

# Mary Notes

Sisters of Mary of the Presentation

Maryvale Convent, Valley City, ND 58072

Volume 50 No. 2 June, 2018

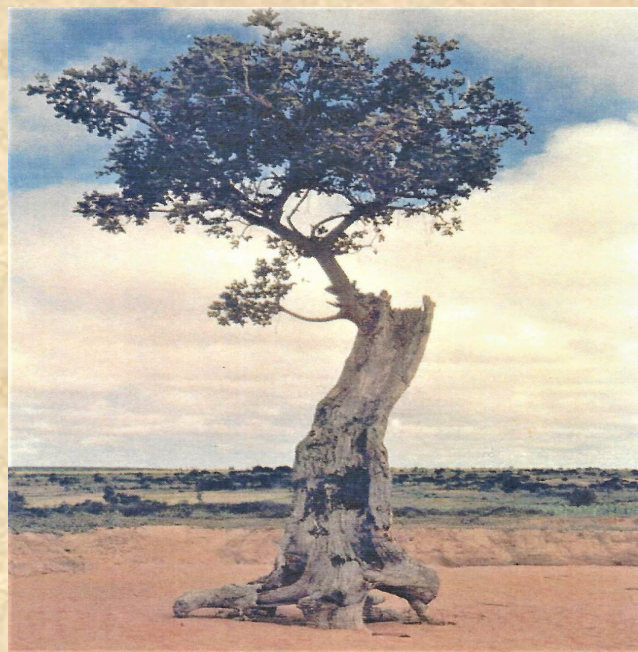


A poem by Caryll Houselander, put to music by John Foley, SJ, describes, I think, the current situation of the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation and our present world:

*“Wood hath hope. When it’s cut, it grows green again,  
and its boughs sprout clean again.  
Root and stock, although old and withered up,  
and all sunk in earth corrupt, will revive.  
Leaves return. Water pure brings life to them,  
and the tree lives young again.  
Wood hath hope.*

*But ah, strange thought:  
if we could rise again, called home to a loving land,  
We would have hope.*

*We would have hope.  
Like a tree we’d grow green again,  
and our boughs sprout clean again;  
We would have hope.*



As a Religious Congregation we have repeatedly used a picture of a real tree in the Fort Portal, Uganda area that expresses the same truth as a sign of hope. Numerous people have said to us, “It is too bad that you do not have new members,” or asked questions like, “What are you going to do, being your numbers are lessening?”

As we reflect on our current reality, we answer with the response of Mary, the Mother of God, “May it be done to me [us] according to your word.” (Luke 1:38) Of course, we have not taken this stance passively. We have and continue to seek women who God may be calling to Religious Life, and we are open to new life in all its forms. We have prayed, discussed, identified strategies and taken action. We continue to strive to live out the directives of Vatican Council II by inviting the laity to be part of the ministries originally begun by our Religious Congregation. We have, with the Catholic Church, established a ministerial public juridic person, SMP Health Ministry, to carry on the Catholic Identity of SMP Health System and the 10 health care ministries. There are 89 lay men and women as SMP Associates directly endeavoring to live out our charism in their day-to-day lives.

Hebrews 6:19-20,18 describes our situation well: *“Like a sure and firm anchor, that hope extends beyond the veil through which Jesus, our forerunner, has entered on our behalf...so that we who have taken refuge in [Jesus] might be strongly encouraged to seize the hope which is placed before us.”* God brings new life in many forms and in many ways...we are asked to faithfully follow God’s call.

By Sister Suzanne Stahl, SMP

## Report on Associate Survey on Legislative Advocacy

By Mary Anne Michelet, Associate

In May of 2017, I sent 89 surveys, some were two to an address, with a self-addressed, stamped envelope in order to return the survey to me. Here is a copy of the letter and the survey:

*Dear SMP Associates,*

*In the last Mary Notes article for the Peace and Justice Committee, we mentioned sending out a survey regarding your advocacy efforts. The Mission Statement of the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation from the General Chapter 1982, when Associates were invited to join in the mission stated, in part:*

*“WE RE-AFFIRM emphatically that the Congregation was founded for the service of ALL, with a special concern for the underprivileged and the poor. Conscious that in society a variety of forms of exploitation and oppression are being exerted, and in order to respond to the call of the Church to participate actively in promoting rights of mankind (Evangelica Nunianti, Nos. 30-31) WE DECLARE that our mission of announcing Jesus Christ will be accomplished first and foremost through our service to the POOR, in a spirit of JUSTICE inspired by Scripture (Is.61:1ff)” p.8*

*The Associate Handbook further states in “Sharing Life and Ministry Program”*

*“Each Associate shares faith - through dialogue suitable to the individual’s lifestyle by striving to create an atmosphere of justice, peace and respect for the dignity of all persons.” p.14*

*There are many ways to create this atmosphere and of course we hope to do so by living a life close to Christ and by direct service. St. Vincent, second patron of SMP, was known for his service to the poor and disenfranchised, and he also worked to change the systems that kept people poor and oppressed in his environment of France. One way we can help change systems is by encouraging government to do its part to protect those in most need. Please answer the following questions and return the survey in the envelope enclosed. Thank you.*

Survey:

1. Do you participate in legislative advocacy?
2. When did you last call, write, E-mail or visit one of your government officials - local, state or national?
3. Do you get legislative alerts from Catholic Hospital Association, Catholic Charities, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, North Dakota, Illinois or any State Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Relief Services, Society of Saint Vincent DePaul, Diocesan Conference of Catholic Women, other? (Please circle those that apply and write what “other” means below).
4. Would you like to get legislative alerts so you can advocate with your government on issues related to Catholic teaching on social justice?
5. Which of these issues is of importance to you? Please rank them in importance 1-11.

