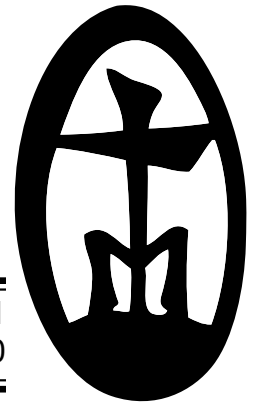


Mary Notes



Sisters of Mary of the Presentation
Maryvale Convent, Valley City, ND

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A Lenten Reflection

By Sister Carol Jean Kuntz, SMP Provincial

It is that time of year again – Lent. I have come to be very thankful for this time because somehow it helps me to make/take opportunities to improve my spiritual life. It is so easy to get all caught up in the

busyness and the hectic pace of life.

Lent helps me to look more closely at how I am relating to God and who I am becoming. Each Lent I realize that there is still a part of my heart that forgets, fears or is unaware of how much it needs to reflect the goodness and love of God.

The Church suggests three primary ways to help one return to God with one's whole heart: they are prayer, fasting and almsgiving. I would like to take this opportunity to focus on Fasting.

Fasting shows my dependence on God and expresses the fact that I really am trying to put God first in my life. For a long time I thought of fasting as only fasting from food. After many years I finally have come to realize that in addition to fasting from food, Lent provides opportunities for other types of fasting as well.

My understanding of fasting needs to include not just what I eat, but also the attitude of my mind and heart – or in other words, when I fast from food it is of no use unless I also have a loving and forgiving attitude toward others.

Fasting is or can be a powerful means of personal conversion – it is a means to become a more loving person. I would like to reflect on just a few ways of how I am learning/struggling to fast.

- FASTING from negative and judgmental thoughts about others helps me to find and appreciate the good in each person and allows me to have more kind thoughts and feelings
- FASTING from watching TV and playing computer games allows me to spend more time in prayer and to be more present to those with whom I live and work.
- FASTING from my need to always want to be right or having my way allows me to listen to another's opinions and ideas.
- FASTING from all that I take for granted allows me to realize and appreciate how blessed my life is!

My list can go on and on and I'm sure each can make his/her own list. Fasting is not meant to take the joy out of life but rather it is a means to restore a deeper sense of satisfaction with life.

May you each have a Holy, Blessed Lent.

DURING LENT...

Fast from fear; Feast on faith.

Fast from despair; Feed on hope.

Fast from depressing news; Feed on prayer.

Fast from discontent; Feast on gratitude/

Fast from anger and worry; Feed on patience.

Fast from negative thinking; Feast on positive thinking.

Fast from bitterness; Feed on love and forgiveness.

Fast from words that wound; Feast on words that heal.

Fast from sadness; Feed on joy and humor.

Welcome to Maryvale

On Monday, October 5th, 2009, the first of the members of the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation Health System began to gather at Maryvale for the quarterly meeting of the system before the rest of the CEO's arrived for their annual Retreat.

The topic of this year's Retreat was "SMPHS – A HISTORICAL MISSION". The planner was the new Vice President of Mission, Jack Kennelly. He chose many excerpts from SMP History to read to us for information and reflection. These quotes from the Origins of the Community provided many thought – provoking questions, asking us how we practiced the virtues of hospitality, availability, sacrifice, and obedience which was exemplified by our Mothers when they undertook the long voyages across the ocean, long trips across our country, to be of service to all who needed them. Their courage is truly a lasting tribute to humble women which is admirable and a challenge for us to follow.

The session opened with a sharing by each of the participants about their feelings as they came to the retreat. Then each CEO presented a 3 minute sharing of their successes in living Mission – Driven Healing Hospitality in the past year.

A short history of the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation was delivered by Sister Rose Therese Sevigny. In it she emphasized the life of the original six Sisters who blazed the trail for our immigration to the United States. A short history of the first mission was given. Then the role of the Holy Cross Fathers in our history was shown for it was they who were mainly responsible for the exodus of our Sisters from France. They requested many Sisters to do domestic work in their colleges. Finally a short abbreviated history of our present four hospitals was given. Time did not allow any mention of the acquisition of the Retirement Homes.

Father Dale Kinzler, Diocesan liaison for Health Care in the Fargo Diocese, spoke on the History of Health Care in the United States and explained the teachings that underlie the Ethical and Religious Directives that distinguish faith-based providers from secular providers. Discussion and questions ensued.



Sister Carol Jean missioning Bruce Davidson. Father Michael Schommer and Tim Burchill in the background.

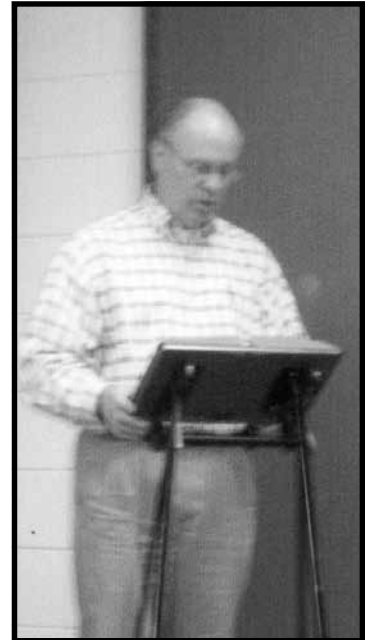
Sister Margaret Rose presented information on Catholic Principles of Social Justice. She identified different forms of justice and gave examples on how they are practiced.

On our last day a panel of four administrators talked about what it means to be a part of a Catholic Health Care System. They gave examples of events in their own lives. Discussion and input was also given by other administrators on their experiences.

The evenings were spent in enjoying one another's company and playing games. Each day we celebrated the Liturgy and thanked God for the Mission and all who live and serve in it. In the closing session a Missioning Service was directed by Father Michael Schommer, pastor of St. Catherine Parish, and Sister Carol Jean Kuntz, Provincial. Music for the Liturgies was provided by Sister Suzanne Stahl.

