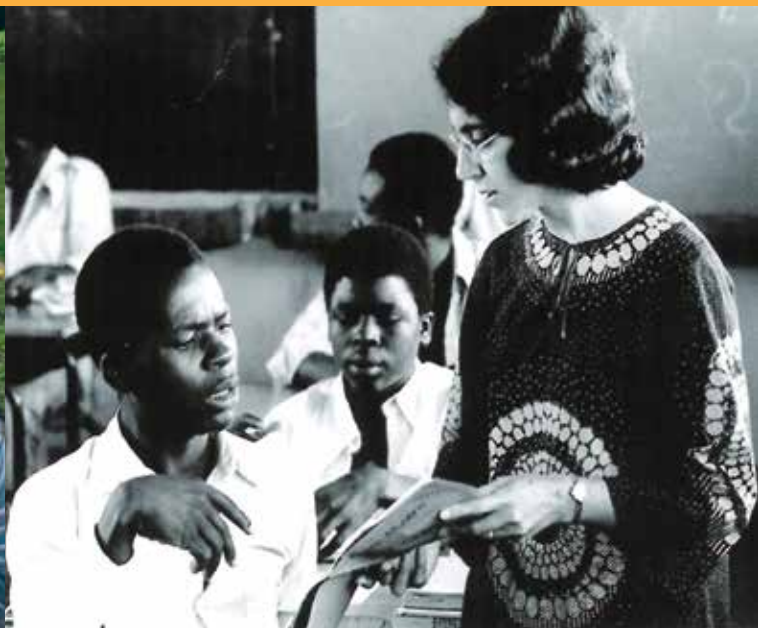


A publication for friends of the  
Congregation of the Humility of Mary



## A Life-Giving Relationship

By Nick Vasquez

*Editor's note: When sisters took their vows and joined the CHM community, their biological family relationships changed, like anyone who leaves home, but they certainly didn't give up their life-giving relationships.*

*As a sister grows nearer to Christ her love for her biological family often deepens. The visits they have together and the correspondence they send become precious opportunities to share with one another on a deeper spiritual level.*

*Old fashioned writing and mailing of letters has always been a part of staying in contact with family and still is. Times have changed and like all of us, sisters are quite often found corresponding with family on the internet. One sister said in regard to*

*her developing relationships with her young nieces and nephews, "Social media rocks for family connections!"*

*If you have a special story about your family connection with a Sister of Humility, please send it our way. Here is one from Nick Vasquez about a special bond with his great aunt, Sister Delphine Vasquez:*

There were only a few encounters as a child with my Great Aunt Fina, which I regret. My mother, along with most, call her Sister Delphine. But our relationship is personal and I have always felt she was not one for formalities, so Aunt Fina is what I prefer!

Around 2009 it had been a decade or more since I had seen her last. Ironically, the previous two years, I had been living a block away from

Humility of Mary Center where CHM sisters live. Of her 12 siblings my Great Uncle Ron was one that I grew up seeing regularly. He had always told me, "Go over to the convent and see your Aunt Fina."

One arbitrary day, as I was driving down Central Park Avenue, I stopped in and left a note for her to call, feeling I was living too close not to try to at least say hello or catch up.

Since that day, ten years ago, we have been sharing a meal, stories and small talk a few times each month. At first, most of our conversations were about our family—my grandpa, who had passed before I was born, and my grandma, who was not a favorite among most of the siblings. I was very curious as to why we were all so distant. My curiosity didn't last long

*-continued on page 3*

*Photos: Left: Sr. Delphine Vasquez shares details of her monarch ministry with her nephew Nick Vasquez.*

*Right: 1975 - Sr. Delphine on assignment in Zaire teaching English to high school students in Bukavu.*

# Summer 2019

## Volume 17 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 Earth itself.

So let us celebrate the feast—not with the old yeast, the yeast of corruption and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

*-1 Corinthians 5:8*

### Congregation of the Humility of Mary

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*Sr. Mary Ann's faith and focus on not only her family, but those less fortunate in her community, made an impression on her nieces and nephews. Read more about it in the May 9, 2019 post entitled "Time Talent Treasure" in the CHM blog "A Nun's Pocket" found in the news/events section at [www.chmiowa.org](http://www.chmiowa.org).*

*Dear Friends,*

In this issue of “The Flame” we feel called to celebrate! We celebrate our relationships with families and friends. We celebrate our mission, our ministries and the many ways we connect with God, each other, the world and our planet.

