What’s Inside

Letter from Leadership......2
In the Spotlight...............3
Earth and Justice News....4
2019 Jubilarians..............5
Nora Cronin School.........6
Associates Retreat........7
Mission Advancement......7
A Promise to Keep..........8
Prayer for the Journey....9
In Memoriam................10
Prayer Association..........11
We Remember................11
Ways of Giving...............12
Mission Statement..........12

2009 ~ A Future Full of Hope

New Ministries
2013 Fiat - Massachusetts
2014 Lantern Light - New Orleans

2009 New Campus - New Windsor
New Leadership Team

Pope Francis declared
Nano “Venerable” on
October 13, 2013

Massachusetts Sisters
and Associates

Sr. Mary Naccarato’s
2014 Final Vows

2011 Care for the Earth
“Going Green”

2017
20 years of Unity
Massachusetts & New York

2019 ~ New Horizons Await Us....
Dear Friends,

May the God of the Present-Moment be with you…

As I begin this letter and address you as “Friends” I am immediately drawn to a deep feeling of gratitude. Your faithfulness in supporting our mission to serve others as Jesus and our foundress, Nano Nagle, is overwhelming. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

In 2018 our Holy Father, Pope Francis gifted us with the Apostolic Exhortation, entitled: “Gaudete Exultate – Rejoice and Be Glad.” He tells us “We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves.” Sometimes we may think that holiness is just for the saints, however, throughout our lives we have been reminded many times that God has chosen each one of us to be holy.

As we celebrate the Easter season, I invite you to continue to think about your life journey and how you accept this invitation from our God. It would be wonderful if you would share some of your memories about your connections to our sisters and associates with us. We so enjoy receiving your notes. It helps us to remember our own efforts at striving for holiness in our lives. You are all a part of God’s blessings to us. I hope that you will take time to pray the following blessing as a way to continue your own journey to holiness.

May the God of the Present-Moment be with you, slowing you down, revealing to you the sacred gift hidden in every moment of your day. And may you develop a reflective heart, able to be present to life; a heart that can take the time to move beyond the visible, to touch the precious mystery of life and living. May the blessing of the Present-Moment be upon you.

Be assured of the daily prayers of our Sisters and Associates.

Gratefully in Christ,

Sr. Mary Byrnes, PBVM
In the Spotlight
Sr. Geraldine Corio, PBVM

“Deep down I know, I must thank God.”

These words belong to a piece of children’s music that we would sing during our summertime religious education program at St. Joseph Church in West Milford, New Jersey. They express my experiences of the time I have spent here.

West Milford is the place I now call home and have lived here for many years. It is very different from the home of my birth, “the Bronx New York.” I was taught by the Presentation Sisters at St. Frances of Rome School and continued my education at Mt. St. Ursula High School. After acceptance into the Congregation of the Sisters of the Presentation, ongoing studies eventually led me to pursue a theological degree at Immaculate Conception Seminary, Darlington, NJ.

I left my teaching days behind - but brought the skills learned during those times - and started serving as a Director of Religious Education first at St. Christopher’s in Parsippany. And then was led to St. Joseph’s in West Milford, the oldest parish in New Jersey founded in 1765. Such a history! For many years there were no priests. With the people handing on the faith, lay leadership continued until the Franciscan Friars arrived – and now were complemented with Presentation Sisters Geraldine and Janet Brisky.

What a joy this has been! What fun! Working with such committed coworkers and ministering to God’s people eager to share the faith is life-giving for me. I love sharing sacramental moments with families, designing summer programs for children and bringing about new initiatives. How wonderful to see people enjoying themselves while sharing their faith. Our major focus today is helping one another make Christ the center of our lives…pointing each other to Christ.
Earth and Justice News
By Sr. Virginia Wilkinson, PBVM

The Corporal Works of Mercy...what we can do as a parish!

Do you want to make the Corporal Works of Mercy come “alive” in your parish? You don’t have to do it all on your own! Look at your parish efforts as well as what other faith communities and local not for profits are doing, and you may be amazed at all the ways you and like-minded folks are “feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick.” There are so many opportunities to collaborate, donate, and volunteer!