Immigration

Refugees

Health Care

Mental Health

## Living Wage

*Sister Margaret Rose, Sister Miriam, Mary Anne Michelet*

The following is a very belated report on the Associates who responded to the survey:

5 gave thoughtful written responses to the issues

As far as the level of interest in the issues, this is how they ranked:

1. Right to Life
2. Health care
3. Mental health
4. Hunger
5. Homelessness/affordable housing
6. Immigration/refugees
7. Education
8. Living wage
9. Racism
10. Predatory loans





Four Associates said ALL issues are important. One Associate added sex-trafficking and one added religious liberty to the list.

One of the encouraging aspects of the survey was learning that 22 already get alerts from various predominately Catholic sources. My apologies to those who asked for legislative alerts, since none have been sent by me, although Sr. Suzanne has sent some to you in the past year.

Thank you to SMP for allowing me to do this survey and for all of the Associates who returned it. Please, everyone, keep letting your views be known to your legislators. We could add to that beautiful poem of St. Therese, “Christ has no other hands but yours” ... ***Christ has no other voice but yours!***



## Myriam Dinner

By Sister Dorothy Bunce, SMP



Bishop John Folda of the Fargo Diocese again hosted the Myriam Dinner at the Bishop’s residence in Fargo on Sunday, January 21, 2018. Father Kurt Gunwall, Vocation Director for the Fargo Diocese, extended the invitation to this dinner on Bishop Folda’s behalf and made the arrangements that needed to be made. The evening began with praying Evening Prayer together in the Bishop’s Chapel.

Sister Marlyss Dionne and Sister Dorothy Bunce attended the dinner on behalf of the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation. Sisters representing each Congregation in our diocese were also present. Young women from NDSU, some of whom are active in the St. Paul Newman Center, were also invited.

After eating the delicious meal, a representative from each Religious Community shared how she discerned her vocation and/or what aspects of her congregation drew her to the particular community she joined. This sharing provided a platform for many questions from the young women who were present and allowed more time for the Sisters to add information to what they already shared.



The evening closed with praying Night Prayer together. The young women expressed their thankfulness to the Bishop for the invitation to be with him.

The composition of the Myriam Dinner is similar to the Saint Andrew Dinner, which is intended for men who may be interested in the priesthood or who sense a vocation to a men’s religious community.



# Ave Marie Employees Give Donation

by Sister Suzanne Stahl, SMP



Ave Maria Village, a nursing home in Jamestown, North Dakota, sponsored by the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation Health Ministry, gives donations to the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation Missions in southeast Cameroon, Africa twice a year. The donations are from employees. Gathered February 2, 2018 for the picture are Tim Burchill and Sister Suzanne Stahl, SMP Provincial, in foreground along with managers at Ave Maria Village. 100% of these donations go directly to serve the poor in Cameroon, Africa where the Sisters work in schools, clinics, hospitals, parishes, jails and always with the poorest.



# St. Cecilia Parish Celebrates the Sisters

By Sister Mary Agnes Huber, SMP



For the last several years, the Catholic Church has set aside the second Sunday in February to honor those who live Consecrated Religious Life, and it was no different this year. St. Cecilia Parish in Harvey, ND honored Sister Miriam Braun, who works in the parish, and Sister Mary Agnes Huber, who works in the hospital and nursing home. The celebration began after Mass when Father Frank Miller called the Sisters forward in church, and the congregation sang a special blessing over them. The Knights of Columbus were standing in honor guard as the Sisters and Father Frank Miller processed out after Mass. The Sisters had their picture taken with the KCs and Father Miller before going to the church basement for a potluck dinner. Many parishioners shared in the dinner that continued the celebration honoring the Sisters. Before dinner, pictures were taken of the Sisters with the beautifully decorated cake, and after dinner the Sisters opened up the individual gifts that they had received. First of all there were two gift cards, one for Warehouse Grocery and the other one for Supervalu. The individual gifts each Sister received were a fleece blanket and a bottle of hand lotion. There were cards and money received from people of the parish. It was a nice day, as people kept saying it was *"So good!"* to have the Sisters in the parish. It was a good day.



# Redeemed 2018

By Sister Sharon Houle, SMP

Redeemed 2018 was the title of a Fargo Diocese -wide conference at the beginning of the Easter Season and on the eve of Divine Mercy Sunday. Held in Fargo on April 7, the theme of the conference was “Called by Name.” This title evokes not only the personal call of God, but also our call to mission. The opening remarks were made by Bishop John Folda, Bishop of the Fargo Diocese. He reminded us that we come into existence only because God first thought of us; He willed us into being. He loves each of us personally, calls us His sons and daughters. From our baptism we receive a new life in Christ, we begin our journey of listening, seeking and fulfilling the mission to which God calls us.