Each time we receive a gift from one of you, our donors, we celebrate you and your thoughtful, generous giving.

We celebrate re-connecting with former students;  
with family members of sisters who have died;  
with former members;  
with former colleagues in schools where we taught;  
and in parishes where we served.

We celebrate your support and partnership in our retreat ministry and ministries serving the homeless, immigrants, people in Chiapas and Guadalajara Mexico.

In essence, we celebrate you and your support of our mission to work for justice within the human family and care of Earth itself.

Thank you. Please know we always look forward to hearing from you and also appreciate celebrating in person. You are always welcome.

*Sr. Mary Ann Vogel  
CHM President*

-Great Aunt Fina continued from page 1

after reflecting on the large number of relatives in the family and the many countries in which they live.

After joining the CHMs, Aunt Fina was traveling the world for the better part of her young adult life, working as a teacher for the Peace Corps and the Department of Defense among other ministries. When this became the topic of our conversations, my admiration grew quickly for her devotion to a life of service.

Growing up in a very devout Catholic family, I had a decent understanding of Aunt Fina's religious vocation, but I was only familiar with sisters who taught in my school. It is awe-inspiring to hear the stories of her work. She has such a wealth of cultural, spiritual and emotional knowledge—as opposed to a primarily indoctrinated outlook and function in the church.

As time passed, our relationship grew more towards a family dynamic, as well as she became my mentor in spirituality. It is a true, honest joy spending time together.

Now our trips to restaurants, Walgreens and eagle watching have become very casual in conversation. Although there are usually philosophical overtones, primarily because I feel I have so much to learn from her, we also like to talk about the ins and outs of cheeseburgers, movies and hummingbirds.

I am very grateful for our relationship at this point in my life. She exudes such positive energy and our meetings always give me a fresh perspective, even if the conversation is mostly about butterflies.



Read about Sister Delphine's monarch ministry at [chmiowa.org](http://chmiowa.org) in the Sister Stories section.

## 20 Years of Spiritual Retreats

by Margaret Kruse, OSF, Director of Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat

This year marks the 20th Anniversary of CHMs providing spiritual retreats at Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat. The Prairie is a place of beauty and solitude that people from all walks of life can enjoy.

Fr. Vincent Fabula purchased the 200-acre farm from the Dierickx family in 1992 with a vision that it could provide a space for people to visit and experience renewal.

Following his death, the sisters purchased the sacred ground in 1999. The sisters saw the need for more overnight accommodations and a large gathering space for groups, so in 2003 Prairie Heights was built. The facility can comfortably house up to 11 overnight guests and the large gathering space can accommodate 40 guests.

The Prairie grounds are home to many reflective spaces for those who seek quiet time:

- A Labyrinth, constructed in 2000-2001 with the help of the Quad City Labyrinth Project and local Boy Scouts, provides a place for contemplation.
- The outdoor Stations of the Cross, once beautifying the grounds of Marycrest College, were transported and erected in 2000 by the Knights of Columbus.
- A memorial garden of stones to honor sisters and friends of the prairie is located in the center of the Stations of the Cross.
- The Cosmic Walk, created in 2013 by Eagle Scout Mathew Townsley, offers a 2.5-mile walking path with 22 stone markers that highlight the eras of universal creation. Along the pathways, 7 benches offer rest to those who walk the grounds.

Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat is



Guests enjoying the Spirit of the Prairie event at Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat.

committed to serving meals using naturally-raised healthy foods. Our garden grows many of the vegetables used in our meals, and our greenhouse was built in 2014 to provide fresh greens throughout the year.

We planted pollinator strips along the Prairie driveway in 2014 to attract bees, butterflies, and birds. Since that time a greater variety of butterflies and birds have been seen throughout the Prairie.

Solar panels were installed on the grounds in 2016 as a source of alternate energy. We strive to find other ways to lead the way in the fight against climate change, including the possible addition of charging stations for electric cars.

