



# The *Flame*

Congregation of the Humility of Mary

Fall 2004

## Simple Conversations Restore Hope

Dear Friends,

Now that September and October have gone before they came, we move on to November with guarded expectations regarding the situation in the Diocese. Because we live on land that is leased from the Diocese, our thoughts have not been on the calendar, but on making wise decisions regarding our future. As I told our Sisters and Associates, our house is not in danger of being taken from us. We may have a new landlord. Our support and concern is with Bishop Franklin and the Diocese. We pray the Spirit leads them to a just and peaceful settlement with the victims. May God bless us all!

If ever there was a time for “real conversation,” it is now. Sisters and Associates have been having “real conversation” groups discussing the question “who is God for me today?” Over 120 Sisters have taken part. Without exception, reports have shown each participant felt the experience to be wonderful, exciting and challenging. One person even said she had never been asked the question, “What is your understanding of God?” I am convinced, as Margaret Wheatley says, “There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.” As promised, I share some of the responses.

- My view of God is different. (*When I was a child, I spoke as a child. . .*)
- God is good, true and beautiful.
- God is vitally interested in all of us.
- God is a caring friend; a radiant, intimate presence; a creator.
- My view has broadened; I now see God in others and nature.
- I believe in the Triune God.
- God is a challenger, a risk-taker.
- God is outside of time and space.
- God is a great spirit – forget “he” and “she.”
- God is the Source from which all emerges – a basis of trust.
- God is not seen, but felt.
- God is pure love; energy all around me.
- The entire cosmos is part of God.
- God is a companion, closer now and more real.
- God is a provider – I am now more dependent on God.
- I am now aware of God in small ways.

Respondents also mentioned they were more tolerant of diverse notions of God and how others live out their lives of faith. I was deeply moved by the candor of all. I thank my God for the wonderful spirit of all those participating in “real conversations” now and in the future.

– Roberta Brich, CHM President



**I believe we can change the world if we start listening to one another again. Simple, honest, human conversation. Not mediation, negotiation, problem solving, debate or public meetings. Simple, truthful conversation where we each feel heard, and we each listen well . . . The simplest way to begin finding each other again is to start talking about what we care about. If we could stop ignoring each other, stop engaging in fear-filled gossip, what might we discover?**

–Margaret Wheatley





# The Flame

Fall 2004  
Volume 2 Number 3

The Flame is published three times a year for the Congregation of the Humility of Mary and their friends.

**Our Mission:** We, the members of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary call one another to live the Gospel with simplicity and joy following the example of Mary.

Like our founders, we strive to be attentive to the call of the Spirit in the signs of our times, especially the needs of the poor and the powerless.

We commit ourselves as individuals and as a congregation to work for justice within the human family and to care for the earth itself.

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*Printed on Recycled Paper*

This anniversary year has brought so many blessings . . .

## We Thank You 150 Times Over!

So many of you wrote to congratulate us, came to celebrate with us, and gave generously of your resources to aid us in our ongoing ministries and in honor of our anniversary. We are ever grateful.

## May You Be Blessed 150 Times Over!

A committee of CHM Sisters and lay staff from the Quad Cities and Des Moines worked together for a year in organizing activities in celebration of our 150th Jubilee. Back row, from left: Lisa Bellomy, S. Mary Ann Vogel and S. Jeannie Hagedorn. Center: Ss. Joan Sheil, Roberta Brich and Jude Fitzpatrick. Front: Ss. Maggie Bennett, Delphine Vasquez and JoAnne Talarico.



Sharing the same origins in France, CHMs and Humility of Mary Sisters from Pennsylvania worked together on joint 150th celebration activities. Back row, from left: Marcella Houdek, HM, Jeanne Thurin, HM, Rose Anne Hanlon, HM, Gretchen McKean, CHM,

Catherine Linnenkamp, CHM, Lillian Stephens, CHM, Mary Elizabeth Henaughan, HM and Michelle Schiffgens, CHM. In front: Madeline Muller, HM and Camille Clark, CHM.

## CHMs Honored in 2004

CHMs in Ottumwa each received a State of Iowa Certificate of Recognition of their individual ministries and in honor of the 150th anniversary of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary. Those receiving certificates were Ss. Donna Donovan, Kayleen Heffron, Irene Munoz, Mary Hilary Veith and Suzanne Wickenkamp.

The Ottumwa Courier recognized S. Mary Hilary Veith among those of Southern Iowa *Who Make a Difference*. Since 1966 S. Mary Hilary has served the Ottumwa area visiting nursing homes, jails, hospitals and private homes.

