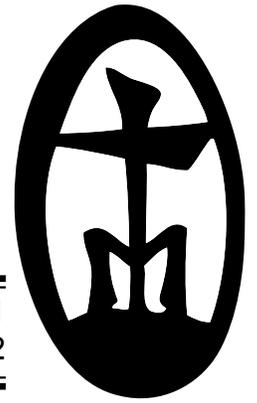


Mary Notes



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

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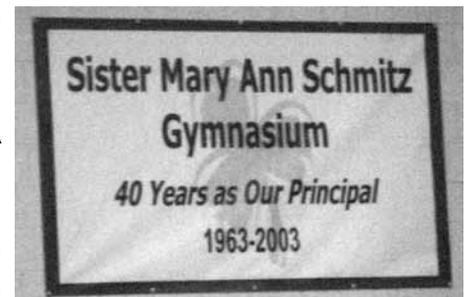
Gymnasium Dedicated to Sister Mary Ann Schmitz

What a grand surprise came to me! A surprise telephone call announced to me that a dedication of the gym at St. Patrick's School in Washington, Illinois was to take place on Nov. 19, 2011. Would I please attend? All expenses would be paid if I would just appear. After stammering a few minutes I asked for thinking time. After a discussion with the Provincial and prayer time I said, "Yes, I would come!" I am the world's poorest traveler, this was known, so I flew to Chicago and a car met me there to finish the trip to Washington –no changing of planes. I was met by the associate pastor, Father Ryan Bedemeyer, after a 2 hour ride we were well acquainted thanks to Father Ryan. A week of activity was planned; I even had an official itinerary prepared by Msgr. Prendergast (he was a Colonel in the army – protocol was followed) and my hostess Rosemary Kloet.

The itinerary gave me time to visit key people, to rest at appropriate time, to visit the school and the annex (the former convent) and to prepare for the program on Saturday. The highlight of the week was the appetizer cordial and dinner hosted by Msgr. Prendergast on Thursday night, a few guests were invited. I had the opportunity to attend a basketball game; the 8th grade team won and moved onto State Tournament and won 3rd place at State. I stayed with my best friends, the Kloets, so I had visiting time there.

The dedication of the gymnasium in my honor took place from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm on Saturday with a free open buffest for all catered by one of the alumni Jim Linsley, who operates the local grocery store. Msgr. Prendergast said 300 people were fed and 100 came and went. The number

of people surprised and delighted me as I visited. A 4 table display of photos and clippings showing events of 40 years



caught the attention of all. Even the stage was covered with a red carpet. All the tables had black linen table cloths with green and white balloons everywhere. One wall had a huge covering hiding something. Another wall had a small covering hiding something. On all the walls are hangings of honors the students and coaches have earned throughout the years. These hangings made an umbrella over my honored hanging.

Msgr. Prendergast arranged (financially) for the provincial to come from N.D. Sister Carol Jean arranged to come by car so Sister Rose Therese, Sister Giustina, and Sister Therese Celine, who were the last 3 sisters at St. Patrick's, and Sister Marlyss accompanied her. Sister Elaine and Sister Anne Germaine from Princeton and Sister Dorothy Bertsch from Spring Valley also joined the celebration. The people were so glad to see the Sisters. St. Patrick's really loved the Sisters and miss their presence.

At the program Msgr. Prendergast was master of ceremonies. Father Robert Hughes, a former pastor, was there and spoke. Msgr. Swaner, former pastor, sent a letter which was read. Sister Carol Jean, the Provincial, spoke also. The plaques were unveiled and blessed. Yes, 2 plaques, one

huge one on the wall across from the entrance and a smaller one on the opposite wall where I always sat to view the games (my photo is on this plaque). Then I had to say a few words.

I spent several moments explaining the real significance of the dedication. Firstly I confessed I dislike sports immensely contrary to the rumor that exists: SMA (my label while I was at St. Patrick's) loved sports around her. Wrong! Athletics, scholastic bowl, spelling bees, band, and music form a learning portion. If we wished to maintain enrollment of junior high students we must have extracurricular activities. There were some in 1963 but not well organized. A parent and coach noted the problem also. Together with many other dedicated parents we formed a committee, a hard working committee, to develop a sound program. We presented it to the pastor. The pastor approved the program on condition we raised the finances. So the adventure began. First we joined I.E.S.A. (Illinois Elementary School Association) because it had an organized program. Bake sales, dances, fundraisers of every kind were put in place. When I left in 2003 the program cost \$13,000, now it costs \$30,000. The athletic committee is still in existence and having great success.

