



***New Housing Arrangements:
Presentation Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary***

The Most Reverend Paul J. Swain

Bishop of Sioux Falls

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the memorial feast of St. Hilary, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

At the request of Sister Janice Klein, PBVM, President of the Presentation Sisters, I am writing to inform the clergy of plans regarding their ministry that the Presentation Sisters will soon be announcing publicly. The Presentation Sisters, whose ministry in Dakota Territory predates Pope Leo XIII's decree creating the Diocese of Sioux Falls, have been and will continue to be an important part of the ministries of the Diocesan Church.

The Sisters will be announcing plans to build new residences in Aberdeen and Sioux Falls. The community has shared details of its plans with me. I, in turn, have offered my encouragement and support in these endeavors. These have not been easy decisions for the community, but it is evident they have been grounded in prayer and made after taking into account individual needs of the Sisters.

The Sisters will work in partnership with Avera to develop these new residences. In Aberdeen, Presentation Place will be constructed adjacent to Avera Mother Joseph Retirement Community. In Sioux Falls, Presentation Center will be constructed south of the Walsh Family Village on the campus of Avera McKennan Hospital & University Health Center.

The Presentation Sisters' mission to minister to the poor and vulnerable and to promote human dignity, community life, and the well-being of the Sisters themselves are key priorities for the transition that will result from these new buildings. Sister Janice has offered her assurance that the community remains committed to their ongoing, life-giving ministries.

Changing health needs of the Sisters and better stewardship of their resources are among the reasons why these new residences are appropriate at this time. Together, the Sisters are looking ahead and looking forward to better prepare for the future. I applaud their courageous vision.

Presentation Heights convent in Aberdeen, the Sisters' primary residence since 1952, was built to house over 100 Sisters. Most of its space is no longer needed nor appropriate to maintain. The Sisters are considering other uses for the building that might complement their ministry or benefit their mission.

The Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary arrived in Dakota Territory in the 1880's and began Eucharistic Adoration in 1906 at the request of Bishop Thomas O'Gorman. Continually, they lift up the needs of the diocese in prayer. Throughout the decades, 217 Sisters have been involved in education and education ministries, 155 were engaged in health care, 87 in supportive services and 74 in extended ministries. They have also lived out their commitment to social justice, a witness to us all that is more difficult to measure yet no less vital.

Please join me in praying for the Sisters during these changes that they might be in the community's best interest and for the well-being of its mission outreach.

May Our Lady walk with them during this transition.