



A Ministry of Prayer

by Sister Joann Kuebrich, CHM

The title of our community rule book, “Search and Service,” identifies my ministry of prayer. It states, “Aware that ministry will be fruitful only as it proceeds from the fullness of interior life, the sisters of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary strive to seek God solely before all else, joining their prayer to ministry.”

The early years of my ministry were in the pre-Vatican II era so my prayer life was that of the community prescribed prayers. My personal prayers consisted primarily of devotions and novenas asking the Holy Spirit for inspiration and guidance for my work, community living and praying that I was doing the will of God.

In the years following Vatican II, when we became responsible for our personal prayer life, I continued

to rely on prayer for myself and my ministries. The saying, “My prayer is my work,” was a temptation that I found myself caught in when I realized that I was spending less time devoted to prayer and my relationship with God than I gave to my ministry. Fortunately, a life circumstance (a grace from the Holy Spirit) alerted me to what was happening. I had gone astray like a lost sheep. (Ps. 119 v. 175) Repent was the call! It was through this experience that I came to appreciate the wisdom of the statement in our

Let my soul live and praise you, and let your rules help me. I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek your servant, for I do not forget your commandments.

-Ps. 119 v. 175-176

rule “...to strive to seek God solely before all else...”

Seeking to know and love God and praying has been an intense and important part of my life’s journey since my childhood. In that sense, I am a natural searcher longing for ways to know and love God and developing that relationship. Now that I am no longer engaged in active ministry, one of my priorities is to deepen this search through spiritual reading, contemplative prayer, daily community prayer and the Eucharist. “Be still,” the psalmist says, “and know that I am God.” Being mindful of God’s presence throughout the

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Photo: Sisters of Humility gather together in prayer in the Magnificat Chapel located in Humility of Mary Center in Davenport, Iowa.

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

Dismiss all anxiety from your minds; instead, present your needs to God through prayer and petition, giving thanks for all circumstances. Then God's own peace, which is beyond all understanding, will stand guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4: 6-7

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Celebrating staff anniversaries at Humility of Mary Center are CHM Vice President Greta Fitzgerald, Sr. Kathleen Storms, SSND, Director of Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat for five years, Associate Pat Knopick, CHM Associate Program Coordinator for five years, Mary Kay Shumaker, part-time receptionist for five years, Sr. Rae Elwood, Program Assistant for Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat for five years and CHM President Johanna Rickl.

Dear Friends,

With each issue of "The Flame" we intend to provide information and updates about the ministries of the CHM community. We know you are interested in such topics because you have generously and consistently provided wonderful support to these works of the Gospel. Be assured of our gratitude! In the present issue, we draw attention to an active ministry exercised by all of our sisters: the prayer that sustains our life of commitment to God and that undergirds all our activities.

Recently a survey was sent to all CHM sisters regarding their understanding of the ministry of prayer, how their prayer practice has changed since becoming a CHM, and what prayer experiences are especially meaningful. The collection of responses is beautiful. The cover story by Sr. Joann Kuebrich is one example, as was a short story about Sr. Roberta's Brich's tactile form of prayer that was in the last issue of our e-newsletter "CHM Spirit". You can expect to see more of these reflections in future issues of "The Flame," our blog "A Nun's Pocket" and "CHM Spirit." These publications can be found by visiting our website at chmiowa.org. We would so appreciate it if you would consider subscribing to and sharing any or all of them.

While visiting our website you are welcome to make an online prayer request. These intentions are then lifted up in our individual and community prayers. We also invite you to join us for Mass and prayer at the Humility of Mary Center on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 8:00 am, Wednesdays at 11:40 am and Sundays at 10:00 am.

*Sr. Johanna Rickl
CHM President*

-Prayer continued from page 1



Preparing for a special Mass are Sr. Irene Muñoz, CHM Associate Joan Marie Resnick, Sr. Joann Kuebrich and Sr. Jeanie Hagedorn.

day is one of my aspirations that blends well with my contemplative prayer practice.

The community part of my ministry of prayer includes working with our Center Liturgy Committee. We aim to observe all the elements of the liturgical cycle by celebrating the solemnities and feasts with appropriate community prayers, liturgies, music and rituals. Occasional prayer services are used to celebrate our community founders, feast days and contemporary secular events/causes. The Liturgy Committee works with the administration for a sister's funeral service and a memorial Mass for an associate. Prayer requests, however they are received, are treated with respect.