What an honor to be a part of this learning experience for 40 years and now a part in plaque form! I feel the wonderful parents who support the program should have the honor and not me. With St. Paul I say, "...I thank my God every time I remember you (and that is often). In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the Gospel (and athletics) from the first day until now..."

P.S. There was much background work done for this celebration, by Dr. Sharon Weiss, present principal at St. Patrick's and Mr. Larry Mueller, a former athletic director and still a strong supporter of St. Patrick's athletic program. To them I owe special thanks.



L to R: Sister Carol Jean Kuntz, Msgr. Prendergrast, Father Robert Hughes, Sister Mary Ann Schmitz, and Father Ryan Bedemeyer.

A Wish for the New Year

At our annual Christmas/New Year's Party this year, one of the activities at the tables was to write lyrics to a Christmas carol tune, about a wish for the New Year, 2012. One of those presented was to the tune of the refrain of "Jingle Bells."

We want peace
We want peace
For everyone on earth
Job security, freedom and
joy on every face.

We pray for all
that God will bless
and keep us all our days
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year
To each and every one.

HIS PRESENCE

Sr. Agnes Marie Zimny

He's here!

Let's cheer the bright sun and run
In joy as we enjoy
His many gifts, be they drifts
Of snow, or a black crow,
Perhaps a rose to please our nose?
Or wind so free and rain on me.
With gratitude my heart is filled,
my spirit thrilled!



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Email: carol.kuntz@fargodiocese.org



Sr. Ann Redmond

Human Trafficking

October 8, 2011, the Sisters and several Associates gathered at Maryvale to hear Sister Ann Redmond, a Sister of St. Joseph of Carondelet, as she presented us with many facts and stories of human trafficking.

Sister Ann explains that human trafficking has occurred if a person was induced to perform labor or a commercial sex act through force, fraud or coercion, according to the U. S. Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000. This act, making trafficking a federal crime, was the first comprehensive anti-trafficking law in the United States.

It can be very dangerous work rescuing victims, according to Sister Ann, whose community's Anti-Trafficking Working Group raises awareness and gives financial support to agencies that help directly with the issue.

Sister Ann shared that it is very difficult to help those who are being trafficked, because they usually do not self identify that they are being trafficked. Many times those who are exploited are threatened or fearful of what will happen if they reach out for help. Some girls are prostituted or labored as young as five years old, so it is "a difficult concept to try to rebuild their life when they didn't have one basically." For those who are rescued, the first major challenge is to get over the stigma and shame, and then it's stabilizing and finding a new way of life. Sr. Ann said, "Trust is a major issue as the victims are so desperate to please that they will tell you whatever they think you want to hear. They can be so attached to their trafficker that they want to protect them (the traffickers) because this person has taken care of them, given them a place to be - even though they may have beat them or raped them. It is a long, slow process."

Sister Carol Jean Kuntz

Celebrating Mary of the Presentation

On Nov. 23, 2011 Tim Burchill, CEO of Ave Maria Village, Jamestown, ND and Deacon Tom Geffre invited the Sisters to a Mass and Brunch celebration in honor of the Sisters' Feast Day, The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Nov. 21st).

The Mass was celebrated by Father Al Bitz of St. James Basilica in Jamestown and Deacon Tom Geffre gave a beautiful homily regarding the life and works of The Sisters of Mary of the Presentation.

To see more of what he spoke of go to www.sistersofmaryofthepresentation.com (click 1st link SMP-in "person").



Sister Marlyss visiting at Ave Maria Village in Jamestown, ND



Sister Therese Celine visiting with residents at Ave Maria Village



Mission Moments

By Sister Anne Germaine and Sister Elaine

Who is my neighbor?

