Celebrating Nano Nagle and Her Legacy

This year, the 300th anniversary of the birth of Nano Nagle has been celebrated around the world. With lantern in hand, Nano walked the winding lanes of Cork, lighting the hovels and attics, incarnating God’s love in dark places. Known as the “Lady of the Lantern,” Nano inspired others by her singleness of purpose to work, not only directly with those in need, but for change in the structures of society that condemned the destitute to a life of hardship.

What Nano did not know during her days of untiring ministry, was that her spirit and zeal would spread worldwide to lands and centuries far beyond the little streets of Cork, Ireland. The charisma of this one compassionate and determined woman is alive today in thousands of people in twenty-four countries on every continent, including two thousand Presentation Sisters. The Presentation Sisters of New Windsor, New York are among that number who joyfully carry Nano’s legacy wherever they may be with the conviction of Nano’s own motto: “By degrees, with the assistance of God, we may do a great deal.”
Dear Friends,

As summer memories of days for relaxation and time with family and friends quickly fade we are drawn into the season of autumn – a period of harvesting summer’s gifts while preparing for shorter days, falling leaves and cooler weather.

A reading from Chapter 3 in Ecclesiastes reminds us…

“To everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under the heavens.”

It seems to me that every season has its own beauty and God invites us to enjoy it. However in today’s world we rarely have time to appreciate God’s gifts, often distracted by “breaking news” – frequently news about suffering, violence, destruction, mistrust, corruption, or fear.

Our loving and gracious God doesn’t want us to lose heart but rather look to each day and each season for strength, wisdom and hope. Yes, to welcome, enjoy and give thanks for the autumn colors, the morning frost, the fields of grain, the migrating birds, the western sunsets, and the people we love.

Let all seasons teach us about wisdom and gratitude – gratitude for all God’s Creation and for our world that is broken and in need of our prayer for healing, gratitude for this nation that so desperately needs to hear our voices crying out for justice and peace for all, gratitude to and for our families who love, support and care for us, gratitude for our friends who sustain us in good times and bad. The list goes on and on…

During this 300th anniversary year of the birth of our foundress, Nano Nagle, the Sisters of the Presentation and our Associates, thank you our generous and faithful donors. Nano’s love for God sent her forth into the streets of Cork, Ireland with zeal, all the while witnessing to God’s love. Today our Sisters continue to follow her example as we listen and respond to wherever God’s voice is calling us.

Without your ongoing prayerful and financial support we would not be able to respond to the cries of those made poor. We invite you to continue your journey with us as we live out the spirit of Nano Nagle in these challenging times. May we together discover the beauty God has in store for us as we welcome, rejoice and give thanks for all the seasons of our lives. Indeed, each season has a purpose for which we have been called. Let us respond in joyful hope.

With gratitude and love,

Sr. Martha Otterstedt

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**2018 Giving Statements**

If you require a statement of your 2018 donations for your tax return, please contact the office of Mission Advancement after January 15th.
It was April 15, a week before Earth Day, 2018 and unseasonably cold, especially when a crowd of about 40 persons sat facing the wind off Washington Lake in Orange County, NY. We had come together to pray in gratitude for “Water: Our Sacred Gift”…a gift we no longer took for granted because the reservoir which is Washington Lake had been contaminated by an array of PFOS chemicals. The source of the pollution had been traced to fire-fighting foam used at the Air National Guard Base located at Stewart Airport. City and state agencies and advocacy groups had been active in educating the public, assessing the public health risk, remediating the problem, and suing for damages.

Pastor Mary Lou Baumgartner and members of King of Kings Lutheran Church lead the group in song. We Sisters of the Presentation gathered with local clergy and friends to acknowledge our interconnectedness with all of creation, to ask for forgiveness, to pledge our stewardship. We attempted to “listen to what the water was telling us”, as our native brothers and sisters from long ago would have counseled us. Finally, we extended our hands and prayed over Washington Lake: “Creator God, fountain of life, we praise you for the gift of water…Heal these waters, move us to love these waters as you do.”

At our 2018 Assembly, we addressed issues which directly affect our immigrant brothers and sisters, the people among whom we live and work.