Step it up a notch by planning a Service Sunday in your parish with representatives from Right to Life, local food pantries and soup kitchens, Habitat for Humanity, Animal Rescue, and Safe Homes for victims of domestic violence. Are there parishioners who belong to book clubs? Invite them to consider reading the U.S. Bishops’ recent pastoral on racism, “Open Wide Our Hearts” or Pope Francis’ apostolic exhortation, “On the Call to Holiness in Today’s World”. What about a parish movie night featuring films like “Romero” and “Entertaining Angels” (the life of Dorothy Day)?

Pope Francis has added an 8th Corporal Work of Mercy: Care of Creation! As spring draws near, consider putting weekly quotes from Pope Francis’ “On Care of Our Common Home” in your parish bulletin. Spring is also a good time to ask, “How ‘green’ is my parish?” Ask the parish council and/or custodian to look at heating, lighting, recycling, use of Styrofoam and plastic, choice of cleaning materials and pesticides. During Black History Month, highlight in school and religious education classrooms saints who are persons of color. Our Lady of Guadalupe is patroness of the Americas – that’s us, too! How can her story be told?

Pentecost is the birthday of the universal church. How many “tongues” are spoken in your parish community? How do you celebrate diversity of language and culture? Does your parish observe National Migration Week, the week following Epiphany? Great materials, including posters and prayer cards, are available from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops website.

I was delighted to be invited by Fr. Joseph Tyrrell, pastor of St. Patrick Parish in Highland Mills, NY, to come to his parish on February 11th to discuss these ideas with interested parishioners from St. Patrick’s and several surrounding parishes. It was a stimulating afternoon and an affirmation that opportunities abound during the liturgical year and in the flow of liturgy to express and celebrate the social mission of the church.

The Corporal Works of Mercy are at the heart of who we are as Christians. So often we ask ourselves as individuals, “What am I called to do?” Let us accept the challenge to turn to one another in our local parishes and ask ourselves, “Who are WE called to be, as Church, in this geographic area? How are WE, as parish, called to be the hands and heart of Christ to the unborn, the hungry, the homeless, the asylum seeker, the sick, the imprisoned, the aged, all those in need?”

SISTERS OF THE PRESENTATION
Celebrating Our 2019 Jubiliarians

Sr. M. Andre Murphy (Sr. Mary Joachim) entered the Congregation on Sept. 8, 1949 and was finally professed on April 17, 1952. After ministering in education as both teacher and principal for twenty-nine years, Sister then served in pastoral ministry before retiring to Mt. St. Joseph in 2007. Currently Sister resides in Cabrini Nursing Home, in Dobbs Ferry, NY.

Sr. Laura Follmer (Sr. Mary Inez) entered the congregation on Sept. 8, 1949 and was finally professed on April 17, 1952. In her 55 years of elementary school teaching, Sister ministered in the Archdiocese of New York, the Diocese of Brooklyn and the Paterson Diocese, NJ. After eleven years of Congregational Service, Sister is retired at Mt. St. Joseph.

Sr. Joan Marie O’Neill (Sr. Mary Alphonsus) entered the congregation on Sept. 8, 1949 and made her final vows on April 17, 1952. After teaching elementary school and high school, Sister held administrative assistant positions in the Paterson Diocese as well as at Mt. St. Joseph. She retired in 2016 and lives at Mt. St. Joseph.

Sr. Eileen Treanor (Sr. Mary Nicholas) entered the congregation on Feb. 2, 1949 and made final profession on August 16, 1951. Sister ministered as an elementary teacher and principal for twenty-five years and then entered into parish ministry. Sister continues in part-time ministry as Director of Religious Education in St. Paul Parish in Yonkers.
Of all the stories I’ve written, one that’s lodged in my heart was about a school whose students succeeded despite the many obstacles they had to overcome. Some never heard English spoken at home. Most never heard the word “college” at home, let alone think of going to one. When they walked the streets of their neighborhoods, they saw sites that did not inspire them: boarded-up buildings and homeless men and women. Yet when I first happened — by chance — to meet a few graduates of the Nora Cronin Presentation Academy in Newburgh, one was a student at SUNY New Paltz, majoring in early childhood education — and was just named “Woman of the Future” by the Girl Scouts and YWCA Orange County. Another was studying at the Vaughn College of Aeronautics and Technology in Queens to fulfill her lifelong dream of becoming a pilot or air traffic controller. A third was studying at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute to major in electrical engineering. Their success was the typical result of how the middle school’s teachers and administrators help disadvantaged girls make dreams they might not have otherwise even dreamed come true. Of the 102 impoverished girls who’ve attended since 2006, all but two have graduated high school — many from top Catholic schools like John S. Burke in Goshen and Our Lady of Lourdes in Poughkeepsie. The motto? “Failure is not an option.”