Gratitude was expressed by the participants as they prepared to return to their ministry. Among those were Aaron Alton, Sister Margaret Rose, Sister Carol Jean Kuntz, Sister Suzanne Stahl, Sister Rose Therese Sevigny, Jodi L. Atkinson, Timothy Muntz, Lisa Schnedler, Timothy Burchill, Nancy Farnham, Bruce Davidson, Craig Christianson, Rockford Zastoupil, and Linda Leone.

We thank all who had a part in organizing, presenting, and hosting the day.



Jack Kennelly proclaiming the Word of God.

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Vocation Awareness

The Season of Christmas is a time of Gift giving and we at Presentation House celebrated with Junior High girls from St. Louis parish and school the Gift of our Religious vocation in an afternoon of fun and education on the meaning of Religious Life. We did this through the use of a DVD entitled "Jesus calls Women" followed by some sharing of our personal experiences as a Sister of Mary of the Presentation. Our Vocation is a Gift that we received and unwrap daily in a life of prayer and dedication to the ministry entrusted to us. The girls had a great time and the families were so grateful that we had the girls over to our home.

Sister Anne Germaine and Sister Elaine



OWL'S

[OLDER WOMENS LEAGUE]
(Only women 90 or older are eligible)

Poem by the Leader
Sister Agnes Marie Zimny

SEASONS

The sunny days are summer days,
A tanning white skin time,
Of picnics packed,
Hot dogs to eat
With happy appetites.

The harvest time are busy days
With golden crops to glean,
For picking large ripe melons
Near overflowing streams
Where autumn leaves need raking
And their apples for the taking.

But winter days are resting time
That we old folks enjoy.
Just to slow down
In a white world
To there repose
And dozezzz.

One Body in Christ

It was October 11, 2009 when the community of Sisters and Associates gathered as we received Tim Burchill of Jamestown to the signing of his covenant relationship with the community. Tim is the CEO at Ava Marie Village in Jamestown, one of our Health Care facilities. He carries forth the healing presence of Jesus through his leadership and witness of dedication to the mission which instills in his employees the dignity of each person especially to one of the most vulnerable groups of people in our society, the elderly who come to us for care.

After the beautiful liturgy we continued to experience being One Body in Christ as we enjoyed one another over a delicious meal prepared for us by our Associates. This celebration continued as we, the Associates and Sisters gathered in the auditorium for a program on Vocations prepared by Sr. Dorothy Bunce and Sister Anne Germaine. We shared our History, our Mission and memories of how God has been in our midst and continues to lead and empower us as his disciples as we call forth other woman to walk in the footsteps of Christ living the charism of The Sisters of Mary of the Presentation. Each of us received the challenge to take an active part in vocation ministry as many ideas were shared.

As you read this article you might be wondering Who is an Associate. An Associate is a Christian person who willingly enters into a covenant with the Sisters becoming ONE BODY IN CHRIST to share in and contribute to the life and corporate mission of the Congregation. The member is a woman or man who desires a bond with the Congregation in a formalized way. Contact Sr. Mary Jane Pulskamp at St. Andrew's Health Center in Bottineau or Sister Anne Germaine at 620 E. Thompson St. Princeton, Ill. 61362 for further information.

By Sister Anne Germaine



Sister Carol Jean Kuntz welcomes Tim Burchill of Jamestown as he signed his covenant relationship with the community.

Cherry Mine Disaster: Dedication and Remembrance

It was a beautiful fall day on November 14, 2009 that the small town of Cherry, IL and the people of the Illinois Valley gathered with people from throughout the United States and other countries, especially Italy, who came for this day remembering the loss of lives. Many of these people had a loved one killed in the Cherry Mine disaster of 1909 when 259 miners were killed as the mine fire took their lives. We, Sister Dorothy Bertsch, Sister Elaine and myself attended this celebration representing our Sisters who came to Spring Valley, IL in 1903 to care for the miners.

We saw pictures of our Sisters in the Museums of Cherry and the Princeton Library. Our hearts sank with grief and pride as we thought of our Community presence at that time. As we walked the cemetery we saw and visited with many people as they took pictures of the engraved names on the tombstones of their family member. It was a solemn day of remembering as an invocation was given along with many brief addresses by dignitaries before the beautiful monument of engraved names on granite was unveiled. Our Sisters, in their dedication of being the presence of Jesus 100 years ago, went daily to the mine with family members to give support while families hoped and prayed that their loved one would still be alive. The day ended by the release of 259 balloons in memory of each life lost.

Sister Anne Germaine



This monument is dedicated to those who lost their lives in the Cherry Mine Disaster of 1909.



259 balloons are released to honor each of the lives lost.

Vocation Ministry at Maryvale

The Sisters of the Maryvale Community sent invitations to the Associates in the Valley City area inviting them to attend a special dinner at Maryvale January 28, 2010. A total of forty-five persons were present for the dinner, twenty-four of these were Associates. The tables were set in festive style and the kitchen staff served a superb meal! There was a spirit of joy and unity within the group.

At the end of the meal there was a program. Sister Marlyss welcomed all present and gave a brief history of our Religious Congregation, from its origin in France to the present time of our ministry in the United States. The international character of our congregation was emphasized, as well as our mission ministry in the Cameroons. She asked the assistance of the Associates in promoting vocations to our congregation.

Sister Carol Jean, Sister Suzanne and Sister Rose Therese each in turn shared their personal vocation story as a Sister of Mary of the Presentation. We appreciated their willingness to participate and were inspired by their simplicity in following God's call.

Sister Dorothy Bunce, as formation director of our province, gave a presentation on the elements and steps of the formation program for young women who seek to join us in religious life. She also handed out informational brochures that would assist our Associates in promoting vocations.