We pledged to pray for people whose Temporary Protected Status (TPS) had been revoked, forcing them to return to countries experiencing criminal violence, political instability, or natural disasters.

We remembered, too, the many Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) whose future is in so much jeopardy. “Chains” representing those affected people were prepared to be brought to the offices of local congress person.

As daughters of Nano Nagle, whose passion for the poor and oppressed continues to motivate us, we read a statement calling on the Trump Administration to reconsider its decision on Temporary Protected Status. We called on Congress to pass legislation that would address the root causes of immigration, provide immigration courts the staffing they need, and grant DACA recipients a pathway to citizenship.
Celebrating Our

60 Years

**Sr. Julia Ciccolini** (Formerly Sr. Mary Dominic)

Sister Julia Ciccolini shares an encounter which she describes as “a Nano Nagle experience – being one step beyond my comfort zone to a new ministry.” Sister Julia has been blessed to be on the AIDS Committee for the Diocese of Worcester. One planned event involves the committee providing a dinner every month for community members with AIDS. Sister Julia was welcoming guests to dinner on a hot July day when she noticed one guest having difficulty climbing the stairs. Upon greeting him, Sister Julia apologized for the stairs. He replied, “stares are not the problem. I’ve walked eleven miles to get here.” As time went on, this person and Sister Julia got to know each another better and he shared with Sister Julia: “I’ve always known God loves me but now I also know that my church welcomes me.”

60 Years

**Sr. Ann Daly** (Formerly Sr. Mary Josephine)

Sister Ann Daly was inspired by the life and work of the Sisters who taught her while she was a student at St. Michael’s High School. “I was introduced to Nano Nagle, their founder, and saw her inspiration in them - so I entered the community!” Sister Ann was a teacher and Director of Religious Education. She expressed great satisfaction in seeing growth in knowledge, faith, character and interaction with others in the students. Sister Ann cherishes her many memories and the wonderful people she has encountered. Sister Ann currently works in hospice and describes this as “truly a gift from God. I have the privilege of being with patients in their final months of life. As Nano trudged the lanes of Cork to care for the sick, I carry her with me to people soon to meet her in heaven.”

60 Years

**Sr. Joan Dombrowski** (Formerly Sr. Mary Irene)

Sister Joan Dombrowski leapt right into parish work at St. Joseph Parish in New Windsor. This time was a vibrant opportunity for the laity to come alive and Sister Joan was the lively one to spur them (and herself) on to the challenges of Vatican II. “These were fantastic days,” says Sister Joan. During her time on the team ministry at St. Brendan’s in Clifton, NJ, Sister Joan’s eyes where opened to many forms of discrimination: those of different cultures and religion, refugees and the oppressed – More recently, Sister Joan volunteers in a Safe House for trafficked women. So many crying needs that Nano would have embraced! Sister Joan enjoys the comradery in community especially how to lighten work with laughter. Recently, Sister Joan was a companion to a Sister on her last day at a nursing home, describing this time as a blessing and a gift.
“Where have all the flowers gone?” asks Sister Christine Liegey whose early ministry involved teaching first grade at St. Andrew's in Clifton, St. John's in Goshen, St. Rose of Lima, in Rockaway, and St. Bartholomew's in Yonkers. These young buds have opened and flourished from her early care. As parish education shifted after Vatican II, Sister Christine moved into teacher training for Religious Education classes. She was in the hedgerows with Nano, now called Holy Family in Floral Park, St. Virgil's in Morris Plains, and St. Philip's in Clifton. As parishes developed, new challenges arose and Sister Christine moved to meet them: Spiritual Direction for the lay leaders in a parish; Saturday Morning Retreats; RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation); Liturgy Planning; Prayer Groups and Book Groups; Evangelization Programs; visiting the sick and homebound. After Hurricane Irene, Sister Christine helped flood victims rebuild their homes. More recently, as a Ministry of Consolation has developed, she trains people in teams of four how to minister. And now, in semi-retirement, Sister Christine ministers at a funeral home, praying and crying with those who experience loss. Nano would be proud of this daughter!

