

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



Prophetic Voices

by Lisa Martin, CHM Communications Director

In 1854, in a French village that was poor both financially and in practice of the faith, the Congregation of the Humility of Mary (CHM) had its beginnings. Humility sisters came together to establish a free school for girls, teaching religion, writing, reading, arithmetic and lace making. The sisters were giving voice to the concerns of that era—speaking against the unjust and helping the powerless.

Sister Joan Chittister, OSB recently addressed the Communicators for Women Religious conference on “The time is Now: A call to Uncommon Courage.” She defined what it means to be a prophet in today’s world

and issued a challenge to combat complacency and apathy in our own lives. Rather than wait for others to solve the problems of inequality, injustice, and poverty, Sr. Joan explained why it is our moral and spiritual responsibility to take action and make the world a better place for all.

This has been the course of CHMs for over 165 years: Providing homes for orphans, education for children and adults, healthcare, housing and supportive services for those experiencing homelessness, doing the work of the gospel and following Jesus’ example with a mission to help the powerless and Earth itself. Sisters

continue to speak with the prophetic voice of God over and over again – advocating for justice, equality, peace, and dignity.

Looking toward the future of the congregation, in 1971 CHMs established the CHM associate relationship. It is to provide opportunity to participate as non-vowed persons in the spirit and work of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary—the basis of this is the gospel of love.

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Photo: CHM Associate Rosemary Hendricks is director of What Does Jesus Do (WDJD) Mission and carries the word of God on mission trips to Kakuma, Turkana, and Kenya in East Africa. WDJD Mission’s goal is to aid the poor by providing them with the basic necessities to survive, along with education towards becoming self-sufficient.

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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.



Sr. Johanna Rickl, CHM Vice President, and Sr. Mary Ann Vogle, CHM President, using their prophetic voice to spread the important message to just be KIND.

So pursue the way of love, but earnestly desire spiritual gifts as well, especially the gift of prophecy.

1 Corinthians 14:1

Congregation of the Humility of Mary
820 W. Central Park Avenue
Davenport, IA 52804-1900
563/323-9466
sisters@chmiowa.org
www.chmiowa.org

Executive Editor: Lisa Martin
Asst. Editor: Joyce Bieber

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Dear friends and donors,

Charism, the gift we members of the Humility of Mary Community share with all of you, our associates, donors and friends, is to listen to the Spirit in our changing world and to live the Gospel message in simplicity, humility and joy. From this gift, our charism, flows our mission which is to work for justice within the human family and to care for Earth itself. In this issue of “The Flame” you will learn about ways our associates and ministries continue to build on the mission of the Sisters of Humility.

A song we love to sing is “We are Companions on the Journey.” Our associates are truly companions on our journey and we are blessed to have them with us. You, our donors, are also companions on our journey. Without your financial support we would not be able to do the many things we have been doing to respond to the “cry of the poor.”

Not a day goes by that we do not hear the cries of our brothers and sisters who are in need of our help, both locally and around the world. They need a place to call home, they need food, they need someone to care, to listen to them. We have many wonderful connections and through them, if we cannot send people, we have sent money to help with legal assistance, rent assistance, food and other necessities. Thank you for your support of our mission and for joining us as companions on our journey.

*Sr. Mary Ann Vogel
CHM President*

Prophetic Voices continued-

It involves caring and sharing the gifts and talents which one has received and continues to develop. It binds people together and gives them support as each person reaches out, in faith, assured that they are not alone.

Associates are people called to live the CHM mission within the context of their contemporary lives. They choose to deepen their prophetic spirituality 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.

Associates are women and men, young and old, married and single. They are teachers, business professionals, musicians, social workers, homemakers and retirees from many walks of life.

Their common bond is the deep connection they have with the Humility spirit that characterizes the congregation. All recognize how important it is to keep growing in their spiritual life. In addition, at their deepest core, they feel called to work toward economic, social and political justice wherever they live or work.

The CHM associate relationship offers a support system, a spiritual lifeline, a connection to the ongoing task of searching and serving. It is an opportunity to join the sisters in giving voice to the concerns of this era; voices to speak God's cause; to speak with the prophetic voice as Jesus did—over and over again. Sisters and associates must raise their voices together—each in his or her own world—where the gospel is seldom heard. They are, as Sr. Joan said, “The carriers of yesterday’s wisdom and of tomorrow’s need.”