Our first speaker was Dr. Edward Sri, a theologian, author and dynamic Catholic speaker. The title of his talk was “Called by Name”. Jesus calls us; He knows our name, calls us by name. Jesus asked Peter, “Do you love me”? (John 21) Jesus is asking Peter if he loves him with “Agape” love... unselfish, unconditional love. Peter remembers his denial; humbly he says, “Yes, Lord you know I love you.” Jesus knows Peter loves him with “phileo” love...companionable and relational love. Jesus asks again. Peter is a changed man aware of his own inadequacy, he comes to Jesus humbly and says, “Yes, Lord I love you.” Jesus now comes down to where Peter is. With the third question, “Peter, do you love me?” Jesus is referring to phileo love. Peter’s response: “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus wants to transform Peter’s phileo love to Agape love. Jesus tells Peter, “When you get older, someone else will dress you and lead you”...indicating the type of death Peter will suffer. At this time Peter will have Agape love. (John 21:15-19)

A poster for the 'Redeemed 2018' event. At the top, the title 'REDEEMED 2018' is in large, bold, yellow letters. Below it, the date and time are listed: 'Saturday, April 7, 2018 | Doors open at 8:00 a.m.'. The location is 'Scheels Arena and Shanley High School (children's program)'. Registration information follows: 'Early Registration (by March 18)' with rates of '\$25 - Adults | \$15 - Ages 5-17' and '\$100 - Family maximum with early registration'. A quote from Isaiah 43:1 is featured: '"DO NOT FEAR, FOR I HAVE REDEEMED YOU; I HAVE CALLED YOU BY NAME: YOU ARE MINE."' Below this, several speakers and activities are listed with their photos: 'WHO AM I TO JUDGE?' by Dr. Edward Sri, 'SEE HOW THEY LOVE ONE ANOTHER' by Greg and Lisa Popcak, 'YOUTH PROGRAM' by Nic Davidson, 'The Frontenders' (a group photo), 'FAMILY DANCE', 'Cat Chat', 'Magic Show' by Jeffrey Salvesson, and 'CHILDREN'S PROGRAM\* at Shanley High School (\*free registration requested)'. At the bottom left, it says 'Hosted by the Diocese of Fargo' with a logo. At the bottom right, it says 'For schedule, more information or to register, visit www.fargodiocese.org/redeemed'.

How do we experience transformation? Walking with Jesus in discipleship leads to transformation. Imitation sums up discipleship. The disciples learned who Jesus was by following, praying, eating, sleeping, and listening to Jesus teaching. From this lived encounter with Jesus the disciples transformed into imitators of Jesus. “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.” (1Cor. 11:1) The heart of discipleship is to strive to imitate Christ.

The Heart of Discipleship is striving to imitate Christ, growing in humility by receiving love, forgiveness, and healing. Four habits of discipleship: prayer life, frequenting the sacraments, fellowship, works of mercy and teaching of the apostles. (Acts 2:42)

The presentations were followed by everyone praying the Divine Chaplet of Mercy and attending the Eucharistic Liturgy at which Bishop John Folda presided.





## Missionary Discipleship

By Sister Anne Germaine Picard, SMP

This Spring I have been gathering several groups of people to give them mini- retreats of prayer and reflection.

The employees of St. Margaret's Health and the Prairieland Home Care staff gathered at St. Margaret's Hospital on March 7, 2018 to reflect on what it looks like to walk in the footsteps of Jesus in our Catholic Health Care. The beautiful story of "The Ragman, THE CHRIST", which showed the staff the true meaning of being the healing presence of Jesus, was dramatized by some of the Mission Integration team. Later we reflected on the Gospel story of Bartimaeus, who cried out as Jesus was passing by. The crowd tried to stop him, but Jesus heard his cry and invited him over, asking him, "What can I do for you?" To walk in the footsteps of Jesus is to be moved to compassion, and by our presence and attention we bring healing. Then we had a presentation of the story "Turning Point", which again showed how our acts of kindness bring healing or hope to someone we might not even be aware of. This is walking in the footsteps of Jesus as we are the disciples of Jesus in the workplace.

At St. Louis Parish in Princeton, IL, I was part of a team that lead a retreat experience for all those in leadership ministry positions, such as lectors, Eucharistic ministers, ushers, teachers, etc. My presentation was called "The Art of Accompaniment: Walking with Jesus." It focused on making a difference by the witness of our lives. By our faith, being good listeners, by our participation in the Eucharist, and being hospitable to one another do we share our walk with Jesus.

My last retreat evening was to the CCW women of our parish for a Lenten retreat on March 27, 2018. The theme of this retreat was "The Gift of Encounter" using the beautiful story of John 4:5-29, where

Jesus encounters the Samaritan Woman at the Well.

This mirrors our own encounter with Jesus. As the woman gradually came to see Jesus, not just as a Jew, but as Prophet and Messiah, she began announcing Jesus to others. She became a Missionary Disciple. This is our mission, too.