“Hospitality of the Heart” is Sister Dale McDonald’s unique understanding of Nano Nagle’s gift. This is the challenge to welcome all by responding with generosity of time, talent, and presence. This is how the Presentation Sisters have carried on Nano’s legacy for the past 300 years. Sister Dale’s ministry has been in Catholic School Education at various levels from elementary through graduate school. “Special moments for me,” she says, “have been those in which students, whether children or adult, have come to realize the joy of learning and mastery of a particular skill or piece of information that had been difficult for them. Some favorite moments in community life have been summers when the entire community gathered at Mt. St. Joseph to spend vacation time together and the great joy in being with one another that provided support and energy for the new school year ahead.” As President of the Community for two terms, Sr. Dale exemplified Vatican II leadership: collegial and compassionate.

Workshop Way,” a system for education founded by Sister Grace Pillion, changed Sister Carol Melsopp's life and method of teaching. It is based on the belief of each person’s limitless capacity to learn. Key to its method is the infusion of each child with an unwavering self-esteem. (And for anyone living with sisters using this method there was need for a limitless number of “stocking boxes” which were used to hold individual, personal tasks for each student). Nano would have loved this emphasis on God's special, personal love and care for each student. Attuned to Nano’s love of mission, Sister Carol brought this creative pedagogical method to St. David’s in New Orleans and to Butte Central Elementary School in Montana. Sharing in PBVM community life instilled the message of Nano Nagle into her very being. They lived and shared their belief in the message of Nano Nagle: “Love one another as I have loved you.”
Sr. Patricia Morrison (Formerly Sr. Mary Redempta)

What would Nano Nagle think of Facebook? She did make use of many different means for achieving her ends. So, had Facebook been around, that might have been one of her methods. Among memories of teaching at St. John’s in Goshen, St. Frances of Rome in the Bronx, and St. Michael’s and St. Jude’s in Manhattan, Facebook has highlighted a significant encounter in the ministry of Sister Patricia Morrison. “Two years ago I connected on Facebook with a young man I taught over forty-five years ago. He messaged me that he was upset with our country. ‘You taught me what America is really about and you helped me navigate life with your strength, wisdom and humor. You influenced my integrity, fairness and sense of justice more than anyone else in this world.’ And isn’t this what Nano was about? -empowering people to be their best selves!”

Sister Patricia describes her Presentation Community life as one that has blessed her for over sixty years. She has lived with wonderful women who have taught her what being Presentation means through their words but more importantly by their example.

Sr. Margaret Murphy (Formerly Sr. Mary Therresita)

Who wouldn’t want to work in a school where you never have lunchroom duty? The principal (Sister Margaret Murphy) did it every day! Sister Margaret has spent her life in schools, both teaching and in administration. What a happy and rewarding life! Even Sister Margaret herself is surprised now that she is retired, saying, “who would have guessed that my entire life would focus on education in three different dioceses, with multiple elementary grades and ending as Principal of St. Andrew’s in Clifton, NJ.

I love Nano’s phrase: ‘The Almighty makes use of the weakest means to bring about His works.’” As principal, a fond memory in recent years focuses on the school-wide retreat days which included teachers, parents and children. One fun piece of such a retreat was Pope Francis Day when a realistic, life-size, smiling image of the Pope accompanied them throughout the day, even providing a remembrance of the day by posing for individual photos with the pope.

Sr. Kathleen Treanor (Formerly Sr. Mary Patricia)

