

Mary Notes



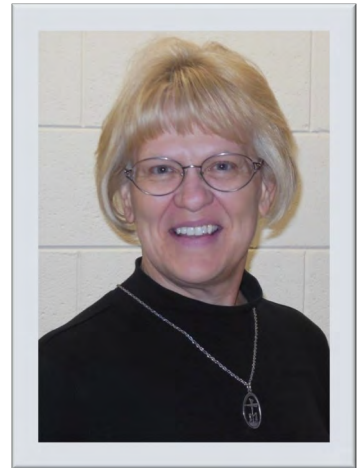
Sisters of Mary of the Presentation

Maryvale Convent, Valley City, ND 58072

Volume 54 No. 1 February 2023

“I am with you, I am with you ALL-ways!”

We, Sisters of Mary of the Presentation, are blessed to take time each year for a 5 to 8-day silent retreat. I was blessed with this gift January 4-12, 2023, at Our Lady of Corpus Christi Retreat Center in Corpus Christi, Texas. Father Samuel Medley, SOLT, was my spiritual director. He had many insights into the scripture and multiple images to help the scripture passages move from my head to my heart.



Each day I would sit with about four different scripture passages, listening to what the Holy Spirit might be telling me. In between I took long walks, sat quietly outside, did some raking of the Meditation Garden, visited the Adoration Chapel, prayed the rosary and the Divine Mercy Chaplet and offered intercessory prayer for the world.

During that time I had the opportunity to “attend” Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI’s funeral virtually. I was inspired by this wonderful witness of God.

At the end of the retreat I asked God for a gift. He gave me a song with multiple verses. The refrain is:

“I am with you, I am with you ALL-ways!”

The refrain is with me everyday letting me know that indeed God is with me every moment, in sadness and in joy. God is with me no matter where I am...in the chapel, in bed or at work. May you, too, know God’s constant presence.

Into His Likeness: Be Transformed as a Disciple of Christ

Inspired by Edward Sri and his book entitled, *Into His Likeness: Be Transformed as a Disciple of Christ*, Sister Anne Germaine took this title and what it means as the topic of the Women's Retreat held in March and July 2022. More than forty women from all over North Dakota spent a weekend at Maryvale Retreat Center for prayer, teaching and dialogue with other women who strive to grow in their spiritual life and live a life of discipleship.



March Retreatants



July Retreatants



Sister Anne
Germaine
Picard
decorating the
auditorium.



Father Don Leiphon blessing the
gifts that were given to retreatants.



“I had a ‘Peace-filled’ & ‘Moments Close to Christ’ retreat at Maryvale.

Sr. Anne Germaine was the perfect example of Peace and true Discipleship in Christ. I love the way she kept things low-key. No rush...there was time to ponder our personal discipleship and to easily find the ‘peace’ in our life through the beautiful surroundings at Maryvale.

I also enjoyed the small group discussions. No judgement, and comfortable sharing made that part of the weekend inspirational!”

I thank Sr. Anne Germaine and Maryvale community for the safe, peaceful, and inspirational retreat!”

Susan Waldoch



“Sr. Anne Germaine Picard is wonderful! She is patient, kind-hearted and full of Jesus. She sees Him in everything! She was a great leader for our retreat. I loved the personal stories she shared that were heart-felt examples of how God works in our lives when we listen to His guidance. There were learning sessions and also plenty of free time to journal, pray, and go for walks and enjoy the beauty of Maryvale. The St. Ignatius trail was especially beautiful. It was like Maryvale was built around this perfect creek running through the property. I was so refreshed after my weekend retreat. I felt more positive, hopeful and happy. Just the reset I needed! I will definitely do this again.”

Shari Huettl



**“I FELT SO
REFRESHED!”**

“I have wanted to attend a Women's Retreat for many years and I finally made the time for it. It most certainly did not disappoint! I went hoping to get a shot in the arm to increase my prayer life. The peace and beauty of Maryvale, combined with the prayerful weekend was so rejuvenating. It was made even more so by Sister Anne Germaine and all of the faithful women who added to the experience.”