My personal prayer time begins in the chapel at night when all is quiet. It is this silence that stills my being. *(Jesus often drew apart in solitude at night to pray. Mark 1:35; 6:46; Luke 5:16)* This time falls into a natural flow of reading the Scriptures for the next day's liturgy, lectio divina and centering prayer. It is a time to review my day, known as the examen, continuing the novena to the Holy Spirit and special intentions including my family. Praying Compline, the night prayer of the Church, ends my prayer. This is the deepest and most healing part of my day.

After breakfast, I try to spend time sitting in my rocking chair at my bedroom window which opens to a wooded ravine, a lawn with trees and a bird feeder—a setting that in any season is an array of God's creation and an inspiration for meditation. Here I spend time doing spiritual reading, journaling and praying.

My private daily prayers always include what I call the three pillars of my prayer life: forgiveness/reconciliation, gratitude and praise to God and special prayers to the Holy Spirit.

"For each one of us, there is only one thing necessary: to fulfill our own destiny, according to God's will, to be what God wants us to be." -Thomas Merton

Good News!

It is now possible to register online for all Our Lady of the Prairie programs and retreats.

Visit **chmiowa.org** to view the retreat calendar and reserve your space for any of the upcoming events with a credit card. You may also register by contacting Sr. Rae at 563-336-8414 or olpretreat@gmail.com.

Special Event on May 8

"Coming to Peace" Book Reading

7:00pm - 8:30pm

Humility of Mary Center,

820 W. Central Park Ave, Davenport, IA

Free Will Offering

A book written and read by Isa Gucciardi, Ph.D.,
Founding Director, Foundation of the Sacred Stream

The essence of resolution lies in the recognition of the deep and unbroken connectedness that we share as human beings. This book shows how the processes of "Coming to Peace" meet those in conflict and provide them a pathway to reconciliation and wholeness.

Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat is hosting its first annual

NO SHOW GALA

- The event will NOT take place on Tuesday, April 25
- Cocktails will NOT be served at 6 pm
- Dinner will NOT be served at 7 pm
- NO program will be held at 8 pm
- COST: What you think you would have spent, had this been an actual event.

Save the money you would have spent on a ticket to an event that you'd rather not go to and donate those funds towards helping us feed the hungry of heart and nourish the poor of spirit.

Donations will be used for one of our greatest needs—installing a chairlift to make easy access to our second floor for overnight visitors. Won't you help us better serve our guests? Monetary donations of any size are welcome.

You can find the **No Show Gala** and how to donate on the calendar of events at **www.chmiowa.org**.

And so We Prayed

by Kathleen Storms, SSND, Director,
Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat



During a sabbatical there is extended time for rest, relaxation, renewal and prayer. The glow from the 34-day experience hosted at Our Lady of the Prairie (Jan. 26 to Feb. 28) lingers on in the hearts of those sisters who attended.

We started each day with Morning Prayer and celebrated Mass weekly. Presenters wove in time for reflection, writing, meditative walks and artistic expression. We *prayed* our way through the sabbatical. Sr. Joan Chittister's definition of prayer describes our experience:

"Prayer is the link to a life beyond the mundane, the daily, the routine, and the immediate dimensions of life. It is the beginning of a relationship with the God who is closer to us than we are to ourselves. It is a relationship with both creation and the Creator. It grows us into the fullness of ourselves, both spiritually and psychologically."

Some of the ways in which we were encouraged to pray were:

- 1. Visio Divina—literally means "seeing the divine"** through photographs and images, icons and works of art. Prayerful consideration of and interaction with an image allowed us to expand our experience of the divine. One sister saw a beautiful cotton mink that sat at attention and spoke to her of God calling and loving her.
- 2. Lectio Divina—is "divine reading" of scripture** allowing a word or phrase to rise in one's consciousness. This holy word is savored and examined. In prayer each morning we reflected on the Mass readings for the day. Music of the same theme, reading of a psalm and silent meditation deepened the meaning of these words.
- 3. We created Mandalas—**which means "circle" in ancient Sanskrit. Mandalas offer a way to balance lines, circles and other visual elements into a unified and harmonious piece.

This form of meditative practice is kin to writing a journal. The slow, reflective process is a way to pray and communicate with God.

