

A publication for friends of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary

the FLAME



Inside:
2023
Jubilarians

United in Mission

Summer 2023

Summer 2023

Volume 21 Issue 2

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 poor and powerless people.

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



Photo: CHM Leadership Retreat attendees (front, from left) Vice President Sr. Marcia Eckerman, President Sr. Johanna Rickl and Cabinet Member Sr. Mary Ann Vogel; (back) Facilitator and Associate Diane Schlachter and Cabinet Member Sr. Lynn Mousel.

Dear Friends,

“Present” is a response used to affirm that a person is someplace where a roll call is being taken. It is usually in a group whose members are responsible for fulfilling the organization’s purpose. This issue of the Flame reminded me of that, especially as I viewed the front cover that features 60+ percent of CHM members. As you read, you’ll find many ways that CHMs are present and fulfilling their commitment as consecrated women religious. And that is something to celebrate! CHM Sisters, along with Associates, celebrated commitments at the recent CHM Assembly. I hope you enjoy the reflection and biographies of the Jubilarians.

Perhaps you have attended memorial events about persons who gave their lives for a cause. As names are read, those attending answer in Spanish “presente,” affirming their solidarity with the deceased and their dedication to the common cause. With recent deaths of sisters and associates, we, too, have had opportunities to recognize their commitment and to reaffirm our union with them in service to the world, the church and each other. Note the connections, including that between “beings” and “bees.”

Our CHM assembly reflections were made super-meaningful for me because “Ubuntu” was heard throughout the Leadership Conference of Women Religious Assembly I recently attended. Brian Swimme led us to recognize that we have all reached our current level of intelligent awareness because we have built on the wisdom and work of everyone who has gone before us. Another translation of “Ubuntu” is “I am because we are”. And a key element of this “we are” is our relationship with the earth which is well expressed in the article on page 13.

Thank you for being present and united in mission with us!

Sister Johanna Rickl

All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents.

(Laudato Si', #14)

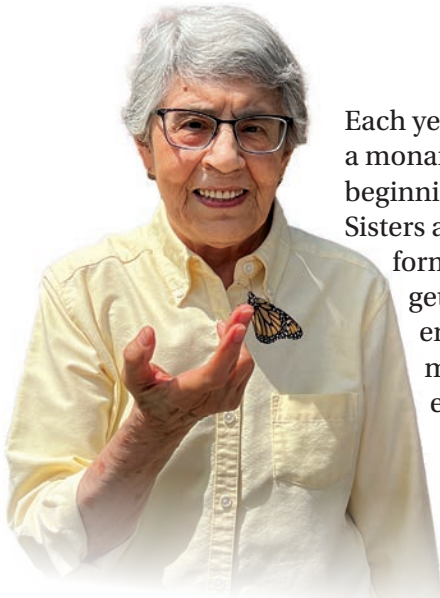
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Living Our Faith

Since the invasion of Ukraine, CHMs have been saying the Rosary daily for the people of Ukraine and Russia and their leaders, refugees and those killed and injured. Other intentions, including the preservation of democratic principles and values in our country, are included as well. Several CHMs, including Sr. Catherine Linnenkamp pictured here, lead parts of the rosary.



Each year since 2007, Sr. Delphine Vasquez has operated a monarch butterfly nursery at Humility of Mary Center beginning with the collection of eggs on milkweed. The Sisters and staff enjoy watching the caterpillars grow, form chrysalises, emerge as butterflies, and, finally, get released into St. Joseph's Courtyard. Sr. Delphine enjoys fostering the existence and multiplication of monarchs that are not only beautiful but help the environment as plant pollinators.



Water with Blessings is a non-profit program whose mission is to bring clean water to thirsty children in developing countries as well as Native American and Appalachian families in the United States. The program distributes special bucket filters to families who lack access to safe drinking water. Sisters Dolores Schuh and Lillian Stevens are helping by knitting and crocheting "socks" that fit over the water filter to serve as a cushion of protection in case the filter is dropped on a hard surface.



