

Community move a blessing for Sisters and Riverview



SISTERS PERSPECTIVE

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Sister of the Presentation of
the Blessed Virgin Mary

The month of April is the anniversary of our foundress's death and what she started in 1776 has gone round the world. There are sisters throughout the world commemorating her existence and we have all worked diligently to follow Nano Nagle's motto, "Do what needs to be done." The Union of the Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary has been in the Fargo Diocese since 1882. Her words and actions have led to being in the fields of education, medicine, ministry, and a lifetime of care giving.

Sharing a meal with a total stranger is an experience that is life giving. God and the Presentation Community are alive and well on this daily journey. We are all called to listen and pray.

—Sister Stella Olson, PBVM

The journey of life leads people down different avenues. The sisters started in northern Fargo. After the tornado in 1957, the sisters realized it was time to move and built a new home on the south edge of town. As the number of sisters increased, so did the ministries. But sisters age, as we all do, and that building got too big. Due to the decreasing numbers of Sisters, it was time to rethink our place of residence. The old residence became a retirement center for seniors.

A new ministry center was built at 32nd Avenue South where many spiritual and justice activities for lay and religious were held. The lay people were well aware of Nano Nagle and the ministries of the sisters and helped whenever and wherever they could. As a result of the lay people's interest, in 1980 the Presentation Associates/Friends of Nano was created. There are now over 125 members throughout the United States who continue to share the ministry in other parts of our country and keep their affiliations with the sisters. They are a strong force in continuing Nano's charism as the number of sisters are decreasing.

Most of our sisters locally have moved into retired years but our journey of faith never ends. All the people that were once

students or friends are still walking with us. Our numbers are decreasing and the space we were in was too big for the number. It is now fitting to return to the retirement center we once created.

My life in transition has been different than most of the sisters, but it has been one blessed by God in very creative ways. I was blessed as a child and helped to understand the power and presence of God in creation. I knew God had his hand in the creation of the squirrels, birds, and animals as well as the trees and plants that were nearby. After 24 years as a sister in the residence on 32nd Avenue South, I moved to Riverview. One of the first visitors I had was a squirrel on my patio. It brought back many memories. Needless to say, I found some food for the birds and the squirrels and feel a blessing from God through my patio visitors.

I was very active in my home parish when I entered religious life 27 years ago. The power and presence of God continues to be revealed to me. When I moved, I had no clue how God would continue to lead me on this journey of life. I am here to tell you that God has a plan for each of us no matter where we live or how old we are. Life with God is never ending for lay or religious.

We are now sharing our lives with all the residents at Riverview whether at meals, worship or just relaxing. We are blessed by the lives of men and women who have lived in many places throughout the states. Each of us is called to listen and share our lives and experiences with our dinner partners.

My life is blessed by this move as I listen to the stories of how God has led other men and women and my similarities with theirs. Sharing a meal with a total stranger is an experience that is life giving. God and the Presentation Community are alive and well on this daily journey. We are all called to listen and pray.

Diocesan policy: Reporting child abuse

The Diocese of Fargo is committed to the protection of youth. Please report any incidents or suspected incidents of child abuse, including sexual abuse, to civil authorities. If the situation involves a member of the clergy or a religious order, a seminarian, or an employee of a Catholic school, parish, the diocesan offices or other Catholic entity within the diocese, we ask that you also report the incident or suspected incident to Msgr. Joseph Goring, vicar general, at (701) 356-7945 or the victim assistance coordinator, at (701) 356-7965 or by email at victimassistance@fargodiocese.org. To make a report of sexual abuse of a minor and related misconduct by bishops, go to ReportBishopAbuse.org or call 1-800-276-1562.