4. Learning Watercolor coupled with words of St. Francis. We learned basic watercolor technique as a way to express words of scripture, connection with nature and an image of God. This process opened new ways of seeing color, texture and spiritual meaning.

5. SoulCollage® for the non-artist among us, is an insightful way to use images for prayer and reflections. It is a process for tapping into our intuition by searching for images that touched us from magazine pictures. We pasted the pictures on cards and were led through guided reflection on the deeper meaning to be found there.

6. Contemplative Earth Walks were encouraged by most of the presenters. This simple summary gives shape to this experience: Gather yourself... Wander until you are stopped... Wait for a reply... Say thank you...

7. Reflection on the elements used at Mass took on new meaning as we came to know the evolutionary story of wheat, grapes, water and oil. We discovered that each of these comes

from the same root place in creation as our own bodies. No wonder Jesus chose these to celebrate his presence with us.

8. Christ Yesterday, Today and Forever (The Cosmic Christ) St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians (1:15-20, 21-23), selections from the Gospels, and Pope Francis' "Joy of the Gospel," painted a picture of Jesus Christ forever with us as one among us and the concerns of today. Prayer deepened as our sense of Jesus expanded.

9. What is the light for which you long? A final reflective process was to reflect on this question. A follow up reflection was "This is important for me because..." repeated until we ran out of things to say. Prayer in this context brought us to root beliefs, a deepened sense of God's love, and a way to see into the future.

Prayer melded our sabbatical experience into a reflective, healing experience. Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat again proved to be the perfect place to ponder the Holy—to trust God's revelation and grace. Many of these prayer practices are incorporated into programs at The Prairie. Check them out at www.chmiowa.org

Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat is a sponsored ministry of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary.

Photo: Participants at Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat's first ever Sister Sabatical.
First Row: (left to right) Mira Mosle, BVM, (Dubuque, IA), Helen Hofmann, OSF, (Syracuse, NY) Second Row: Marcia Eckerman, CHM (OLPR Assistant), Charlotte Brungardt, OP (Great Bend, KS); Therese Carroll, RSJ (Earlwood, NSW, Australia); Lillian Stevens, CHM (Davenport); Eileen Daudlin, SSND, (Elm Grove, WI); Mary Catherine Doyle, CSJ (Toronto, Canada) Kathleen Storms, SSND, (OLPR Director) Not pictured are 2nd week participants: Johanna Rickl, CHM and Kathleen Tomlonovic, CHM.

We are Grateful for our Supportive Friends

by Joyce Bieber, CHM Development Director

The sisters of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary regularly include our supporters in their prayers. To reinforce this we have added a section to our response envelopes for our friends to indicate special dates in their lives. We will happily include your special occasion in our monthly prayer list.

As usual, we received an outstanding response to our All Saints and All Souls Day mailing. The names of deceased loved ones that were submitted for prayers were included in our “Book of Eternal Life” that was placed in the Magnificat Chapel during the month of November. The sisters dedicated the month to reflecting on the names and praying for the souls of the dearly departed.

Do you know someone who has everything? Many of you have chosen to celebrate the blessings in

your life by making a joyful gift in honor of life’s special occasions. Anniversaries, baptisms, birthdays, holidays, retirements, good health and good friends are all wonderful occasions to make a celebration gift. It’s easy to do and you will have the satisfaction of knowing that your gift is supporting the mission and ministries of the Congregation. We will send an acknowledgement for you to the honoree on his or her special day.

If you are an online donor, you may notice a change in the donation form located on the CHM website. We have recently upgraded our donor management system and included is an integrated online donation processing program. This will allow us to process online donations more efficiently, create donation forms for specific appeals and better track our donations. To make an online donation, log on to



Sr. Roberta Brich reflects on names in the “Book of Eternal Life” and prays for the souls of the dearly departed.

chmiowa.org and click on the “Give” button located in the top navigation. You have the option of designating your donation to one of our ministries or directing the donation to the “greatest need.” You may also give the donation in honor or in memory of someone and, if you desire, we will send a card acknowledging the donation to the honoree or

family member of the deceased. Donations can be made as one time gifts or recurring transactions.

If you have questions regarding donations to the Congregation of the Humility of Mary, please contact Joyce Bieber, Development Director, 563-336-8401 or email jbieber@chmiowa.org.

