



Villa Maria del Mar



A Life Well Lived

BY JOANNA POLLOCK

Earlier this year, we said goodbye to a dear friend of the Villa, someone who had become as much a part of our story as we had become a part of hers. Decades of shared ministry among us formed a rich history and connection. Her annual visits to the Villa -- including seven retreats in 2025 -- endeared her into our Villa community. Her broad smile, joyful and gentle spirit were a delight to all those who knew her. Each visit she came bearing gifts: homegrown lemons, a friendly greeting, a warm hug and the comforting presence of a familiar friend.

She deeply valued her 40 years of experience at the Villa and in gratitude for the impact it had on her life, she chose to support the ministry with her giving. We are profoundly thankful for her kindness, generosity, and for the blessing she was to so many. The legacy of her life "well lived" will continue to inspire and sustain us in our work at the Villa as we cherish the memories of our time together.

There are many meaningful ways to support the Villa ministry; through prayer, volunteering, attending retreats, sharing the Villa with others, or through financial giving. Donations help provide resources for ongoing care of the property, unexpected maintenance needs and planned improvements.

Gifts can be made via a credit card online through our website, villamariadelmar.org, by stock transfer or through an IRA charitable donation or Donor Advised Fund (such as DAFgiving360). Some workplaces offer matching gift programs, allowing donors to multiply the impact of their generosity. Additionally, as you consider your own legacy and estate planning, you may wish to remember the Villa through a bequest or planned gift. We are also grateful for gifts designated towards scholarship funds that help make retreats accessible for low-income groups and individuals.

We are continually grateful for the many friends of the Villa who support the ministry in countless ways. Donations to the Villa allow us to continue welcoming guests in a place of peace and beauty, where they can experience encouragement, renewal and rest. If you would like to learn more about the many ways to support the Villa ministry, please reach out to us directly.

As our dear friend once reflected, "The way the Villa is set up is very conducive to spiritual and individual growth." The Villa's mission is enriched by donors whose generosity embodies a "life well lived" and whose legacy of giving continues to bless others for years to come. Thank you, friends.

"We give thanks to God always for all of you, remembering you in our prayers, unceasingly." 1 Thessalonians 1:2

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Sponsored Retreats 2026

July 27-August 2
Fr. Jim Clarke

Where is God in our Chaos?
(Virtual attendance only;
please call to register)

December 10-13
**Advent Winter Stillness
Retreat**

Online registration:
villamariadelmar.org/events

Scan to Donate Online



Villa Updates

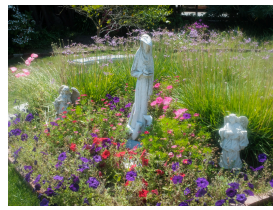
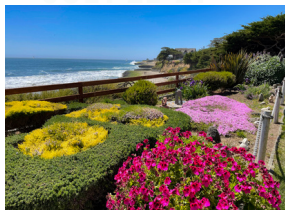
It has been a busy start to the year at the Villa. Since January, we have welcomed more than 2,200 guests representing 73 groups, along with six Villa Maria-sponsored or co-sponsored programs. Guests have included recovery groups, meditation retreats, university and nonprofit organizations, women's and men's groups, a Zen community, and other faith-based groups.

During the month of March, the Villa closed for one week to complete several improvement projects. During this time, we upgraded our Wi-Fi system, painted the lobby, repaired roof areas above the dining room, replaced the kitchen's Ansul fire suppression system, and installed a new heater in the Seaview Room.

Additional improvements have continued throughout the spring. New windows have been ordered for Josephine House, to help improve both energy efficiency and security. In May, the rear Chapel entry flooring was replaced and new storage cabinets were added. As of June, guest rooms in the Annex and the remaining two walls of the Chapel exterior are being repainted.

One of our largest ongoing projects is the installation of a new electrical cabinet - which is taking a LOT longer than anticipated. A new electrical contractor has been engaged to help move this forward. We are hoping to complete the installation in 2027.

Future projects include repairs to the exterior landing and stairway leading to the Garden, repainting the lobby entry walkway, and plumbing upgrades within the main building. *We are so grateful for your continued support, which helps ensure the Villa remains a place of welcome, hospitality and renewal.*



A Note from the Sisters

BY SISTERS MICHELLE GARLINSKI AND MARY ONDREYCO

In his recent encyclical, *Magnifica Humanitas*, Pope Leo XIV focuses his thoughts and reflection on the future, specifically, the impact of AI. Pope Leo stresses that the importance of human relationship is central to our faith and our human growth. He shares that, *"created for relationship, every human person is planned and willed by God to enter into communion with God, with others and with creation."* (MH, #50)

Villa Maria del Mar and the Villa Chapel Community heed this call. Since 1963, the Sisters of the Holy Names have welcomed people to the Villa, where their relationship with God, others, or creation can be nourished.

We asked two people, who are part of the Villa or Villa Chapel Community, to share how this statement has been realized for them through their experience.

Angie G. who has been part at the Villa and Villa Chapel for the past several years, shared; *"at Villa Maria, I cross the threshold of sacred space, where the spirit of service infuses serenity, and practices of care nurture the contemplative for a grace-filled community."*

Mary N. has been connected to the Villa Chapel for over 45 years. She shared what a pleasure it has been for her to get to know so many loving sisters, priests and our faith-filled community. *"The Villa is where I find peace and love. It is my home away from home."*

We are blessed and privileged to welcome and accompany many people here at Villa Maria del Mar and the Villa Chapel. We pray that all who come here may discover a sacred space where relationships with God, one another, and creation are renewed and strengthened. Like Mary N. we hope the Villa can also be for you, "a home away from home."

Epicurean News -

What's Cooking?

At Villa Maria, the kitchen is more than a place where meals are prepared — it is an extension of our mission of hospitality. One of the core values of Epicurean (kitchen management company) is "Cooking from Scratch" providing food that is "fresh, honest, and local."

Epicurean partners with local growers and artisan suppliers located within 150 miles of each kitchen, helping reduce the environmental impact associated with long-distance transportation.

Chef manager Jeff proudly sources cage-free eggs from a local supplier in Aptos. Our bread comes wholesale from a San Francisco-based bakery, and fresh seasonal produce from surrounding farms is delivered weekly.

Stocks are prepared from scratch, and soups and salad dressings are made fresh daily. Turkey and beef are roasted in-house for deli selections. Guests are often treated to a variety of freshly baked goods prepared onsite.

Sustainability is also woven into daily kitchen operations and Epicurean has received the GEELA Award in recognition of their work in this area. Villa guests are encouraged to recycle and compost, and the kitchen continually seeks ways to reduce waste.

Epicurean's values and culture align beautifully with the Sisters' commitment to caring for the Earth and sustaining the future of our planet.

Jeff and his team work hard to provide meals that are healthy, nutritious, and enjoyable for every guest. We hope you have an opportunity to experience some of the delicious offerings during your next visit.



EPICUREAN GROUP

fresh. honest. local.