S. Ana Maria Orozco was honored by Msgr. Robert Schmidt and other Papal Volunteers for Latin America board members for her 36 years of missionary work in the highlands of Chiapas, Mexico.

S. Elizabeth Anne Schneider was recognized for her volunteer service at Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center. S. Elizabeth Anne contributed over 1100 hours during the past six years.

S. Joanne Di Iulio received a special recognition award from the Bi-State Literacy Council for promoting literacy.

Bryan Whitman, an Eagle Scout of DeWitt, was honored at an award ceremony at Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat. Bryan was recognized for his work in landscaping the contemplative sitting area at the pond and the statue of Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom. For her role as mentor for Bryan's project, S. Joann Kuebrich received the Scouting Mentor Award.



S. Ana Maria Orozco

## 2004 Jubilarians Celebrate at Our Lady of Victory

Congratulations to ten CHM Sisters and one associate celebrating their Jubilees in 2004. They have ministered a total of 565 years, living out a mission of working for justice within the human family. Following they share current ministries and memories.

### 75 years

**S. Maurine Sofranko** – *ministry of hospitality and prayer.* “I recall the 1957 ‘fire’ of Ottumwa Heights and the living quarters at the air base. The combined efforts of the city and the support received, left a lifelong impression of gratitude that no lives were endangered. The experience was living charity ‘on the spot.’”



Ss. Rebecca Dobbels, Justine Denning, Carla Takes, Dolores Schuh, Claudellen Pentecost and Maggie Bennett.

**S. Dolores Schuh** – *volunteers at Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat and a proof-reader and copy editor for Liturgical Press.* “Living as a CHM in a Benedictine community gave me the best of all worlds. I came to appreciate the diverse religious traditions, both in the USA and in over 30 countries.”

### 70 years

**S. Mary John Byers** – *prayer ministry.* S. Mary John lives “my life as a journey with God – in gratitude and praises.”

**S. JoAnne Talarico** – *office manager at St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Student Center at Drake University.* “I feel privileged to have lived in

**S. M. Simone Wilmes** – *ministry of teaching children piano.* “I believe people need a place to just be heard, and not necessarily helped. I would like to be a listening post where troubles are aired and cared for!”

religious life through Vatican II, participating in the evolution of the Church as well as the Congregation of the Humility of Mary.”

**S. Carla Takes** – *volunteer for Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center; Humility of Mary Housing and Humility of Mary Center.* “While I valued my years as director of the residence hall (Ottumwa Heights Junior College), it was a position that, by its nature, presented the most challenges. These were formative years as I worked with 75 girls in a dormitory setting.”



Ss. M. Simone Wilmes and Mary John Byers.



S. Maurine Sofranko (center) celebrates with S. Pat Miller, CHM Vice President (L) and S. Robert Brich, CHM President.

### 60 Years

**S. Modesta Neubauer** – *ministry of prayer.*

### 50 years

**S. Margaret Bennett** – *pet therapy program volunteer at hospitals, nursing homes and schools.* “I was honored by the Davenport Parochial School Instrumental Department with an award for service and the naming of the Honor Band in my name.

**S. Justine Denning** – *caregiver for her mother.* “Early in my many years of teaching in Catholic schools, I recognized the faith and power of children’s prayer.”

**S. Claudellen Pentecost** – *works in central supply at Benefis West Hospital in Great Falls, Montana.* “My most fulfilling time was the time I spent as coordinator at the Humility Center in the 1980s.”

### 25 years

**S. Rebecca Dobbels** – *oncology nurse, Holden Cancer Center Clinic, University of Iowa Hospital.*

**Elizabeth Ann Dreas, CHM Associate**

Associate membership is not vowed but is rooted in bonds of friendship, service, prayer and mutual support.



# Development News

*S. Maria Luisa Marchello, beloved Sister of Humility and biological sister of the artist John L. Marchello, recently passed away. Her good works and faith live on in each piece of Fork Art that her brother creates. John is a member of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary's Angel Network. A percentage of the Fork Art proceeds helps the Sisters of Humility with their mission and ministries.*

## Development BITS & PIECES

**The 2004 CHM Christmas card** will feature the exceptional artwork of S. Toni Gieger. "God's Peace Dove" will reside on the beautiful card and the prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi will be featured on the prayer card.

**All Saints/All Souls In November** Those of you who have made memorial gifts to the Sisters of Humility will receive an All Saints card this year. Please take a moment to fill out and return the card so that we may remember your deceased loved ones at our November masses.

**Blessings and special thanks** to S. Delphine Vasquez for designing the CHM Angel for the new fundraising effort, the CHM Angel Network. All those making investments in the CHM Angel Network program will receive a thank you card featuring S. Delphine's Angel.

## John L. Marchello

*An angel watching over the Sisters of Humility...*

*An excerpt from The Ann Arbor News August 28, 2001 by Don Faber*

John Marchello is deep into religious "fork art." He transforms the common, everyday eating implement into crucifixes (he calls them "cruciforks"), angels and nativity scenes . . . The story behind his fork art dates to July 1999, when Marchello was coping with issues of cancer and mortality.

A swollen prostate gland was giving him cause for concern. While awaiting the outcome of his pathology report, Marchello went into a local restaurant for a quick breakfast. He received his silverware and noticed something unusual about the fork.

**As he puts it, "The right side of my brain saw a fork with the two outer prongs bent sideways and upward while the center**

**prongs curled forward. The left side of my brain saw the crucified body of Jesus Christ."**

Struck by his vision, Marchello dimly heard the waitress dismiss the anomaly as "the dishwasher acting up again." Marchello slid the bent fork into his shirt pocket. He then heard himself telling the waitress he wanted to buy some forks, three dozen to a box.

Two days later, his path test came back positive. "I was diagnosed with prostate cancer in the early stage," he said, "with a 90 percent chance the cancer was contained within the gland."

In October 1999, he underwent a radical prostatectomy. Today, Marchello says all traces of cancer are absent.



In the days before his surgery, Marchello spent evenings and weekends trying to develop a skill at bending forks. His studio contains a bench grinder, vise, pliers, hammers and a soldering device.

Why the fork? "It's such a common tool, it jolts people when they see it in an art form," Marchello said. **"So the next time they see a fork, it'll remind them of God."**

Marchello was born in East Moline, Illinois, near the Mississippi River. He calls himself a "cradle Catholic," born into the faith. As a child he served as an altar boy."



CHM Angel, John Marchello, says, "I take a simple object, something someone uses every day, and I imprint it in people's minds that they'll never see it as a common fork again."

### WANTED:

Our CHM Angel in Ann Arbor, Michigan, is donating a percentage of all proceeds from his FORK ART to the CHM Angel Network. Silver and silver-plated forks, spoons, knives, and other serving utensils are needed. Call Nancy Kay today at CHM Angel Network Headquarters at (563) 323-9466 to make arrangements for a silver donation.

*All of God's blessings to you during the upcoming holiday season! Give thanks! Rejoice! And may peace abound!*

## DONOR QUESTION CORNER

# Where Does My Gift Go?

Spiritually  
inspired  
Fork Art



Gifts to the Sisters of Humility may be designated for a number of different needs. They include:

- Greatest Current Need
- Quality of Life for Retired Sisters
- CHM Angel Network Fund
- Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat
- Humility of Mary Center Chapel Renovation
- Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat Capital Campaign

### Greatest Current Need

Presently, operating expenses are our greatest current need. With a number of unexpected expenditures the past few years and an increase in the number of retired Sisters, we anticipate an operating deficit. Designating a gift to the greatest current need will help the Sisters of Humility cover the everyday costs it takes to run the Humility of Mary Center.

### Quality of Life for Retired Sisters

Designating a retirement gift helps secure the retirement costs for the Sisters. These costs include medical and health expenses, room and board

expenses, and other needs of those Sisters who have dedicated their lives to God's work. Additionally, these gifts contribute to the costs for those Sisters who now reside at the Bishop Drumm Care Center.

### CHM Angel Network Fund

In the poorest part of rural Mississippi, S. Helen Strohman wakes each morning to face more young people in need of her help. Sr. Helen is one of many Sisters of Humility "out in the field," working for little or no pay with hopes of helping those with the greatest needs. The CHM Angel Network Fund is set up to help fund the active ministries serving the neediest of the needy, the hungry, the poverty stricken, the prejudiced and the wrongly accused. Gifts to the CHM Angel Network Fund help directly support the active ministries of the Sisters of Humility.

### Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat

A gift to Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat in rural Wheatland, Iowa, helps the Sisters of Humility continue to operate this spiritual retreat for all persons of all denominations. Gifts will help pay for

general maintenance and operating expenses. Your gift makes it possible for this ministry to touch the lives of many who are thirsting for God's word and direction.