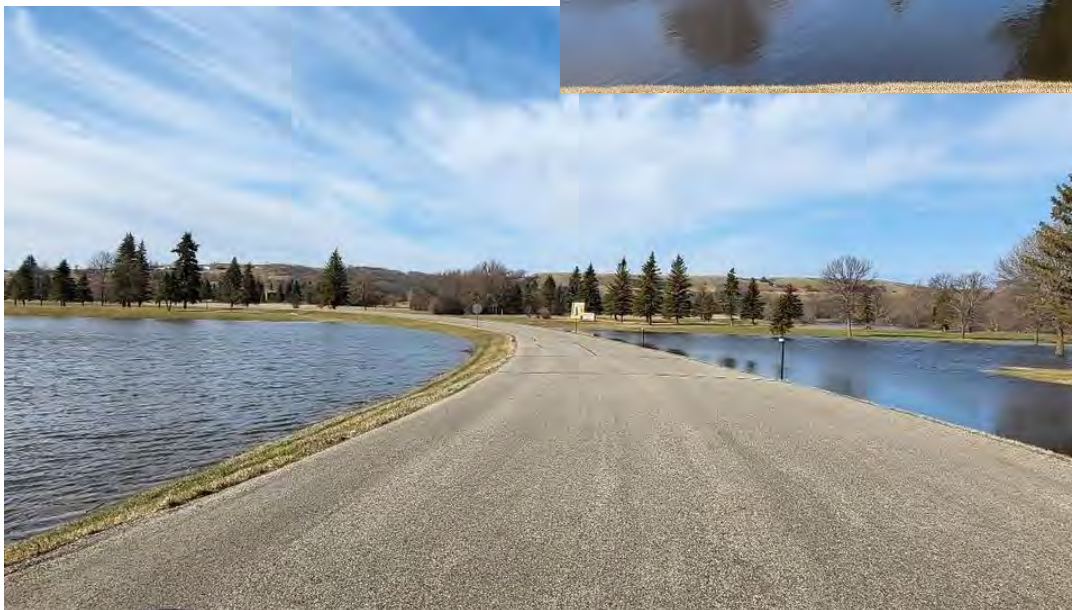
Rose Deck

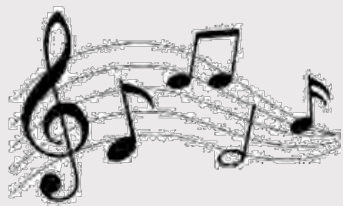
Water, water, and more water...

After a winter of sooooo much snow, Spring finally came to North Dakota. But along with the warming temperatures came melting snow! And did it ever melt! Water, water, and more water...! Valley City, ND declared a flood emergency on April 23, 2022 to protect the city from the rising Sheyenne River for up to 21 feet. The clay dikes and flood walls were put up and, thanks be to God, no damage was done!

Maryvale, especially Dave Musgrave, Environmental Services Coordinator, and his team took precautions as well by keeping a close eye on the forecasts. The aqua dike was put up around Bethany House, which sits very close to the river. Luckily, the main entrance to Maryvale was always accessible for staff, visitors, and hospitality groups.

We are very thankful this was not a repeat of the flood in 1993, or 2009, or 2011!





Spring Concert: The Valley Troubadours

The Valley Troubadours filled the Maryvale auditorium with all sorts of lively music as they performed their Spring concert on May 2, 2022. About seventy guests, the Sisters, and Father Don were treated with selections that ranged from hits of the 50's, to contemporary, to spiritual.

Cyndi Hill, Accompanist, didn't miss a note as Maestro John Monilaws directed the group of twenty troubadours, including ten soloists, who sang to a toe-tapping audience.

Everyone enjoyed the music and the cookies that followed.



Helpers at Maryvale



Mrs. Ihry and Sister Suzanne direct the enthusiastic helpers!

The St. Catherine School 5th and 6th graders were getting antsy being cooped up in a classroom! The count-down was on...only 2 days of school remaining! And the weather was sooooo nice! What was a teacher to do? Let the class vote, of course. They chose unanimously that going to Maryvale and picking up sticks was a way better idea than staying in school!

Of course the kids were trying to find the "biggest" branch of them all! The trailer was filled within an hour's work! The kids were rewarded with refreshments, which included cookies!