We then proceeded to share some ideas of ways the Associates could help us in promoting vocations. Slips of paper containing ideas were placed at the center of each table (under a candle!). Persons at each table were asked to read the suggestion aloud. Brief discussions followed each of the nine ideas that were provided.

Before the closing prayer, the Associates were invited to join us in playing cards or other games. People chose to stay and visit a little before leaving rather than play games. We were delighted that so many of the Associates in our area were able to come for this event. They seemed pleased and expressed appreciation for our hospitality.

The Maryvale Community continues to make efforts in promoting vocations with another activity that will begin in February and continue into the following months. Each of the fifteen Sisters will have a couple of designated days each month as her special day to pray, fast and do penance for the intentions of vocations to our Congregation. Calendars have been compiled with each Sister's name written on her special day.

May God gift us with dedicated persons to choose to join us in Religious Life!

By Sister Marlyss Dionne

Ministry Reflection

Have you ever been in the right place at the right time and you know that God is the manager of the moment and the other graced moments that followed. That happened to me beginning in September, 2009 when I led a retreat in a rural parish entitled "Celebrating Catholic Women." Attending this gathering of twenty one women was a woman and her two daughters whom I had never met. I saw the mother at daily Mass but didn't really know her except that she was a member of our parish.

About a month after the retreat, Mary's husband had a massive stroke. I was called by one of the daughters if I could go to the hospital to visit her dad and mother who faithfully sat with her husband. He was unchurched but had faith. At my first visit I offered to pray with him. He was open to prayer. He gripped my hand tightly as I prayed. A few days later he was transferred out to another health care facility to have further testing and it was discovered that he also had terminal cancer as was given up to 6 months to live. He was put on Hospice care. This news was most difficult to receive. One of the daughters contacted me again and gave me her mother's cell phone if I would call her to bring her some comfort. I did this but also called Mary Anne Michelet, an associate of the area who agreed to go and visit and was an angel of God's presence as she visited and brought communion to Mary while her husband was there. It was just a few days later the he was transferred back here to a Nursing Home. I was again called to see if I could visit him. I would go and visit and sing some hymns and have prayer. He would tightly grip my hand as I prayed and would thank me. I could see and feel God sustaining him and his family. In the same room was another dying man whose wife was Catholic and he had never been baptized. Again it was revealed to me that there was no mistakes with God because this woman knew Marjorie Bunce, sister of Sr. Dorothy Bunce of whom Sr. Dorothy got to visit while here for a meeting in December. One evening while Mary was attending her husband our pastor came in and asked Bill if he would like to be baptized and his response was "Yes". Mary attending her dying husband agreed to be Bill's sponsor bringing new life in his preparation for his death. I saw that the faith of these women carried their husbands to the Lord. I had previously shared with Bob's family about a prayer service I would be happy to lead and pray with them as Bob's death approached. Their son who was jobless and dealing with many difficult, worrisome personal issues

came home and spent a lot of time at the bed side of his dad. God was again so present. The day arrived of his approaching death and I was called and asked if I could do the prayer service with them. As I led the service, we sang a few hymns and at one point in the service I invited each person present to say good-bye or what they wished in their father's ear as part of this farewell service. The son approached his dying dad spoke something in his ear and suddenly the father reached high in the air threw his arm around his son in a final long embrace of love as healing happened between them. The tears flowed in everyone's eyes as they experienced this miracle of Christmas before them. It was another one of those God moments that I will never forget. It was this son a day later said to his mother as their dad was dying, don't you think we should call Sister to come now. I came and we prayed the chaplet of Divine Mercy as we watched and waited for that moment of final good-bye and the family asked that we sing "The Old Rugged Cross" which was one of their dad's favorite hymns and this hymn led him home to the Lord as he let go of earth and the door to eternal life opened.

I share this story with you and invite you to reflect upon the many times you have been at the right place at the right time and God performed a miracle before your eyes.

This experience is another one of those sacred moments of my vocation as a Religious when all I can do is to spend time giving thanks to God for my vocation as a Sister of Mary of the Presentation. It is all about God, His presence giving me deeper meaning and purpose to what it means to be a "Sister." I came to Illinois as Vocation Director for the community and God creates pathways for me to minister to his people not my way but his way. God leads and I follow. We need women, open to dedicate their lives for the salvation of souls which is a vital aspect of our charism. There are many unmet needs in our midst and if we are available to the Spirit a door opens for ministry. There are Vocations to Religious life. They need to be encouraged. If you know of women who desire to stop out in following in the footsteps of Jesus as a Sister of Mary of the Presentation encourage them to say their Yes to God and contact us. We want them, God wants them, The people need them. sisterannegermaine@gmail.com

Sr. Anne Germaine

A Look Into the Past: Angels of Mercy Taken from "Spirit" Magazine

In November 1903, seven nuns from the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation traveled from their home in France to Spring Valley to staff a new hospital intended to serve area coal miners. Little did they know that, just six years later, they would be called upon to play an important role in caring for those affected by the nation's worst mining disaster.

At first known simply as "The Miners' Hospital," it was later named St. Margaret's, in honor of founder Father John Power's mother. In the early years, the building was sparsely furnished and included only a five-bed ward and a private room. The Sisters often gave up their own beds for their patients.

At the time the hospital was founded, there were few laws governing the protection of miners, and accidents and deaths were common occurrences. However, nothing could have prepared the nuns for the scope of the tragedy to come.

The nearby village of Cherry had grown up around the St. Paul Mine, which had been created to supply the St. Paul Railroad steam locomotives. The mine was considered one of the most modern and safest in the nation.

But on the afternoon of November 13, 1909, as workers at the mine were transporting a cart of hay to the underground mule stables, a dripping kerosene torch set the load on fire. The fires spread rapidly, trapping 400 miners and eventually leading to the deaths of 259.