### Humility of Mary Chapel Renovation

In 2002, the Sisters undertook a project to help renovate the current chapel at the Humility of Mary Center in order to accommodate more people and provide a spiritual space for the retired Sisters to worship. The chapel has been an integral part of our ministry of prayer for all those in need throughout the world. Approximately \$200,000 in renovation costs remain and gifts to the Chapel Renovation Fund go directly to cover these expenses.

### Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat Capital Campaign

The OLP Capital Campaign kicked off in 2001 with a goal of \$500,000 to cover the cost of the new Prairie Heights addition. Gifts to the OLP Capital Campaign Fund go toward meeting the remaining \$100,000 of this building project.

*Always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else.*

*1 Thessalonians 5:15*

But we can all be angels to one another. We can choose to obey the small stirring within, the little whisper that says, "Go. Ask. Reach out. Be an answer to someone's plea. You have a part to play. Have faith." The world will be a better place for it. And wherever they are, the angels will dance.

- Joan Wester Anderson

## Volunteer angels needed for the CHM Angel Network in the following areas:



**If you live in or near these areas please be an angel and help support our Sisters in active ministries!**

Davenport, Iowa  
Des Moines, Iowa  
Iowa City, Iowa  
Waterloo, Iowa  
Chicago, Illinois  
Peoria, Illinois  
Great Falls, Montana

Billings, Montana  
Madison, Wisconsin  
Boulder, Colorado  
Kansas City, Missouri  
St. Louis, Missouri

**Various locations in these states:**

Arizona  
California  
Florida  
Oklahoma

Minnesota  
Hawaii  
North & South Dakota  
Texas  
Washington

**Please help! It's fun, it helps the Sisters of Humility and you make a difference in the lives of many people in need! Become an Angel!**

**CHM Development**  
**Develop@chmiowa.org**  
**(563) 323-9466**  
**www.chmiowa.org**



**S. Josephine Abel**  
1916-2004



S. Josephine made her final profession in 1940. Her life's ministry as an educator included high schools in Montana and Iowa.

**S. Rosemary Shay**  
1912-2004



S. Rosemary professed her final vows in 1934. Her mission of teaching included schools in Iowa and Minnesota.

## Gone to New Life

**S. Anita Fosdick**  
1923-2004



S. Anita professed her final vows in 1943. An educator, she taught in Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota and Montana.



**S. Maria Louisa Marchello**  
1925-2004

S. Maria made her final profession in 1951. Her life's ministry of teaching led her to Iowa, Illinois and Mexico.



**Connie Bennett**  
CHM Associate  
1941-2004

Formerly a Sister of Humility, Connie carried on the CHM spirit in her daily life as a CHM Associate since 1978.

### Plain Song

Lord Jesus, I love you  
in and out of time.  
I love you balanced  
on the fragments  
of my own denatured wit  
and walking cross the waters.

-by S. Maria Luisa Marchello

### A Favorite Prayer of S. Anita Fosdick

May God support us all the day long, till the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then in God's mercy may He give us a safe lodging and a holy rest, and peace at the last! *Amen*

To think of death as the end of life,  
is to think of the horizon as the end of the world.

-unknown



## Memorial Cards Celebrate Life, Love and Giving

This special keepsake card makes a beautiful statement of sympathy and comfort to family members of loved ones who have gone to eternal rest. The card also lets the family know of your gift made in memory of their loved one to the Sisters of Humility.

Please consider using these special cards and remember the Sisters in your memorial giving.

If you would like one or more memorial cards, please contact our Development Office by phone (563) 323-9466 or e-mail [develop@chmiowa.org](mailto:develop@chmiowa.org).

## Keeping the Faith

In a time when one may feel torn with the issues of the world weighing down, “keep the faith” may be all we need to hear. The Sisters of Humility have three new ways to promote spirituality.

### *Grow With Us*

Branching out to include women and men of all faiths, the Sisters of Humility offer a variety of opportunities to grow in faith and work for justice within the human family. This simple brochure, produced in-house, outlines four opportunities for CHM association: Vowed Membership, Associate Program, Visitation Program and the Experimental Community. *Grow with Us* is available in English and Spanish.