Associates Gather for Mass and Retreat



May 29, 2022...a beautiful day to celebrate the Ascension our the Lord and to gather the Associates for Mass and a retreat. Sister Anne Germaine Picard gave a wonderful presentation on the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation's Charism, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for He has anointed me. God has sent me to bring the good news to the poor..." (Luke 4:18)

Evangelization is the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation's primary charism and has been formed into their apostolic ministry throughout their history, starting with Father Fleury and Mother St. Louis. They patterned their ministry after their patroness, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and their second patron, St. Vincent de Paul. The Sisters and the Associates are to practice the virtues of hospitality, obedience, simplicity, faith, and joy. They participate in evangelization by being the Presence of Jesus.



Nancy Orthman and Sr. Sharon Houle taking in the warm weather.

Free time was offered. Many took in the outside beauty of Maryvale, while others visited. The group came together for some discussion. The retreat closed with Sister Suzanne Stahl, Regional Superior, blessing the hands of each Associate to be the Presence of Jesus wherever they are located.



Sisters and Associates listen to the presentation on Charism.



Sr. Suzanne Stahl blessing the hands of Associate, Tim Burchill.

2023 Women's Retreat

March 17-19, 2023

July 7-9, 2023

GOD is *thirsting* for you,
Are you *thirsting* for GOD?



To Register:

Call (701) 845-2864

or

E- mail: maryvalesmp@gmail.com

Presenters:

Sister Anne Germaine Picard, SMP
SMP Associate, Sharon Eversvik



SMP Leadership Is Selected

The Annual Regional Meeting of the United States Region took place June 23-25, 2022. Sister Suzanne Stahl, Regional Superior, welcomed Sister Jacqueline Josse, Superior General of the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation from France. She also introduced Sister Judith Carroll, interpreter. The first morning was taken up with regional business, as Sister Elaine Lange, Regional Assistant, gave a report of the Region, and Sister Suzanne gave the annual financial report and answered questions from the Sisters.

Having spoken with each Sister individually the day before, Sister Jacqueline expressed what an important moment this selection process for leadership is for our Congregation. The Sisters spent the rest of the day in silence so as to be able to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit. The next day the selection process continued as each Sister prayed for those on the nominee list. That afternoon, after consultation with the rest of her team, Sister Jacqueline announced that Sister Suzanne Stahl was selected to be Regional Superior and Sister Elaine Lange was selected to be Regional Assistant. They will serve the Community from 2022-2026.

After the announcement, congratulations were given by all the Sisters and refreshments were served. During Evening Prayer, Sisters Suzanne and Elaine formally accepted, in the presence of Sister Jacqueline, to serve as Regional Leadership for the United States Region from 2022 through 2026.



Sister Jacqueline Josse, Superior General,
and Sister Judith Carroll, interpreter



Left to right: Sister Elaine Lange, Regional Assistant,
Sister Jacqueline Josse, Superior General, Sister Suzanne
Stahl, Regional Superior

GOD HAD OTHER PLANS!

By: Tim Burchill, Associate



Liberia is half the size of ND with 8x the people

Liberia

- Settled by freed black slaves from US and Caribbean early 1800's
- Gained independence 1847
- Government is modeled on US
- Official language is English
- Land area 1/2 size of ND
- Population is 5.4 Million
- 80% live below poverty level— \$1.90/day/person
- 85% Christian



Location of Liberia in Africa

How do a former Barnes County, ND farm boy and Saskatchewan, Canada farm girl wind up growing crops in Africa to help families who lack food security? If you had asked my wife, Christine, and I a few years ago when we started planning for retirement, we would not have had a clue! But here we are, knee-deep in rich, brown, tropical soil, and the adventure is just beginning!

Christine, and I started planning for retirement about ten years ago. When we got married in 2010, it was a pre-requisite on her part that we would spend winters in a warmer climate. In 2012 with the help of a former colleague of Christine's, we searched for and found a modest place in Arizona that we loved. We took the plunge and looked forward to brown Christmases and wearing shorts and T-shirts in January! In the years following, we frequently traveled to Arizona for vacations, longing for the day when we could go down and stay the entire winter.

Beyond this, our retirement plans included going on travel adventures like Viking River Cruises and Rick Steves European tours. And of course, we reasoned, we'd have more time for grandchildren and our favorite hobbies. We've now learned that God has other plans for us.