Sr. Elaine and I returned to our home about 6:30 Sunday evening after our long drive from North Dakota. Before we settled in, a police car was stationed on our street close to our home; soon an ambulance came to the corner apartment to care for an 84 yr. old woman who lives alone. Her children all live in other states. She was taken to the hospital emergency room and admitted into intensive care. A phone call was made to a friend of hers. The next morning Sr. Anne Germaine visited her in ICU and sat by her side and had prayer for she was unconscious. I called the rectory, the pastor was away for two more days. The secretary called another priest to give her the anointing and he came and ministered to her. Later in the day I stopped again to see her and her son from Wisconsin had arrived and we visited. He was pleased that she received the sacrament of anointing and was peacefully waiting for his mother to go home to the Lord. We were living the present moment of going the extra mile by attending to an alone elderly women that was on our path that night.

We saw a need and like Jesus moved with compassion we responded by taking some action for her spiritual care.

God Opens Doors

I was visiting with the Activity director at Liberty Village to set a date to show my power point presentation on Cameroon for the residents and found out in that visit that there has not been a clergy person there for over 3 months to do a weekly prayer service for the residents. I prayed and felt called to offer my services because her efforts were fruitless so the residents were not having a service but just music on a C.D. or a DVD program.

I go now every Saturday morning at 10.00 am and lead them in prayer and song using the Sunday scriptures. The residents are so happy to gather for prayer. I strive to apply the scriptures to their lives in the Nursing home and experiencing their limitations and how God is present to them. Their faces light up as I spend a few moments before and after each service to greet each one personally being the compassionate presence of Jesus and to assure them of their dignity and God's love.

God Opens a Classroom Door to Cameroon

I gave my presentation on Cameroon, showing a lot of the plant life, animals etc., as well as the schools, clinics, parishes and

hospital to the children and staff of St. Louis Catholic School. As I shared with the children about the education process of the children in Cameroon, the children were moved with compassion. The student club met and wanted the students to sponsor a child's education. During Catholic School week (Jan.29-Feb.3) the students families donated over \$500.00 for the education of a child. To educate one child for a year is \$420.00. Once again God blesses our ministries.

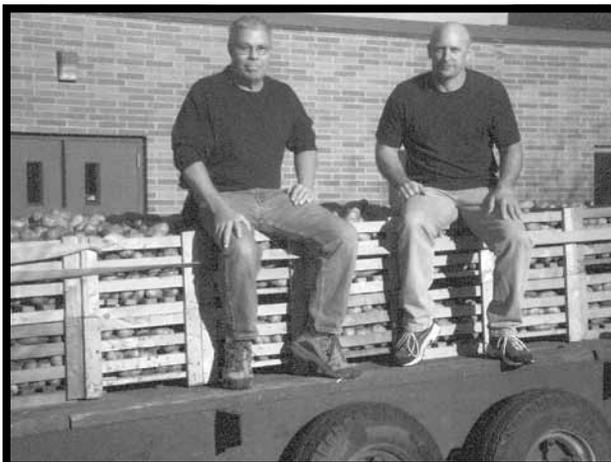
The seed within the story of the suffering poor of Cameroon bore abundant fruit and one child's life will be different.

Respect Life Sunday

This afternoon at 2:45 many women and men from our parish and other faith traditions gather down Main street on the sidewalk. It was called a chain for Life. Each person was holding a big poster saying Abortion Kills or another such verse supporting life of the unborn. People drove down the street some honked their horn and others showed support. The hour was spent in silent prayer and being a witness for Life. This was another way we were witnesses with others for LIFE.

Tragedy Strikes

A new school year had just began and the first grade teacher goes home and finds her husband on the



Potatoes! Potatoes!

In the fall, Tom Musgrave and Scott Prescott traveled to Grafton, ND to obtain a year's supply of potatoes. Our benefactor is Suda Farms of Grafton.

Many thank for the gift. We truly appreciate it!

ground after a fall from a high ladder as he was about to paint the frame of his garage door. He was taken to the hospital by ambulance with a broken hip.

We heard about it in the morning. Sr. Anne Germaine went to the Hospital waiting room and sat with his wife while he was in surgery. Sr. Elaine had been given a lift chair from St. Margaret's when she had surgery a year and a half ago and we loaned it to them for his use which was so very helpful. We called other people from our parish who loaned Sr. Elaine a tub, chair, walker, hand grabber, toilet high riser when she was in need of that extra support and everyone was so willing to share their resources. We drove around and gathered these same resources and delivered them to our teacher's home. We sent his name into Maryvale for Prayer; the children at school daily prayed for him and made him cards. We were together the body of Christ bringing comfort and support as the healing process began and continues to happen.