We invite you to experience the beauty of The Prairie during our Annual Spirit of the Prairie on Sunday, August 18, 2019, from 3:00-6:00 pm. During this event a riding tour around the Prairie will be available to introduce you to these attractions.

Come! We welcome you to share the experience of Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat.

## Honor and Remember

The Congregation of the Humility of Mary is grateful for the donations received in memory or honor of loved ones between January and May 2019. CHMs remember these individuals in our daily prayers and Masses.

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*l-r: Sr. Lynn Mousel, Sr. Maggie Bennett and Sr. Greta Fitzgerald helped pack donated food items for the River Bend Foodbank, a non-profit organization that collects wholesome food for distribution to more than 300 charitable community organizations that support the hungry in eastern Iowa and western Illinois.*

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*Sr. Kathleen Henneberry (1) and Sr. Mary Rehmann were among many residents of Humility of Mary Center who enjoyed a jazz band performance and social time with Assumption High School students.*

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# Jubilee 2019



*"We are deeply grateful for sisters, associates, family and friends who have accompanied us on our journey into Jubilee. May God continue to bless all with a spirit of humility, simplicity and joy as the the future unfolds before us."*



The Congregation of the Humility of Mary celebrated Jubilee 2019 on June 23 with a Celebration Mass in the Magnificat Chapel at Humility of Mary Center in Davenport.

Those celebrating their anniversary gathered in St. Joseph's Courtyard for the photo above. Front row l-r: Sr. Kayleen Heffron - 60 years and CHM Associate Phillis Ammeter - 25 years. Back Row l-r: Sr. Pat Heidenry - 70 Years, Sr. Kathryn O'Meara - 70 Years, Sr. Jude Fitzpatrick - 60 years and Sr. Rae Elwood - 60 years. Unable to attend was CHM Associate Mary Jo Dawe - 25 years.

**Read more about CHM sisters at [www.chmiowa.org](http://www.chmiowa.org).**

## In Loving Memory



Sister JoAnne Talarico  
August 25, 1936 -  
May 10, 2019



CHM Associate Molly Caven  
November 6, 1946 -  
April 8, 2019

Tributes to our departed sisters can be found at [www.chmiowa.org](http://www.chmiowa.org) in the Sister Stories section



*During the CHM Annual Assembly in June, associates gather for a day of reflection and fun.*



### CHM Associates

With joy we introduce our newest associate, Gale Votroubeck. CHM Associates are people called to live the CHM mission without vows and within the context of their contemporary lives. They choose to deepen their baptismal call through prayer, service and community in the spirit of the founders of the Congregation. The purpose is mutual enrichment and sharing of energy, insight and inspiration.

*For information about the program call 563-336-8416 or go to [www.chmiowa.org](http://www.chmiowa.org)*



Ashley Velez is the new executive director of Humility Homes and Services Inc. (HHSI) in Davenport. HHSI is a sponsored ministry of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary and provides housing programs, services and advocacy to increase housing opportunities and to end homelessness in the Quad Cities.

Pictured with Ashley is CHM Vice President, Johanna Rickl, who chairs the HHSI Board. At a recent openhouse at HHSI Sr. Rickl prayed, "Today we thank you especially for Ashley Velez, our HHSI executive director, as she continues to strengthen the web of relationships that encourages generous community members to share expertise, time and resources in response to challenges faced by sisters and brothers in our community who experience homelessness."



**9th Annual  
Spirit of the Prairie**

**Sunday, August 18, 2019  
3:00 - 6:00 pm**

*Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat*  
2664 145th Avenue - Wheatland, IA

- **Summer Buffet ~ Spirits ~ Live Music ~ Tours**
- **Locally produced food, wines and beer**
- **Silent art auction featuring the artists**

**\$40 early-bird reservation  
\$50 after August 7**  
*proceeds benefit OLPR programs*

*Celebrating 20 years of spiritual retreats on The Prairie!*

*Save the date!!!*

 Register now for early-bird price  
[www.chmiowa.org/retreat](http://www.chmiowa.org/retreat) 563-336-8401