Sister Patricia (Mary Redempta) Morrison was born in New York City and professed final vows in 1966. She graduated from St. Thomas Aquinas College with a bachelor’s in education, Queens College with a master’s in elementary education, and Iona College with an master’s in pastoral counseling.

Over the course of 49 years, Patricia taught in Goshen, the Bronx, Manhattan and Howard Beach. She served as secretary for the Religious Consultant Center in Brooklyn, guidance counselor at St. Thomas Aquinas School, and secretary at St. Rose of Lima School, Rockaway Beach, and St. Raphael School, Long Island City.

July 6, 1930 ~ January 4, 2022

Sister Elizabeth (Mary Joachim) Burke was born in Long Island City and professed final vows in 1955. She graduated from Fordham University with a bachelor’s in education and College of St. Rose with a master’s in education.

Sister Elizabeth was a teacher and principal in several schools in the New York City area. She then served in pastoral care and, later, as a chaplain. Prior to her retirement in 2007, she was the outreach coordinator at Holy Rosary Parish in the Bronx.
September 28, 1929 ~ February 20, 2022

Sister Mary Lusk (Mary Jogues Joseph) was born in Long Island and professed final vows as a Sister of the Presentation in 1953. She graduated from Fordham University with a bachelor's in education and was a certified chaplain.

Mary taught in the Bronx, Goshen, Long Island City and Queens, New York; Houma and St. David, Louisiana; and Clifton, New Jersey. She also taught religious education in Brooklyn. She assisted in the infirmary at Mt. St. Joseph and in ministries of pastoral care and chaplaincy. Before retiring, sister worked at The Center for Hope Hospice.

March 23, 1923 ~ April 8, 2022

Sister Mary Andre professed final vows in 1949. She earned a bachelor's in education from Manhattan College.

Mary Andre taught in the Bronx, Manhattan, Fishkill, Yonkers, New Windsor and Rockaway Beach, New York, as well as in Clifton, New Jersey. In addition to teaching, she served as the librarian at Holy Rosary School and was the maintenance supervisor at Mount St. Joseph, New Windsor.

Poem of Life

Life is but a stopping place, a pause in what's to be, 
a resting place along the road to sweet eternity.
  We all have different journeys, 
  different paths along the way, 
we all were meant to learn some things, 
  but never meant to stay.
Our destination is a place far greater than we know, 
  for some, the journey's quicker, 
  for some the journey's slow.
And when the journey finally ends, 
  we'll claim a great reward, 
and find an everlasting peace, 
together with the Lord.
Sisters and associates celebrated Earth Day with gatherings in both Massachusetts and New York.

Sister Virginia Wilkinson offered a retreat on women in the Bible with no names in New York, Massachusetts and virtually using Zoom.

Sisters showed solidarity with Ukraine by planting sunflower seeds, which were then planted at Mt. St. Joseph.

Sisters and associates in New York and Massachusetts wore orange on National Gun Violence Awareness Day.

Boy Scout Troop 11, Saint Leo’s Parish, Leominster, Massachusetts, built two new benches for the sisters as a service project.

Eagle Scout Michael Skulevold, along with his Troop 4027, created this garden for the sisters at Mt. St. Joseph. The garden can be found outside of House 64.

Sister Yliana Hernandez was honored with a picnic in celebration of her retirement from Nora Cronin Presentation Academy.

Gathering of Presentation People

In 2019 the leadership of the Conference of Presentation Sisters adopted new mission and vision statements. In the spirit of Nano Nagle, these have become “not words, but deeds.”

Through the collaborative work of Presentation sisters, associates, employees and other partners these vision and mission statements have found life as they are developed into initiatives. One of these initiatives is the Gathering of Presentation People: Light the Lantern. Originally planned for September 2020 and twice postponed, the Gathering will take place September 15-17, 2022, in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Nearly 20 New Windsor Presentation people, including sisters, associates and employees, will join the over 155 Presentation people from across North America for this historic event.

Sister Mary Catherine Redmond will facilitate the gathering, offering participants the opportunity:
- To reflect and share on my piece in the Presentation story and develop a greater understanding of my personal role in how and where I bring the charism and mission of Nano Nagle to our world.
- To expand my experience of Presentation people and the interconnectedness we share.
- To dream possibilities for the future.
- To listen and share with each other as we embody the spirit of Nano who offered radical hospitality in her interactions with others.

Look for updates in our next newsletter!

Communications Updates

If you are a long-time partner, you probably will have noticed some changes in our communication, including our refreshed congregational logo and the delay of this newsletter. As we look toward the future with hope and a desire to continue our work, we want to ensure that we are adding to and improving our communication channels with all of our Presentation people: sisters, associates and other partners in mission. We are spending time assessing and re-assessing our communication and hope to find new ways to bring you even more stories and information.

We have begun working with Lisa Olson as our director of communications. Lisa brings over 20 years of experience with Presentation congregations to the role. During her 10 years with the Aberdeen, South Dakota, Presentation congregation she served in communications and on the board of the (National) Communicators Network for Women Religious. She began working with the Conference of Presentation Sisters in 2011, a role she still fills. She has also worked with the North American Conference of Associates and Religious and other religious congregations. Through these experiences she has collaborated with congregations throughout North America and taken part in the International Presentation Association assemblies in Canada and Australia.

“I am blessed to be able to do the work that I do for and with Presentation people,” Lisa says. “I have met the most wonderful people and been enriched through those friendships and experiences far beyond my imagination.”

Having the chance to work again directly in communications with an individual congregation was an opportunity Lisa couldn’t pass up. She now serves from her home office in South Dakota part-time as director of the Conference of Presentation Sisters and part-time as director of communications for our congregation.

We hope you enjoy the changes and enhanced communication efforts. If you have ideas for stories, social media efforts or other communication efforts, you can contact Lisa at tlolson@venturecomm.net.
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 Mission Advancement Office Mt. St. Joseph 84 Presentation Way New Windsor NY 12553