In 2021, I completed 39 years as a health care administrator in North Dakota. The last fourteen of those were spent as CEO of SMP Health—Ave Maria (formerly Ave Maria Village) in Jamestown, a long term care ministry of the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation (SMP). Early on, I developed a deep affinity for the Sisters and everything they stood for. This led me to become an Associate of the SMP's in 2009. Wanting to be part of their ministry, we also began sponsoring a high school student in the Sisters' Cameroon mission.

Christine had lived in North Dakota since coming to Dickinson to attend college in the 1970s. She worked in education for nearly forty years, teaching high school art for most of that time. After our marriage, she moved to Jamestown and ended her career with eight years at Kensal Public School, thirty miles north of Jamestown, teaching art and music to mainly elementary students on a part-time basis. The last two years we were both working were 2020 and 2021, which were of course at the height

of the COVID pandemic. This greatly increased the stress in both the health care and education fields. Although we had both enjoyed our careers, we were truly ready to be done! Plans were made to retire in Jamestown, and as stated before, spend winters in Phoenix.

In my job at Ave Maria, our workforce had, over time, become increasingly diverse. Near the end of my tenure, several immigrants from Liberia, West Africa were on our payroll, mainly working as certified nursing assistants. Some had lived in the U.S. for many years, while others had only recently arrived. I was impressed by the spirit, compassion, and hard work they displayed in taking care of our residents, beside their strong Christian faith. Upon getting to know them better, I discovered that many still had family members in Liberia. Several were helping support these loved ones by sending them part of their wages. The stories they told of life in Liberia were compelling, and the needs of the people living over there seemed overwhelming to Christine and me, especially in comparison to the blessings we enjoy in America.

Two brutal civil wars in the last generation wreaked havoc on the Liberian economy, and on the people themselves, with many citizens being killed or resettled in refugee camps in neighboring countries. In the past ten years, the situation has stabilized considerably, and efforts are being made to strengthen Liberian democracy, although corruption continues to be a problem in the country.

Many Liberians spend most of their energy and time just trying to put a roof over their heads and an adequate supply of food on the table. It is popularly believed by experts that the key to rising out of poverty and moving toward self-reliance and sustainability is education. However, without food security, education becomes difficult, if not impossible. How can one be educated and work their way out of poverty when they suffer from malnutrition and even possibly starvation?



Tim and Christine Burchill
on their February 2023
trip to Liberia.



Bill Woyah ministering to children in Liberia.

It was through these native Liberians at Ave Maria that we got acquainted with 29-year-old Bill Woyah, a teacher and part-time Christian minister near Monrovia, the capital city of Liberia. Bill's objective at the time we met him was to come to America to study information technology at the university level, and then return to Liberia and use

his newfound knowledge to help improve life for his people. Christine and I agreed to help sponsor Bill, and plans were made for him to come to the States. However, upon applying for a student visa at the U. S. embassy in Monrovia in 2021, Bill was summarily turned down, with no specific reason given. We learned later that the underlying reason for not allowing foreign nationals into the country had much to do with America wanting to curtail the number of immigrants entering our borders, particularly from developing nations. At first Bill was discouraged, but as we talked about it, we realized that this was very likely God closing a door. **But the wonderful thing about our God is that when he closes one door, he almost always opens another one!**

It was this setback that gave us the impetus to form a nonprofit organization, which is named Living is Giving, Inc. (LIG). Through LIG, we and our partners in Liberia and the U.S. are determined to make a difference in the lives of as many people as we can reach. The organization is registered as a charity in North Dakota and has received 501(c)3 tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service. LIG has established a small farm which we hope will place food on the table of numerous Liberian families. Women from the local area volunteer their time to cultivate crops on a plot of land which has been purchased through our own personal funds and help from other individuals and families who believe in the project. The hope is to eventually diversify the project by adding livestock and/or poultry, and with God's help, make the venture partially sustainable.



One of the families involved in the LIG project



A group of volunteers planting crops on land purchased by LIG donors

The first Cassava harvest has begun!



Bill and a few of the Frank Town boys standing at the corner of LIG

DONATIONS MAY BE MADE THROUGH PAYPAL (LIVINGISGIVING@GMAIL.COM), VENMO (LIVING IS GIVING INC) OR BY PERSONAL CHECK (MAIL TO: LIVING IS GIVING, C/O TIM BURCHILL, 1422 9TH AV. NE, JAMESTOWN, ND 58401) LIG IS A 501(C)3 NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION. ALL GIFTS ARE 100% TAX DEDUCTIBLE. THANKS! WE NEED YOUR HELP!