A Pastoral Visit

We were driving through Henry, IL. on Saturday returning from a day of prayer for Women of the Diocese and we stopped to visit Bob Dall, an Associate who had just been admitted during the week to the Heartland Nursing Home. We surprised him and his daughter who was visiting with her father. Choosing to live the present moment we chose to stop to see Bob rather than just passing by the city to reach our destination. Again these moments of care showed him that he was not forgotten. We closed our visit with prayer together. Our visit made a difference as we were the compassion of Jesus to him.

Leaving the Country?

By Sister Rose Therese

We left for only a short period of time! On September 15th, Sister Carol Jean Kuntz, Sister Suzanne Stahl, and Sister Rose Therese Sevigny journeyed to Winnipeg, Manitoba to attend a workshop entitled "Reflective Leadership informed by Reflective Living". Forty-five participants gathered for this three-day seminar. The group was varied, comprising of religious, ministers, and lay people. The program was given by Dr. George Bilotta from FCS: Formation Consultation Services. The materials stressed consciousness, being present to self, others and the world. He examined Reflective Living as reflecting on everyday experiences and applying it to life and leadership. Concrete suggestions filled the presentation and were used in group exercises. Of particular note was FCS's work on ego-striving, dispositions, and ways of responding to daily life that often block and hinder effective leadership. Of all the dispositions he proposed to us for an initial start to open our human hearts and human spirits were awe and appreciation. To give a better idea of the seminar I will quote a paragraph of the materials he sent to us for further growth.

"Human heart and human spirit opening dispositions, e.g. awe, appreciation, gentleness, hospitality and humility facilitate the opening of the human heart. These dispositions facilitate the human spirits' consciousness, presence, wide-eyed-open awareness to be in the moment, in the here and now. In a sense, heart-opening dispositions clear out the clutter, obstructions, and the unimportant. Spirit awakening dispositions facilitate the spirit being awake, alert, attuned, aware, expectant, welcoming, and receptive." Would you care to hear more? Check out the FCS website.

After three days of intense work, we were ready for a little diversion. We took the long way home by way of Kenora, Ontario. It added a few miles to our tour but we were happy to do it. (See *Kenora* article) Our seminar had many good ideas I will try to practice. It was worth the time and effort.

Christmas in North Dakota?



Sisters Suzanne, Carol Jean, Marlyss and Dorothy Bunce ride their bikes on Christmas Day.



Students of St. Catherine's School perform at Maryvale



Sister Marlyss visits with a student

An Old Fashioned Christmas

By Sister Rose Therese

On January 4, 2012, the students of St. Catherine's School in Valley City came to Maryvale for the presentation of their Christmas program, "An Old Fashioned Christmas". This was the second year that they came. The program was a collection of songs. Each student individually sang a verse or line of different songs. The children presented each Sister with a booklet of favorite Christmases, best gifts, best loved song, etc. and the children also gave beautiful pictures of various Christmas symbols. The Maryvale kitchen gave cookies and drink to each child. Sister Marlyss gave them holy cards. We thank the staff of the school for taking time out of their schedule to bring some Christmas cheer to Maryvale Sisters.

Saints In The Making

Written by Sister Marlyss Dionne, SMP

The Senior High Youth Celebration was held at Napoleon Public School on October 20, 2011. The event, sponsored by the Fargo Diocese, brought a group of 250 young people and sponsors from all parts of the diocese, including a number of youth from the Bismarck Diocese who live in the vicinity of Napoleon.

Sister Dorothy Bunce and I were invited to set up a vocation booth in the gym there. I was invited to be a speaker at one of the eleven workshops offered in the afternoon. My talk, "Holy Bones" was about the many relics of the saints, why we have them and how they have been collected and respected by Catholics from the early centuries of Christianity. I also brought along a display of real relics which are kept in our historical room at Maryvale.