Upcoming events at Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat

AUG. 21, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. *Pathways to the Divine - Sac and Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa (Meskwaki Nation) with Johnathan Lantz Buffalo. ONLINE ONLY.*

AUG. 23, 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. *Birds, Bees and Beebalm: A Day Exploring the Creatures and Wildflowers of The Prairie with Nahant Marsh's Brian Ritter, Amy Loving and Jimmy Wiebler. Gain a greater understanding of prairie ecology and native landscapes.*

AUG. 24, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. *ONLINE ONLY. Sins of the Spirit, Blessing of the Flesh with Rev. Dr. Matthew Fox. This presentation challenges traditional perceptions of good and evil by offering a new theology that lays the groundwork for a more enlightened treatment of ourselves, one another and all of nature.*

AUG. 25 - 27, Friday, 3:00 p.m. - Sunday, 11:00 a.m. *Late Summer Weekend Writing Retreat with Jodie Toohey. You need two full days to dedicate to writing, reading and/or reflecting with other like-minded individuals.*

SEPT. 6, 10:00 a.m. *Mass on The Prairie.*

SEPT. 7, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. *Festive Fall Pumpkin Painting Artist's Vault with Julie Wall. Paint your stress away. Relax while creating a fall pumpkin painting.*

SEPT. 8, 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. *Stepping Slowly into the Great Conversation: A Nature Therapy and Creativity Retreat with Emelia Sautter and Thomas Dean as you seek quiet, rest, restoration and creative inspiration in nature.*

SEPT. 9, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. *Welcome, Come On In with Dr. Ken Novak. In the spirit of our diocesan synodal focus of welcoming, inclusion and belonging, we will coinvestigate what happens inside the soul when we say to our sisters and brothers, "come on in."*

SEPT. 10, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. *Expanding Health, Resiliency and Revelation through Esoteric Acupuncture with Dr. Jeff Beck. Learn the ways that esoteric acupuncture brings balance to finer densities of our body, mind and spirit. Includes a treatment using oils to activate the acupuncture points rather than needles.*

SEPT. 14, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. *ONLINE ONLY: The Hidden Spirituality of Men: Ten Metaphors to Awaken the Sacred Masculine with Rev. Dr. Matthew Fox. From war to ecological collapse, most of the world's critical problems stem from a distorted masculinity out of control.*

SEPT. 16, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. *A Chance to Deeply Understand Chakras with Kathleen Collins. When we understand chakras, we can help ourselves heal and honor our health and well-being!*

SEPT. 17, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. *Dream Studies - A Gateway to Knowledge with Marcia Flory. The subconscious mind possesses a remarkable talent for self-discovery.*

SEPT. 17 - 19, Sunday, 5:00 p.m. - Tuesday, Noon. *Celtic Retreat: Wandering and Wondering with Cissy Donovan Eyre, MA, and Lori Stevens. This silent guided retreat introduces Celtic practices for seeking the sacred within.*

SEPT. 18, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. *Pathways to the Divine with Baptist Pastor Rogers Kirk, Jr. Location: Third Missionary Baptist Church, 222 W. 14th St., Davenport. ZOOM Option Available.*

SEPT. 21, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. *The Joy of Vegetarian Cooking with Angel Lyle. A vegetarian diet, even if only a few days a week will positively affect our wellbeing.*

SEPT. 22 - 24, Friday, 5:00 p.m. - Sunday, 11:00 a.m. *Deeper with God with Jenny Chadima. Notice God in the complexity, the frustration, and the joy of everyday life.*



Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat, 2664 145th Avenue, Wheatland, IA 52777
Website: theprairieretreat.org Facebook: Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat
Phone: 563-374-1092 E-mail: olpretreat@chmiowa.org
To sign up for a retreat, go to theprairieretreat.org
Click retreat calendar for an entire listing of retreats. Call 563-374-1092 for help.

Our retreats are affordable. Ask about our scholarship opportunities.