Children participating in Bible Talk ministry.

Living is Giving has also taken on an existing children's ministry in the same area called Bible Talk Organization (BTO). BTO operates in three different communities and strives to feed the souls and the bodies of Liberian youth of all ages. This is accomplished by sharing the good news of Jesus through non-denomination Bible teaching, singing, worship, and providing food for the children who attend when possible. Our partner, Bill, whom we refer to as our "boots on the ground in Liberia", was the founder of BTO. Many of the volunteers who are involved in the farming operation are also part of the BTO ministry



Bible Talk Organization kids

Future plans include the establishment of a school to provide Liberian children a well-rounded education which includes such things as agricultural best practices, nutrition, and health/hygiene. The Liberian public school system is technically free to all, but is plagued by a severe shortage of teachers, lack of school facilities and supplies, and severe underfunding. Many villages in the rural areas of the country do not even have schools. Parents are also expected to purchase their children's school uniforms, books, and supplies, which are beyond the reach of many families. We are also considering offering small "micro-loans", at a low rate of interest, which could help Liberians start or grow cottage businesses to help their owners rise above poverty and become self-sufficient.

What else does God have in mind for Living is Giving? We don't exactly know, but we do have a strong sense of his leading in all of this. Alone we cannot improve the lot of all 5 million Liberian citizens. But like the story of the little boy who was walking along the beach where millions of starfish had washed up on shore and was throwing them back in the water one at a time, **we can make a difference to some, if not many, people in need of our help.**

During their recent trip to Liberia, Christine asked some of the women why they volunteered to be a part of LIG when it is very hard work for no pay. I was told they believe in the vision, one lady says she works for her grandchildren's future. Another said it isn't for immediate gain but for long term gain for food and education. Another said "it has given us hope for the future."



These pictures show young Cassava plants. Tapioca is made from Cassava flour. The greens are cooked and used to make sauce for rice and the root tubers make various flour type things or are just cooked and eaten. It will be ready to harvest in 6 months.



Christine helping to hoe this year's crop of Cassava plants.

500-MILE PILGRIMAGE

Associates, Bob & Anne Marie Wuolu, Viola Wysocki, Amanda Kunze, Maryvale archivist, Cathryn Stillings, along with Sister Suzanne Stahl and Sister Anne Germaine Picard made a 500 mile, one day pilgrimage to five of the SMP Health Ministry locations.

The crew departed Maryvale July 30, 2022 at 7:30 a.m. and made its first stop at SMP Health — St. Raphael's in Valley City. From Valley City, we headed West about 45 miles to SMP Health — Ave Maria in Jamestown. Next on the list was SMP Health — St. Aloisius in Harvey with a pit stop at the convent in Harvey. Sr. Mary Agnes Huber greeted us there and had freshly made coffee to enjoy with our sack lunch.

After lunch we journeyed on first to Bottineau and SMP Health—St. Andrew's and then to SMP Health—St. Kateri in Rolla. Chris Albertson, CEO of both hospitals gave us a tour of each ministry. As we left the Turtle Mountains we decided to take the route through Devils Lake, where we enjoyed supper in the park. We safely returned to Maryvale at 9:30 p.m. It was a long, faith-filled packed day, but it was so worth it!

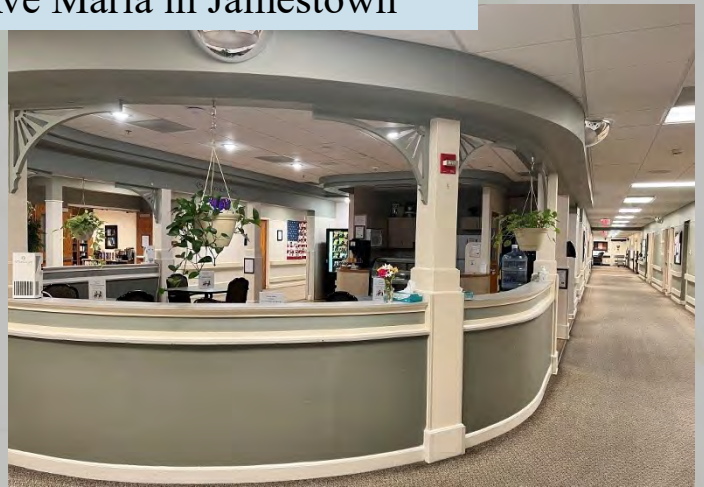


L to R: Cathryn Stillings, Bob Wuolu, Amanda Kunze, Anne Marie Wuolu, Sister Suzanne Stahl, Sister Anne Germaine Picard, and Viola Wysocki