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 *Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat*

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The lady in red, Sr. Joanne Di Iulio, celebrated 90 years in March 2016 at Bishop Drumm Retirement Center in Johnston, IA. With her from l-r: CHM Assoc. Barb Gross, Sr. Micheline Curtis, Sr. Elaine Hagedorn, Sr. Jeanie Hagadorn, Sr. Romana Kaalberg, Sr. Marilyn Schierbrock and Sr. Jeanette Kopel.

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Delores McAllister
Diane and Michael McAndrews
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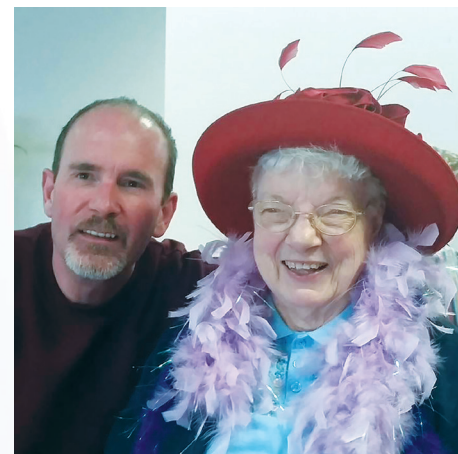
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Molyneaux Risk Solutions, Davenport, IA
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 Judy Sieren
 Robert Sieren
 Shirley Sieren
 Gloria Sigler
 Lucia Signorelli
 Michael Sigwalt
 Sally Simonson
 Marilyn Simpson
 Katherine Sircy
 Sisters of St. Francis

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 Elizabeth G. Slappey
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 Community, Dutton, MT
 St. William's Council Of Catholic Women,
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 Norma Stutzman
 Ellyn and Paul Stych
 Joan L. Suchomel
 Elizabeth E. Sullivan
 Mary Jean and Gerald Sullivan
 Flora Sun
 Daughn and Michael Sutter
 Molly and Ray Swiercek
 TAE Sunshine, Zephyrhills, FL
 Nora Taets
 Sr. Carla Takes, CHM
 Sr. Maribeth Takes, CHM
 Sr. Cathy Talarico, CHM



Sr. Karen Macksey celebrated her 90th birthday in April 2016. Her nephew was a special guest.

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 Rita Tandeski
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This spring issue of *The Flame* contains a listing of friends who have made contributions to the Congregation of the Humility of Mary from January 1 through December 31, 2016. Every effort has been made to provide a complete and accurate listing. If there are errors, omissions, or questions, please contact the development office at 563-336-8401.

Thank you for your generosity and support.

I thank God always, when I remember you in my prayers.

Philemon 1: 4



Sister volunteer crew at Humility of Mary Center

The Congregation of the Humility of Mary is grateful for the donations received in honor and memory of loved ones between October and December 2016.

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Chartered in 1999 by the Congregation of the Humility of Mary, the CHM Magnificat Society was established to identify and honor those donors whose commitment, vision and concern for the future of the Congregation is demonstrated by their planned giving support.

Responding to the needs of the Church in the modern world, sisters serve in ministries including support for the homeless and underserved (especially Humility of Mary Housing, Inc. and Humility of Mary Shelter, Inc.), immigration and healthcare advocacy, education, pastoral care in parishes, Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat, prayer and care of Earth. Planned gifts ensure that these vital ministries will continue.

Membership in the Magnificat Society

Membership in the Magnificat Society is granted to each friend who makes a will provision/planned gift for the Congregation of the Humility of Mary as part of his or her estate planning. To learn more about the benefits of becoming a member contact:

Joyce Bieber, CHM Development Director,

563-336-8401 or jbieber@chmiowa.org

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Carol Vogel

Gertrude Vogel

Janet M. Walther

Sue Witte

CHM Sisters and Associates Resting in Heavenly Peace



Sr. Elizabeth Thoman
June 18, 1943 -
December 22, 2016



Sr. Mary Ellen Freeman
August 16, 1943 -
December 24, 2016



Sr. Mary Janice McCann
April 23, 1926 -
February 24, 2017



Sr. Ann Terese Collins
April 6, 1920 -
February 26, 2017



Assoc. Vera Gingerich
June 28, 1923 -
October 28, 2016



Assoc. Martha Trescott
November 1, 1941 -
November 15, 2016



Assoc. Patricia Waldrop
July 14, 1930 -
January 20, 2017

*Loving tributes to our
departed sisters can be
found at
www.chmiowa.org
in News & Events Section
under "In Memoriam"*