SEPT. 24, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. *PrairieFest*

SEPT. 25, OCT. 2 and 9, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. *ONLINE ONLY: A Spiritual Journey with the Enneagram with Mary Jo Lewis, MD, PhD.*

SEPT. 27, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. *Peace Through the Beatitudes with Sr. Kathleen Sadler, OSF. Discover how the Beatitudes are a blueprint for Christian discipleship.*

SEPT. 28, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. *God Does Extraordinary Things Through Ordinary People with Larry and Connie VanOosten.*

OCT. 3, 10, 17 and 24, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. *Mind Your Mind: Mindfulness Meditation for Beginners with Brian Thompson. ZOOM option available.*

OCT. 4, 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. *Easy Peasy Pie Crust with Deb Monroe. Impress your guests with this homemade pie crust recipe!*

OCT. 4, 10:00 a.m. *Mass on The Prairie.*

OCT. 16, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. *Pathways to the Divine - Unitarian Universalist with Lyn Foster, Pat Everly and Melissa Hood. Location: Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 309 30th Ave. N., Clinton. ZOOM option available.*

OCT. 18, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. *Cultivating Self-Compassion with Miriam Prichard. Learn practical ways to let go of your inner critic and experience self-compassion.*

OCT. 19, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. *ONLINE ONLY: A New Reformation: Creation Spirituality and the Transformation of Christianity with Rev. Dr. Matthew Fox.*

NOV. 1, 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. *The Spiritual Practice of Writing an Ethical Will: Affirm the Wisdom Growing Within Your Soul with Elaine Olson.*

NOV. 3 - 5, Friday, 6:00 p.m. - Sunday, 1:00 p.m. *Kitchen Table Singing with Liz Rog. Do you like to sing or wish you could? Build connection and belonging.*

NOV. 8, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. *Weaving Stories, Nurturing Hope with Val Lucas. For anyone who has experienced the loss of a loved one and would like support in working through this challenge.*

NOV. 10 - 11, Friday, 5:00 p.m. - Saturday, 4:00 p.m. *Pause and Refresh - You deserve time just for you! with Pat Shea.*

NOV. 12, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. *Yoga for Peace, Mind-Body Unity with Jeanne McKenzie and Carrie Mahoney.*

NOV. 16, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. *Women of the Bible: The Foremothers and the Women Disciples of Jesus with Rev. Dr. Ann Fritschel.*

NOV. 18, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. *Hope and Healing for Those Who Grieve with Mary Pottery Kenyon.*

NOV. 20, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. *Pathways to the Divine - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints with Richard Whitaker, president of Davenport Stake. Location: Stake Center, www.4929 Wisconsin Ave., Davenport. ZOOM option available.*

NOV. 30, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. *God Does Extraordinary Things Through Ordinary People with Sr. Lillian Stevens.*

DEC. 8 - 9, Friday, 5:00 p.m. - Saturday, 5:00 p.m. *What the Caregiver needs to Care for Creation with Fr. Mike Schaab.*

DEC. 10, noon - 4:00 p.m. *Advent Retreat with Dr. Ken Novak.*

DEC. 16, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. *Biblical Reflection for Spiritual Enrichment with Rev. Prof. Matthew J. M. Coomber, Ph.D.*

DEC. 21, 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. *Nature and Forest Therapy with the Winter Solstice with Emelia Sautter. Join us to honor the Solstice and experience the practice of Forest Bathing.*



PrairieFest

September 24, 2023

1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

The Prairie Retreat

2664 145th Ave.,
Wheatland, Iowa

Live Music
FREE Family Fun
Tour the Grounds



In loving memory . . .

Sr. Miriam Ehrhardt

Sr. Miriam Ehrhardt died on June 20, 2023. Myrna Francis Ehrhardt was born Dec. 3, 1934, in Marshalltown, Iowa. She entered the congregation in 1953 and professed final vows in 1959 as Sister Miriam Thomas.

Sr. Miriam earned an associate's degree from Ottumwa Heights College, Ottumwa, Iowa. Her ministries were food service and dietetics. Throughout the 1960s, she traveled in the summers to Milwaukee, Wis., and Boston, Mass., completing workshops in different aspects of food service and food service management. Later, in the 1980s, she completed continuing education workshops through the Eastern Iowa Community College District.

She worked in food service at Ottumwa Heights College and motherhouse. She also worked in Illinois and was a school volunteer in Montana. She later returned to Ottumwa Heights as assistant plant coordinator and food service manager. In Davenport, she became food service manager and coordinator for Humility of Mary Center. She retired in 2005 and continued to live at Humility of Mary Center.



Sr. Patricia Miller



Sr. Patricia Miller died July 1, 2023. Born on August 29, 1931, in Albion, Neb., Sr. Pat entered the Congregation of the Humility of Mary in 1955, and professed vows in 1958 receiving her religious name, Sr. Mary Alma.