The guest speaker for the day was Scott Anthony, who is the youth minister for two growing parishes in York, Pennsylvania - St. Joseph and St. Patrick. He challenged the youth to walk the narrow road to greatness which leads us to being saints and eventually being with God in heaven. The last round of workshops

was given in a general session in which DJ Bill Lage challenged young people and others to take a good look at the music they listen to and what messages they are receiving from that music. He asked them to consider who they are supporting when they buy music that is not consistent with their moral lives and their lives with God. A very thought-provoking session for teens who spend a lot of time listening to music!

The day also involved reconciliation for all, with 13 priests from neighboring parishes helping with the administration of this sacrament. Eucharistic adoration was available all day, offering everyone the opportunity to visit with Jesus for a while. A Eucharistic procession from the school to St. Philip Neri Parish Church took place right before Mass. The main celebrant was Father James Gross, leader of the Catholic Youth Advisory Committee.

Sr. Dorothy and I returned home, blessed and "sanctified" by our day spent with the youth of the diocese.

Inside Prison Ministry

Associate Steve Eckhart feels he is doing what we are asked to do as Christians when he ministers to people in prison. As the same time, he feels Christ's presence in the inmates he visits and is blessed by them. Steve graciously agreed to share some of his experiences with prison ministry.

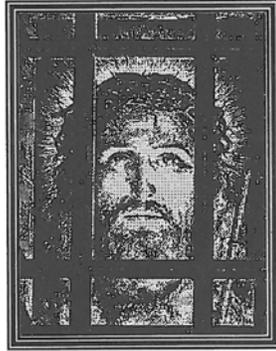
Steve was introduced to prison ministry by a friend who was already visiting inmates. His is one of three groups from the Little Flower Catholic Parish in Rugby, ND. One group visits the jail every Saturday and once a month the parish priest visits. Steve's group consists of one woman and two men who wish to spread the message of God's love and forgiveness. They usually sing praise and worship songs, sometimes there is someone along who plays guitar to help lead the singing. They read the Gospel or an article that describes real life incidents of God's love and forgiveness. At the closing of this service they go around the room and pray for each one's individual needs.

How do they know their ministry is making a difference? Well, they trust God, but sometimes they can see results. Some of the inmates are more willing to share that reading the Bible is changing their lives. One group of inmates even meets to pray each evening. They pray for each other, those who don't come to the prayer session and the people who come to minister them. Sometimes the ministers ask them to pray for certain intentions. The next time they come, the inmates ask how the intention worked out. Steve also sees a difference in how they treat each other, more like family than just another person doing time. Many times the inmates say they believe God is giving them this time away from outside distractions to become more aware of His presence.

Knowing he is doing something that may bring someone close to Christ is very rewarding. Many times Steve tells the inmates that he's not sure if what their group does is helping anyone, but he is so blessed by the inmates very presences and what they teach him. It helps him be more grateful for the many blessing of his life family and friends. God's love and forgiveness, a wonderful parish and of course God's Son who died to save us.

A few stories illustrate the impact of this ministry, One man, who was going to be released from prison but with no job wondered how he would be able to return home and try to live a different life with all the old bad influences surrounding him. He was returning to an area in which two of the prison ministers were making a Cursillo retreat and he decided to attend the weekend also. Watching him grow spiritually that weekend and seeing the hope in the possibility of new life develop within him was truly amazing. During the weekend he thanked the prison ministers for coming to the jail and helping him to grow closer to God. After the weekend he started to

I was in prison



and you visited me...

(Matthew 25:36)

attend Mass and become active in parish activities. He was also able to find a job and start to change his life in many ways. What a wonderful success story!

Another story tells of an inmate who received Baptism and First Eucharist. He said he was so thankful that he had the opportunity for this while in prison. It was something he probably would not have done otherwise. In another instance, one of the men Steve ministers with was at a place of business and met a former inmate who was now employed there. He came up and thanked the minister for coming to see him in jail and helping him to change his life for the better.