Taken from Times Herald Record 4/11/2019 - Steve Israel

At the invitation of the Presentation Sisters’ leadership team, in 1999 a group of sisters began to dream of new ways to serve those in need. Though there were many hurdles to overcome, Sr. Nora Cronin emboldened the group to persist in the idea of developing a learning center in the city of Newburgh. Through her contacts in education and her knowledge of faith-based schools, Sr. Nora led the group forward and by 2003, she and Sr. Yliana Hernandez were able to establish the Presentation Educational Foundation to support the efforts of the group to establish a school for underprivileged girls. Though ill for some time, Sr. Nora’s death in 2004 was a great loss to the project about to unfold. The members of the foundation agreed that the new school would be named after her. The 2006-2007 school year welcomed the first class of fifteen fifth grade girls who were from low-income families and residents of the city of Newburgh. After moving twice, the school was established at its current location on Bay View Terrace in Newburgh. Today the Nora Cronin Presentation Academy has graduated nine classes of young women who have been educated in an environment of faith and learning, giving them the keys to a life of opportunity which they may never have known were it not for Sr. Nora.
Though blustery and damp on the outside, the environment inside Mt. St. Joseph was one of warm congeniality and reflective calm. On Saturday, April 27th Mrs. Kathryn O’Connell Cleary, MA set the tone for a day of retreat for the PBVM Associates from New York and New Jersey. The day was coordinated by Sr. Patricia Dowler and Jane Person, who along with Mrs. Cleary and her husband, traveled from Massachusetts for the occasion. Mrs. Cleary’s creative blend of scripture, story, poetry and music filled the day with an abundance of ideas for personal prayer and shared thoughts. Several of the Sisters participated in sharing personal reflections, and times of quiet as well as lively conversation at lunch.

Congratulations to our donors, Raymond & Joyce Aucoin, who recently received the Mother Theresa Award from St. Bernard Parish in Leominster, MA

From the Office of Mission Advancement

Did you know:

- We received a total of 3,637 gifts just in 2018!
- The top 5 donor states are New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Florida, and Connecticut!

Email Blast: We send friendly updates and holiday greetings on a regular basis. Please contact us if you would like to be included on our email list.

Stay tuned for our Annual Raffle as we will be mailing our tickets in mid June!
My Journey as a Presentation Associate

“A Promise to Keep”

By Dr. Donaldo Batiste, Ph.D.

While it seems like a lifetime ago that I met the Presentation Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in reflection, it has only been 55 short years! I actually learned about the Sisters through my older sister when she moved away to go to college in September, 1963. Her roommate had graduated from St. Lucy School in Houma and she extolled the virtues of these great women and outstanding teachers.

Although my dear sister passed away during the second semester of her first year of college, she nonetheless, had a heart to heart talk with my parents on one of her last visits home about taking me and my younger sister out of the public schools and enrolling us in St. Lucy to ensure our readiness and success in life after high school. When my sister passed away unexpectedly in March of 1964, my parents were even more determined that the promise they made with my sister was indeed ‘a promise to keep’. And what a blessing that promise has been for me!

To say that I have a treasure trove of stories and memories from those early days, would be an understatement, indeed. I credit both the Sisters influence and example in leading me toward becoming the strong Catholic and confident man who I am today. When I was a child, I looked up to these women religious who led and guided me toward becoming a successful adult. Often times as children, we fall into the world of make-believe and dreams. Being a child is a magical time, and I was both sheltered and loved during my time at St. Lucy… and I continue to be blessed by the Sisters, even today!

Today, I am living out the charism of Venerable Mother Nano Nagle as an Associate member of the PBVMs, a role I have lived with fidelity for the past 23 years. In my Associate role, I purchase, cook and deliver meals weekly to the elderly and the infirm citizenry of my community. Additionally, I serve as a point of contact for a new community of PBVM Associates, where I mentor and pray with and for all associates and aspirants through and after their official entry onto the PBVM Associate role.

My heart will always enshrine a special place for each of my PBVM Sisters in general, and my PBVM teachers, in particular. Through my eyes, each Sister continues to live, for it is through each that I have grown to be who I am today, and I will never be able to repay this debt. Therefore, each Sister is carried with me, and my life experiences shall always in truth, be theirs; for this is yet, another ‘promise to keep’

Fr. Matt Celebrating the Liturgy with our Presentation Sisters!