While attention understandably was riveted on attempts to rescue the men and boys rapped deep underground, the devastation did not stop at the surface. Wives, mothers and children agonized over the men's fates.

Daily they surrounded the rescue workers at the mineshaft, weeping, begging, praying, and berating the company that they blamed for the fire and insufficient recovery efforts. Below ground, men wrote letters to loved ones as their lives flickered away.

Many of the women spared little time worrying about their futures, distressed, as they were over their men. Rescue efforts continued for weeks, and the bereaved women

paraded through what one Sister called "the field of the dead" that was the morgue tent, hoping, yet fearing, to identify the body of a loved one.

"It was very heartrending," wrote one of the Sisters, "to see these poor women when they recognized the bodies of their husbands. ... Often the women could not recognize their loved ones from physical features which were horribly unrecognizable, but by some object found on their person or by the (ID) number suspended at the waist."

One week after the fire began, everyone rejoiced over the surfacing of the so-called "eight-day" men who had survived in an air pocket. The mine was sealed to tamp out the fire, perhaps effectively sealing the fates of any miners who remained alive. When it was reopened, recovery efforts continued until September 1910, 11 months after the fire. At least two of the Sisters would make the daily trek to Cherry until the last bodies were recovered.

Many of the miners' wives and families became victims themselves because they were left with no means of support. In these days before Social Security, workman's benefits and government aid, the women's livelihoods were buried with the miners.

It was to the families that Sister Gilbert, Sister Marie Antonin, Sister Simon, Sister Marie Alexis and Sister Marie de Nazareth ministered. Srs. Gilbert and Marie Alexis were among the original seven nuns to come in Illinois in 1903. Since they had arrived knowing little English, the sister could relate to the frightened and anguished wives who were recently immigrated Slavs, Poles, Italians, Swedes, Austrians, or Lithuanians.

Bereft of extended families continent away, "the wives were there all alone, no support, nothing," summarizes Ed Caldwell, a recognized Illinois Valley expert on the Cherry Mine Disaster.

One Sister who had been assigned to do laundry and cleaning for a family that included four children, ranging in age from 6 months to 8 years, recounted: "Never



have I witnessed such chaos; there was nothing in the house-no bread, no meat, no milk, nothing but small bar of soap.”

In all, about 160 widows and nearly 400 children were affected by the calamity. About \$500,000 (from the company and raised through relief efforts) was awarded as compensation to the families.

The Sisters played an integral role in assisting the families through the first long winter, caring for their daily needs and doling out the relief funds. Mother Magdalen, Superior, wrote to her superiors in France of the esteem in which the Sisters were held: “The company of the railroad came insisting that the same Sisters remain with the families... The priest from that area also requested that the Sisters be responsible for distributing the donations coming in for families in need. The Sisters themselves had rolls of bills which they carried... to give families along the way.”

Without the nuns’ help, Caldwell is convinced, “families would have died.” In a town founded on coal, home heating supplies were scarce. Clothing and food shortages

were rampant, and only the relief efforts, including donations of money, food, clothing and other items from both local and national sources, fended off hunger and destitution that winter.

After the tragedy, some of the widows returned to their native countries, but others remained, convinced that America, despite all they had just experienced, still held promise. The mine limped on for another few years before shutting down, a victim of changes in the industry that swept mining from northern Illinois.

The disaster had an impact greater than the devastation to miners and their families within the tiny community- it prompted the state legislature to establish stricter regulations for mine safety and to pass a workman’s compensation act.

The Sisters’ mission to provide compassionate care for the Illinois Valley community, put to the test a century ago, continues today through St. Margaret’s Health and SMP Health System.

Sisters Carry Out Mission of Maryvale

By Jean Schlegel Valley City Times Record

People who have never visited Maryvale Convent, three miles northwest of Valley City, may wonder what the sisters there do. It may seem a mystery.

Sister Marlyss Dionne, who has lived at Maryvale since it was built in 1965, offers insight on what the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation's mission is.

The Sisters of Mary of the Presentation is a Roman Catholic religious women's community with locations in Europe, Africa and North America. They serve people through education and health care.

And for the sisters of Maryvale, who serve at and away from the convent, their work encompasses areas both spiritual and earthly.

Hours of prayer

Although it's a misconception to say all they do is pray, Sister Marlyss says the sisters – especially elderly, retired ones – pray often.

"They are our prayer warriors, or prayer ministers," she says. There is a prayer journal in their chapel, and as the names are added to the journal, they pray for each one of them.

"Many people call in and want prayers said by the sisters," she says. The callers give names to be placed in the journal.

A focus of their prayers is abortion. The convent gets calls from a pro-life organization in Fargo, asking them to pray for someone who is contemplating having an abortion.

"We are always praying against abortion," Sister Marlyss says.

A Canadian woman has called several times, asking for prayers to be said, she says.

The sisters also pray for ministries the convent sponsors. This includes work in health care facilities, nursing homes and hospitals, and for sisters who work in parishes and schools.

One of the SMP's facilities is the Sheyenne Care Center, a nursing home in Valley City.

Outside the convent

Eighteen sisters live at Maryvale, though the convent has 33 sisters.

Of the 18, 12 are retired and some are elderly and sick; six sisters carry on much of the convent's work. Their ages range from 50 to those in their 90s.

The others live and work in other North Dakota cities, including in Fargo, Harvey and Bottineau, as well as in Princeton and Spring Valley, Ill., where they have their largest hospital.

Sisters also work in the Mandan area. One teaches at a Catholic school there, and another does ministry



Sister Marlyss Dionne, Sister Augusta Bernier and Sister Emma Marie Arcand.



SEARCH WEEKEND participants

to Native Americans at the Standing Rock Indian Reservation south of Mandan. Another sister does parish ministry in Fosston and Bagley, Minn.