SMP Health – St. Raphael in Valley City



SMP Health – Ave Maria in Jamestown



SMP Health – St. Aloisius in Harvey



St. Aloisius Convent

SMP Health – St. Andrew's in Bottineau



SMP Health – St. Kateri in Rolla



~Viola Wysocki writes...

We were each handed a booklet which started in the year 1903 where a group of Sisters first arrived in the US. 1903 was the beginning of SMP Health Ministry in Illinois. From there they spread into ND. Thanks to Amanda for putting in a lot of work and time compiling all the information on each of the places and beyond.

Was impressed with the cleanliness, the spacious rooms and hallways. The staff we met were very friendly and welcomed us to ask any questions we may have had.

One's faith was visible in each place with a beautiful Chapel to accommodate the residents. Pictures and paintings throughout some of the hallways were unique to the region we were in. Each entrance had a sign with the beautiful SMP Health logo on it.

A special thanks to Sr. Suzanne, Sr. Mary Agnes, Sr. Anne Germaine and Chris for being tour guides. For Amanda and Sr. Suzanne for taking on the job of driving the van, and thanks to Amanda for providing the food for the day.

We made it back to Maryvale safe and sound in the time stated.

God Bless All. Peace.

~Anne Marie and Robert Wuolu wrote...

Wow! What an adventure this was!

We signed up to see SMP Health Ministries, be with the Sisters and relish more of North Dakota. That became a pilgrimage journey of discovery for both of us. Amanda and Sister Suzanne drove us over 400 miles of vast regions of central and northern North Dakota which we had never seen before. I was amazed at the beautiful rolling hills, water and abundance of trees. It reminded me of Germany.

It was pure joy to spend the day with like-minded people giving us better insights into the scope of what goes on in their facilities for the elderly who cannot care for themselves. The staff in each was friendly, knowledgeable and compassionate, willing to answer any of our questions. All buildings were impeccably clean and odor free with ample light. The beauty of all artwork showed God's love to residents and visitors. I remember the homey feeling. I wanted to be there. Inside and out showed concern for God's green earth and care for His children.

One of our highlights was at the table in the convent in Harvey, home to Sisters Mary Agnes and Anne Germaine. To be in their home was a special treat. Amanda had prepared a very abundant, delicious, nutritious meal of filled buns, veggies, fruits, etc. It was amazing!

And then there was the picnic on our return home. Again we feasted on more delicious food and still there was more left. It seemed to multiply. God is good all the time.

We would do this again in a heartbeat and pray there will be another chance to experience more of their health ministries. Thank you very much for this opportunity. Love, peace, joy and prayers.



Picture on the Left:

Associate, Tammy Votava, spent Sunday afternoon, July 3, 2022, playing harp for the Maryvale Sisters and Father Don Leiphon.

Picture on the Right: She came back December 30, this time bringing her husband Ken, also an Associate. Ken read aloud the Christmas story, stopping now and then for Tammy to play a fitting Christmas hymn. It was a beautiful program enjoyed by all the Sisters and Father Don.





Maryvale...a “New” Beginning

On October 3, 2022, the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation celebrated a “new” beginning for Maryvale Convent. The Sisters have called Maryvale home since 1965. It has been for them a place to gather for meetings, a place where the administration of the Community is carried out, a place for retreats and a place to share religious life with one another. None of that will change. What *does* change is who owns the building and the property and who is in charge of the retreats and hospitality.