Each of these retreats closed by listening to St. Theresa's Prayer in song, "Christ has no body now, but yours...we are his hands, his feet, his eyes...Christ has no body now on earth, but yours."





# VALLEY TROUBADOURS GIVE CONCERT AT MARYVALE

By Sister Marlyss Dionne, SMP



We were most fortunate to host the Valley Troubadours for their 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Spring Concert on April 23, 2018 at Maryvale. I was delighted to receive a phone call from Kevin Langer, a member of St. Catherine Parish and also a Troubadour, who asked if we would like to have the Troubadours come again this year to sing at Maryvale! I immediately said, “Yes!” because we had enjoyed them so much in years past, and I knew the Sisters would love to attend their concert this year. Others in Valley City

heard about our event and came from the Legacy Place and Bridgeview in buses to attend. There were 30 residents from these two places plus other friends from Valley City who were here for the concert.

The group of about twenty Troubadours began their concert at 6:30 and delighted us, with lots of enthusiasm and spirit, by singing thirteen wonderful musical selections including religious and secular music. Some of the selections included: “Make a Joyful Sound”, “I’ve Been



Everywhere”, “If We Ever Needed The Lord Before”, “Waltzing Matilda”, “Here Comes The Light”, “You Are Mine” and “Oklahoma”. At the end of the program, the Sisters provided cookies and lemonade for all those in attendance. It was a marvelous experience and we look forward, with great anticipation, to their next concert at Maryvale!

# SPRING: SEEDS OF NEW LIFE

By Sister Debra Berry, SMP



When the season of spring comes, a festival of new life is experienced all around us. Suddenly there are longer days of sunlight, earlier dawns, and later sunsets. As spring unfolds there is much to marvel at: tiny seeds in warmed soil shed their husks, thick walled bulbs open their doors that have protected them during the winter, and on trees and shrubs leaves emerge; what an exciting time of year! All of the earth is filled with newness of life for it is indeed a time of new birth and resurrection. It is a time I find myself energized by the bright sun and the greening earth. It is a time to sow seeds not only in the earth, but also within ourselves. The seeds sown are part of the mystery of how life can come from something so simple and insignificant. Seeds have so much potential despite their unassuming appearance. By being washed by the rain into the soil, carried by the wind, and gently placed in the garden's soil they can begin to germinate, grow, and blossom.

This journey of the seed opening in the moist earth, then pushing the fresh green toward the sun is like the journey that each of us takes as seeds are sown within our hearts. Our inner home is a lot like the heart of a seed. Like seeds we have the potential to receive the Word of God, for becoming who we are meant to be. Deep within us are many gifts that often lie there, dry and lifeless. For them to grow they need to be planted in rich soil so we can believe in our storehouse of giftedness, expand our vision of life, and become re-energized. Spring encourages us to take new risks and to crack open the husk of the potential that lies within us.

As we walk through this month of May, let us become more aware of the seeds that are pregnant with life within us. May they teach us about the Easter secret of dying and rising to new life. With an open and receptive heart, these seeds of God's Word are planted deep within our hearts. So as you celebrate springtime this year, place a seed in your hand, hold it carefully, bless it with presence and your prayer. Pray to call forth the gifts of one other person and appreciate the seeds of goodness in others. Reflect on what it means to be open to the seed of God's word. As you plant some seeds, nurture them, and watch them grow. Then ask yourself: How am I like the seeds of the earth, opening to God and to others? What secret is buried deep in the soil of my heart that is yearning to come to new life? What is the Gospel of Springtime that is unfolding for me this year?

Celebrate SPRING, let it fill you with wonder, delight, and hope.





# How Suffering Transforms Lives

By Sister Sharon Houle, SMP

To maintain one's nursing license it is required that we obtain a number of education points. This led me to attend a symposium on April 26-27, 2018 called "Advancing Nursing Practice." It was at this conference that I had an experience of how suffering transforms lives. I wish to share with you the story of Allison Massari. My spirit was deeply touched by this story.

Allison is an artist. She had gone to purchase supplies for her art project. Among the supplies collected was turpentine. On the way home Allison was in a car accident. Her car caught on fire and the turpentine quickly caught fire and exploded. Unable to open the door she began to pray, "Lord, do not let me die alone. I do not want to die alone." She continued to pray. Through a haze of smoke she saw a man; he began pulling her out, her burned back dragged over the dirt and grim of the ground. She was quickly air lifted to a hospital burn unit. Allison had sustained second and third degree burns over 50% of her body.

During her stay in the hospital, Allison experienced debridement, grafting and other treatments that caused excruciating pain. There was a sense of absolute loss; her prayer was to get through the next second. One day she experienced extreme emotional pain, anxiety, and frustration. A nurse came to her aide. She placed her hands on the side of her head, looked into her eyes with love. She continued to look deeply into Allison's eyes with love. Allison looked into her eyes; she saw love for her, caring. Her frustration and anxiety gradually faded away, she began to relax, became calm. She was loved. Amongst all this misery there was love, she was loved. This experience fed her soul. This sense of being loved began transforming her sense of absolute loss to a sense of hope.