These powerful stories may make us wonder, "What can we do to help inmates, especially if we aren't called to ministry in prison?" Here are some suggestions for us:

1. Include the incarcerated in our daily prayers remembering that we all need God's love and forgiveness. Spread the word that people in prison or jail still need our prayers.
2. Steve's church, St Cecelia Catholic Paris in Harvey, ND, helps by having a rummage sale and uses part of the profits to buy tee shirts, socks and undergarments for both male and female inmates. They also have a box in the church to donate such personal items for inmates. Steve described this ministry to their Knights of Columbus and they help by furnishing funds to purchase prayer books and Bibles.
3. Give copies of new or used devotionals to inmates – *Our Daily Bread*, *The Word Among Us*, *Living Faith*, *The Magnificat*, *Living in Christ*. Contact your local prisons and ask how to go about that if you don't know anyone who visits them.
4. Welcome released inmates and help them when they return to the community. A smile, an offer of coffee, or something more; you decide an appropriate way to reach out. We can have a sense of openness and acceptance as they try to make a new and better life.
5. Regarding writing to inmates as a way of support, each facility may have regulations regarding this practice. It is important to check on this before writing to someone in prison.

Thank you, Steve for sharing your experience with ministering to people in prison. Such acts of kindness, mercy and solidarity can have a huge impact. Prison ministry is rewarding and needed to help God heal broken lives. Perhaps your community reaches out to inmates in other ways. If you have some experience or knowledge of prison ministry in your area, please contact me at maryannmichelet@hotmail.com or 309-657-2484 and let me know so we can share it in a future article. Thank you. Mary Anne Michelet SMP Associate, Secretary of SMP Peace and Justice Committee.

The Story of Cameroon

By Sister Anne Germaine

“The seed planted on fertile ground bears fruit” in the hearts and minds of so many people as they listen to the story and view the pictures we took in our recent stay in Cameroon, Africa on Mission with our Sisters in ministry.

Did I know when I said YES to go to Cameroon that on my return God was asking me to continue to offer that support by telling His story of the people, their poverty, the ministry through our Sisters and the Church. No. I knew I was going to share with the staff at St.Margaret Health and with our community but God keeps opening doors of speaking engagements and articles in newspapers, the Spirit Magazine and other forms of communication to tell the news and needs. Seeds are continually planted in the hearts of people as they are moved with compassion and desire to share from their resources.

St.Margaret Health care employees have passionately poured forth their union with the hospital of Salapoumbe, Cameroon where the sisters serve the poorest of the poor with little resources. This doesn't stop them and their staff in loving and giving of themselves. The employees of St.Margaret Health held a raffle of a quilt of material brought back from Cameroon made by an employee. They gave spontaneous donations, rather than exchange gifts for Christmas among themselves, donated money for the hospital, education of children and general needs of the mission of our Sisters. Their hearts are that fertile soil that Jesus speaks about in the gospel that produces fruit a hundredfold. Like Mary, the mother of Jesus they heard the Word and acted upon it.

My personal experience of being in Cameroon moved my concept of the poor from my head to my heart. It is because of this conversion experience that I cannot remain silent about the poor and am moved to tell their story that others may also be moved with the compassion of Jesus and know that we are one family as God's children no matter where we live. We need each other and can make a difference. There is a seed of God's mercy within every story. It just needs to be shared and God makes it fruitful. Be not afraid to share your story and allow that seed of grace to produce fruit in someone else's life.

Dedication Held at Sheyenne Care Center

Sheyenne Care Center invited the Sisters to attend the dedication and blessing of the newly remodeled living room and dining room on November 28, 2011. The fireplace and new furniture were part of the added features. Msgr. Dennis Skonseng of St. Catherine's Parish gave the blessing of the area and Craig Christenson, CEO spoke words of thanks to the staff and residents who made adjustments during the remodeling project.



Maryhill Manor

Enderlin, North Dakota

The story of “Mary”, from Nancy Farnham, CEO of Maryhill Manor, Enderlin, ND, demonstrated the transforming power of love and listening and hospitality.

“Mary”

Six years ago an unhappy woman named Mary came to live at Maryhill Manor. She had basically been asked to leave her previous nursing home for “causing trouble.” She had run away from the facility several times, one time hiding in the neighboring Catholic church, and had other situations occur that the nursing home said they would not tolerate. Her guardian and caseworker had both called us to see if we’d be willing to have this woman move into Maryhill. As we talked with those involved, it was clear to us that a big part of the problems at the other nursing home had been caused by a tug-of-war over power and control between the facility staff and Mary. For instance, the Administrator at the other facility told our staff member that we would just have to “lay down the law” with this woman and tell her she had to go to bed by 8:30pm. Our philosophy, which respects the residents’ choices and lets them keep control of their own lives, meant we took a whole different approach.