The creation of a new non-profit, Maryvale Corporation, is the result of years of planning and prayer by the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation. The Sisters realized that with the lack of vocations and their numbers declining, they would eventually be unable to continue the ministries of retreats and hospitality. They desired to continue these ministries for the people of the Fargo Diocese. After brainstorming ideas and checking out some possibilities, they approached Bishop John T. Folda, Bishop of the Fargo Diocese. After several discussions with the Bishop and his staff, the Sisters decided to sell Maryvale (property, buildings and ministry) to the Diocese of Fargo. The Sisters will continue to live at Maryvale as long as needed, while the retreat center is now owned and managed by Maryvale.

Steve Splonskowski, Executive Director of Maryvale, and Sister Suzanne Stahl, Regional Superior of the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation, sign the purchase agreement.



The celebration of Maryvale's "new" beginning began with a prayer service led by Bishop Folda, which included prayers for the strengthening and blessing of all who will begin or continue their work of hospitality and evangelization at Maryvale. Prayers were also asked that the ministry of Maryvale may grow in faith, hope and love, and that all who come to Maryvale may experience the Holy Spirit's deep abiding presence.

As Sister Suzanne handed the "key" to Bishop Folda, she said, "While this is not the key to the kingdom of God nor the key to the kingdom of heaven, it is the key to Maryvale. May Maryvale's mission of evangelization continue until all people know and follow Jesus Christ."...to which all replied, "Amen. Alleluia!"

After blessing the water to be used, Bishop Folda processed with all those present to various parts of Maryvale, as he sprinkled and blessed the areas to be used in the ministries of Maryvale. As they walked, all sang: *"This is holy ground, we're standing on holy ground. For the Lord is present, and where God is, is holy. This is holy ground, we're standing on holy ground. For the Lord is present, and where God is, is holy."*



Sister Suzanne Stahl, Regional Superior, hands the "keys" of Maryvale to Bishop John T. Folda.

The celebration of the transfer of Maryvale to the Diocese of Fargo concluded with refreshments in the dining room.

Maryvale will be offering more retreats and has plans for expanding the ministry in order to touch more lives with the sustaining grace of God. Steve Splonskowski was named Executive Director of Maryvale and Carrie Nice will continue to be Operations Manager of Maryvale. She coordinates the hospitality and retreats ministries, and can be reached at 701-845-2864 or by e-mail: maryvaleopsmgr@gmail.com.



Bishop John T. Folda entrusts the "key" to Maryvale to Executive Director of Maryvale, Steve Splonskowski.



Carrie Nice, Operations Manager of Maryvale

Associate Covenant Signing

October 22, 2022, the newest SMP Associate, Sophya Rose, signed her Covenant with the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation. Sister Anne Germaine Picard, Co-director of Associates, planned a beautiful liturgy. It was followed by a delicious potluck meal organized by fellow Associates.



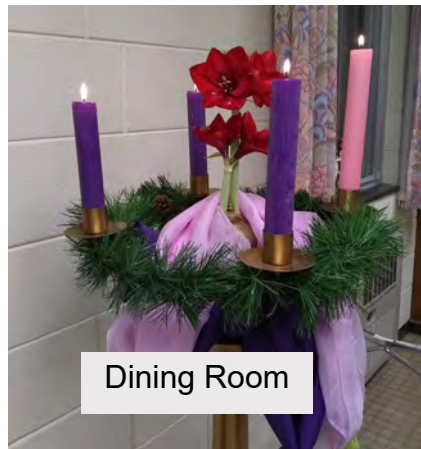
Sophya Rose, at the young age of 14, started volunteering at a nursing home, and when she was 16, she obtained her Certified Nursing Assistant license. She graduated from Sacred Heart School of Practical Nursing College as an LPN and then graduated with her RN degree from Stritch University. Sophya has been working for the Sisters as a CNA since 2019 and recently started RN duties as well.

Sophya attended RCIA classes and was confirmed Catholic in 2004. She recently returned to the Church and is a member of St. Catherine's Church, Valley City, and is a board member for the REACH program that benefits St. Catherine School.

Sophya is excited and looks forward to continuing her faith journey with the Catholic Church and being an Associate of Sisters of Mary of the Presentation.



Fellow SMP Associates gathered around Sophya Rose (center)



Dining Room

At the beginning of Advent Cathryn Stillings, SMP Archivist, gifted the Sisters with a box containing three wax-covered amaryllis bulbs. All we had to do was watch them grow. There was no watering needed!