Sr. Pat received a bachelor's degree in nursing from Creighton University in Omaha, Neb., her master's degree in nursing from Catholic University in Washington, D.C.,

and a doctorate in psychology from the University of Iowa. She practiced and taught nursing in Iowa at St. Joseph's Hospital in Ottumwa and Marycrest College in Davenport. She was associate dean of the master's nursing program and conducted research with cardiac patients at the University of Nebraska in Omaha, Neb., and chair of the baccalaureate nursing program at Briar Cliff College in Sioux City, Iowa. She was a volunteer parish nurse in Fremont, Neb., and a hospice volunteer at Our Lady of Victory Parish in Davenport. Sr. Pat was the vice president of the Sisters of Humility from 2004 - 2008.



Associate Sue Witte

Dec. 26, 1939
to
June 8, 2023

Associate Patricia Skinner

Feb. 13, 1928
to
July 30, 2023



For more information about CHMs, living and deceased, visit Sister Stories at chmiowa.org.

The Prairie beehives provide learning opportunity

Nestled amidst the tranquil embrace of nature, Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat (OLPR) stands as a beacon of devotion to both spiritual growth and ecological harmony. Our mission, deeply rooted in the belief that fostering a profound connection with the environment leads to a greater understanding of creation, is exemplified by our steadfast commitment to partnering with students for transformative ecology study projects. A recent visit by a student completing a fellowship at the University of Iowa is an example of our commitment to this strategic priority.

Oummu Kulthum Mohamed Ali Hassane visited OLPR on July 28 as part of the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders. At The Prairie, she and Mandela Fellowship volunteer Ann Houlihan met with Bob “the bee guy” Roe who maintains six bee hives on site and Todd Seifert, OLPR property and operations manager.

Mohamed Ali Hassane, who is from Moroni, Grande Comore, Cosmoro, an island off the coast of Africa, has a background in agronomy. By participating in the Mandela Washington Fellowship, she aims to expand her knowledge of entrepreneurship and learn from others, particularly in the business world in the United States. She is currently a teacher and researcher at the University of Comoros and is the founder of Island Organic Bee, which produces organic honey and honey derivatives.

Roe and Mohamed Ali Hassane shared information about the type of boxes used for storing the hives and problems like mites and diseases that affect hives. Each deal with weather issues. In Iowa, winter means moving the hives to protect the bees from the cold. In Cosmoro, it's typhoons that require the hives to be raised higher off the ground to avoid flooding.

The Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, a program of the US Department of State, was established in 2014. The initiative empowers participants through academic coursework, leadership training and networking. The University of Iowa participates through the college's Institute of International Business and John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center.



Photos. Top: Oummu Kulthum Mohamed Ali Hassane (left) and Bob Roe greet one another. Middle: Bob and Oummu are all smiles following a hands-on experience with The Prairie beehives. Bottom: After suiting up in the necessary attire, Mohamed Ali Hassane (left) applies smoke to the beehives to calm the bees while Roe inspects the hive.

To set up an educational visit to OLPR, contact OLPR property and operations manager Todd Seifert at 563-374-1092.



Sisters (from left) Marilyn Berger, Delphine Vasquez and Roberta Brich and affiliate Jennifer Hager.



Facilitator Sr. Addie Lorraine Walker.

Sawubona and Ubuntu:

By Sisters Mary Ann Vogel and Johanna Rickl, CHM

It takes courage to own our spiritual gifts. This is a message emphasized by Sr. Addie Lorraine Walker, SSND,

("I see you") and recognizing our interdependence ("I need you"). These concepts were related to Mary's

"We spent time contemplating our first name realizing that we are a valuable person who carries hope and recognizing the importance of acknowledging every person we meet."

- Sr. Justine Denning

at the Annual CHM Assembly held at Humility of Mary Center in June. Sixty sisters and associates participated in the assembly in person, while others joined in virtually during certain times.

Sr. Addie Lorraine's presentations during the assembly were focused on contemplation, listening and understanding the call to religious life. She introduced the South African words "Sawubona" and "Ubuntu," emphasizing the importance of acknowledging and valuing others

Magnificat and the need to ponder and reflect on our charism and calling.