A new friend – Fr. Matthew Pawlikowski earlier this year offered to celebrate liturgy with our mount community every Monday. Father graduated from West Point and after completing his mandatory six-year tour of duty in the army he entered the seminary and was ordained a priest in the Archdiocese of Newark, NJ. He is originally from Secaucus. We are blessed with his presence.
Prayer for the Journey

Sr. Paula Cormier and Sr. Dorothy Scesny, Presentation Sisters living in Massachusetts, responded to an invitation from the Leadership Conference of Women Religious sent to religious orders throughout the United States. The LCWR was seeking volunteers to work with immigrant refugees who have come over the border into the United States. Both Sisters volunteered their time from February 6th to 21st 2019.

Sr. Paula, who is retired and does volunteer work, served in a center in El Paso, Texas with the Sisters of Loretto where meals were served to the people. Sister was most impressed with the spirit of the residents of El Paso who provided for those who came for meals. Sister also did intake interviews and was happy to make use of her years of experience working with Spanish-speaking persons in Peru, Massachusetts and New York. While it was good to alleviate some of the needs of these people, Sr. Paula recalled the efforts of St. Oscar Romero who was assassinated in 1980 after speaking out on behalf of those who suffered countless injustices. One man typified why so many people flee from corruption in their own countries. Although he made good money in his country as a mechanic he could not provide for his family due to the exorbitant taxes and the threats to kill his children if the taxes were not paid.

Sr. Dorothy is director of mission and spiritual care at St. Mary’s Health Care Center in Worcester, MA. She was assigned to work in Texas at La Posada Providencia, a shelter, founded by the Sisters of Divine Providence 30 years ago. Sister relates the account of a woman at the shelter who was abused after being involved in political activism against her government in Africa. She escaped to the US where she learned she was pregnant. She was encouraged to have an abortion, which she refused. She gave birth to a son whom she named Emmanuel, which means “God with us”.

This woman works in the kitchen at the center, does housekeeping elsewhere, studies for her GED and hopes to become a nurse. Certainly she is the personification of hope and faith in God’s presence in her life. While everyone at the center has chores, one day they were asked to volunteer to clear brush in the area. Everyone joined, including children and a disabled man; another example of their gratitude and willingness to help those who are helping them. Sr. Dorothy admired the Sisters who regularly live and work at La Posada for their passion for the mission and untiring efforts on behalf of those who come to them. Teaching English, picking up people from the airport or bus stop at all hours of the day and night and driving those at the center to Sunday services at various churches exemplify their dedication. Upon her return Sr. Dorothy expressed gratitude to all who afforded her this time to minister to the current need in our country. When she related her experiences to people back in Worcester their immediate response was, “What can we do besides pray?” Sister’s answer was quick to come in suggesting that financial donations for the work that is being done would ease some burdens of those who labor to provide for basic human needs at the border.

Adapted from an article published in The Catholic Free Press in Worcester, MA.
Sr. Regina Avard  February 11, 1919 - November 9, 2018
Sr. Regina Avard (Sr. Mary Regina), of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, passed away on Friday, November 9, 2018 at Mount St. Joseph Convent. She was 99 years old. Sr. Regina was born on February 11, 1919 in New York City and joined the Sisters of the Presentation on September 8, 1939. She professed first vows on April 9, 1942 and final vows on April 9, 1945. She graduated from Manhattan College with a BA degree (1950) and an MA degree (1970). During her religious life, Sr. Regina’s ministry spanned 66 years at: Our Lady of Solace, St. Frances of Rome and Holy Rosary Schools in the Bronx, Mt. St. Joseph Academy in New Windsor and St. Michael’s Elementary School in Manhattan. Sister served as principal (1970-1976) and teacher (1952-1959) at St. Andrew’s School in Clifton, NJ.

Sr. Mary Laurita Hand  July 26, 1934 - April 8, 2019
Sister Mary Laurita Hand, 84, known in secular life as Lucille Hand, died April 8, 2019, at Presentation Convent in Leominster, MA. Sister was born July 26, 1934 in Woonsocket, RI, the daughter of Anna (Grennon) and Lawrence Hand. She received her early education in Woonsocket, RI and entered the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary on September 24, 1951, professing her final vows on August 20, 1956. Continuing her education, she received a Bachelor of Education in English from Regina Coeli College, Fitchburg, a Masters Degree in English from Rivier College in Nashua, NH and an Administration Degree from Providence College in RI. Sister Mary Laurita served as chairperson of the English Department and Drama Director at St. Bernard High School in Fitchburg and later at Bishop Keough High School in Pawtucket, RI. In 1977 she was appointed Assistant Superintendent for the Fall River Diocese in MA, becoming Superintendent in 1980. Other accomplishments include Geriatrics, Religious Education, Summer Theater, Canon Law and working at Jeanne Jugan Residence in Pawtucket, RI.