When Mary moved into Maryhill she was a very sad and angry lady. She’d been through a lot. Her husband had died not long before, the nursing home she had lived in with him had closed so she had to move, and she had disagreements with the new nursing home’s staff. She also had jewelry stolen from her while at the other nursing home. Mary let her unhappiness be known to staff members by getting angry and loudly yelling out. One evening shortly after she moved in, Mary left Maryhill and refused to return. The Administrator was called at home and headed to Maryhill. She met Mary on the road a little distance from Maryhill and stopped to talk with her. In their conversation she told Mary that people at Maryhill worry about her when she leaves and that they would miss her if she ran away. Mary softened and returned to Maryhill and never tried to run away again. She knew that people cared about her, and that made a difference.

Mary had her own way of doing things and the staff members at Maryhill adapted to her needs and ways. She liked to stay up very late and preferred to sleep in a recliner rather than her bed. Her bed was removed from her room and a recliner brought in for her comfort, but she continued to sleep on a recliner near the Care Station. She seemed to feel more secure with people around her. Mary also brought parakeets with her to Maryhill and she loved those birds! For a reason we’ll never quite understand, she didn’t want to have the parakeets in her room, so they were brought out to the

living room. Mary worried about her birds in the living room, often saying that “some little kid is going to pull their tail feathers out.” One day she announced that she’d found the perfect spot for the birds --- the soiled utility room! Staff members weren’t sure that would be the best place for the birds, but decided to give it a try and this unconventional solution made Mary happy. She visited her birds daily in the soiled utility room with a staff member assisting with their cares. The birds thrived and so did Mary!

Through the years there were many things that staff members did to show their understanding and kindness toward Mary. Staff members would shop for her on their own time, looking for her special cigars and the shirts and jackets in the color and style Mary liked. They’d write letters for her, care for her many knick-knacks making sure never to move them from their appointed places, and serve her meals to her at her special spot out on the porch. She’d get into “streaks” where she’d like one particular food served to her in large quantity for many meals in a row. Staff members made sure she received her requests, whether it was a certain type of olive, fresh tomato slices, or pickles!

Over the years, we loved her more and more and it seemed as though Mary could feel that! She’d still get upset now and then, but a little smile and an “I’m sorry” was quick to follow the outburst. Every evening Mary could be found in front of the statue of Mary in our main hallway saying her bedtime prayers. If one of us shared a prayer need with her, she appeared to feel especially honored. She consistently attended Mass every week and it was obvious that her faith was important to her.

At the end of her life, Mary continued to make decisions about her care, choosing to refuse some treatments that were offered by the doctors. Her guardian and our staff respected her decisions, as our friend Mary always knew exactly what she did or did not want. Her final Christmas gift, selected by a Maryhill caregiver, was a beautiful rosary with white pearl-like beads. Mary was in her final days when she received this gift and it was the perfect choice. When the gift was opened, she looked with clear eyes at the rosary and smiled. The rosary was with her from that point on. In her final days, many staff members took their turn by her bedside holding her hand, with two staff members staying into the early morning hours on her final day. The tears and the tender care spoke clearly of our love for her.

When Mary died, it was decided to have her funeral Mass at Maryhill Manor. We were honored by this and were touched as many staff, residents, and friends attended. Staff members participated in the funeral by singing solos, cantering, and reading scriptures. It was a beautiful celebration of Mary’s life. This little lady, who was a little rough on the outside but very sweet on the inside, had wiggled her way into our hearts and had touched our lives. She is missed.