Now her days were filled with hope and possibilities. The therapy was not less painful; her spirit had greater endurance, resilience. There was some joy beginning to enter her life. She began to realize that there can be joy in the midst of suffering.

Allison Massari lists three secrets to mastering your life: 1) Embrace the idea that joy and pain exist side-by-side; 2) Choose kindness; 3) Have courage, tenacity, and determination...never give up.

Upon hearing that there can be joy in the midst of suffering my thoughts went to Jesus on the Cross. Jesus had experienced excruciating pain and loss during his passion and death. Yet Jesus did show moments of joy. Jesus knew he had fulfilled the will of the Father. He said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do. John, receive your mother ...Mother, receive your son." He had run the race, the victory is His. What a powerful witness of Joy in the midst of Suffering!



## "BLOOM WHERE YOU ARE PLANTED"

By Sister Therese Celine Craven, SMP

"Bloom where you are planted"  
Bud forth your blossom bold;  
Fortified by Christ-filled roots- -  
Your fruit will turn out gold.

"Bloom where you are planted"  
Allow yourself to grow;  
Revived by the Gardener's pruning- -  
Your beauty will begin to show.

"Bloom where you are planted"  
Live this motto true;  
Up-rooted from your special garden- -  
The sun shall surely shine through.

"Bloom where you are planted"  
Make life a living joy;  
Spread peace and love where're you go- -  
And nothing will you annoy.

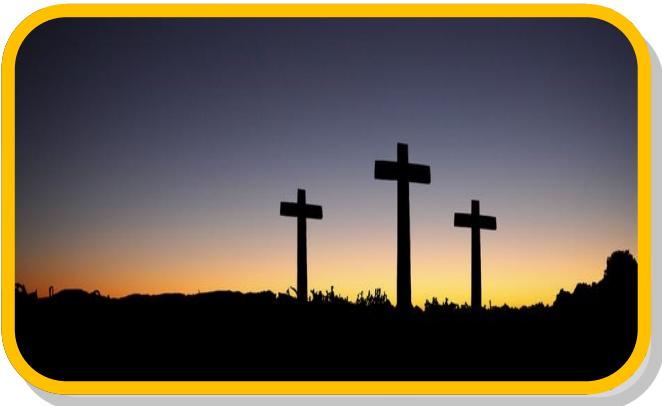
"Bloom where you are planted"  
Let Jesus be your guide;  
He came to give you abundant life- -  
If only in Him you abide!

"Bloom where you are planted"  
Do change your stony heart;  
Allow the breath of the Spirit within- -  
A heart of flesh will then start.

"Bloom where you are planted"  
Let Jesus be your vine;  
You be his branch that shoots forth fruit- -  
Grapes crushed into His wine.

"Bloom where you are planted"  
Serve others as you grow;  
Let others profit from your fruit- -  
Then Jesus they, too, will know.

"Bloom where you are planted"  
Love all in the Lord's Hands;  
Let Jesus work throughout your life- -  
Then all will be according to His Plans.





# **“We choose to passionately follow Christ, the humble Servant.”**

By Sister Sharon Houle, SMP

The Question is: How do I live the Vision, how do I “re-choose to passionately follow Christ, the humble servant” in my daily life? The first step, I thought, would be to re-read and meditate on Our Way of Life. It is there, I find the Virgin Mary, filled with faith, available, servant, joyful and ready to do God’s will. She is simple, doing everything out of Love of God and for God’s glory. I reflect. Being the presence of Jesus, listening, being non-judgmental, and caring for sick and homebound out of love, would be following Christ through the Corporal Works of Mercy. Other ways of following Christ as a humble servant are by coordinating volunteers to bring Communion to the sick daily at the hospital, coordinating a Cancer Support Group, directing the Befriender Program. Helping parishioners complete their “End of Life” forms, teaching the Catholic and Ethical Directives on “End of Life Issues”, teaching interested parishioners about the diocesan directives of vigil and funeral services; helping them pre-plan their vigil and funeral services. These are all ways of passionately following Christ



as a humble servant. Keeping in mind St. Paul’s statement: “It is not I that lives, but Christ lives in me.” Of myself I can do nothing, all is dependent on the grace of God. This season of Easter is a time for gratitude and joy. Through Jesus’ Passion, Death, Resurrection we receive salvation and eternal life. There is no greater gift than to be received humbly, in faith and love.

Mary is a great model of faith, humility and servant. Her passionate desire was to do the will of God during hard time and in times of ease.



# Walking with Jesus: Women's Retreat

By Sister Anne Germaine Picard, SMP



Our Spring Women's Retreat at Maryvale the weekend of April 6-8 this year was entitled "Walking with Jesus", which was led by Sister Dorothy Bunce and Sister Anne Germaine Picard.

Pope Francis, throughout his pontificate, has been speaking about how important it is for the Church to accompany people through their challenges and struggles, which entails deeply listening to them, supporting them, and helping them listen to how God is working in their lives. The retreat concentrated on walking with Jesus as he shows us how he responded to both the alienated and the respectable.

