



## Into the Future with Courage and Grace

*by Sister Mary Ann Vogel, CHM President*

Just two days after his ordination as a bishop and installation as bishop of the Diocese of Davenport, Bishop Thomas Zinkula presided at the installation Mass for the new CHM Leadership Team. Elected in March, installed on June 24, and taking office on July 1 were Srs. Mary Ann Vogel, president; Johanna Rickl, vice-president; and cabinet members Srs. Marcia Eckerman, Irene Muñoz and Lynn Mousel. Completing a five-year term on the CHM Leadership Team were president and vice-president Srs. Johanna Rickl and Margaretha Fitzgerald, and cabinet members, Srs. Mary Bea Snyder, Mary Ann Vogel and Marilyn Jean Hagedorn.

For the past five years the CHM community was led through a series of contemplative conversations as we

planned for the future. The journey will now continue with the new team.

We women religious are in a time of diminishing numbers but certainly not a time of diminishing needs in the world we live in today. Our CHM mission statement speaks to this as we say, and do, in many ways: "We commit ourselves as individuals and as a congregation to work for justice within the human family and to care for Earth itself."

In envisioning the future of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary, we elected to continue the charism of humility and to choose abundant life. We also developed a vision statement which says "we are called to face our contemporary realities and step deliberately into the future with courage and grace."

While reflecting on these two statements, I keep envisioning what the scene must have been like 158 years ago when eleven of our founding members, along with four orphans and one priest, chose to leave their homeland and families due to political pressures in France, and respond to a request to come to the United States. They boarded a boat for a 13-day trip across the Atlantic Ocean to unknown land, language and people. They truly stepped "deliberately into the future with courage and grace."

Religious life in the United States got its start by missionary groups coming from Europe and, together, they were responsible for many educational

*-continued on page 2*

*Photo: Sr. Marcia Eckerman, Sr. Mary Ann Vogel, Bishop Thomas Zinkula, Sr. Johanna Rickl, Sr. Irene Muñoz and Sr. Lynn Mousel after the Installation of Leadership Mass at Christ the King Chapel on the St. Ambrose University Campus.*

## Summer 2017

### Volume 15 Issue 2

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

Behold, I am doing something new!  
Do you not perceive it?

Isaiah 43:19

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*Outgoing CHM leadership team with their meeting facilitators posing in front of the wall of past CHM presidents: l-r: Sr. Bea Snyder, Sr. Mary Ann Vogel, Sr. Greta Fitzgerald, Sr. Johanna Rickl, Sr. Helen Garvey, BVM, Sr. Jeanie Hagedorn and CHM Associate Diane Schlacter.*

and healthcare institutions we know so very well today. Many of these same communities have now moved out to the margins of society.

Members of LCWR (Leadership Conference of Women Religious) were asked to contribute one powerful question that they believe religious community leaders could ask to help the communities live their mission with a depth of engagement with the realities of the world. These questions were in a recent LCWR publication and included:

- 1) Where are we, as women religious, finding voice and trying to influence change for the benefit of the oppressed, even while feeling oppressed at times?
- 2) How do we envision the joined voices of a multitude of women religious making an impact on our political, social, church, and personal environments?
- 3) How are we to tend the souls of the world?
- 4) What individual and collective attitudes must we deepen and actions must we take to keep us walking

always with God, wherever we may walk?

There are so many questions and the times are certainly challenging. Kathleen Storms, SSND, speaks to this in her article "The Road Less Traveled".

In recent weeks, I have been reflecting on this quote from a talk Pat Farrell, OSF, gave to leaders of religious communities: "The path ahead is dimmed by the fog. It is your time to lead. To do so you must learn to be led and to listen deeply."

Out of that deep listening perhaps some new pioneer communities will emerge from the remaining members of our current religious communities and the fog will lift and shed light on the path ahead.

Throughout our years of ministry, we have had tremendous support from you, our donors. You are true partners in all that we do and we ask that you continue the journey with us. We are blessed to have you in our lives and you can be assured of our prayers. Thank you.



# The Road Less Traveled

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

Sisters across the world are currently involved in deep dialogue on the future of religious life in a time of lessening numbers and aging of members. At the same time they are aware of critical unmet needs in the world today. These are both frightening and energizing times for people of faith who are called to respond to the Gospel mandate to live a beatitude life.

Retreat centers are also facing critical issues. Many were founded by religious congregations as a way to deepen and enlarge our Catholic faith. Vatican Council II in the 1960s gave us great incentive to offer places of refuge, renewal and education as we became a church concerned about the faith formation of the laity. Today, it is no secret that many retreat centers struggle financially to keep afloat in these economically stressed times. Many have had to close their doors because the numbers of those seeking renewal has dwindled. Some retreat centers are not able to offer what people are searching for.

Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat from its inception has offered bible study, faith development and teachings on social justice. It is what was needed almost twenty years ago. We have a rich legacy on which to build current programs and offerings. In a more globalized, multivalent world it seems our work as a retreat center requires deep contemplation, open dialogue, informed awareness of the needs of our day and the desire to provide a space for conversation, renewal and transformation. Our mission is to provide a hospitable sacred space where open dialogue, prayer and spiritual renewal are possible.

Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat, a ministry of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary, takes seriously the task to provide opportunities for growth and renewal. This mission at times will call us to challenge our beliefs so we can appreciate the beliefs that others hold dear. We will always use Catholic teachings as our base while opening ourselves to dialogue with others. We will grow as discerning people of faith when we open ourselves to diversity of thought and interpretation, cultural differences and values. It is our task to follow the example of Jesus who challenged his own faith tradition. He took the road less traveled as he shows us the way.



It isn't possible to witness this play and not be changed by the gut-wrenching experiences of these recent refugees and immigrants, by their ability to survive in the face of the horrific.

—Dr. Judith A. Conlin  
Executive Director,  
Iowa International Center

## VANG

A Drama about Recent Immigrant Farmers

<p><b>Thursday</b> <b>September 14   7 pm</b> DeWitt Opera House Theatre 712 6th Ave, De Witt, IA</p> <p><small>Co-sponsored by the Sisters of St. Francis, Clinton, IA</small></p>	<p><b>Friday</b> <b>September 15   6:30 pm</b> Humility of Mary Center, 820 W Central Park Ave, Davenport, IA</p> <p><small>Co-sponsored by the Congregation of the Humility of Mary &amp; School Sisters of Notre Dame</small></p>
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A Hmong family fleeing to Thailand. A Sudanese man thrown into prison. A Dutch boy, dressed as a cowboy, who put the flag of the Netherlands through the paper shredder and declared, "I am an American." These are some of the characters brought to life in this drama about recent immigrant farmers.

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*Celebrating staff anniversaries at Humility of Mary Center are from left:*

*Sr. Johanna Rickl, Dorothy Hudson, supportive living aid for 25 years,*

*Roger Voss, maintenance assistant for 5 years, Kelly Bell, administrative*

*assistant for 30 years, Sr. Bea Snyder and Sr. Greta Fitzgerald*



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## Resting in Heavenly Peace



CHM Associate  
Maria Elfides Salazar  
January 12, 1933 -  
July 25, 2014



Sr. Kevin Bissell, CHM  
November 26, 1926 -  
March 31, 2017



CHM Associate  
Darlene Hoskinson  
December 1, 1931 -  
May 18, 2017

Loving tributes to our departed sisters can be found at [www.chmiowa.org](http://www.chmiowa.org) in the news section



# Jubilee 2017



**T**he Congregation of the Humility of Mary celebrated Jubilee 2017 on June 25 with a Celebration Mass at Christ the King Chapel on the St. Ambrose University campus in Davenport.

Those celebrating their anniversary are (above l-r) CHM Associate Veronica Munyon (25), Sisters Luz María Orozco (60), Donna Schmitt (70), Lillian Stevens (25), Elaine Hagedorn (60), Catherine Burns (60) and Micheline Curtis (60).

On Sunday, September 24, at 2:15 pm, a second Jubilee Mass of Celebration will be held in Our Lady of Peace Chapel at Bishop Drumm Retirement Center in Johnston, Iowa. (below l-r) Sisters Ruth Morris (80), Marilyn Schierbrock (60) and Mary Ann Aman (60) will be joined in the celebration by several of those pictured above.



Read more in the news section at [chmiowa.org](http://chmiowa.org)

## CHM Prayer Life - Sisters Barb Kopel and Pat Miller

*How do you understand your ministry of prayer?*

**Barb:** I believe I'm joining with all others in prayer and it is a responsibility for me just as those going into any other ministry.

**Pat:** A reflection on God's presence with us today. Placing my needs and those of the world in God's hands through reflection and discussion with God.

*How has your prayer practice changed since you became a sister?*

**Barb:** To begin with I wasn't using Centering Prayer. Since 1987, I've used and practiced Centering Prayer which is especially meaningful for me.

**Pat:** Understanding God's presence with me more and using that to assist other people in many ways.

*How have you expanded or increased your prayer forms?*

**Barb:** I've increased the amount of time I spend in prayer and have included Lexio Divina and other spontaneous prayer forms.

**Pat:** Internal prayers seem to help in expressing needs to the Lord. Reflections on God seem like discussions with a friend that can help. Especially meaningful to me is internal reflection or even silence in God's presence.



*Sr. Barb Kopel*



*Sr. Pat Miller*





**S**ister Cecelia Vandenberg was born on June 6, 1918, in Epping, North Dakota. To celebrate her 99th birthday, a party was held at Humility of Mary Center. She is the oldest member of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary, has a wonderful sense of humor and amazes everyone with her quick step and high energy.

Sr. Cecelia professed her vows in 1936 and enjoyed a ministry of teaching music from 1941 to 1988 in Great Falls, Montana, with a period in Rock Island, Illinois, from 1959 to 1966. She turned to hospital ministry in Great Falls from 1988 to 2012 before retiring and moving to Davenport. Sr. Cecelia is currently active in a ministry of prayer and witness. She also visits Montana annually!



## Seventh Annual Fundraiser Sunday, August 20

**3:00 - 6:00 pm - Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat**

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