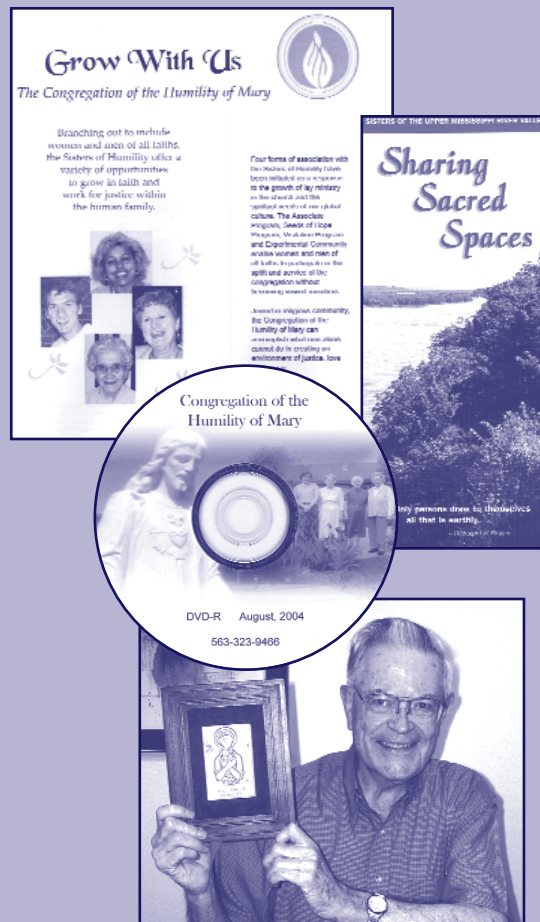
### *Sharing Sacred Spaces*

CHMs are among 11 religious communities of women in the Upper Mississippi Valley who belong to Sisters United News (SUN). SUN has collaborated to produce this booklet focusing on stewardship of the earth. The booklet invites the public to visit and celebrate creation at mother-houses, retreats, spirituality centers, prairies and woodlands.

### *CHM Video/DVD*

An outstanding way to learn about the history and current ministries of the Sisters of Humility – with a focus on the newest form of association – the Experimental Community.

Join us in creating an environment of justice, love and peace so desperately needed in our world today. For a free copy of either publication or to arrange a viewing of the video, contact Lisa Bellomy at (563) 323-9466 or [Lbellomy@chmiowa.org](mailto:Lbellomy@chmiowa.org).



Special thanks to Father Joe Rogers for his support of the CHM video/DVD project.



S. Leona Mary Manning and Rose Arnoldy.

On September 1, Rose Arnoldy, Great Bend, Kansas, began a year of volunteer ministry as a Seeds of Hope participant in Des Moines. She joined Ss. Ursula Keough, Donna Schmitt, Johanna Rickl, and Ramona Kaalberg as the first non-vowed member of the CHM Experimental Community. Prior to coming to Des Moines, Rose taught in elementary school and later worked as a librarian.

Members of the Experimental Community are vowed and non-vowed individuals living together as did the early Christians – breaking bread, sharing prayer and building community. Emphasis is given to simple living and a radical response to the Gospel call to work for justice and peace. Currently the CHM Experimental Community is based in Des Moines and ministers to the needs of people in the River Bend Neighborhood.

... I should tell the Sisters and the newsletter that, in addition to my work in Hispanic missions in northwest Arkansas with battered women and others, I completed two books while there on the history of women in engineering and technology. I also volunteered in campus ministry at the U of A, where my own campus ministry journey as a student started over 40 years ago.

**Humility of Mary Center Staff  
Honored for Years of Service**



Pat Miller, CHM vice president, Marie Durham – 15 years cook, David Anderson – 10 years plant coordinator, S. Miriam Ehrhardt – 20 years HMC kitchen coordinator, Shari Rife – 20 years cook, S. Darlene Schwarte - 20 years cook, Roberta Brich, CHM President.

**XStream Sisters**



Ss. Pat Miller and Joan Sheil helped during the XStream Clean-up held in Iowa and Illinois last August. Twelve Sisters of Humility participated in this worthy environmental cause.

**Welcome**

On November 1st Lynn Mousel began the initial formation program for vowed membership in the Congregation of the Humility



of Mary. Before moving to Des Moines in October, she served as a child and adolescent psychiatrist and was an instructor of the

same at the University of Nebraska in Omaha. During the first year of her program she will continue her psychiatric work at Orchard Place in Des Moines. On November 14 she will be welcomed by the Sisters of Humility and Associates at a prayer service in Des Moines. A special welcoming service will also be held at Humility of Mary Center in Davenport the last Sunday in November.

For change of address contact:  
Nancy Kay Cerny  
(563) 323-9466 or  
develop@chmiowa.org

*CHM Priorities  
2004-2008*

- Membership
- Non-Violence
- Understanding Diverse Cultures

**The Lord has done  
great things for us and  
we are filled with joy.**

*Psalm 126:3*

The donor envelope included in this issue invites your support in honor of the 150th Anniversary of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary. Many thanks to you for your generosity. You make a world of difference!



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