Throughout the retreat we spent time reflecting upon several Gospel figures and the relationship of Jesus to each one of them. These encounters led to their transformation to discipleship. In other words, they became disciples of Jesus, which is the mission of each of us. These figures were the Woman at the Well, Peter, Martha, Zacchaeus, and the beautiful encounter of the disciples on the road to Emmaus. Throughout the weekend we turned prayer into action through listening, praying and supporting one another.



It is helpful to share our stories... an example of this happened as we learned of a five year old child who is struggling with cancer. We prayed for the child and presented a woman on the retreat with a prayer shawl, made by Sister Eloise Marie Pulskamp, to be given to this child.

We concluded the weekend with a Discipleship prayer and a memorial sandal, "WALKING WITH JESUS."

This retreat will be given again at Maryvale the weekend of July 13-15, 2018.





## Life and Ministry in a Nursing Home

By Sister Mary Ann Schmitz, SMP

Yes, I, Sister Mary Ann Schmitz live at Rosewood Nursing Home on North Broadway, Fargo, North Dakota, and I work in the Pastoral Care department here at Rosewood on Mondays and Thursdays. On Wednesdays and Fridays I go to Villa Maria Nursing Home on South University Avenue in Fargo, North Dakota and work in the Pastoral Care Department there. From my knees up I function well; from the knees down I have little use of my legs. I have a motorized wheelchair so I am able to get to wherever I want to go in both nursing homes. How do I get from North Fargo (Rosewood) to South Fargo (Villa)? Villa has a van with ramps that accommodates my motorized wheelchair.

The above tells you where I am, now I must tell you how I live. I need much care to rise, dress and go to bed. For this I am a resident! I have a private room, and I eat in the general dining room. I always leave my door open so everyone is welcome, and residents do stop in. I assist at prayer services and I visit residents who are in need. Above all, I pray for them because prayer answers any need they may have. Yes, I make a Holy Hour every working day. I get acquainted with many as the residents come and go.

Do I miss my SMP community? Yes, by all means! I keep in touch whenever possible. Sister Sharon Houle visits me every Sunday, and we end the visit by praying the Liturgy of the Hours together. Sister Suzanne Stahl has appointments in Fargo so we have Kentucky Fried Chicken (my favorite) together as we chat about SMP business.

I will make retreat at Maryvale because the maintenance man at Villa offered the van which can accommodate my motorized wheelchair. With my motorized wheelchair I can attend all conferences and meals, but most of all to enjoy SMP's at prayer and work.

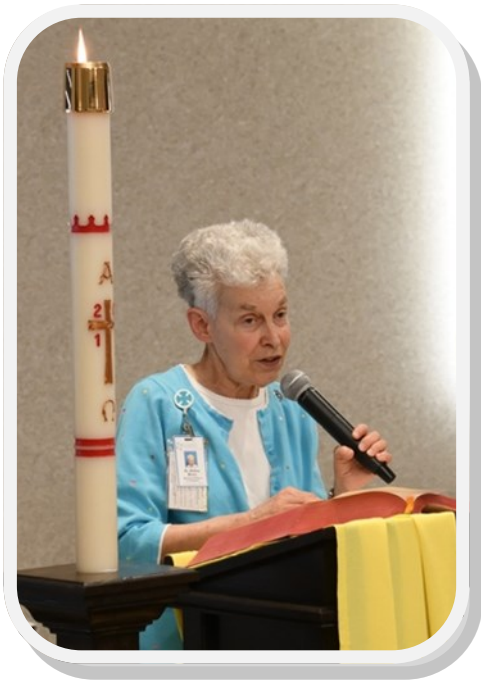
What have I learned from this experience? Ministry can be done in various ways. Just now I went to participate in a "Walking Them Home" service. This is where we accompany the body of the person who died to the hearse while we pray. I was too late, but his wife was still there, so I spent time with her.

Because I live here at the nursing home, I am available in the evenings and weekends when the rest of the Pastoral Care staff is not here. If we watch the non-verbals of our residents and staff we know where we are needed. Life in the nursing home is an awesome way to live ministry.



## St. John's Bible Goes on Tour

By Sister Debra Berry, SMP

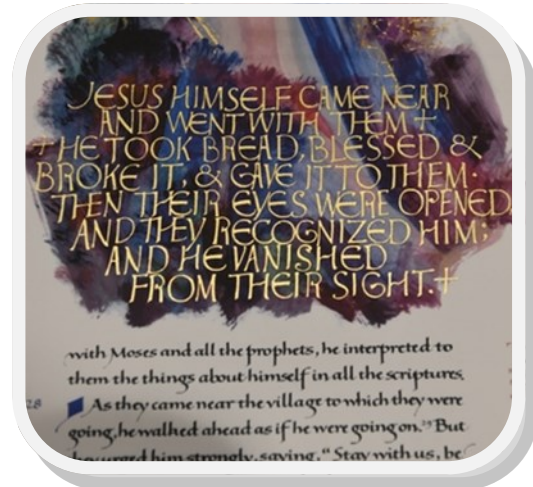


To celebrate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Benedictine Sisters of Duluth, MN, each of their 33 facilities is being privileged to host this sacred handwritten Bible. David Allen, the Sr. Spiritual Care Consultant for BHS, brought the Bible to St. Gabriel's Community in Bismarck, ND, on Friday, May 4, 2018. Three of us received a lengthy training on how to care for the Bible while it was going to be with us. We learned how to properly turn the pages, how to let others use it, etc. The Bible was with us for 2 weeks. During that time we hosted many events so people, parishes, the schools, our donors, etc. could have the opportunity to view it.