KENORA – (KEWATIN-NORMA-RAT PORTAGE)

Land of lakes, forest, and bridges

By Sister Rose Therese

When we decided to go to a workshop in Winnipeg, we considered taking a side trip to Kenora. However, when we arrived we realized it would add a few more miles to our trip and it was too far for our first day so we gave up the idea. During the seminar we met a Sister whose community still has a sister in Kenora in the teaching profession. She told us that Sister Maria would be happy to show us around the town. So she was contacted and we decided to make the trip. Let me explain our desire to make the trip. When our first Sisters came to North America, they first came to Rat Portage as it was known at the time. They came to a land of wooded areas, hills, lakes and bridges that join the many islands around Lake of the Woods. I can imagine what it was like at the time they came. They tell of walking miles on the frozen lake in the winter. We traveled up and down many hills. Sister Maria showed us a building which they believe was the school the Sisters might have used. Today it is a family home. She also showed us a large educational complex which houses all levels of grades. She said to us, "See what your Sisters began!" Today, Kenora is a beautiful tourist town of lakes, forest, and hills. Great for camping and fishing! I am glad we decided to go as it provides another link to our history.



Sisters Suzanne, Rose Therese and Carol Jean, in front of the large complex, Pope John Paul II School.



Believed to be the original house of Sisters at Rat Portage. Small lower window is believed to be an original one.

Maryhill Manor Christmas Tea

On December 3, Sr. Carol Jean, Sr. Marlyss, Sr. Celine Marie, Sr. Giustina, Sr. Eloise Marie and Sr. Therese Celine attended the Christmas Tea at Maryhill Manor in Enderlin. Nancy Farnham greeted us at the door. Everything was beautifully decorated for the Christmas season with shiny gold tablecloths and delicious festive foods; hot wings, meatballs, cheese, bars, cookies and gingerbread men. We also had punch and/or coffee. As we ate our scrumptious lunch we enjoyed listening to piano and harp Christmas music.

The construction part of the Manor was cleverly decorated as a huge Christmas gift. The additions to Maryhill Manor include: housing to replace small units, a Chapel, and a therapy room. This project is scheduled to be finished by May 1, 2012.



Sisters Eloise Marie, Giustina, Carol Jean, Marlyss, Therese Celine and Celine Marie.

Sr. Therese Celine



Upcoming Retreat Events

2012 Events

March 16-18 (Friday-Sunday):

The annual Women's Retreat will be held at Maryvale Spiritual Life Center, Valley City. The theme of the sea and all the images surrounding the sea provide material for reflection and prayer. Jesus spent much of his time at the sea. "Come to the Water; Answers to Life's Conflicts" is a retreat in which you may encounter Jesus in a most profound way. Come to be with him at the sea.

Suggested donation is \$85.

April 27-29 (Friday-Sunday):

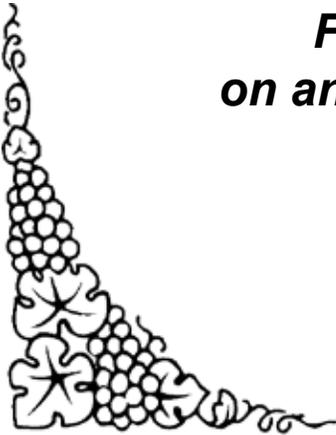
The Ignatian retreat will be held at Maryvale Spiritual Life Center, Valley City. It is based on the spirituality of St. Ignatius of Loyola and is steeped in the gospels. This is a silent retreat where one is able to meet Jesus in the experiences of His own life. Conferences and individual direction with the retreat director are an important part of the retreat.

Suggested donation is \$60 and one must register by Apr. 20.

June 15-17 (Friday-Sunday):

Maryvale Spiritual Life Center, Valley City, will host a Mother-Daughter retreat. The retreat is devoted to bringing mothers and daughters together through mutual experiences of prayer and sharing. Mass, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and scriptural prayer will be part of these days together. There will be conferences on spiritual topics. Leisure and recreational activities will also be enjoyed. The retreat begins at 7 p.m. on Friday and ends at 12 p.m. on Sunday. Daughters must be 12 years and older.

Suggested donation is \$60 per person and one must register by June 7.



***For scheduling or more information
on any of the above retreats please contact:***

***Sister Dorothy Bunce
dorothy.bunce@fargodiocese.org
or call (701) 845-2864***



Sisters of Mary of the Presentation
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In the future, we will be sending *Mary Notes* electronically via email. If you would like to receive *Mary Notes* electronically, please send your email address to Sr. Carol Jean Kuntz:

carol.kuntz@fargodiocese.org

If you do not have an email address, or are unable to receive *Mary Notes* electronically and would like to continue to receive *Mary Notes*, please contact

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