Sister Carol Jean Kuntz is the provincial leader of the United States province, and she is assisted by Sister Suzanne Stahl and Sister Rose Therese Sevigny. These three operate as a team and have a four-year term in their roles.

Father Claude Seeberger is the current chaplain at Maryvale. He replaced the late Father John Odermann, who served as chaplain at Maryvale for many years and died on Jan. 14.

Caring for one another

"One of the things we do here at Maryvale is care for our elderly, sick sisters," says Sister Marlyss, director of Maryvale's St. Anne's Care Center.

The 10-person facility is on the main building's second floor. Six sisters are there now; in the past year, five of the sisters in the care center died.

Sister Marlyss said when she looks at their elderly sisters, she sees them as basically happy, prayerful people who have given their lives to God.

"It's really obvious that they care about people. They are very willing to pray for people who call and ask for prayers.

"They still consider themselves in ministry because they have a prayer ministry. They are assigned that prayer ministry and they pray for all the ministries that Maryvale sponsors," she says.

Sister Emma Marie Arcand, 87, is seen praying her rosary in the large chapel at Maryvale. She was from Williston in western North Dakota and was a teacher in Harvey and other Catholic schools in the Fargo diocese.

When asked why she became a sister, she said, "I had a call."

Several of her aunts were sisters, including Sister Albertine, who taught music at St. Catherine Catholic School in Valley City for 50 years.

Sister Helen Backes, 96, is busy putting a puzzle together. She was a nurse for many years.

Sister Augusta Bernier, 98, is the oldest of all the sisters at Maryvale. She is seen having her morning coffee in the dining room on second floor. She has been a sister for nearly 75 years.

They all said their parents were an inspiration to them and brought them up in the strong, Catholic faith. This encouraged them to go into the religious life.

Hospitality Center

Sister Marlyss directs Maryvale's Hospitality Center.

Groups gather there year around. This includes Catholic groups and those of other religions; 89 groups used the facilities last year.

Four times a year, about 60 young men and women come to Maryvale for a religious experience called SEARCH for Christian Maturity. They are high school and college-aged Catholics who minister to each other. They also have talks by a priest, a sister and a married couple.

Maryvale doesn't host regular groups in the summer because the sisters are on retreats. Also, the priests of the Fargo diocese hold their retreats at Maryvale.

Other work

Maryvale Convent is also a formation center for women who would like to become a sister.

Sister Marlyss says there aren't as many women studying now to be sisters as there formerly were.

Since last year, they've had a sister who works full time in an effort to recruit vocations.



Sister Marlyss in the Hospitality Office



Sister Emma Marie praying the Rosary

In addition to the Long Term Care homes and hospitals that the Sisters sponsor, they have Prairieland Home Health. There are two centers: one in Fargo and one in Spring Valley, where people are cared for in their own homes.

These are run by employees of Sisters of Mary of the Presentation Health System.

The sisters who work in their health care facilities are doing spiritual pastoral care, but not all the facilities have sisters.

An international congregation founded in 1828, SMP is composed of what are called provinces and regions, provinces being the more independent entities of the two.

Maryvale Convent is a province and is mostly self-governed by the sisters there. The convent reports to the Mother House in France.

Man Finds Insights at Convent

By Jean Schlegel – Valley City Times Record

Tom Musgrave has been the physical plant manager at Maryvale Convent for 25 years. He knows the sisters there as “real people.”

“The bottom line is they’re people, too,” he says. “They have worries, struggles, strengths and failures.”

Musgrave lives on the 500-acre Maryvale property. He and his wife live in a house he built.

On the grounds, the sisters have their own cemetery, a vegetable garden and a prayer tunnel that has the Stations of the Cross along a prayer lane. Benches along the way allow people to stop and meditate.

Musgrave said Maryvale is an apostolic community. This means the sisters go out into the world and work side by side with people.

“They are called sisters here,” Musgrave said, noting the difference between “sisters” and “nuns,” who are thought of as living in a cloistered community.

Musgrave said his tasks at Maryvale are like running a convention center. Many groups use the facilities.

He says living at Maryvale has taught him the difference between wants and needs, and how people take things for granted.

He had a life-changing experience when he went to Uganda, Africa, in 1994 and 1995. He went with Sister Annetta Lebeau from Maryvale.

A former carpenter, Musgrave went to Uganda to do some building and teach people there some things, but he said they taught him more than he taught them.

Musgrave says he doesn't believe the sisters ever really “retire.” They continue to stay busy even in advanced age, and many of them live into their 90s.

Birthday Party for the Maryvale Chaplain

A surprise birthday party? Yes, the priest friends of Fr. Claude who come to pray and discuss with him each month wanted to surprise him on his birthday, November 17. We Sisters at Maryvale were alerted to the plan and asked to



Father Claude Seeberger

keep it secret! Amidst the writing of birthday cards and decorating the dining room table for his birthday, the Sisters really did keep that secret. Fr. Claude was totally and pleasantly surprised when 4 priests arrived to offer Mass with him at 11:00 on his birthday! Msgr. Laliberte gave an inspiring homily and each priest had a part in the concelebrated Mass. Afterwards we went to the dining room for the meal. He had asked earlier of the kitchen personnel when he came late for breakfast why a table was festively set. However, they also kept the secret and said that must be for one of the Sisters who was celebrating her feast! So, he was truly surprised to find it had been set for him and his guests! Father Leiphon had baked a birthday cake and two loaves of sweet breads for the celebration. The cake was a special treat as it was a two layered chocolate caked filled with cherries, pecans, and walnuts, which we ate with a scope of ice cream!! Father Leiphon certainly knows how to bake a cake m-m-m delicious!! Of course, we sang “Happy Birthday” with gusto! Coincidentally, the diocesan monthly calendar, which specifies days to pray for each priest during this year of the priesthood, had designated Father Claude for November 17! It was a delightful time for all as we honored our chaplain, Father Claude.