We began planning for these two weeks last February. Most of the planning was done by Melyssa Cordova, our Marketing Director, and I. We sent out special invitations to the parishes, schools, pastors, donors, our Foundation Board, etc. About 2 weeks before, we went to each of the parishes in Bismarck-Mandan and delivered flyers and invitations to the parishes and to the priests.

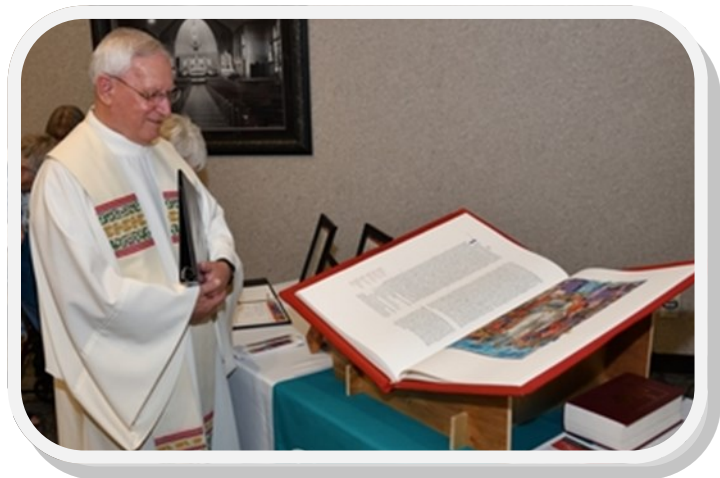
Each morning that the bible was with us we had a staff prayer for about 10 minutes using one of the illuminations. We hosted several evenings where the people of the area could come. At each one of our viewings we showed two YouTube videos to give some of the history behind the Bible and of Donald Jackson, the Queen's scribe, who was commissioned by St. John's Abbey in Collegeville to head up the project.

A lifetime dream of Donald Jackson was to do a handwritten bible with illuminations. He had come to Collegeville for a Calligraphy conference. At one point he asked the Abbot what he was going to do to mark the millennium. He asked him if he would like Donald to do a handwritten bible and the monks responded: "YES!" After 2 years of preparation and planning Donald and his team of 23 scribes began their work. Periodically he would come back to St. John's and show the monks what they had done. It took about 11 years to complete the 7 volumes.





We at St. Gabriel's had the volume "The Gospels and Acts". It was the first one completed in May 2002. The original is kept in the Library Museum at St. John's. What we had was the Heritage Edition of which there are only 299 sets made. Each one has some parts of the illuminations that are unique and done by hand so there are no two that are identical. Donald has initialed each volume. The Heritage Edition pages are done on 100% cotton. The calligraphy was done first and then the illuminations were added to go with the text. The original was done on calfskin vellum and special turkey, goose and swan quill pens were used for the calligraphy. Donald has said that there has been nothing like it since the painting of the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican.



Each volume is 2 feet tall and 3 feet wide, weighing about 35 lbs. The glass case that the bible was kept in at night weighed 65 lbs. The goal of the bible is to "*ignite the spiritual imagination of the people.*" It is for people of all faith traditions.

We invited Bishop Kagan to come on May 8<sup>th</sup> for Mass and bless the Bible which he graciously did. Since our Chaplain could not be present, we

asked Father Al Bitz to come to concelebrate. It was a festive occasion. In the afternoon we hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> graders from St. Mary's school. With all the public viewings we hosted we estimate that about 400 people came through our doors to take advantage of this special opportunity. There were a few groups who called from out of town and asked for a special viewing which we were more than happy to do. One of the special groups was the retired priests who live at Emmaus House in Bismarck. It was a real privilege, and we treasured the opportunity, but were also very happy to say "Good bye" on May 18<sup>th</sup> when the Bible went on to its next facility! To thank us for all our extra hours and hard work in preparation, Tyler, our CEO, took Melyssa and I out for lunch!

Just a little tidbit—If someone were to purchase all 7 volumes of the Heritage Edition it would cost around \$350,000 and each page they said was approximately \$1,000!







# Sister Ann Louise Kolhoff, SMP

By Sister Suzanne Stahl, SMP



Sister Ann Louise Kolhoff, 92, died peacefully in her home March 21, 2018 at Maryvale Convent, Valley City, ND.

Sister Ann Louise was born October 8, 1925 in rural Lisbon, ND to Charles and Rose Mary (Schriml) Kolhoff. She attended elementary school at St. Aloysius School, Lisbon, ND and St. Mary's School of Dayton, Ohio and high school at Dayton Co-operative, Dayton, Ohio graduating in 1944. She worked in sales and human resources at Elder Johnson Department store in Dayton until entering the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation Religious Congregation in 1947. She professed her vows to God August 25, 1948. She graduated with a diploma in 1951 from St. Andrew's School of Nursing, Bottineau, ND and with a Bachelor's of Science and a Masters in Health Administration from St. Louis University, St. Louis, Missouri in 1956 and 1964 respectively.



