

Salt

Fall 2017 • A Publication of the Sisters of Charity, BVM

In the midst of the quiet . . .

I Remember You...

Helen Maher Garvey, BVM (Robert Joseph)

1935–2017



SEASONing

A Message from BVM Leadership

As we anticipate yet another change of season, we find ourselves amazed at the passage of time. The world around us looks different than it did a few months ago. Already we notice the days becoming shorter, the mornings cooler, and the leaves on trees beginning to change color. Seeds that were planted in rich soil in the spring grew to flower and now prepare to fall back to the soil to be transformed and nourish what will come to life next spring. Joyce Rupp and Macrina Wiederkehr in the book, *The Circle of Life*, explain in this way:

Autumn leads the seasons in modeling the sacred practice of recycling. What seems to die bespeaks a quiet truth; that which falls into the earth is never lost. The earth receives it and preserves it. Thus it becomes a nurturing source for new beginnings as another cycle of growth arises. This miracle of transformation is autumn's prayer.

The BVM community gathered in mid-summer to reflect together on the transformation of our shared life. We don't look like we have in the past. We aren't often able to do the same types of ministry we did in our younger days. But we came to understand more deeply that we, too, are being transformed into what might come to life in the future.

While there is sadness in seeing the end of summer we are reminded to look forward, relish the beauty of the season, and place our trust in God who will bring something new to life. It is an invitation to look at our life in the spirit of autumn. There is sadness at the loss of what was, but a passion for what we can do now to live out our mission (especially as we partner with you and others), and an invitation to trust that God will bring new life.

As you read the articles in this issue of *Salt*, we invite you to read them through the lens of "this miracle of transformation that is autumn's prayer." The articles are rich in their scope of new ways of reaching out in service, of reminding us that simple acts of kindness continue to reap plentiful harvests, and of the challenge of working for justice in new and important ways. May our prayer join with yours to be open and to trust what God is about during this holy season of autumn.

Jeri Hadro, BVM

Lou Anglin, BVM

Ladonna Manternach, BVM

Mission Statement: The Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a community of Catholic women religious who, in response to a personal call from God, have chosen a vowed life of prayer, ministry and community. BVMs express their mission of being freed and helping others enjoy freedom in service to God's people through their core values of freedom, education, charity and justice.

Salt is published three times per year for friends and family of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

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2017 Calendar of Events

October

- 22 Immaculata Alumnae/Faculty Mass Chicago
- 29 Benefactor Mass Mount Carmel, Dubuque, Iowa

November

- 3-4 San Francisco Bay Area Faith Formation Conference, Santa Clara, Calif.
- 5 Benefactor Mass, Felician Sisters Center Chicago
- 10-12 SOA Watch, Encuentro at U.S./Mexico border, Nogales, Ariz.
- 28 Giving Tuesday

December

- 8 Renewal of BVM vows and associate promises, Mount Carmel

For more information, visit:
www.bvmcong.org/whatsnew_calendar.cfm



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#GIVING
TUESDAY™

Your contributions on **November 28** will help purchase new chairs for the Caritas Dining Room at Mount Carmel, providing safety, support and comfort for our sisters.

Last year
156
DONORS
from
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online
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for the BVM
Endowment
Fund



On the cover:

As we rejoice in the life of Helen Maher Garvey, BVM (Robert Joseph), we share her spirit and love, reflected in this issue by the mission and ministries of her BVM sisters. As they gather to envision the future and celebrate jubilees, the sisters continue to foster education, inclusivity and the right of all to live with dignity.

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Remembering Helen Maher Garvey, BVM

by Mira Mosle, BVM



*“For many people,
Sr. Helen Garvey was
larger than life,”*

wrote the *National Catholic Reporter*. “She’s one of those icons.” Her leadership spanned decades and found expression in a broad diversity of ministries and locales. Helen Garvey, BVM (Robert Joseph)’s death on Aug. 6, 2017, came as a surprise to many as the BVM community, Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), and the larger church lost a role model and exuberant lover of life.

“For us, Helen was a mentor, a confidante, a companion, a leader, and a dear friend,” noted BVM Bernadette McManigal (Lucinus) in her welcome at Helen’s funeral liturgy, held at Mount Carmel in Dubuque, Iowa.

Helen was born in Hempstead, N.Y., on Jan. 17, 1935, the sixth of eight children in a lively Irish family. She entered the congregation in 1952 and served as an elementary school principal in Illinois, Iowa and New York.

Helen Garvey, BVM speaks at a reception for the Women & Spirit Exhibit. Helen’s life reflected her inspiring leadership, tireless service, accolades of honor, and her spirit of resilience, humor and charm. Yet, as BVM President Teri Hadro shares in her funeral reflection, “Helen understood the importance of presence, of attending to the person she was with . . . it was never about Helen. You had her complete attention.”

A Wise and Loving Leader

Equipped with a Ph.D. in organizational development from Columbia University, Helen moved into BVM congregational leadership in 1976—at 41, she was the youngest BVM elected since Foundress Mary Frances Clarke. She served 16 years as president and vice president.

“Her leadership style was characterized by consultation, collaboration and consensus-building,” said Bernadette. “She did this with patience, optimism and a sense of humor. Helen used her gifts to remind us of the beauty and goodness of religious life as our way of being united with the Spirit, and facing the challenges and opportunities of our time. She shared her wisdom and love.”

Helen was elected to the presidency of the LCWR in 1986. In this role she addressed Pope John Paul II on behalf of American women religious when he visited San Francisco in 1987.

In 1993, she began an 11-year ministry as director of pastoral services for the Diocese of Lexington, Ky. There she developed lay leadership among parish councils in a largely rural and unchurched area.

Sharing the Story and the Vision

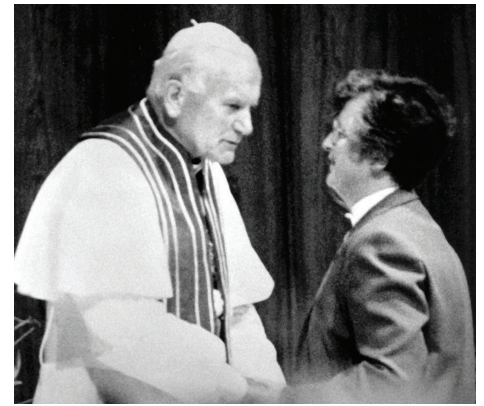
Helen accepted the daunting challenge of chairing the LCWR History Project to create a national exhibit, “Women

& Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America.” The highly acclaimed exhibit traveled to 10 cities coast to coast over a three-year period. “Raising money was easier than convincing congregational archivists to loan cherished historical artifacts for the exhibit,” BVM President Teri Hadro recalled Helen saying. “Her belief in the importance of the project and her powers of persuasion carried the day,” Teri added.

The recipient of an honorary degree from Clarke University in Dubuque, she also served on the board of trustees at Clarke, Mundelein College and Loyola University in Chicago, and since 2009 on the board of the *National Catholic Reporter* Publishing Co.

As a consultant for the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO), Helen assisted religious communities in planning for their retirement needs, and was invited to be a speaker and facilitator of many congregations. She also authored many articles.

Helen “leaned on and into God’s presence in good times and in tough times,” said Teri in the reflection at Helen’s funeral. “She was determinedly resilient and had that special gift which enabled her to bring others along. Her charm, quick sense of humor, and her New York accent drew us into her vision, touched our hearts, and made us eager to do our part in God’s mission. Her faith was inspiring; her trust infectious.”



Helen Garvey, BVM addresses Pope John Paul II in San Francisco in 1987.

LCWR awarded her its Outstanding Leadership Award in 2009. The citation summarized the leadership gifts of this woman deeply loved and widely admired by all who encountered her:

*“A woman
Who knows who she is,
and where she stands,
and what she believes*

*Who listens to all opinions
and finds consensus
in divergent voices*

*Who builds up everyone around
her by expecting the best and
acknowledging excellence*

*Whose humor and charm open doors,
rally troops, and disarm enemies*

*Whose depth of knowledge
in so many subjects, and
understanding of human nature,
empower her to connect with people
from all walks of life.”*

Helen chose “The Magnificat” as the gospel for her funeral. Not a surprise. “Her life was truly a magnificat; she proclaimed God’s greatness with her being,” said Teri. “Her love is her legacy to us and her message can be stated simply: *You are loved; God is with you. Go and do likewise.*”

About the author: Mira Mosle, BVM lives in Dubuque, Iowa, and volunteers with several justice initiatives.



Helen Garvey, BVM greets guests at the opening of the Women & Spirit Exhibit at the Cincinnati Museum Center in Ohio, in May 2009.



Sisters Gather, United in Heart

by Jacquelyn Cramer, BVM

The familiar sacred space of the Motherhouse Chapel was transformed into a meeting room for the gathering, flooded with light and resonant with memory. Participants found round table seating, a new projection screen, and cameras and mikes to transmit the meeting to those participating via videostream around the campus.



Joining in the joyful chain dance around the chapel are (l. to r.) BVMs Margaret Geraghty (St. Cabrini), Marcelia Maglente, Roberta Anne White (Caritas) and Vicki Smurlo.

On July 31, 240 Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and associates gathered in the Motherhouse Chapel in Dubuque, Iowa, for the 2017 Congregational Gathering, *United in Heart: Connecting—Contemplating—Celebrating*. Opening with a video, participants were awed by the portrayal of the BVM story in pictures and words. Throughout the gathering, the mantra, “I am with you on the journey, always with you . . . I will never leave you,” echoed in the worship space where BVMs had prayed, professed vows, celebrated, and grieved across the years.

Focus: 'Deepening Community Life'

Following the prayerful viewing of the video, participants entered into contemplative dialogue. Listening to one another's stories and reflecting on the charism of BVM Foundress Mary Frances Clarke, each participant shared how she experiences and lives the BVM charism in her own life. Entering more deeply, participants in the small groups pondered how God is calling from the future, how to deepen bonds of affection, respond to the signs of our times, and extend the BVM charism to the world.

Marie McCarthy, SP, coordinator of programs for the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), led those assembled in contemplative dialogue about religious life at this point in history. In her presentation, "Into the Hands of the Living God: Embracing the Future Together in Hope," Marie reminded us that we are part of the larger story of a God who is always creating and bringing new life.

Marie reflected back to us our joy in gathering, not for the purpose of "doing business," but for the business of deepening our life in community.

She challenged us to reflect on transformation, of letting go in order to let come, as we go forward into the future. Her portrayal of the imagery of the caterpillar to butterfly transformation, the actual dissolving of cells within the cocoon and emergence of "imaginal cells" that provide the DNA for a completely new being, prompted intense consideration of transformation in religious life.

She invited us to ponder the resurrection dimension of the paschal mystery in the life of religious congregations and the miracle of the widow of Zarephath, whose handful of flour and a little oil sustained herself, her son and the prophet for a year.

Vision and Hope for the Future

Discussion and large group sharing focused on directions for the future: strengthening the bonds of affection, using BVM resources for good, and collaborating with others who share the same vision and values to do what BVMs cannot do alone.

The gathering ended in a guided meditation led by Marjorie Heidkamp, BVM (Herberdette)—with each participant holding a piece of stained glass—praying into the glass prayers, hopes and dreams for ourselves, our community and families, and our world (pictured below). BVM artists collected the pieces of glass to create stained glass windows, which will hang in the two dining rooms at Mount Carmel, inviting the light of Christ to daily shine through each and all as BVMs and associates continue to live out the BVM charism.

As the guided meditation on the stained glass ended, participants joined in singing the anthem, "Alle, alle, alle, alleluia . . ." as many spontaneously stood to join a chain dance around the chapel.

About the author: Jacquelyn Cramer, BVM lives in Memphis, Tenn., and serves the BVM community as congregational representative.



The stained glass artists include BVMs Ruth Evermann (Lyle), Margaret Mear, Patricia Fitzgerald (Chrysostom), Marjorie Heidkamp, Vivian Wilson (Lauren), Carmelle Zserdin, Barbara Cerny, Paulino Crabb and associate candidate Ray Komar.



A poem composed for the gathering by Mary Frances Reis, BVM (Paul Adele), captures the essence of the windows:

*The windows
stained glass
pieces of differences
multicolored prayers and dreams
for a future full of hope
bonded together
into a communion
that comes alive
when Light shines through
and plays a melody
of love and justice
upon the earth.
Light of Christ within us,
Light for the world.*



Ruth Evermann, BVM



Golden Jubilarians Reflect a *'Shared Spirit and Common Mission'*

Golden jubilarians (l. to r.) Linda Roby, Lynn Winsor and Joan Nuckols embody a spirit of gratitude at their celebration in July.

by Jody Iller

"Let Us Be Grateful"

was the theme chosen by this year's Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary golden jubilarians, BVMs Linda Roby, Lynn Winsor and Joan Nuckols. Marking 50 years of ministry, they joined fellow sisters, family, colleagues and friends at Mount Carmel July 28–30 in Dubuque, Iowa.

The three-day celebration featured Hawaiian, Latino and Italian themes at dinner and in dress and entertainment, enabling the BVM community to share in the fun-filled festivities reflecting the jubilarians' lives of "grateful joy."

In her opening words, President Teri Hadro welcomed all, saying, "Our golden jubilarians have spent the past 50 years helping others grow in the freedom of the children of God."

They continue to remove barriers for hearing impaired persons and expand the horizons, hopes and dreams of students, helping young women to believe in themselves.

The three members of the Set of 1967 professed first vows on March 28, 1970.

Meet the Golden Jubilarians

Linda was born in Omaha, Neb., and professed final vows on April 18, 1976. In Dubuque, she served as formation director at Mount Carmel. She taught elementary students at St. John School for the Deaf in Milwaukee; and taught elementary school at St. Pius X in Des Moines, Iowa; and St. Clare in Portland, Ore. Also in Portland, she served the Portland Regional Center as a visiting teacher for elementary and secondary school Deaf students integrated into regular classrooms. She currently ministers as director of Catholic Deaf Ministry for the Archdi-

ocese of Portland, a position she has held for many years.

Linda shares, "I've been blessed to have worked with the Deaf most of my ministerial life, especially in my 30 years with the Catholic Deaf in the Portland Archdiocese. Their unique language and culture—and their strong sense of community and care for each other—inspire me. As a faith community, we've extended this care to include outreach to those in need in our neighborhood and around the world. Deaf leadership and pride are alive and well in Portland!"

Joan and Lynn have shared ministry together for the past 34 years at Xavier College Preparatory in Phoenix. Lynn has been at Xavier since 1974.

Joan was born in Butte, Mont., and professed final vows on June 12, 1977. She taught at Xavier HS in St. Louis; Xavier HS in Phoenix; and South Central Jr. HS and Butte Central HS in Butte. She then ministered at Xavier College Preparatory HS in Phoenix as teacher, campus minister, and vice principal for Academics and Campus Ministry. She currently serves as principal at Xavier College Preparatory.

“Being a BVM is the core to who I am, what I do, how I share God’s blessings in my life,” says Joan. “Living in community these past 50 years is a great blessing in my life. I have been privileged and encouraged to do so many things—teaching history, being campus minister, vice principal, and now principal. I have been very fortunate to travel as a BVM to so many places. Most memorable has been the Lourdes Pilgrimage during Holy Week which helps me to realize the worldwide Catholic community and respond to the journey that God calls each of us to follow.”

Lynn was born in Fond Du Lac, Wis., and professed final vows on April 17, 1976. She taught physical education and coached at Xavier HS in St. Louis. In Phoenix, she taught physical education and coached basketball, golf and softball at Xavier College Preparatory HS, where she later served as vice principal for Activities/Athletic Director, positions in which she continues to minister today. She is a certified master athletic administrator, coaches golf, and is active in state and national organizations related to athletics.

“My ministry as a BVM sister revolves around the broad spectrum of activities, athletics and sports. What better way to experience God’s love than through gift of movement, positive interaction with others, and teaching through example values like honesty, integrity, justice and charity through the medium of sports and athletics,” shares Lynn. “To be a BVM for me means increasing my relationship with Christ, sharing community life with my BVM sisters, and serving God’s people in the Catholic secondary school setting.”

Linda, Joan and Lynn shared their gratitude to their fellow sisters who have accompanied them on their journey during the past 50 years and who helped in making their celebration a unique and memorable event.

About the author: Jody Iler is a communications specialist for the Sisters of Charity, BVM at Mount Carmel in Dubuque, Iowa.

 **Golden Jubilee: Top Ten Reasons to Celebrate**
[HTTP://BIT.LY/2YE2LG6](http://bit.ly/2YE2LG6)
Diamond Jubilee Celebration
[HTTP://BIT.LY/2YDWWJU](http://bit.ly/2YDWWJU)

Diamond Jubilarians Commemorate Lives of Loving Ministry

Eleven Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary celebrated 70 years in religious life on Sept. 10, 2017. They gathered in the Mount Carmel Motherhouse Chapel in Dubuque, Iowa, for a liturgy of thanksgiving followed by a celebration dinner.

The jubilarians entered the BVM congregation on Sept. 8, 1947. They professed first vows on March 19, 1950, and final vows on Aug. 15, 1955.

In her welcome at the liturgy, BVM President Teri Hadro shares, “These 11 women today celebrate a total of 770 years of bringing Christ’s message to others as BVMs.” Ministering as teachers, spiritual directors, artists and musicians, these sisters proclaimed God’s love and brought a message of hope to all.



Diamond jubilarian Eileen McGovern, BVM rejoices during the sign of peace.



Mary Paul Francis Bailey, BVM



Gayle Brabec, BVM (Luellen)



Mary Judine Bruch, BVM



Jeanne Granville, BVM (Suzette)



Eileen McGovern, BVM (James Leone)



Ann Daniel O'Neill, BVM



Marion Pasdiora, BVM (Jean Victor)



Joan Redden, BVM (James Irene)



Virginia Stone, BVM (Alice Rose)



Margaret Zimmermann, BVM (Jamesella)

Not pictured: Helen Marie Macatee, BVM

St. Joseph Academy: Education for the Generations

by Jody Iler

Though many BVM sisters are “absent” from the classroom these days, their dedication to the mission of education has not wavered. A look back at the century-plus history of St. Joseph Academy (SJA) in Des Moines, Iowa, is a testament to the ongoing influence of the BVMs.

Blessed and opened on March 19, 1885, by the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, SJA was a boarding academy for the education of young girls ranging in age from preschool through secondary.

Living with BVMs Shapes Life Values

“In earlier days many of the student boarders were farm kids who went home on the weekends,” says Alice Powers, a 1946 graduate of SJA. Born in Des Moines, Alice stayed year-round as a boarding student while attending fourth and fifth grades because her mother, a single parent, had to work all week.

As the only boarding student who stayed with the sisters in the summer, Alice says she was spoiled! “I was the child they never had,” she recalls. “One sister would teach me to knit, another to crochet, still another to embroider.” She maintains that in all her years at SJA, the sisters never mentioned the subject of



Children play outside near the construction site for the new preschool at SJA, built in the late 1940s.

conversion to her, a non-Catholic. “I was interested in the religion classes, though—probably because I didn’t have to take them, as did the other students.”

Alice did become a Catholic after graduation, a year before she married her husband, John Powers. On moving to Phoenix, having five children, and establishing a business, Alice reflects, “Those were hard years, building a business, raising children, and I worked full time as well.”

Today, Alice’s great granddaughter is a junior at Xavier College Preparatory in Phoenix, where several BVMs still teach. “I kept in touch with the sisters,” says Alice. “They were like parents to me.

To this day, I feel that I am the person I am because of my years with the BVM sisters. In addition to our schooling, we learned values, a work ethic, and giving back to others.”

Student Learns ‘Women can be in Charge’

“My parents sacrificed in order to send me and my siblings to Catholic high schools,” says Susan Carlson, SJA class of 1967. “St. Joseph Academy—the Academy, as we often called the school—was the only Catholic high school for girls in Des Moines.”



SJA, circa 1950-60s

Looking back, Susan feels that the sisters had a great influence on her own career path. “The teacher who most influenced me was Margaret Mary Whelan, BVM (Agnesita),” says Susan. “She was a theologian and scripture scholar. I am now a student at Catholic Theological Union (CTU), a graduate school of theology in Chicago. I have come to realize that it was quite unusual in the mid-1960s for a Catholic woman to have received the theological training that Sister Margaret Mary had received.”

Susan feels that her chemistry teacher, Ellenice Condon, BVM “taught me about focusing on attention to detail, which helped me in my career as a lawyer.”

Susan reflects that SJA also exposed the students to the needs of the wider world, including the civil rights movement. “The Academy provided a nurturing environment where we were expected to be the best that we could be—to be responsible and disciplined,” she says. “I graduated before the Women’s Movement in western society had gained much attention. On an unconscious level, I learned that women could, by themselves, be in charge of things—after all, the school was run by women!”

Ending an era at SJA, the grade school closed in 1948 and the boarding school closed in 1951—both to give needed space for classrooms as day students increased. The preschool continued in a new building until 1972, when SJA merged with Dowling HS as the co-ed Dowling HS/St. Joseph Educational Center.

Both Alice and Susan embody the core values that they learned as SJA students, and continue to remember the BVMs in their ongoing mission of education for future generations. “My support for the BVMs expresses my deep gratitude for their work,” Susan shares. And Alice adds, “We tried to instill these values in our children as they would see us living them in our daily lives, and hopefully, they will keep that within them.”

About the author: Jody Iler is a communications specialist for the Sisters of Charity, BVM at Mount Carmel in Dubuque, Iowa.

SJA Alumna: Education is Her Life Mission!



Lori Ritz recently joined the Sisters of Charity, BVM as director of the Office of BVM Life and Mission. “I view my role as sharing with the BVM congregation, the associate community, and others as we all seek to live the charism of Mary Frances Clarke—to be free and free others in God’s steadfast love,” she says. “I entered SJA as a sophomore, coming from a public junior high school. It was so easy to become part of the ‘community’ there. Many opportunities were available for leadership, participation and service. I have fond memories of volunteering in the preschool, being

on the debate team, participating in speech contests, serving in the National Honor Society. Being part of SJA traditions such as candle lighting, pre-prom visits to the convent, May crowning, school plays, and the Washington, D.C., trip added to my high school memories. My friendships with the BVM sisters were influential in my selection of Clarke University (Dubuque, Iowa) for my undergraduate work and my 44-year career in education, as well as inspired me to enter the congregation and minister as a BVM before leaving after 10 years. Today I continue living the core values as a BVM associate.”

To read more reflections by former SJA teachers and alumnae, visit:
http://www.bvmcong.org/whatsnew_pubs.cfm

Do you have a prayer request?

The BVM sisters always pray for persons in need.

To make a prayer request, complete our online form at bvmcong.org/contact_requests.cfm or email development@bvmcong.org.

Your prayer request will be placed on the prayer boards outside our chapels at Mount Carmel.

With faith, determination and a

dream to fulfill a mission of education, five young Irishwomen set sail for America nearly 185 years ago. Mary Frances Clarke and her companions set in motion a legacy that continues today through the dedication and support of those taught by the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

With fewer sisters in teaching ministries, the BVM community adjusts to the changing times by seeking ways to foster the core value of education. If some sisters could no longer teach, then BVMs would create scholarships to support Catholic education!

Changing Times


Create New Opportunities

And so—the BVM Endowed Scholarship Fund was born—made possible through the support of over 1,000 donors, many of them former students of the sisters.

Results of the 2016 Annual Appeal enabled the congregation to award scholarships at schools founded or primarily staffed by BVMs. Students at Carmel Catholic HS in Mundelein, Ill.; Loyola University Chicago; and Wahlert HS and Clarke University, both in Dubuque, Iowa; have received scholarships. Six more will be offered to students across the country.

Wahlert HS student Rebecca Schmerbach shares, “I was excited to learn I was the recipient of the 2017 BVM Endowment Scholarship and that the sisters would be helping me throughout my high school years. It’s great, in addition to the financial support, to know the sisters are encouraging me on my journey through high school. I am excited to challenge myself with honors and advanced placement classes I plan to take.”

Holy Family Catholic Schools Chief Administrator Carol Trueg says, “We appreciate the BVM support of our K-12 educational system and in helping students continue to access Catholic education. These scholarships sustain the impact of the many sisters who taught in and helped to shape Dubuque’s proud tradition of Catholic education.”



“I am grateful to the sisters at Mount Carmel who have provided financial, spiritual and emotional support for my education.”

—Danielle McIntyre

BVM Scholarships: Continuing the Legacy

by Jody Iler

As a graduate of Clarke University who was taught by BVMs, Carol shares, “These intelligent, interesting and dedicated women inspired not only my passion for learning but also my decision to follow in their footsteps and pursue education as a career.”

BVM Staff Pursues Educational Goals

The BVMs offer a Mary Frances Clarke (MFC) Scholarship to women in need of financial assistance to achieve their edu-

cational goals. A BVM sister or associate must recommend a potential candidate.

The Marge Zimmer Scholarship is available to employees. Human Resources Director Cari Simpson says, “The scholarship is named for Marge Zimmer, who was a care manager at Mount Carmel until her sudden passing in August of 2015. Our health care employees can apply for a Zimmer scholarship, funded by Marge’s family in her memory, to further their education in the health care field.”

Katie Schultz, BSN, RN is assistant director of Health Care Services at Mount



BVM employee Danielle McIntyre performs a blood pressure checkup on Alice Marie Duphy, BVM (St. Gerard).

Katie Schultz, BSN, RN, assistant director of Health Care Services at Mount Carmel, feels blessed by the support of the BVMs.

Carmel. Besides BVM tuition assistance, Katie utilized the MFC scholarship to go back to school and earn her bachelor's degree in nursing. She has also received the Marge Zimmer Scholarship.

"When I decided to return to college I was a single mom raising three children," Katie says. "The funds eased my mind, ensuring that I would be able to pay for school without excessive student loans." Katie is grateful for the monetary and prayerful support of the sisters as she pursued her degree. "It is extremely humbling to be supported by

such wonderful individuals whom I am fortunate enough to work for on a daily basis. God has blessed me abundantly!"

Health care staff member Danielle McIntyre shares, "After working at Mount Carmel for two years, I realized that I truly enjoyed caring for 'my sisters.' At the end of my workday, I always felt uplifted because I had provided care, love and compassion for them. I wanted to continue in my profession and pursue a degree in nursing. I enrolled at Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC) to become a Certified Nursing Aide

(CNA), and went on to earn my Certified Medical Aide (CMA). I immediately signed up for classes to work toward a nursing degree."

Like Katie, Danielle received BVM tuition assistance to obtain her certifications. She was awarded the MFC Scholarship twice to help pay for her classes toward nursing school, and was chosen for the Marge Zimmer Scholarship.

Danielle begins the nursing program at NICC in January. "I have learned so much and received many opportunities," she says. "On the BVM website, the sisters describe their congregation as follows: 'We are a community of Catholic women called to live the mission of Jesus through our core values of freedom, charity, education, and justice.' I thank the sisters for sharing these values with me the past seven years."

Like a self-fulfilling prophecy, the cycle of teaching, learning and sharing continues to inspire those who join in furthering the BVM mission of education.

About the author: Jody Iler is a communications specialist for the Sisters of Charity, BVM at Mount Carmel in Dubuque, Iowa.



IRIS BVM 'news broadcasters' and team include (l. to r.) Mary Paul Francis Bailey, Bertha Fox (Dolorose), Rosalie Glanz, coordinator C. Jean Hayen, Bernadette McManigal, coordinator Regina Wagner, Marie Corr and Audrey Juergens. Not pictured are BVMs Marjorie Heidkamp (Herberdette) and coordinator Mira Mosle.

Sisters Stay on Top of the News!

by C. Jean Hayen, BVM

For 19 years, BVM Catherine Jean

(C. Jean) Hayen has ministered in Dubuque, Iowa, to Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary who have low vision and/or hearing impairments.

During this time, she discovered that the Iowa Department for the Blind in Des Moines, Iowa, provides helpful services for sight needs, such as digital books. She also discovered the Iowa Radio Reading Information Service (IRIS)!

Since 2003, IRIS has enabled the sisters at Mount Carmel in Dubuque to keep up-to-date on the news by listening to recorded readings of publications like the *Des Moines Register* and other newspapers on a special radio receiver provided by IRIS. The signal cannot be heard on regular radios.

Several years ago, a sister inquired if readings of the Dubuque *Telegraph Herald* (TH) could be added to the selection. C. Jean contacted IRIS and in winter 2016, local lay volunteers began reading at the TH building.

Some of the sisters who wanted to volunteer as readers found that the build-

ing was not easily accessible for them, and wondered if they could read/record the news at Mount Carmel. BVM Vice President LaDonna Manternach supported this idea and encouraged the resident sisters to volunteer as in-house readers.

Thanks to the Iowa Department of the Blind and the BVM Information Technology (IT) staff, there is now a recording room on campus for BVM volunteer readers, and IRIS news is aired 24/7 on the sisters' in-house cable channel. BVMs read the TH news twice a month.

"Sisters call IRIS 'a blessing,'" says IRIS Executive Director Maryfrances Evans, a graduate of the BVM-founded school, St. Joseph Academy, in Des Moines.

Fifty local and national publications are read by 600+ IRIS volunteers across Iowa. "I am happy to see so many newspapers available," shares one BVM sister.

The reading and recording coordinators—BVMs C. Jean, (St.) Regina Wagner and Mira Mosle—are grateful to the sisters who read.

"We hope that this is a user-friendly service not only for those with sight needs but for anyone who likes to just sit back and listen to the current news," says C. Jean.

Sisters 'Broadcast' the News

Marie Corr, BVM (Dona), one of the volunteer readers, says, "I first became acquainted with IRIS when Regina invited me to observe a readers' session. I was hesitant at first and I feared making mistakes. Regina is supportive and makes me more comfortable. Working as a team is also reassuring."

When BVM Rosalie Glanz (Victor Ann) heard about IRIS and learned that the news would be broadcast from Mount Carmel, she volunteered to be a reader, saying, "It sounded like a nice charitable thing to do."

BVM Bernadette McManigal (Lucinus) learned about IRIS from LaDonna at a house meeting at Mount Carmel. "I felt this was something I could do and it is an outreach activity, which inspired me," Bernadette shares. "We read all the local articles. I feel it is important to do a bit of editing as you can run out of time."

Audrey Juergens, BVM (Raymond Ann) worked with Mind's Eye in the St. Louis, Mo., and Belleville, Ill., areas. For three years, she and her brother paired each week for the reading. "I thought I would like to continue my service here in Iowa. I can do it and I like it," says Audrey.

"We have so appreciated LaDonna's support in getting the recording process set up at Mount Carmel," C. Jean says. "What a wonderful way to hear the news—in a relaxed way, right in our own rooms!"

About the author: C. Jean Hayen, BVM serves as volunteer for the Mount Carmel Retirement Center support services.



Mary Paul Francis Bailey (l.) and Marie Corr read the news in the recording room at Mount Carmel.

Sharing History on the Emerald Isle

by Jennifer Head

The annual **History of Women Religious in Britain and Ireland (HWRBI) conference** was held June 8–9 at University College-Dublin, Ireland. Ann Harrington, BVM (St. Remi) and I were honored to have our proposals accepted for presentation at this conference. Joining us on the trip was Kathleen Sinclair, BVM. The opportunity to travel to Dublin was the thrill of a lifetime. Not only did we engage with historians interested in a topic very close to our hearts, we took advantage of the opportunity to follow in the footsteps of BVM Foundress Mary Frances Clarke and other early BVMs.

Women Religious of Yesterday

Ann's presentation, "Mary Frances Clarke and Mythistory," focused on how the legends and stories about Mother Clarke have shaped how she is viewed. Ann noted that for much of the 185-year history of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, sisters have passed on "mythistory"—what is both known and believed about history—to tell the early story of the community and its founders. She explored how this mythistory still influences the BVMs today.

My presentation, "Pioneering Women Religious in the Sciences," focused on the "hidden history" of these sisters. It included BVMs Kenneth Keller, one of the first women in the United States to earn a Ph.D. in computer science, and astrophysicist Therese Langerbeck. I also discussed several other sisters, including Mary Xavier Hebert, OSU, the first female pharmacist in the United States, and Mary Aquinas Kinskey, OSF, who was a licensed pilot and taught aspiring military pilots during WWII; she may also have been the inspiration for the television show "The Flying Nun."

During the conference we enjoyed very diverse presentations from scholars on both sides of the Atlantic. Eliot

Nidam Orvieto, from Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust memorial, explored the way that convent records, such as annals and chapter reports, document the efforts by women religious to rescue Jews in France.

Margaret Susan Thompson, of Syracuse University, presented on congregational records that include accounts of priests and bishops denying access to communion, confessors and/or placing congregations under interdict due to "dangerous" (Margaret's term) women in leadership.

A Special Pilgrimage

After the conference ended, Ann, Kathleen and I set out to visit North Ann Street, the home of Mother Clarke's "Miss Clarke's Seminary." We knew it was located "behind St. Michan Church."

However, there are two "St. Michans" in Dublin; one is the Church of Ireland (Anglican) and the other Roman Catholic. Fortunately, both St. Michans are in the same neighborhood and the staff at the Anglican St. Michan Church provided us with directions to "our" St. Michan Church. After a short walk, we found North Ann Street and the "Seminary."

To be standing in the same place that Mother Clarke and her companions stood over 180 years ago was a solemn highlight



Exploring Dublin, conference presenters Jennifer Head (l.) and BVM Ann Harrington stand at the approximate location of "Miss Clarke's Seminary," which later became a distillery and is now an apartment complex.

of our trip. Visiting her "home" added immeasurable significance to our participation in the conference.

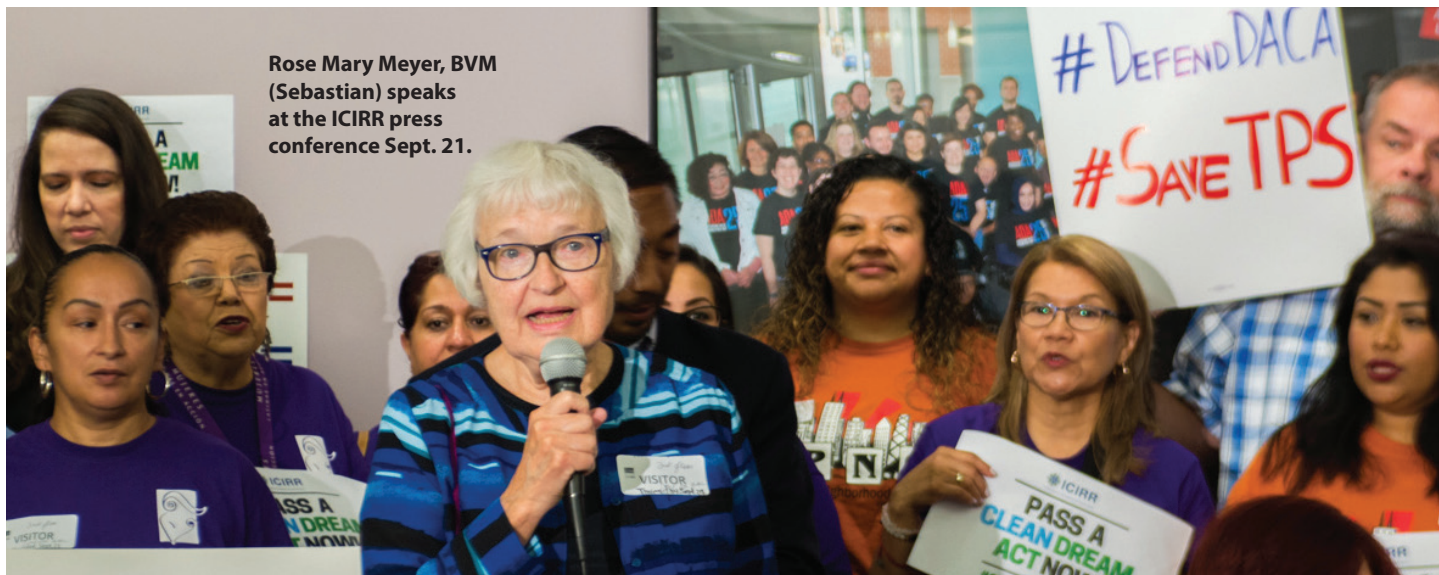
About the author: Jennifer Head is the archivist for the Sisters of Charity, BVM at Mount Carmel in Dubuque, Iowa.



Ann (l.) and Jennifer gave their presentations at the University College-Dublin.

BVMs Work to ‘Affirm Dignity of All People’

The Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary unite with other women religious in promoting solidarity, advocacy, affirmation and support, including housing and tutoring services—for immigrants. These two articles provide a closer look at Chicago BVMs and their efforts to promote the charm and core values of the community as they reach out to others in welcome and love.



Rose Mary Meyer, BVM (Sebastian) speaks at the ICIRR press conference Sept. 21.

Actions of Sisters, Associates Support Immigrants

by Luann Brown, BVM

Immigration issues in the United States, which have impacted the lives of the most vulnerable global citizens, have become increasingly critical in the past year.

On April 8, approximately 30 Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and associates gathered in Chicago to share actions on behalf of immigrants and the policies that affect them. Here is a sampling of the rich sharing:

Rose Mary Meyer, BVM (Sebastian)

Rose Mary explained her networking work with the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR). Through ICIRR's numerous member organizations, she shares advocacy work with people from many cultures and

religious backgrounds. One of the foci is passage of immigration laws beneficial to those who could be facing deportation, including Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). She shared the need for advocacy, especially for the Illinois Trust Act. This legislation would ban law enforcement agencies from arresting or holding anyone for immigration purposes without a warrant signed by a judge.

"Advocacy for immigration justice inspires me because of networking with people from many different countries and cultures," Rose Mary reflects. "I feel enriched when they share their courageous stories. I learn from them and am moved to action by their hope for a more humane life for themselves and their children. Immigration advocacy is a blessing in my life."

Nancy McCarthy, BVM (Josephine Mary)

Nancy discussed her participation in Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants, an organization comprised of approximately 40 religious communities of sisters, brothers, associates and friends. Their primary purpose is to demonstrate public solidarity

with immigrants. The two main actions for meeting this goal include 1) working on advocacy through communicating with policy makers concerning immigration laws and 2) standing on corners to pass out written information and have conversations with people. The organization also prepares informational programs and hosts an annual educational event.

Nancy reflects, "When I was teaching English as a Second Language (ESL), many of my students were immigrants. I was motivated by the farm worker movement and the people I met at demonstrations. I realized I needed to and could do something."

Carol Cook, BVM (Conrad Ann)

Carol presented information about her involvement, along with other BVMs, with Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America (CRLN). A subcommittee focuses on immigration. Carol represents the BVM community of Illinois in the work of the Immigrant Welcoming Committee, comprised of church, temple and religious communities. Activities include attending meetings to share what each member

group is doing, joining in an ecumenical prayer service at the former detention center in Broadview, advocating for just immigration laws, and sharing prayer with people in sanctuary and hearing their stories.

Carol shares, “It is very moving to stand with people facing deportation, to hear their stories, to see their pain, and then to address unjust policy issues.”

Gwen Farry, BVM (Leontia)

Gwen told the group about her experience at Chicago Theological Union (CTU), which provides a home on a

dormitory floor to women and children waiting to obtain refugee status. The home, sponsored by the Interfaith Committee to Detained Immigrants (ICDI), is named Maria Joseph, after a woman who was released from detention with no place to go and died the next day on a city street. Sisters from approximately 15 religious communities take turns staying with the families when staff is not present. Gwen accompanies the families once or twice a month.

“The way they treat each other and care for each other is amazing and inspires me,” Gwen says. “I am touched

by how positive and grateful they are for the little they have, as well as their willingness to share with each other.”

At their Mount Carmel home in Dubuque, Iowa, and wherever they minister, the Sisters of Charity, BVM continue to maintain their stance of solidarity, welcoming and supporting immigrants and refugees in these chaotic and uncertain times.

About the author: Luann Brown, BVM ministers as a behavioral health specialist in Melrose Park, Ill.

ESL Tutoring: Sisters Empower Immigrant Women

by Margaret Geraghty, BVM

*“Knowledge of languages
is the doorway to wisdom.”*

—Roger Bacon

Two Dominican Literacy Centers

in the Chicago area, sponsored by the Dominican Sisters of Springfield, Ill., provide English instruction and more to immigrant women eager to learn the skills that will enable them to open that door. Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary serving as volunteer tutors at those two centers have seen firsthand the enthusiasm and effort that the students bring to their one-on-one sessions every week.

Rose Marie Lorentzen, BVM (St. Carol) volunteers at the center in Aurora, Ill., where she has worked with students since 2005. BVMs Diane O’Donnell (Joanella) and Margaret (Peggy) Geraghty (St. Cabrini) volunteer at the center in Melrose Park, Ill., where Elizabeth (Liz) Wirtz, BVM (Antoinette), was also a dedicated volunteer for six years, before she moved to Mount Carmel.



Beverly Jeanne Howe, OP (l.), assistant director of the Melrose Park Dominican Literacy Center, talks with **Judith Curran, OP,** center director, and volunteer tutor **Diane O’Donnell, BVM (Joanella) (r.).**

BVM volunteers have found their experiences at the centers rewarding. Rose Marie shares, “I find great satisfaction and am deeply gratified by the students’ progress. I am grateful for this tangible opportunity to live out the Gospel mandate—‘to welcome the stranger.’” She finds that each tutor forms bonds with a student from another culture, benefitting parties by replacing stereo-

types with friendship, and estrangement with solidarity.

Centers Change Women’s Lives

The basic goals of both centers are to assist immigrant women to learn to read, write and speak English and to provide citizenship classes for the women studying to pass the naturalization test and become

ELS Tutoring continued on p. 18.

ELS Tutoring continued from p. 17.

U.S. citizens. At both centers, the clientele is primarily Hispanic women.

These women want to be able to go to the doctor without an interpreter, to go shopping on their own, and to attend parent-teacher conferences spoken in English. They want to improve their job performance, participate in their local communities, and become active members of their churches.

Among immigrant families, the women are often the last to learn English. Their husbands learn English on the job and their children learn at school. These women want to step out of the background and become equal members of their families and communities by learning English.

"I have experienced the Literacy Center as a place of peace, sharing and acceptance of all who come together to teach and to

learn English," Diane says. "The immigrant women are a teacher's dream because of their desire and efforts to learn. It has been my privilege to hear their stories, their struggles and their hopes for their future."

Meeting the 'Needs of the Times'

"My six years as a volunteer tutor was an enjoyable and rewarding experience," Liz reflects. "Working with immigrant women as they struggled and sacrificed to read, write and speak the English language taught me about courage, patience and compassion. Not only was I inspired by my students, but also by the Dominican sisters that I worked with."

There is no charge for the tutoring, but the women are asked to pay \$25 toward the cost of books and materials. Fees are waived in cases where it would cause a hardship. Funding through grants

and donations supplement the cost of materials. This year, the Aurora center applied for a BVM Ministry Grant to help further the education and improve the lives of disadvantaged women.

The BVMs who have volunteered at the Dominican Literacy Centers agree that the work done is a visible application of their community's core values, applying those values to the contemporary need of immigrant women for education.

An immigrant woman herself, BVM Foundress Mary Frances Clarke would no doubt heartily endorse this 21st century application of her vision of education, freeing women to participate more fully in family and community.

About the author: Margaret (Peggy) Geraghty, BVM (St. Cabrini) lives in Chicago and continues to volunteer at the Dominican Literacy Center.




Women Religious Urge Action to Protect Dreamers

The Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary stand with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) in urging Congress to immediately take up and pass the bipartisan Dream Act of 2017. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) serves as a common sense path to stability for families and communities and reaffirms American values. BVMs and other religious women of faith who

comprise the LCWR "take seriously the gospel call to welcome the stranger and care for those in need."

Mary McCauley, BVM (Mercedie) (above, center) served in pastoral ministry in Postville, Iowa, during the immigration raid in May 2008. At a recent rally in Dubuque, Iowa, in support of DACA, Mary shared testimonies from "Dreamers" with those

present. "The Dreamers are young men and women who have worked hard, respected the law, contributed to their neighborhoods, received college educations, are gainfully employed, and contributing their gifts to our country," says Mary. "They are counting on us to use our voice, our wisdom, our innate call to affirm the dignity of all people, and our political power to pressure our legislators to pass the Dream Act."



Herisey Bajo, a Marshallese employee at Mount Carmel, visits with Jean Margaret Black, BVM. Herisey recently completed a certified nursing assistant (CNA) course with financial assistance from the BVMs.

Sharing Stories of Diversity Promotes Inclusivity

by Mira Mosle, BVM

It seems remote—a string of coral atolls and islands in the Pacific Ocean. But natives of the Marshall Islands are increasingly a positive presence in Dubuque, Iowa, and at Mount Carmel, home of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Twenty-nine women from the Islands have served as nurse aides on the Mount Carmel campus during the past decade; today six are on staff. The city counts between 400-600 Marshallese residents. The BVMs and others in the area have become aware of the unique challenges the Marshallese face, and collaborate in multiple ways to help meet the needs.

A Bit of History

The United States took control of this geographic area from Japan at the end of World War II, then conducted 67 nuclear tests between 1946–58, resulting in radioactive fallout that was disastrous for the health of the population.

The Islands became a sovereign nation in 1986, but adult Marshallese residents can live and work in this country indefinitely without a visa or green card. They do not have access to medical services, Medicaid and food stamps. They cannot apply for U.S. citizenship unless recommended by an immediate family member

age 21 or over who is a U.S. citizen. Since most who have emigrated have children who are younger, this places the adults in an impossible ‘Catch 22’ situation.

Working on Solutions

The radiation exposure and nutritional deficiencies have led to an abnormally high incidence of Type 2 Diabetes among the Marshallese. Yet 73 percent in the Dubuque area lack health insurance. This is coupled with the challenge of learning a new language.

The BVM congregation joined other donors to provide funds for a bi-lingual Marshallese health care worker to navigate between the Marshallese and local health care providers. The woman hired worked for four years at Mount Carmel, and credits the sisters with her fluency in English.

Marshallese BVM employee Jimmie Lome says, “I am grateful for the health insurance I have at Mount Carmel and the Medicaid insurance for our three boys.”

The Facing Project

Putting a “face” on the Marshallese here in Dubuque is underway through participation in a national story-telling initiative. With the leadership of Clarke University, Dubuque, graduate student Suzie Stroud and the organization, Inclusive Dubuque, 12 Marshallese have told their experiences of “Facing Diversity” to volunteer scribes, including four BVMs: Mary Ellen Caldwell (Eugenio) (RIP),

Mary Jean Ferry (St. Christopher), Catherine Jean (C. Jean) Hayen and Mira Mosle. These stories, printed in both languages, were published in book form early this summer.

Of the interview process, BVM Mary Jean shares, “I came to know the Marshallese as persons of great courage. Their faith in God, love for family, and desire to work are gifts they bring to Mount Carmel, the city of Dubuque, and our country.”

Marshallese women on the Mount Carmel health services staff were among those sharing their journeys. Jimmie adds that although she is grateful for her health insurance, there are other issues to deal with. She has experienced “people avoiding me . . . and some kids harass us. We have very few friends in Dubuque. However, we do have gatherings of our Marshallese community . . . I love my life now here in Dubuque. I see a lot of good changes with my family.”

BVM C. Jean reflects, “I learned much about their culture, courage and lives. Through this project, I hope that we in Dubuque will be more welcoming and inclusive of the Marshallese community.”

These gentle people have come in search of opportunity, and BVMs are committed to helping make that dream a reality.

About the author: Mira Mosle, BVM lives in Dubuque, Iowa, and volunteers with several justice initiatives.

In Memoriam



Harriet Holles (Agneda)
March 23, 1933–June 17, 2017

Harriet taught elementary school in Clinton, Iowa; and ninth grade in Glendale, Calif. She was a college math teacher in Chicago, Dubuque, Iowa, and Conception, Mo. She ministered in spiritual formation/direction in Conception and Dubuque, and as director of religious education in Springfield, Mo.

“Harriet was an ardent reader and a serious thinker, as was evident in her well-marked copy of the BVM Constitutions. Numerous tabs marked significant passages of underlined text and notes filled the margins, sometimes including a “YES!” all in capital letters with an exclamation point when she wholeheartedly agreed. Her copy was literally falling apart from her intense study.”



**Patricia Ann Perko
(Vincent DePaul)**
Sept. 11, 1934–July 12, 2017

Pat taught elementary school in Missoula, Mont.; Omaha, Neb.; Seattle; and San Francisco. She was learning center teacher and/or director in Seattle and N. Hollywood, Calif. In Butte, Mont., she served as school secretary, learning center coordinator, and home health nurse aide. She was coordinator of religious education in San Francisco.

“Pat was observant and pensive, preferring to gather information before making a decision or even commenting. Yet, at an unexpected moment, she delighted others with a delicious sense of humor. She enjoyed organizing events, from vacations and family visits to Montana cluster meetings to a combined celebration for her golden jubilee and 70th birthday. After moving to Mount Carmel, she welcomed other new arrivals from Montana and her set and arranged gatherings for both groups.”



**Helen Maher Garvey
(Robert Joseph)**
Jan. 17, 1935–Aug. 6, 2017

Helen taught elementary school in Chicago and Antioch, Ill.; Fort Dodge, Iowa; and West Hempstead, N.Y. She was principal in Hempstead and Bellerose, both in New York. She served on the BVM congregation's leadership team. She was elected president of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR). She was organizational consultant and director of the Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America exhibit. She served on the board of the *National Catholic Reporter*. She ministered as director of pastoral services for the Diocese of Lexington, Ky. She served as facilitator for various religious communities and was active in many congregational committees.

“Recently Helen had a conversation with a friend, reminiscing about stories. She repeated the quote, ‘God lurks in our stories.’ God lurked and was ever present in Helen’s life, her leadership and her love for family, community, friends and us . . . she led us to know the loving God who is present with us and among us.”



Note: In Memoriam features excerpts from each Sister's *Welcome*, read at her funeral liturgy. Visit our website to read a sister's entire obituary.
[HTTP://BIT.LY/2YMQG7E](http://bit.ly/2YMQG7E)

Please pray for the Sisters of Charity, BVM who have died

June 2017–September 2017



Mary Terese Rink (Lumina)
Feb. 20, 1929–Aug. 13, 2017

Terese was on the college faculty in Dubuque, Iowa, and taught postulants and novices at Mount Carmel. She taught secondary school in Memphis, Tenn.; Des Moines, Iowa; and Chicago. At the University of Illinois Medical Center, she served in clerical work, as coordinator for the Disabled Children's Program, and as case manager.

“Quiet, gentle, sensitive and gracious—all describe Terese. Her subtle sense of humor was a delight and, at times, she could even be a bit of a tease. She was intelligent, curious and an avid reader. She enjoyed writing letters, having conversations with her BVM sisters, and especially walking. She combined her love of family and history to create an ancestral history book, a wonderful gift to her family for whom she was immensely grateful.”



Mary C. McGovern (Clemento)
June 6, 1920–Aug. 15, 2017

Mary was an elementary music teacher and principal in Dubuque, where she also ministered in a college resource center and served as congregational volunteer at Mount Carmel. She taught elementary school music in Grayslake, Maywood and Chicago, Ill.; Casper, Wyo.; and Emmetsburg and Sioux City, Iowa.