Reported by Sister Marlyss Dionne



L - R: Father Duaine Cote, Father Dale Kinsler, Father Claude, Msgr. Robert Laliberte and Father Donald Leiphon.

Prayer and Team Work Go Hand in Hand

A woman came to our Catholic Hospital from out of town. She was in labor but her baby was not due until later in the month. Shortly after she was admitted to the hospital, the baby came into the world. At first the baby was not breathing, so the doctor and a number of other staff were working with the baby, and another doctor was with the mother, as she was having some health issues at the same time. The staff was from various areas: Doctors, Nurse Practitioners, Cardiac Rehab, Nurses, Social Services, Chaplain, Pastor, Infection Control Nurse and the Maintenance. The latter were working on the heater to warm the blankets. As these people were working with the mother and the baby, many of the staff was running for various things that the medical staff needed at the time. Also during this time, a large group of about twenty staff from dietary, housekeeping, social workers, nurse aides, chaplain, and office personnel gathered in the chapel for prayer asking the help of the Lord to guide the hands of the doctors and other staff working with the mother and baby. The Pastor was with the mother and was praying with her. After some time, the mother was doing better and as the staff continued to work with the baby and keep it warm, etc. the baby let out his first cry and later began to breathe on its own! The helicopter service from the nearest larger hospital transported the baby. It was now breathing on its own and was a nice pink color. The Pastor baptized the baby and the baby is doing well.

This shows what prayer and teamwork can do with the help of God. It was a very tense time, but in the end everything turned out just fine. It is a privilege to be in solidarity with the laity who carry forward the healing of Jesus.

By Sister Mary Agnes Huber



A Subtle Explanation of a Prominent Feature on my Face...

By Sister Frances Marie

I have a little nose as turned up as can be
And what can be the use of it
Isn't very plain to see
It cannot stand a feather
Dust will make it sneeze
It seems to be allergic to weeds
Scented in the breeze.

I've had it since I was born.

It came to church with me one morn.
It started to itch and then to quiver.
The thought came with a shiver
"I'll have to blow my nose."
I opened wide the handkerchief and thought
"I'll do it quick".

I took a deep breath and then:

The rafters began to shake-
The bell went ting-aling.
It drowned out the organ,
You couldn't hear the people sing.
I thought "I'd do it easy like."
But it sounded like a siren.
Some people left the church.
I guess they were the firemen.

Red in the face.
At my disgrace.
I closed my pocket tight. And firmly set my lips.
Still it won the fight, You see it got the drips.

Still I have got my nose- It is kind of attached to me.
Wherever I go, it goes.
It gives me lots of trouble
Because it has to have its blows.



Blessing of Maryvale Outdoor Shrines and Pathways

Pilgrims Make Their Way with Jesus

It was a cold and windy October 10th afternoon as the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation and guests braved their way around the holy ground of Maryvale to bless all the outdoor shrines and pathways. Fr. Claude Seeberger, OSB Maryvale chaplain led the prayer as the pilgrims made their way on foot or by car. The re-creation of the shrine of St. Joseph and Fatima and the new creation of the Stations of the Cross and the Ignatius pathway were the impetus to have this ceremony of blessing. Sprinkling with holy water and prayer reminded the pilgrims that God can use all things to raise minds and hearts to God. Beginning at the front of Maryvale with the beautiful stone relief of Mary, Mother of the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation (SMP), the pilgrims prayed this prayer of consecration:



“Virgin Mary, Mother of God and Queen of Heaven, most powerful Advocate and cause of our joy, we choose you today as our Mother and Queen. We consecrate to you our being and our entire lives – all that we have; all that we are; all that we love. We give you our hearts and our souls, our homes, our families and our country. Everything in us and everything around us we dedicate to you. May we love and honor you as our Mother all the days of our lives. O Mary Immaculate, God’s Mother and our Mother, reign over us and teach us how your Son, Jesus, may rule and triumph in us as He rules and triumphs in you.”



With the rosary leading the pilgrims the Shrine of Fatima was the next stop. This shrine was moved from St. Margaret’s Convent grounds when the convent was sold to St. Margaret’s Health, Spring Valley, IL. The crucifix crafted by the late Fr. John Odermann, OSB stands in the rocks with a bleeding heart bush at its feet. This led us to the new Stations of the Cross and the well trod Prayer Tunnel. The Stations of the Cross were created by Tom Musgrave as was the Ignatius pathway. The pilgrims moved on to the Maryvale Marian Shrine at the entrance to the property. Through Psalm 25 they implored God to “Show me Your way O Lord.” Hymns of Fatima, Immaculate Mary and St. Joseph, Great Protector led them to the Shrine of St. Joseph. This statue was moved from under the trees by the Quonset to a new setting by the Maryvale driveway so it is more frequently seen. The Ignatius Pathway to the west of the back of Maryvale convent near the spring stream of life giving water into the woods was the next holy stop. There the pilgrims sang the prayer of St. Ignatius “Take, Lord receive....” What a fitting way to end the pilgrimage which leads each one on their path of life with Jesus the Christ.



Sister Suzanne Stahl

Parish Nursing

I have recently completed a course, through Concordia College, to meet the requirements of Parish Nursing Practice. It is surprising to learn, how many registered nurses of various faiths have turned to Parish Nursing Practice. Our week long course took place at Mount Carmel resort, north of Alexandria, MN. Mount Carmel is beautiful well kept retreat resort near Lake Carlos. It is located in a wooded area with lots of space to walk. Also a small chapel, situated in the woods was ideal for prayer, medication and relaxation. The cabins on the property were comfortable and of various sizes. Some could accommodate a family. I decided to stay in the lodge. The lodge was also where we had our classes. Our day began at 7 am and went to 8p.m. except for Wednesday when classes ended at 3:30p.m.