Who remembers the Beacon Ferry? Sister Kathleen Treanor does. Her first teaching assignment meant regular trips from St. Mary’s in Fishkill across the Hudson River to classes at Presentation Junior College. Life thereafter became one focused on adjusting to multiple locations, but always a life in schools. Sister Kathleen was a teacher and principal at Mt. St. Joseph Semi-Military Academy, St. Joseph’s in New Windsor, Holy Rosary in the Bronx, St. Andrew’s in Clifton, St. Jude’s in Manhattan, Queen of Peace in Paterson and finally back to her roots in Orange County. Along the way life presented various challenges: welcoming a new lay teacher at La Guardia Airport meant not just picking up a teacher but her bicycle as well – quite a feat tying this to the car roof; co-existing with the guard dog “Cochise” at St. Jude’s was only managed by sisters protecting Sister Kathleen from his fierce bark. But challenges were softened with support from so many people. Sister Yliana Hernandez and Sister Helen Raynor taught Sister Kathleen to work with the Dominican people at St. Jude’s; Sister Pat Flynn, a Holy Childhood sister, held Sister Kathleen’s hand each morning as she passed Cochise, the shepherd guard dog… scary! Sister Kathleen wonders “Did Nano have to worry about dogs?"
My Journey as a Presentation Associate

By Mr. Mario Alonzo

I have been blessed with the gift and privilege of being an Associate for the Sisters of the Presentation since 2004. I remain grateful to all the Sisters, especially Sr. Norma Carney and Sr. Mary O’Neill for their invitation and encouraging me to become an Associate. Learning about the “Lady with the Lantern,” Venerable Nano Nagle and her unselfish answer to God’s call to serve, remain faithful during very challenging times. Her courage, perseverance and most of all her faith in God’s love for the poor inspired me to prioritize and reevaluate how I respond to God’s calling to serve and fulfill his Divine Mercy.

It has been a joyful experience and I feel so honored to be a part of a loving, caring, inspiring and supporting prayerful partners. I look forward to our monthly prayer meetings, which to me is like getting together with family members. We enjoy each others presence as well as nurturing our relationships with each other. The reflections and sharing during the prayer meetings helps me to remain focused on God’s calling and in Nano’s spirit. With this, I feel inspired to live and share my faith, Gospel values, and my commitment to the various ministries which I am involved with. Those ministries include St. Charles Parish, the Sisters of the Presentation, other ministries in which the Sisters serve God, and each other. May God Bless us and keep us faithful to His calling...

From the Desk of Sr. Mary Byrnes

Dear Friends,

May the Lord’s peace be with you.

Thank you ever so much for your continued support of our Sisters and Associates. This year we have been celebrating the 300th anniversary of the birth of our foundress, Venerable Nano Nagle. Each day we receive an invitation from our gracious God to continue Nano’s dream of spreading the Gospel.

At our 2015 Chapter, we called each other to witness the Gospel and make visible the values of human dignity, freedom and justice among all people, especially women, the poor and the powerless and to listen and respond to the cry of Earth urging us to bring forth a sustainable society. Is this not a perfect time in our present world to strive to answer these calls in whatever way possible!

It is only through your prayers and generous gifts that we are able to do this. I continue to be filled with gratitude for your kind notes and donations.

Just a reminder that during the month of November we remember our family and friends who have gone to God before us. The Sisters will pray for all the people whose names are sent to us during this month and they will also be included in a novena of masses. You may use the enclosed form to list the names of those you would like remembered and return it in the attached remittance envelope.

You may be sure that you and your families are remembered in the daily prayers of our Sisters and Associates.

Sr. Mary Byrnes, PBVM
When **Sister Gloria Perez** moved to St. Francis of Assisi Convent in Newburgh, New York, she searched around to see where she could be of service. She soon saw that the parish did not have a Senior Citizen Group and decided to begin one. The group is small but a lot of fun according to Sister Gloria. The group has gone on trips, had a potluck luncheon and donated Christmas gifts to needy children in the area. They especially enjoyed a boat ride on the beautiful Hudson River as well as a trip to Eleanor Roosevelt’s home. As St. Francis merges with Sacred Heart Church, the hope is that the group will continue to grow.

**Sister Pat Reills** has spent the majority of her years in ministry in the inner cities of NY, MA, and LA. Poor by statistics, the people are rich in many other ways because they never give up hope that their lives will get better with God’s help! Currently she works part time at Project Life, an interfaith shelter for homeless families with children in Newburgh, NY. There are 16 families referred by the Department of Social Services which support the families who have individual apartments and can stay for up to a year if necessary in order to complete their service plans and saving plans. Sister Pat’s role includes family counseling and supervising the “After School Homework Club” for the children whose parents are still working during that time of the day. The families do their best at sticking to new routines for their children and themselves. Sister says it’s a joy to be part of their lives. In addition to her works at Project Life, Sister brings communion to patients at Saint Luke’s Hospital.