For more information about becoming an associate, visit chmiowa.org or call 563-336-8416

CHM Associate Sandra Griffith



An immigration prayer service brought sisters and associates together—praying for justice; to value all life. L-R: Sr. Roberta Brich, Sr. Cathleen Real, CHM Associates Nancy Graham and Veronica Munyon



When asked what she treasures about the associate relationship CHM Associate Maria Delsing said, “The impact is the deepening of special relationships. The many friends I have made, I consider my second family. My spiritual life is definitely changed since becoming an associate. I used to think the only prayer was formal prayer. I’ve learned that the importance of doing something for someone else, the saying “thank you,” just being kind, is all a part of our daily prayer life. Learning to let go of things we have no control over and to forgive are such important moral aspects of prayer”



CHM Associate Olivia Ortega echoed Maria’s feelings when she said, “I treasure the friendship and the connection we have. Just knowing our family was thought of during times of need was comforting. The impact on my spiritual life has been enriched by having someone to engage in discussion with, to pray with, or ask for prayers. I could reach out to any of the sisters—it is truly a blessing!”



Diana Gray, co-director of CHM associates explains: The newer model of associate relationship encourages equality, mutuality, and ownership of our unique gifts and talents that we bring to the table and share with the sisters. The associate relationship enhances the group (the sisters and the associates) by combining our unique gifts, talents and lived experiences. The associates have careers, families, volunteer and church experiences that compliment the spiritual and community-based experiences of the sisters. Thus, the duality of each other’s complexities, spirituality, and lived experiences creates a broader and more diverse vision for the group.



CHM Associate Kathleen Collins leads sisters, associates and friends in a drumming circle in the light court at Humility of Mary Center.

Resting in Heavenly Peace

CHM Associate
Linda Lee Hennes
October 10, 1945 -
September 12, 2019



Sr. Mary Ann Vogel, Sr. Johanna Rickl and Ashley Valez accept a check on behalf of Humility Homes and Services. Thank you TBK Bank and Quad Cities River Bandits for your generosity and community spirit to end homelessness in the QC.

CHM sisters joined other Quad Citizens at an interfaith climate crisis rally where they wore masks as a statement regarding the future of the air we breath.



Join us for Mass in the Magnificat Chapel at Humility of Mary Center
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:00 am, Wednesday 11:40 am, and Sunday 10:00 am
First Friday Adoration from 3:30 to 5:00 pm.

Letter to the editor as it appeared in the Quad City Times and the Catholic Messenger:

The Pledge of Allegiance declares we are “indivisible”—yet demonizing rhetoric permeates our society. The potential of terror has invaded our communities. We call upon all citizens to return our country to a place of freedom for all.

The leaders of Davenport’s Sisters of the Humility of Mary and the Rock Island Benedictines returned from the national meeting of The Leadership Conference of Women Religious where, with more than 660 other sisters, we signed a letter to

the U.S. president in which we called for an end to all divisive and polarizing rhetoric.

We cannot stand by in silence while our sisters and brothers are disrespected by others through voices of hatred and fear. All of our nation’s leaders must be mindful of the common good and the dignity of every person. The president should inspire the best in each of us and we ask him to use that unique status to bring about healing—not create division.

Sr. Mary Ann Vogel, CHM President
Sr. Sandra Brunenn, OSB Prioress

Reflecting on Care of Earth

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

As we near 2020, we are acutely aware of the world climate crisis. Pope Francis declared in “Laudato Si” that the science of climate change is clear and the Catholic Church views it as a moral issue that must be addressed. In a video message sent on Sept. 23 to participants at the U.N. Climate Action Summit in New York, Pope Francis called climate change “one of the most serious and worrying phenomena of our time.”

Greta Thunberg, a 16-year-old Swedish climate activist, started the #StrikeWithUs movement when she began spending her school days outside the Swedish parliament to call for stronger action on global warming by holding up a sign saying (in Swedish) “School strike for climate.” Since then, students and adults around the world have joined her.

Locally, a panel of faith and business leaders launched a dialogue in the Diocese of Davenport on Sept. 30 on how to build common ground across different groups to address climate change. The event, led by Bishop Zinkula and In Solidarity, a nonprofit amplifying the Catholic voice for justice, was held at St. Ambrose University in Davenport.

The Congregation of the Humility of Mary has been in front of this issue for many years, encouraging care for Earth and steps for reducing carbon footprint. In 1999 they purchased the 200 acres of Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat from the Trappists to continue a place of peace and prayer while implementing many sustainable land projects, including the prairies, pollinator strips, gardens, greenhouse, solar panels and landscaped areas. In 2019 they completed a conservation easement for 83 acres of prairie near the Wapsipicon River.



Solar panels at Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat.

“One of the most serious and worrying phenomena of our time.”