There were 22 RN's who participated from various denominations. I was surprised to learn that several Catholics in our group were hired or being hired as Parish Nurses in other denominations; one student was being hired by both the Catholic Church and the Presbyterian Church. States represented were North Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin and Missouri. I am beginning to practice as a Parish Nurse at Nativity Catholic Church in Fargo.

Our course ended with a "Service of Dedication for Parish Nurses". The ceremony was conducted by our Course Instructors and a Lutheran Minister. It began with a Call to Worship, then a Hymn of Dedication, Prayer of Dedication, Psalm, Scripture, Homily. The students recited a Dedication to Service Prayer: "Compassionate God, we dedicate ourselves to you and to your people. We dedicate ourselves to bring peace and healing, caring and comfort, to all who need our ministry. We dedicate ourselves to be hearts through which Christ loves, tongues through which Christ speaks, faces through which Christ glows, hands through which Christ heals, arms through which Christ lifts, and gifts through which Christ works. Amen." The ceremony ended with a blessing and each participant receiving a certificate and Parish Nurse Pin. Reception followed.

For those who are not acquainted with Parish Nursing Practice I hope the explanation below will be insightful.

What is Parish Nursing? Parish Nursing is recognized "specialty practice", within professional nursing practice. It has its roots in Judeo-Christian tradition and is consistent with the basic assumption of many faiths that the care of self and others is an expression of God's love. The philosophy of Parish Nursing embraces four major concepts: spiritual formation; professionalism; health and wholeness; and community.

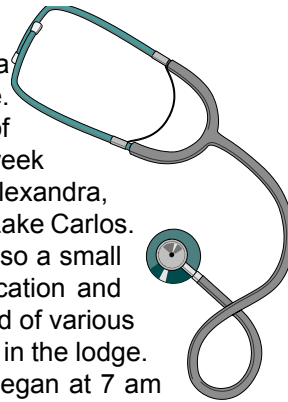
Central to Parish Nursing Practice is the development of one's own spirituality. Spiritual formation is an intentional process or journey towards intimacy with God. Personal spiritual formation is an ongoing, essential component of Parish Nursing Practice which leads to opening of one's heart to self and others.

The mission of Parish Nursing is to challenge the nursing profession to reclaim the spiritual dimension of nursing care; to promote the care of the whole person and to awaken the faith community to revitalize its healing mission.

Parish Nursing Ministry is faith based with emphasis on health wellness of body, mind and spirit within the faith community. It is considered a calling. Ministry shapes its practice. The Parish Nurse works within the faith community helping individuals and families thus contributing to the health and wellness of that faith community.

The functions of the Parish Nurse are: integrator of faith and health, health educator, personal health counselor, referral agent, trainer or volunteers, developer of support groups and health advocate. Parish nurses do not provide "hands on" nursing care or perform invasive treatments. It is not a substitute for pastoral care, medical assistance, community health nursing or social services. Parish nurses work in partnership with others to advocate for the health and well being of the congregation. Parish nursing requires the ongoing support of the congregation.

A parish nurse is a licensed registered nurse (RN) who has completed an internationally recognized basic parish nurse preparation course. She practices within the scope and standards of parish nursing practice in the United States. (ANA, 1998)



Hooked on Prayer Shawl Ministry

When Sister Eloise Marie isn't putting together a jigsaw puzzle she is busy making prayer shawls for our various Long Term Care ministries. The idea behind a prayer shawl is, while the shawl is being created (usually knitted or crocheted), prayers are being said for the person who will receive it. Sometimes the creator knows the recipient personally, sometimes just a name or situation, or sometimes the creator knows nothing about the recipient.

Sister Eloise Marie spends many hours picking out the yarn that will best go together and uses a variety of patterns. She loves this ministry and says that the amazing part about this ministry is the knowledge that the prayer shawl has helped someone through a difficult time or has brightened their day. She looks forward to making many more prayer shawls.

Fr. John Odermann ~ 1928 to 2010

Fr. John Odermann, OSB, 81, died Thursday, Jan. 14, 2010, in his choir stall in the Abbey Church at Richardton shortly before Noon Prayer.

Fr. John (James) Odermann was born in Raub on June 2, 1928, to Henry and Regina (Landwehr) Odermann. He was born into a family of five girls and three boys. He received his elementary education at Elbowoods. He came to school at Assumption Abbey in September 1946 and entered the novitiate on June 21, 1949. He made his monastic vows on July 11, 1950. After completing college at St. Martin's Abbey, Lacey, Wash., he continued his seminary studies at the Abbey and was ordained to the priesthood on May 19, 1955.

After his ordination he was appointed assistant infirmarian and other tasks. The following year, on Aug. 25, 1956, he was appointed assistant pastor to St. Anthony's Indian Mission at Mandaree. In Aug. 9, 1960, he was assigned as assistant pastor to St. Joseph's Church, Devils Lake. Assumption Abbey started a daughter house in Bogota, Colombia in 1960. Fr. John volunteered to go there and left on July 10, 1965. In 1968 he returned and worked again in Devils Lake. Since the State School for the Deaf was in Devils Lake, Fr. John took special interest in teaching the faith to the Catholic students there. From 1971 to 1978 he was pastor of Sacred Heart Church, Glen Ullin. He returned to the Abbey and was appointed to minister to St. Joseph's Church, Twin Buttes. He was also appointed Director of Oblates. In 1979 he added work in the woodcrafts department to his activities. On July 1, 1980, he was appointed pastor of St. Thomas Church, Gladstone, with its mission of St. Philip's, Hirschville. He continued to work in woodcrafts. He participated in the theological renewal program at Santa Anslemo, Rome, from January to May of 1983. On June 1983 he began to work full time at the Abbey in retreat and woodcrafts work. From March 1, 1984 to July 31, 1986, he was chaplain to St. Vincent's Care Center, Bismarck. His last assignment, Sept. 1, 1987 to Jan. 30, 2008, was as chaplain to The Sisters of Mary of the Presentation at Maryvale in Valley City.