Ms. Elizabeth McNally  June 29, 1927 - March 22, 2019
Betty A. (McCarty) McNally, 91, passed away peacefully on Friday, March 22, 2019 at Knollwood Nursing Center in Worcester. She graduated from the Clinton High School, Class of 1945 and achieved her professional degree from the Peter Bent Brigham School of Nursing Class of 1948. As a Registered Nurse, Betty cared for countless patients throughout her prestigious career with Brigham Hospital, Cardinal Cushing Hospital, Carter Memorial, and Cutler Hospital at Ft. Devens, from where she ultimately retired after nearly 30 years of service. A woman of great faith, Betty was a devout member of St. John the Guardian of Our Lady in Clinton. She served as a former Eucharistic Minister, RCIA volunteer, and Associate Minister to the Sisters of the Presentation. Above all, she devoted herself to family, proudly raising her four sons and enjoying every day of being a grandmother.
We Remember

Please join our Sisters & Associates in prayer for the following loyal friends who have recently passed away. We are blessed that the memory of loved ones, who kindled our spirits in some way by their love, their deeds or their commitment, remain with us after they are gone.

Mr. John Ardito
Ms. Jean Belliveau
Mr. Anthony Biancardi
Ms. Eleanor Braban
Ms. Carolyn Byrne
Mr. Florence Cook Sr.
Mrs. Patricia Cox
Mr. Richard Cox
Mr. Thomas Curtin
Mr. Matthew Dougherty
Mr. Robert Fitzgibbons
Mr. James Garvey
Ms. Barbara Grainger
Ms. Norma Gray
Mrs. Elizabeth Heffernan

Mr. Daniel Hill
Mr. Robert Holden
Mr. Robert Holder
Ms. Eleanor Holder
Ms. Ashley Jeff
Mr. George Jones
Mr. John Joyce
Mr. Richard Kruszkowski
Mr. David LaLonde
Mrs. Margaret LaLonde
Msgr. Thomas Leonard
Deacon Gabriel Liegey
Fr. John Losasso, OFM Cap.
Mr. Eugene McEnerney
Ms. Irene Monfilis

Mr. Kevin Moroney
Mr. Timothy David Nagle
Mr. Ed Otterstedt
Ms. Joanne O’Neil
Ms. Rosemary Neidig
Mr. Brian Nummy
Mrs. Frances Pavlik
Mr. Joseph Pecorella
Ms. Vlima Perla
Mrs. Elizabeth Rich-Provenzano
Ms. Patricia Ann Purtill
Bishop George Reuger
Mr. Terrence Ryan
Ms. Rita Salemi
Ms. Irving Weeks

Sisters of the Presentation Prayer Association

Our Sisters are mindful in their daily prayers of the intentions and prayer requests of our friends and benefactors. Masses are offered on the first Wednesday and the third Thursday of each month for all who have asked for prayerful support in the various aspects of their lives. Giving one of our attractively designed cards lets people know that you are remembering them in a unique way during a special time in their lives. The usual donation is $5.00 to be sent after you have used the card.

If you would like any of our beautiful prayer cards for Birthdays, Healing, Special Occasion, Thinking of You or Sympathy you may send your email requests to missionadvancement@sistersofthepresentation.org or you may write to Mission Advancement Office, Mt. St. Joseph, 84 Presentation Way, New Windsor, NY 12553.
Ways of Giving

Your donation has an immediate impact. It will not only help support our Sisters who work without compensation, but it will help support: retired and infirm Sisters, the ongoing education of members, maintenance of facilities in New Windsor, New York and Leominster, Massachusetts.

With your support, we can continue to reach out to those in need, following in the words of our foundress, Nano Nagle, “If I could be of service in saving souls in any part of the world I would gladly do all in my power. Where there is a need I will go.”

Online Donations Please make note that donations can now be made securely and safely online at: www.sistersofthepresentation.org.