Sr. Addie Lorraine, a School Sister of Notre Dame for more than 40 years, is a full-time professor of pastoral theology at the Oblate School of Theology (OST) and director of Sankofa Institute for African American Pastoral Leadership. In July 2022, she was elected president of the National Black Sisters' Conference (NBSC), an organization that named her as recipient of their 2022 Harriet Tubman Award. For nine years she served

as provincial leader of the Dallas Province of SSND (2002-2011). She holds a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Southwest Texas State-San Marcos, a master's degree in theology from Xavier University in New Orleans and a doctorate in theology from Boston College.

Since 1980, her ministry commitment has been reflected in her work as a religious educator, pastoral minister and faith formator. She lectures on charism and offers retreats and spiritual direction to religious communities throughout the United States and Africa. Sr. Addie Lorraine commits her gifts to build up the people of God through education for the mind, heart and spirit. She was a speaker at the 2018 CHM Assembly and CHMs were pleased to welcome her back.

During the Assembly, participants engaged in small contemplative "listening circles" to reflect on their own names given at baptism and their individual calls as well as their



Lorraine Walker, SSND



CHM associates (from left) Barb Gross, Helen Schiltz, Jan Pullella and Rosemary Hendricks

I see you and I need you

call to community in religious life. Sr. Addie Lorraine emphasized the importance of knowing, naming and noting our calling to humility in order to ponder it deeply. She related being “fully named and fully claimed” to the phrase, “Blessed are you, holy are you, holy is your name.”

All persons are human “beings,” not “doings,” she continued. We humans were created by God to be a presence, an expression of God’s love in the world for the good of the world. The call to religious life today is “to do something new... in the name of love. ... The call comes every day of my life.” It is about a relationship with Jesus, about speaking for God in the face of injustice and becoming the loving person we are. She quoted Fr. Pedro Arrupe, S.J., who said, “What you are in love with...will affect everything.”

Sr. Addie Lorraine also posed questions about the call of religious life today, inviting CHMs to consider what God is calling them to do, be and change. She encouraged them

not to conform to the ways of the world but to be transformed by God's will. She highlighted the capacities or gifts that religious life has for the church and the world, based on a presentation by futurist Barbara Marx Hubbard, including capacity for deep Gospel living, mystical presencing, faithfulness in responding to unmet needs, solidarity with the earth as our

speaking truth to power. As a parting invitation, Sr. Addie Lorraine suggested forming contemplative listening circles to practice humility and courage. The participants were given a list of ways in which they could engage in these practices and cultivate these qualities. The key steps are to: 1) describe the reality, 2) discern what

"The first message from Sr. Addie Lorraine that sticks with me is the call to be love for one another. That entails really seeing and listening to one another. Together we are called to listen to the present reality of our religious community, our Church and our world. As women religious, we interpret this reality in light of the Gospel and discern what God is asking of us in these times."

- Sr. Lynn Mousel

common home, community building, risk-taking for mission, social entrepreneurship, deep listening, dialogue and discernment, and

Scripture informs us about this reality and 3) recommend an action to the congregation on this choice to go forward.



Jubilee is a special time to rejoice

Six CHM Sisters and Associates celebrated Jubilees with Masses and receptions at Humility of Mary Center and Bishop Drumm Retirement Center on June 25 and July 17, respectively.

A jubilee is a time to celebrate and honor our sisters' commitment to CHM. We acknowledge the years of dedication, self-sacrifice and service she has offered to God and the Church. For each sister, it is an opportunity to reflect on her journey, express gratitude and renew commitment to religious life. We also honor our CHM Associates for the commitment they have made to a formalized relationship with the Humility spirit and charism of search and service.

During the homily at the June 25 Jubilee Mass at Humility of Mary Center, Fr. Stephen Ebel conceded that in this country, we generally are not putting our life at risk for simply witnessing to Christ. However, the need to openly follow Jesus' example is challenging because of the erosion of Christian values and faith. "To witness in this case requires a special kind of courage because it requires one to overcome the fear of what others think and what they will say," he said.

As we observe jubilees, we are reminded of the beauty and fulfillment found in a life devoted to God and service of others. Join us in celebrating the 300 years of combined service of the four sisters and 75 years of dedication of the two CHM Associates.