“Whatever you do to the least of my brothers, you do to me.” **Sister Grace Gately** has been serving at the Newburgh Ministry and during those last few years she has been privileged to work with poor and those who have lost hope. While intent on helping others, she feels she is well rewarded with a grateful smile, a warm handshake, a hug or a sincere thank you. Everyday items are gratefully received, such as a pair of shoes to replace threadbare sneakers, a book or DVD to block out lonely hours or secondhand clothing so a mother can cloth her children. Sr. Grace takes her turn on desk duty where she fields questions, gives directions or shares words of encouragement. Sometimes she writes thank you notes to benefactors whose generous donations support the works of the Ministry. When anyone from Newburgh Ministry reaches out to the needy, those people know that they are respected, cared for and prayed for. It is a consolation for Sr. Grace to know that her work with those in need is in imitation of Jesus who spent his time on earth caring for those who were in need.
Sister Pauline N. LeBlanc taught for 25 years, worked as the PBVM Community Secretary for 7 years and as an Administrative Assistant at St. Bernard’s School for 25 years… retirement is a special gift! It is a joy to be able to help out at our convent in Leominster, MA …every Wednesday morning answering the telephone and doorbell. …being available to Sister Mary Anne whenever needed! …helping the sisters with chores that they are unable to do. On Saturdays from 9-11:30 a.m., Sister volunteers at Nano’s Nook where she finds it very rewarding to serve the needy.

Sister Charlene O’Leary enjoys her busy schedule of bringing Christ into the lives of a variety of people. Her week begins by working at St. Mary’s in Ayer, MA. Every other Sunday, she presents the Children’s Liturgy of the Word. Sister somehow teaches a fourth grade religion class as well. One of Sisters special joys is seeing Benjamin, her youngest participant. Every other Monday, she visits the Christopher House in Worcester, MA. Sister conducts a Communion Service for the residents at the nursing home in which she lives and leads a weekly rosary devotions and Holy Communion Service. They pray daily rosary and Divine Mercy devotions after mass. The light is carried to young and old and she said that she is not bored in her retirement years. Our God is good! Nano’s light beams on.

Sister Barbara Hobbs has always been interested in various crafts, but 10 years ago, Sister had trouble using her hands and was told to exercise her hands otherwise she would lose the use of them. Sister wanted to continue being active and was not working full time which lead her to volunteer at Presentation Convent for one week every month. While at the Convent, Sister answered the phone and doorbell as needed. In addition to her daily duties, she began working on canvases which left her with the dilemma of what to do with the canvases she made. A friend encouraged her to take part in Craft Fairs. Sister does four to six fairs each fall and sends the money she makes to different ministries including: Presentation Learning Center In Watts, CA, Lantern Light in New Orleans, LA, The Dwelling Place in NYC, Newburgh Ministries, Nora Cronin Presentation Academy in Newburgh, NY, Ministry to Haiti, Puerto Rico disaster relief, the Soup Kitchen in Norwich CT, Nano’s Nook, St. Bernard School in Fitchburg, MA, St. Leo School in Leominster, MA, and Presentation School in Thailand. She enjoys meeting and helping other crafters at various Fairs.
Sr. Mary Gregory West, of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, entered into eternal life on Sunday, March 25, 2018 at Kaplan Family Hospice Residence in Newburgh, NY. She was 95 years old. The daughter of the late Peter and Bertha (Maidhof) West, Sr. Mary Gregory was born on May 19, 1922 in Ossining, NY. Sister entered Religious Life at Mount St. Joseph, New Windsor, NY on September 8, 1942. She made her first vows on April 30, 1945 and her final vows on April 30, 1948. Sister earned a BA degree from Manhattan College, and an MS and Ph.D. from Fordham University's School of Education.