Sister Ann Louise began her health care ministry at St. Andrew's Hospital, Bottineau, ND 1951-1953 as a nurse. She taught in their school of nursing from 1956-1969. She was the Administrator at St. Andrew's Hospital, 1964-1969. At St. Margaret's Health, Spring Valley, Illinois she was associate director of nursing 1970-1971, business office manager 1973-1975, pastoral care minister and secretary of maintenance 1993 – 2008. Sister Ann Louise worked in nursing administration at Presentation Medical Center, Rolla, ND 1975-1976. She was a field representative for the Joint Commission of Accreditation of Health Care Organizations 1976-1979 and 1985-1993. She was Provincial Treasurer 1978-1980. She served at Les Cotils Hospital and Convent on the Channel Island, Guernsey 1980-1984. She was the Co-Director of the Associates of the Sisters of Mary of the Presentations from 1985-2007. Sister Ann Louise served at St. Aloisius Medical Center 2008-

2009. She retired to Maryvale Convent, Valley City in 2009.

Sister Ann Louise wrote her autobiography in her later years. In it she wrote down many poems that she then sang to familiar tunes. In one of them she says her farewell:

I pray for my God above  
To shower you all with deepest love.  
My deepest gratitude and prayer,  
Is the gift I now with you share.

When my work on earth is done,  
And life's victories have been won.  
God will take me home above,  
Then I'll understand His love.





## REWARD OF PATIENCE

There once was an oyster whose story I'll tell  
Who found that some sand had got under his shell.

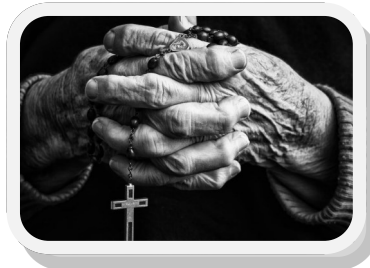
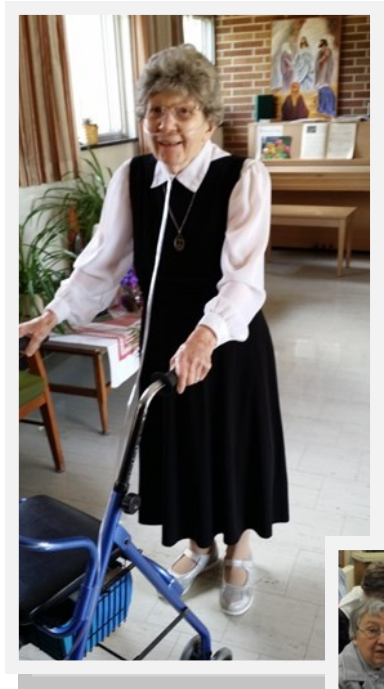
Just one little grain, but it gave him a pain,  
For oysters have feelings, professors maintain.

Now, did he berate the unfortunate fate,  
That led him to such a deplorable state?  
Did he bawl out the government, call an election?  
"No!" he said to himself as he lay on the shelf,  
"If I cannot remove it, I'll try to improve it."

So the years rolled along, as the years always do.  
And he came to his ultimate destiny – stew.  
But the small grain of sand that had bothered him so  
Was a beautiful pearl, all richly aglow!

Now this tale has a moral, for isn't it grand  
What an oyster can do with a small grain of sand?  
What couldn't we do, if we'd only begin  
With all of the things that get under our skin?

Author Unknown



## BEATITUDES FOR FRIENDS OF THE AGED

Blessed are they who understand  
my faltering step and palsied hand.  
Blessed are they who know that my ears today  
must strain to catch the things they say.  
Blessed are they who seem to know  
that my eyes are dim and my wits are slow.  
Blessed are they who looked away  
when coffee spilled at table today.  
Blessed are they with a cheery smile  
who stop to chat for a little while.  
Blessed are they who never say,  
"You've told me that story twice today."  
Blessed are they who know the ways  
to bring back memories of yesterdays.  
Blessed are they who make it known  
that I'm loved, respected and not alone.  
Blessed are they who know I am at a loss  
to find the strength to carry the cross.  
Blessed are they who ease the days  
on my journey Home in loving ways.  
--from the Passionist Missionaries

## HOW TO PLANT YOUR GARDEN

For the garden of your daily living:

Plant three rows of peas:

- Peace of mind
- Peace of heart
- Peace of soul

Plant four rows of squash:

- Squash gossip
- Squash indifference
- Squash grumbling
- Squash selfishness

Plant four rows of lettuce:

- Let us be thankful
- Let us be kind
- Let us be patient
- Let us love one another

No garden is without turnips:

- Turn up for meetings
- Turn up for service
- Turn up to help one another

To conclude our garden we must have thyme:

- Time for each other
- Time for family
- Time for friends

Water freely with patience and cultivate with love.

There is much fruit in your garden because you reap what you sow.

-Author Unknown



Sisters of Mary of the Presentation  
11550 River Road  
Valley City, ND 58072 - 9620