Photos. Top: (from left) Srs. Jeanette Kopel, Marian Smith and Virginia Mary Bartholome were honored at a Mass at Bishop Drumm Retirement Center in Johnston, Iowa. Above: Sr. Joan Marie Schuster visits with Father Ebel prior to a celebratory Mass held at Humility of Mary Center in Davenport, Iowa.

Congratulations to the Sisters who have milestone anniversaries of entering religious life and to the dedicated Jubilarian CHM Associates.

CHM Sister Jubilarians

Sister Virginia Mary Bartholome (Marita) – 80 Years

Born in Great Falls, Mont., Sr. Virginia Mary Bartholome entered the Congregation of the Humility of Mary in 1943 and made her first vows in 1946. She received a B.S. degrees in business education from Marycrest College in Davenport, Iowa, and in library science from the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul, Minn. She also has an M.S. in library science from the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Sr. Virginia Mary was a teacher and librarian in Lewistown and Great Falls, Mont. She later was the head librarian at Marycrest College in Davenport, Iowa.



Sister Joan Marie Schuster – 75 Years

Sr. Joan Marie Schuster was born in Amidon, N.D. She entered the Congregation of the Humility of Mary in 1948 and made her first profession in 1951. Sr. Joan Marie received a B.A. in elementary education from Marycrest College in Davenport, Iowa, and an M.A. in education administration from Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa. Sr. Joan Marie's ministry as an elementary school teacher and principal in Iowa found her in Dunlap, Des Moines, Bettendorf, Davenport, Ottumwa, Marshalltown and Centerville. She also taught in Minneapolis, Minn., Great Falls, Mont., Santa Paula, Calif., Phoenix, Ariz., and Rock Island, Ill.



Sister Marian Smith – 75 Years

Sr. Marian Smith was raised in Erie, Ill., and entered the Congregation of the Humility of Mary in 1948. She made her first vows in 1951. Sr. Marian received her bachelor's degree in education from Marycrest College in Davenport, Iowa, and her master's in education/administration degree from Marquette University. She was an educator/administrator in Iowa in Marshalltown, Des Moines, Albia, Bettendorf and Ottumwa. She also continued her ministry of teaching and parish work in Fulton and Erie, Ill.



Sister Jeanette Kopel (Mary Rene) – 70 Years

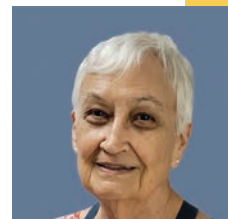
Sr. Jeanette Kopel was born in Haverhill, Iowa, and entered the Congregation of the Humility of Mary in 1954 and professed first vows in 1956. She earned a bachelor of arts degree in home economics from Marycrest College, Davenport, Iowa, and a master of science in library science from Incarnate Word College, San Antonio, Texas. She taught in Iowa and Montana before becoming the librarian at schools in Iowa, Montana, California and Texas. Sr. Jeanette was also active in ministering to the visually impaired.



CHM Associate Jubilarians

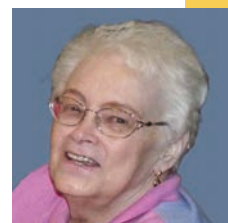
CHM Associate Mary Martin Lane – 50 Years

Mary Martin Lane is a former vowed member of CHM. She taught with other CHMs in Iowa and Montana before becoming an Associate in 1973. Studies and global travels provided Mary Martin with broad and inclusive experiences of diverse spiritualities and religious traditions which have guided and influenced her curiosity and energy for deepening the Humility motto of "search and service" embedded in mindful living.



CHM Associate Con-E Osmer – 25 Years

Con-E is a native of Davenport Iowa. She was very active in her church and other volunteer work while raising her two daughters with her husband, Bob, who died in 2017. She has two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Associate Barb Gross says of Con-E's welcoming nature, "Connie has a gentle presence of care and hospitality. She always has a warm smile and greeting."



CHMs Celebrate!