His work in woodcrafts blossomed while he was at Maryvale. He made crucifixes by the

hundreds and into the thousands. He managed to sell them in many parts of the country through good friends. He had very good friends in many places to whom he was spiritual mentor.

He wrote a book of meditations on the Stations of the Cross. His last project was a book of meditations on many topics. A second volume will be published posthumously. Fr. John was a deep spiritual person and became involved in a spiritual healing ministry team after his retirement from Valley City.

Fr. John is survived by two brothers, Harold (Helen) Odermann, Dickinson, and Lloyd Odermann, Billings, Mont., and four sisters, Phyllis Odermann, Teresa Weinand, Joan Odermann, all from Dickinson, and Cecile (Alfred) Volesky, Helena, Mont., and a sister-in-law, Katherine Odermann, Billings, Mont. He was preceded in death by his parents and one sister, Doris Stevenson.

A Vigil Service was held on Sunday, January 17, at 7:00 p.m., and a Concelebrated Mass of Christian Burial was offered in the Abbey Church at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, January 18. Internment was made in the Abbey Cemetery.

Each of our Monks will offer three Holy Masses for the repose of his soul. Members of the Congregation are asked to remember him in their monthly Mass for the deceased of the Congregation.

Father John was Chaplain at Maryvale for 22 years.

MAY HE REST IN PEACE



Haiti Connection Update

Our "Sister" parish, "Our Lady of Perpetual Help" at La Montagne, Haiti, has been united with St. Louis parish at Princeton, IL. for 22 years. I have been down there to serve 12 times. We have supported them on a monthly basis, plus a medical mission trip twice a year for a 2 week period, We have the Church, school, convent, rectory and youth center that we helped build. The youth center had some damage from the earthquake but can be repaired for the medial mission. Pere Solmone Jerome is the pastor and is O.K., but he is staying in a tent until they determine if it is safe to go back into the buildings. There have been daily shocks and tremors. Our medical team will be going on Feb. 26 and if possible go as far as Jacmel the center for the diocese. La



Our Lady of Perpetual Help at La Montagne, Haiti has been sponsored by St. Louis parish in Princeton, IL for 22 years.

Montagne is this diocese and Jacmel received much more damage and loss of life. Jacmel is along the sea on the south of Haiti and at the base of LaMontagne. Roads are passable, but extremely dangerous! Pere Michael Le Borgne lives there who was the former pastor at LaMontagne and he just escaped the falling ceiling at the Rectory. St. Marks' Cathedral was destroyed along with the parish church of St. James. Estimated deaths were around 5,000 in the city of 50,000 people. Of course you have all heard on the news about Port-au-Prince which is the capital where many deaths, injuries, dislocated people, many orphans resulted from this Earthquake. This is where we flew into before we went to the mountains where our parish is. Many friends of mine were lost. We got to be very close to each other. Many of them were our translators. I will deeply miss them for they did such great work and they became very good friends to us as they gave back to us at the mission. They are very happy, humble, loving and giving people! As of date this is all the news I have. My experience of going to Haiti those many times made me a humble person as I experienced the needs of the people and it opened my mind to the poor in our world. 90% of these people are Catholic. We were able to build a school there. Our ministry for Haiti is a reflection of our Lord's unconditional Love – a love that surrenders all, that inspires trust and faith, and the embraces all people, regardless of race, status or creed. Our believe is shaped that Christ is alive and best served directly by serving those in greatest need (Matt.25:40)

We ask only for daily regular prayers for these people. It is through surrender, service, and prayer that we all become closer. I come to you in union with our Lord. Please continue to pray for all the people of Haiti. Our parish at its first collection for the victims of the Earthquake in Port-au-Prince collected \$5,600 for the Catholic Relief fund. Our daily prayer continues to be poured out to them.

God bless you all,
In Christ Love, Bill Phalen, Associate



I Am Grateful

To God, full of surprises.

To God, Whose love is beyond my comprehension and greater than I can imagine. It continues to surprise, and delight me and satisfy my deepest longings.

For His love, present in the morning, when I awaken and ask about my day, and give it entirely to His care. For His love in situations so confusing and complicated, that seem to have no foreseeable good outcome and I can say: "Lord, I give this to you. Please handle it."

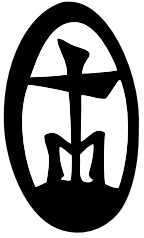
To God in snowstorms, getting stuck, blowouts, torrential rain. God is there, panic disappears.

To God, Who is there – when tempers flare, hurtful remarks are made With his help, peace is restored.

To God, Who helps those whom we are powerless to help because of distance. He hears our wishes and gives what is needed to them.

Sr. Frances Marie Voigt





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Annual Women's Retreat

The annual Women's Retreat at Maryvale has been a favorite for many years.
It is hoped that this year's will be the same.
The retreat, March 12-14, 2010, is entitled
"Tending One's Soul: God's Spiritual Garden."

The imagery of a garden is used in various ways throughout scripture to
speak of relationship with God, spiritual growth and conversion.
Jesus often used garden imagery to teach a gospel lesson.
This retreat weekend will give participants time to cultivate
the spiritual fruits of one's own "garden."

Input sessions, prayer times and group activities will be used to
focus and reflect on the theme.

Lent is a very special time to draw closer to God.
Let God be the Master Gardener in your life.

This retreat will be presented by Sr. Anne Germaine Picard and Sr. Dorothy Bunce.

Register for this event by calling 701-845-2864 or
email to: dorothy.bunce@fargodiocese.org.