-Pope Francis on climate change

In 2020, Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat will be focusing on how we can care for Earth. While we celebrate the 5th anniversary of Pope Francis’ encyclical, “Laudato Si,” and the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, we will look at different opportunities

to embrace, explore and experience our care of Earth, while creating greater awareness of how we are part of the cause of the climate crisis.

Some of our upcoming events and retreats in 2020 include:

~Fr. Bud Grant and Connie Mutel exploring God’s creation and how it generates hope and energy in March.

~Sr. Kathy Sadler will entice us with “Stewards of God’s Gifts” in January and “Sacred Creation” during Earth Day week in April.

~Steven Spangler’s “Stargazing” evenings in March and September will lure you to the crisp beauty outdoors.

~During the Lenten Season in March, Barb Arland-Fye will dialogue with four speakers, keeping in mind caring for Earth and climate change.

~Gwen Deming’s day on tree energy will show us the “Wisdom of Trees” and how they can bring inner peace.

~Nahant Marsh Education Center will bring to life the birds and plants of the prairie.

~Kathleen Collins will call us to prayer as we celebrate the fall equinox in September and winter solstice in December.

~In October Fred Meyer will explore the Prairie abundance through “Wholeness and Healing in the Prairie: A Mindful Walk.”

~Pat Shea’s days of reflection throughout the year will be centered around “Caring for Earth.”

Join us for these and more prophetic voices at The Prairie in 2020. It will be an exciting and stretching year for all of us as we open our minds and hearts to hear God calling us to “something new.”

Be sure your name is on the Prairie calendar mailing list! Call 563-336-8414. Or visit chmiowa.org to sign up for our monthly enews for all the latest retreats and more.

Honor and Remember

The Congregation of the Humility of Mary is grateful for the donations received in memory or honor of loved ones between June 1 and September 30, 2019. CHMs remember these individuals in daily prayers and Masses.

In honor of:

Phyllis Ammeter

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all CHMs

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Sr. Cathleen Real represented CHMs at the Davenport Farmer's Market on Earth Day.

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Gloria Mancilla and her mother help Sr. Bea Snyder collect food items for refugee families in the Quad Cities.

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CHM Associates Pat Knopick and Jan Pullella hit the streets at an immigration rally in Davenport, Iowa.

Rosemary Noth Continued-

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- Gwen Korn
- Carl Liebscher
- Joseph and Ann Lohmuller
- Glenn and Kathleen Medhus
- John and Linda Molyneaux
- Jane Morrison
- Kimberly Mueller
- Martha Neal
- Susan Noth
- Carol O'Conor
- Andrew O'Conor
- Jeanne Petersen
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The Book of Eternal Life was placed in the Magnificat Chapel at the Humility of Mary Center. CHMs devote the month of November to remembering those who have gone on to their eternal rest. Many responded to our October mailing asking for names to be added to the Book of Eternal Life. Even though November is a special month of remembrance, sisters are honored to pray for your loved ones at any time of the year. Please let us know if you have prayer requests by calling 563-336-8401 or responding on our website chmiowa.org.



Gabriella Egging, Sr. Jude Fitzpatrick and Sr. Joann Kuebrich enjoy the sacred beauty of Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat.

Your contributions help support retired sisters of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary and the CHM mission of helping the poor, the powerless and Earth itself.

Magnificat

My soul sings to you in utter joy, O my God,
and my spirit is glad in your saving might.

You have looked on me with love
because of my simplicity and humility,
and all women and men will say I am blessed.

It is because of your Holy Name that
I have been exalted.

To all those who know you,
you are gracious and full of mercy.

You show favor to the powerless and
oppressed,
and turn your face from the proud
and domineering.

Those who hunger in any way you have filled
with their heart's desires, but the self-satisfied
remain empty of your peace.

In your mercy you remember your
chosen people,
our ancient fathers and mothers,
and their children forever.

-adapted by Sr. Delphine Vasquez, CHM



Special devotion to Mary characterizes the sisters of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary (CHM). The love for Mary is shown by the celebration of her feasts, daily prayer in her honor and the Marian Rosary.

The Magnificat, also known as *The Song of Mary*, is taken from Luke's Gospel (1:46-55), and is the Blessed Virgin Mary's hymn of praise to the Lord and the official canticle of the CHM sisters. Its name comes from the first line of its text in Latin ("Magnificat anima mea Dominum") which when translated reads "My soul magnifies the Lord." Mary proclaims the Lord's greatness with characteristic humility and grace.

Photo: Statue of Mary that previously stood on the Marycrest College campus, now rests by the nature pond at Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat.