

Sisters Settling in at Mount Carmel Bluffs

by Mary Glindinning

Whenever you move into a new place, it takes a while to actually feel at home. Sisters moved into Mount Carmel Bluffs in March and April, and it feels more familiar all the time.

“Even though it’s four months now, there’s still something new every day, which makes life very interesting,” says BVM Nancy (Josephine Mary) McCarthy. “Our two-bedroom turret apartment in Vista is so beautiful with the river view.

“We had a great 4th of July viewing of the fireworks party, thanks to the 10 windows in our living room,” Nancy says. “It’s very nice having space to invite friends to share.”

The company is wonderful, she says. “I still can’t believe I’m really living here, with my friend [BVM] Carol [Conrad Ann] Cook, with whom I lived twice in Chicago and Oak Park, but both times with a larger group,” Nancy says. “In spite of the newness, I really do feel at home. It’s also nice to get to know some of the staff in a new way. Activities provided are

unbelievably good and enriching.”

The apartments’ space and appliances are very welcome. “The move from Marian Hall to the spacious turret apartment in Vista was quite amazing,” says BVM Betty (Leonice) Voss. “The helpers who guided the furnishing of our new digs were wonderful. I’m gradually learning how to use the brand new kitchen equipment and other amenities of this brand new facility.”

The interior views are more than matched by the exterior. “I’m so grateful for the many windows and the views of the Mississippi, the forest, and the Pine Walk that I see from 331 Vista,” Betty says. “The new rules and regulations of a new setting take some getting used to as COVID and new management evolves. I’m so grateful for the generous and patient staff who are weathering these adjustments with us.”

For BVM Julie O’Neill, the move has literally had its ups and downs. “Since March, my new home has been on the third floor of Vista,” she says. “To travel from my room to the Motherhouse Chapel, I need to take the wonderful

new elevator to level four, which leads me along a short hallway to the chapel on the second floor of the Motherhouse.

“The second floor of Vista has a direct connection to St. Joseph’s Hall on the ground floor of the Motherhouse, and the first floor of the Motherhouse is connected to the third floor of Vista!”

It might sound confusing, but after a few trial runs, the trip feels familiar.

“While the elevators continue to afford us many ups and downs, our days have been remarkably steady and strong thanks to the fantastic staff members in all the multiple departments here at Mount Carmel Bluffs,” Julie says.

While some sisters moved just across campus, others came from across the country. “I love everything about Mount Carmel Bluffs: the sisters, staff, buildings, scenery, meals, and activities. Thank you, God,” says BVM Joyce Rohlik, who lived for 41 years in Florida before returning to Dubuque. ■

About the author: Mary Glindinning is a communications specialist for the Sisters of Charity, BVM in Dubuque, Iowa.



The building may have changed but the views are the same for BVMs Carol Cook (l.), Nancy McCarthy, Sheila O’Brien, and Gwen Farry.