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS



Photos: (top row) Sisters and employees enjoyed a lively presentation given by Joyce Johnson Rouse, aka Earth Mama, at a presentation Aug. 8 in the CHM Event Center. Pictured are (front, from left) Sisters Roberta Brich, Mary Rehmann, Irene Muñoz, Lillian Stevens and Rachel Beeson, (middle) Sisters Mary Bea Snyder, Rae Elwood and Delphine Vazquez, (back) employees Chris Austin and Shelly Seifert. Sr. Lillian Stevens (right) places a red hat on birthday girl Sr. Regina Mary Cratty during a 90th birthday celebration; (middle row) Sr. Joann Kuebrich helps make paper flowers to be used as centerpieces at the CHM annual assembly. Sisters, staff and friends enjoy a River Bandits baseball game at John O'Donnell Stadium. Those sitting outside are (front, from left) Sr. Lynn Mousel, Claudia Scharf and Sr. Stefanie MacDonald, OSB; (back) Todd Seifert and Sisters Catherine Linnenkamp, Johanna Rickl and Kathleen Henneberry; Sr. Irene Muñoz cuts a rug during the Earth Mama presentation; (bottom row) Associate Phyllis Ammeter and her husband, Gary, celebrate the 2023 Jubilarians; Sr. Cathleen Real stretches during chair exercise taught by Logan Anderson; Jennifer Worley, CHM Service Coordinator at Bishop Drumm Retirement Center in Johnston, Iowa, passes out cards during the Bishop Drumm celebration. Also pictured are (from left) Sisters Marian Smith and Jeanette Kopel.

Meeting God in our human experience

By Marie Thompson

Resident Spiritual Director, The Prairie Retreat

Could it be that the process of transformation is simply being aware that God is everywhere and learning how to be in the presence of Divine love? At the heart of the Christian journey is the understanding that God is present and active in all human experience. I am reminded of the scripture passage from the First Letter of John: "Something which has existed since the beginning, that we have heard, and we have seen with our own eyes, that we have watched and touched with our hands, the Word who is life."

We sometimes forget that we are women and men of faith who live after the resurrection and that there is always a deeper movement of God happening in our life. Nothing is what it seems. Something sacred encircles all the busyness and complexity of life. We discover God in our human experience. Especially when we are experiencing suffering and vulnerability, God's love always intensifies in weakness. A key message of Jesus in the Gospels is "stay awake, stay awake to your experience." Jesus always met people right where they were in life and entered into relationships with those who could be truthful about their experience.

Our society in many ways encourages us to fall asleep to our experience. Daily, as people of faith, we are challenged not to exchange our experience for consumerism, busyness and routines that no longer help us know the touch of God.

Since beginning my new position as resident spiritual director at The Prairie, I have found myself intentionally inviting those who come to this sacred place to come home to their experience and the beauty of the earth and to discover God there. Sometimes it is indeed a process of decluttering and coming to know our experience, experiences of wonder, confusion, hope, faith, forgiveness, loss and gratitude.

The more I make The Prairie home, the more I believe that the original vision of Fr. Fabula and the Sisters of the Humility of Mary was to assist people to be in right relationship with themselves and the earth. In other words, to find the life and peace that God is offering right where we find ourselves in life.

Pope Francis reminds us in his encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, that a significant part of human experience is our relationship to the earth. In other words, to be in right relationship with ourselves we must be in right and caring relationship with the earth.



The Prairie offers a variety of experiences that assist us in coming home and recognizing — truly meeting — God in our human experience and in the wonder of creation.

Allow me to close with a modern day parable quoted by Fr. Thomas Keating: A Sufi master had lost the key to his house and was looking for it in the grass outside. He got down on his hands and knees and started running his fingers through every blade of grass. Along came some of his disciples. They said, "Master, what is wrong?" He said, "I have lost the key to my house." They said, "Can we help you find it?" So they all got down on their hands and knees and started running their fingers through the grass. As the sun grew hotter, one of the more intelligent disciples said, "Master, have you any idea where you might have lost the key?" The Master replied, "Of course. I lost it in the house." To which they all exclaimed, "Then why are we looking for it out here?"

May you find the gift that God is offering you in your house of experience.

**For more information about
spiritual direction, please contact
Marie Thompson, Resident Spiritual
Director, at 563-374 1092.**

CHM received donations in memory and in honor of loved ones between January and June 2023.

We remember them in prayer.

Memorials

Donald Anderson

Donors: Steve and Kathleen Anderson
Wallace and Teresa Anderson
Zelda Clark
Craig and Joann Conrad
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