“Mary lived at Mount Carmel for 27 years and enjoyed being of service until her memory diminished. ‘[My] years at Mount Carmel have been the most healing and most peaceful of my religious life,’ she wrote. ‘I truly live with joy and peace in the presence of the Lord. I am grateful to my God, my congregation, and all who have helped me on my journey.’ Mary’s BVM sisters, along with her cousins, were treasured family members.”



Mary Ellen Caldwell (Eugenio)
June 11, 1920–Aug. 22, 2017

Mary Ellen taught elementary school in DeKalb and Chicago, Ill., and Wichita, Kan. She was elementary school principal in Dubuque, where she also served as a college theology, religious studies, and philosophy teacher and department chair. She taught at a seminary in Kumasi, Ghana, and later volunteered as ESL teacher.

“The approval of the revised BVM Constitutions on Feb. 2, 1989, was a joyous moment for Mary Ellen. She served 13 years on the Constitutions Committee, including one year as the full-time chair, and traveled to Rome for the approbation of the revision. ‘When Helen Garvey and her Council went to Rome for approval of the document, they didn’t have to take me, but I loved being in Rome again and participating in the dialogue at the Vatican.’”

We Remember Our Associates

Mary Versackas | Nov. 8, 1927–May 20, 2017



Holy Family High School Celebrates 80 Years

Holy Family HS in Glendale, Calif., marked its 80th anniversary on Sept. 23 with a liturgy and celebration luncheon. Opened in 1937 by the BVMs, Holy Family continues the BVM charism of providing faith-filled education for young women who go on to make an impact in today's world. Alumnae at the reunion included a woman from the first graduating class of 1941.



BVMs present for the celebration were (l. to r.) Marguerite Murphy (John); Mary Elizabeth Galt (Andrew); Mary Jeanne Stopper (John Edward), Class of '49; Vicki Smurlo, Class of '64; Suzanne Stopper (Carmelita), Class of '44; and Anne Kendall (Robertine).

For more information: [HTTP://BIT.LY/2YUOPXQ](http://bit.ly/2YUOPXQ)



Chicago's Holy Family Celebrates 160 Years

Holy Family Church, Chicago's second-oldest Roman Catholic church and one of only a few buildings to survive the Great Chicago Fire, celebrated its 160th anniversary on July 16. In 1867, Holy Family became the first Chicago mission for the Sisters of Charity, BVM, who spent many years in ministry there.

Read the article: [HTTP://TRIB.IN/2V7JDCT](http://trib.in/2V7JDCT)

BVM Lives Out Corporate Stance on Human Trafficking

Marilyn Wilson, BVM (Claudia Mary) was interviewed on Abolition Radio KFAX 1100 in Fremont, Calif., by founders Vanessa Russell and Benita Hopkins, regarding the work of Catholic Network to End Human Trafficking (CNEHT). The podcast aired Sept. 16 and can be heard at:

[HTTP://BIT.LY/2YMQG7E](http://bit.ly/2YMQG7E)



Marilyn's ministry focuses on work with high school students, and reflects the involvement of BVMs and others in supporting awareness and prevention of human trafficking. She says, "I was able to share a little of our BVM history, mission statement, and current involvements amidst the human trafficking endeavors."

Doorways of Hope

Opening Doors, in collaboration with Steeple Square leadership, dedicated the Francis Apartments on July 27 in Dubuque, Iowa. Eight apartments will provide permanent supportive housing for graduates of Opening Doors' two transitional shelters. A nonprofit corporation, Opening Doors was formed in 1999 by six area religious sister congregations, including the Sisters of Charity, BVM. The apartments are part of an ongoing renovation project of the former St. Mary Parish campus, now known as Steeple Square, facilitated by community leaders working in partnership for the betterment of the community.



8th Day Center Begins Final Year

8th Day Center for Justice in Chicago kicked off its final year with a "Gathering of Gratitude" on Sept. 30. BVMs, friends and supporters assembled for a simple ritual, shared the work of the coming year, and celebrated the past 43 years of 8th Day's journey toward justice. BVMs were one of the founding congregations of the center in 1974.



Joann Crowley Beers, one of the first BVM staff representatives at 8th Day, reflects, "We took to heart Pope Paul VI's words, 'If you want peace, work for justice.' We looked at the stories of creation and saw that God rested on the 7th day, so on the 8th day the ongoing creation was in our hands—and the 8th Day Center for Justice was born. It was a creative, optimistic, empowering time! Many BVMs were already involved in works of justice. Allowing me to be part of something bigger than any of us confirmed that God is at work in us, and God's work must truly be our own."



Uniting Against Alzheimer's Disease

In August, sisters and staff at Mount Carmel in Dubuque, Iowa, joined in a fun-filled competition to raise money to support Alzheimer's research. Ten teams sported buttons with their team's colors as they emptied their pockets, wallets, and piggy banks of excess change, vying for first place in the second annual "Champions for Change" fundraiser.

Participants ended the week with a "Mini Memory Walk" in the Joan Doyle Garden at Mount Carmel. The Champions for Change presented the Dubuque Alzheimer's Association with a check for \$4,278.45. Way to go—TEAM PURPLE!



 [HTTP://BIT.LY/2XVREBI](http://bit.ly/2XVREBI)

Total Eclipse of the Sun



Sisters at Mount Carmel in Dubuque, Iowa, enjoyed viewing the total solar eclipse on Aug. 21. With the last visible total solar eclipse in March 1979 and the next one in April 2024, they made sure not to miss this historic event!

Sisters of Charity, BVM Benefit from Birdies for Charity®

Fundraiser blends sports excitement with charitable giving.

Each summer, the John Deere Classic PGA Golf Tournament teams up with Birdies for Charity® (BFC) in Silvis, Ill., to combine pro golf with the support of nearly 500 area charities.

Donors can "chip in" for a chance to win prizes by pledging \$.01 or more per birdie scored during the tournament and guessing the total number of birdies. The grand prize, a two-year lease on a new car, is awarded to the person who correctly guesses the number of birdies.

This year, 623 donors participated in the fundraiser. Donor funds for the Sisters of Charity, BVM, including a 10 percent corporate "bonus" match from the John Deere Foundation, totaled \$64,840.46. These funds provided an update of the audio/visual equipment in the Motherhouse Chapel at Mount Carmel in Dubuque, Iowa. Additionally, projection screens were purchased to use for larger services, meetings and retreats.

Birdies for Charity® donations have enabled the sisters to be "on par" for a consistent course of improvements in past years. Projects include keeping BVM residents safe from falls with newly installed carpeting, LED lighting, and repairs made to sidewalks and the Pine Walk. A new fire door and fireproof protection for the Mount Carmel Archives ensures both the safety of the sisters and protection of their history.

An updated HVAC system and new air conditioning units keep the sisters comfortable.

BFC funds helped to renovate one of the Mount Carmel dining rooms and a sun porch in the Motherhouse. Funds have also enabled the sisters to enjoy a big screen TV and a campus-wide communication system.

The BVM sisters are truly blessed by and thankful for the generous support of our friends at this yearly event!





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<http://blog.bvmcong.org>



2017 Associate Retreat 'Freed by Love, Acting for Justice'

During the annual BVM Associate Summer Retreat in July, BVM Marilyn Wilson (Claudia Mary) led associates on a journey weaving together a "tapestry of hope in today's world." Love, justice and empathy formed the centering issues reflected in prayer, sharing of personal stories, and interviews with sisters during the weekend.

