



## Villa Maria del Mar



### *Lives Changed*

BY JOANNA POLLOCK

**What does Villa Maria del Mar mean to you?  
What impact has the Villa had on your life?**

*These are two questions we recently asked some of our Sisters and Villa guests. Let me share their responses with you...*

Sister Molly Neville, along with Sister Lois MacGillivray, offered a spiritual formation program at the Villa for a number of years. Sister Molly shared that the ability to “create community” was one of the riches she encountered through her ministry at the Villa. Sister Patti Doyle, who was the Villa Director for 14 years, shared that the “ministry of preparing for and welcoming guests was a blessing to me and the staff.” During her tenure at the Villa, Sister Patti met “many wonderful people seeking a more meaningful life,” and it brought her much joy. Alejandro Maduena, our Maintenance Manager of 27 years, finds the Villa to be a “place of peace and beauty.” (*What a blessing, to work in such a place!*)

The striking vista and ocean waves are a visual reminder to many guests of a higher power and strengthens their trust and belief in God. One guest shared “it is a perfect place to feel God’s presence and to reflect and listen to the Holy Spirit.” In fact, the Villa has often been referred to as a “little slice of heaven on earth.” Other guests experience a “feeling of safety and protection,” and say that sharing their stories is comfortable in this setting and helps with their healing. Over the years, all of our guests have found a quiet space where they can be “restored and refreshed,” which allows them to return to their work or ministry inspired, renewed, and ready to serve.

This meaningful ministry is making a difference in the lives of many individuals. It is bringing communities closer together, encouraging spiritual growth, restoring relationships, healing individuals, and changing lives.

We are so thankful for the prayers of Sisters of the Holy Names that accompany each of our groups, and for the hard work of our resident Sisters, staff and volunteers. We are also thankful for our donors who help support the Villa financially.

What impact has the Villa had on your life? We would love to hear from you.

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:  
The old has gone, the new is here*  
2 Corinthians 5:17

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*“People have found that time spent by the sea not only enriches and enhances their own spiritual growth; it helps to transform the world with the blessings and graces they received during their time spent with God on this rugged coast overlooking Monterey Bay”*

Sister Mimi Maloney  
(quoted in SNJM  
Perspectives Magazine  
Summer 2013)

# Project Recaps

BY JOANNA POLLOCK

During our closure in June, all of our scheduled repair projects were successfully completed. In one corner of the balcony we found significant dry rot in the upper and lower support columns, both of which needed to be completely replaced. All of the large windows in the Dining Room and Seaview Room needed to be removed so that



the framing could be inspected for weather damage and repaired as necessary. Water damage and dry rot were evident throughout the ocean facing area. Also in June, we completed some painting projects. The exterior of Siena Hall, the west wall of the main house, and the exterior of Josephine House all received a protective fresh coat of paint.

Alejandro (our Maintenance Manager) re-painted the interior of Josephine House and a new luxury vinyl floor was installed to replace the worn carpet. In the main house and in Siena Hall, staff re-organized the artwork and furniture to make the rooms more coordinated and comfortable. We look forward to sharing our updates with you in person on your next visit.



## Sponsored Retreats 2025

JUNE 16-22

JULY 21-27

JULY 31-AUG 3

DECEMBER 11-14

Anne Kertz  
Kernion

Sr. Teresa Maya,  
CCVI

Fr. Joe Nassal,  
C.P.P.S

Fr. Greg Boyle,  
S.J.

Register online: [villamariadelmar.org/events](http://villamariadelmar.org/events)  
or email: [vmdmretreats@snjmuson.org](mailto:vmdmretreats@snjmuson.org)

## A Note from the Sisters

BY SISTERS MICHELLE GARLINSKI AND MARY ONDREYCO

### Gratitude is the Heart's Memory (French Proverb)

During November and December, a sense of gratitude permeates many family and community celebrations. As we reflect on our "heart's memory," we are deeply grateful to:

The Native American Peoples who first cared for the land and expressed deep reverence for Creation and the Creator.

The Catholic Ladies Aid Society of San Francisco who provided the creative vision for a hotel in the Monterey Bay area, prompted donations of land and money, and successfully operated the Santa Maria Hotel for over 60 years.

Our Sisters of the Holy Names, who in 1963 took out a mortgage and sought donations to buy and transform the Santa Maria Hotel into a spirit-filled Villa Maria del Mar Retreat Center.

Our dedicated staff and volunteers, who with their giftedness and service, embody the SNJM value of hospitality.

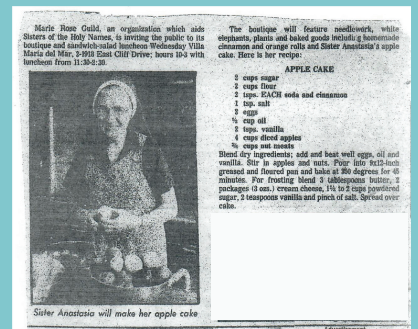
And to our individual guests and groups who grace Villa Maria, and by their presence, contribute to the continuation of our sacred story.

**As your heart makes new memories this special season - we extend our blessings and greetings to you all.**

*Grateful,  
Thankful and Blessed*

## Epicurean News - What's Cooking?

In preparation for our anniversary gala last year we searched through boxes of Villa history and archives. One of the fun items we discovered was a photo of Sister Anastasia busy working in the Villa kitchen. Sister Anastasia was the Villa Cook from 1963-1983. The newspaper article we found is estimated to be from 1973-1975 and includes a copy of her popular Apple Cake recipe. Our current Kitchen Manager and Head Chef, Jeff Heicksen, has recently reintroduced this recipe to our guests and now features it regularly in our menu offerings. We are sharing this nostalgic recipe with you to enjoy with your friends and family this holiday season.



### SISTER ANASTASIA'S APPLE CAKE RECIPE

2 cups sugar  
2 cups flour  
2 tsp each soda and  
cinnamon  
1 tsp salt  
3 eggs  
1/2 cup oil  
2 tsp vanilla  
4 cups diced apples  
3/4 cup nut meats

Blend dry ingredients; add and beat well eggs, oil and vanilla. Stir in apples and nuts. Pour into 9"x13" greased and floured pan and bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes.

For frosting: blend 3 tablespoons butter, 2 packages (3oz) cream cheese, 1.5-2 cups powdered sugar, 2 tps vanilla and pinch salt. Spread over cake.