Sr. Debra Berry put two into the Maryvale Chapel, one in the center of our Advent wreath and the other on the "stump of Jesse". The third one we placed in the center of our Advent wreath in the dining room.



Chapel

It was so much fun watching the fat stalks grow so quickly into beautiful red blooms! Each stalk produced four blooms, and then, after a short rest, a new stalk grew in each and produced four blooms in January and February!



The "Stump of Jesse"

Christmas Blizzard

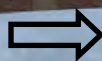
About a week before Christmas we were blessed with a four-day blizzard, which dumped about two feet of the white stuff on us! It continued to be stormy off and on until the end of December. The maintenance crew really had their work cut out for them! They pushed snow into huge piles for days! The wind and snow made for some beautiful photo opportunities!



Joe Neurauter pushing snow



Dave Musgrave pushing snow



Picnic Table

SMP and Maryvale Christmas Party

Every year the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation have hosted a Christmas party for the Sisters and the Employees. This year Maryvale Corporation helped the Sisters host a lovely party.

To get things rolling *The Original Rock and Roll Farmboy*, Mylo Hatzenbuhler, entertained the Sisters, Father Don Leiphon, Bishop Folda, and SMP & Maryvale employees and their guests. Mylo performed hits from his "Very MYLO Christmas Album" such as: Heifer Bells, My County Agent, Rudolph the Unpolled Hereford, Walkin' Till My Pants'll Fit Again.

The man behind Mylo, Clyde Bauman is from Bismarck and is the Music Director at Bismarck State College. He closed his show with two classical music pieces, sung beautifully in his rich tenor voice.

When Mylo finished, it was time for a blessing of the Employees. As Bishop John T. Folda greeted and blessed each employee, Carrie Nice, Operations Manager of Maryvale, and Sister Elaine Lange gave a special bookmark to each employee. Steve Splonskowski, Executive Director of Maryvale, and his family sang beautiful hymns during the blessing.

Splonskowski Family

Left to Right:

Stephen, Steve,
Francesca, Lucia,
Jacinta, Damien



A delicious meal was cooked and served by Tamara Krogman, Tiffany Goering, sisters of Steve, and Magdalena, daughter of Tiffany. Great conversations were buzzing as everyone enjoyed their meal.



Bishop Folda blesses
Cynthia McFadgen

Grab bags filled with various gifts were chosen by each employee as their name was called, beginning with the employee who had worked at Maryvale the longest. Raffle prize winners were announced. A great evening was had by all!

RAFFLE PRIZE WINNERS:

Fuzzy Blanket: Dennis Stillings
Blue Afghan & Pillow: Lori Tabor
Clown filled with candy: Caroline Engelhard
Tree with lights & birds: Lucia Splonskowski
Lighted Nativity: Marie Esch
Lighted Battery Candles: Mike Esch
Stuffed Rabbits: Kelly Tabor



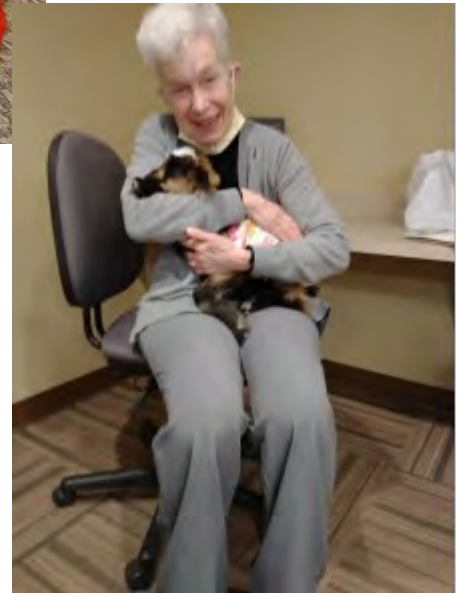
Bishop Folda blesses
Dave Musgrave

Do you see what I see?



The kid fit so well into the Nativity Scene!

Sister Debra Berry, Pastoral Care Director at SMP—St. Raphael's, really took a liking to the tiny baby...or did it take a liking to her?!



SMP - St. Raphael employee, Keely, brought in her baby goat to share with residents and staff.



A Foretaste of Spring...



BLOOM WHERE YOU ARE PLANTED

“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 you will 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 stormy 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 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.

Sister Therese Celine Craven