During her ministry, Sr. Mary Gregory served in the following ministries: Teacher at St. John's School in Goshen (1945-1948), St. Mary's School in Kingston (1948-1950), St. Lucy's in Houma, Louisiana (1950-1963), St. Frances of Rome in the Bronx (1977-1986); Principal at St. John's School in Goshen (1963-1965) and (1972-1977); Director of Religious Education in St. Frances of Rome Parish, Bronx, NY (1986-2010); Congregational Supervisor of Schools (1966-1971) and NY Archdiocesan Regional Superintendent (1967-1972); Sister also served as Vice-President of the congregation from 1971-1975.

Sister Joan Mulcahy 95, formerly known as Sister Mary Jean, a Sister of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, died Monday, May 7, 2018 at Presentation Convent in Leominster.

Sister was born in Fitchburg, MA on January 21, 1923, a daughter of John and F. Louise (Phelps) Mulcahy. She graduated in 1940 from St. Bernard High School, in Fitchburg, studied at Rivier College in Nashua, NH and Plattsburg State University, NY. She also attended Fitchburg State College, and The University of Notre Dame.

Sister Joan entered the sisters of the Presentation in 1941 and professed her final vows in 1946. Her Ministry included teaching in Bridgeprot, CT., St. Bernard Elementary School, in Fitchburg, and St. Bernard High School also in Fitchburg, from 1954-1982, where she was a teacher, guidance Counselor, principal and headmistress, being the first woman in the schools history to hold that post. In 1981, Sister was named Director of Education for the Diocese of Worcester, and was a member of Bishop Timothy Harrington's Cabinet.

Leaving the educational ministry, Sister Joan became coordinator of the Catholic Charities Friendly Visitor's Program. She was a member of the General Council for the Sisters of the Presentation from 1966 - 1969 and 1985 - 1989.
We Remember

Please join the Sisters in prayer for the following loyal friends who have recently passed away.

Mrs. Gertrude Bonnici
Mr. James Connolly
Mr. James Debraggio
Ms. Mildred Feudtner
Mr. Thomas E. Freiss
Ms. Norma Gray
Mr. Kevin Moroney
Ms. Eleanor Moore
Mrs. Patricia Redmond
Mr. Robert Roddy
Mr. Matthew Ryan
Ms. Pat Taylor
Mrs. Helen Trainor

We are blessed that the memory of loved ones, who kindled our spirits in some way by their love, their deeds or their

Sisters of the Presentation Prayer Association

Our Sisters are mindful in their daily prayers of the intentions and prayer requests of our friends and benefactors. Masses are offered on the first Wednesday and the third Thursday of each month for all who have asked for prayerful support in the various aspects of their lives. Giving one of our attractively designed cards lets people know that you are remembering them in a unique way during a special time in their lives. The usual donation is $5.00 to be sent after you have used the card.

If you would like any of our beautiful prayer cards for Birthdays, Healing, Special Occasion, Thinking of You or Sympathy you may send your email requests to missionadvancement@sistersofthepresentation.org or you may write to Mission Advancement Office, Mt. St. Joseph, 84 Presentation Way, New Windsor, NY 12553.
“Not Words But Deeds”

Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Mission Advancement Office
Mount St. Joseph
84 Presentation Way
New Windsor, NY 12553

Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
99 Church St.
Leominster, MA 01453

www.sistersofthepresentation.org

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Find us on Instagram

Presentation Sisters Northeast

Ways of Giving

Your donation has an immediate impact. It will not only help support our Sisters who work without compensation, but it will help support: retired and infirm Sisters, the ongoing education of members, maintenance of facilities in New Windsor, New York and Leominster, Massachusetts.

With your support, we can continue to reach out to those in need, following in the words of our foundress, Nano Nagle, “If I could be of service in saving souls in any part of the world I would gladly do all in my power. Where there is a need I will go.”

Online Donations Please make note that donations can now be made securely and safely online at: www.sistersofthepresentation.org.

Mission Statement

We, the Sisters of Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, inspired by our foundress, Nano Nagle, commit ourselves to the Gospel values of hope, justice, freedom, and human dignity. In union with one another, we pledge ourselves to act for and with the poor and oppressed of our world, and to care for the earth.