

SAVE THE DATES FOR 2019

April 28

St. Mary HS Alumnae Luncheon
Lombard, IL

Contact:
Eileen O'Shea, ACT
eoshea@bvmsisters.org

May 3-5

Associate Coordinating
Committee, Mount Carmel

Contact:
bvmassociates@bvmsisters.org

May 19

Memorial Mass, Mount Carmel

Contact:
development@bvmsisters.org

Jul 12-14

BVM Congregational Gathering
Best Western Hotel
Dubuque, IA

Sept. 8

Diamond Jubilee Celebration
Mount Carmel Motherhouse

For a complete list of events,
visit the members' website:

members.bvmsisters.org

[Resources](#)>[Calendar of Events](#)

For a list of 2019 volunteer
opportunities, visit:

bvmsisters.org/volunteer

We can share your dates
and contact information for
associate events—just let us
know in advance. We would
love to share your experiences!

Take photos and send to:

Grace Mendez at
gmendez@bvmsisters.org or
Lori Ritz at lritz@bvmsisters.org.

BVM Associate News

will be emailed and posted
on the associate page of the
members' website. Copies
mailed on request. Contact
bvmassociates@bvmsisters.org.



BVM Associate News

A Faithful Present, a Hopeful Future

F R E E D O M • E D U C A T I O N • C H A R I T Y • J U S T I C E

Spring 2019

Dear Circle of Friends,

BVMs and associates have pondered the significance of the stoles that are presented and worn as a part of associate commitment ceremonies.

The stoles have been a part of the ceremonies since 1993. These hand-woven pieces of cloth were a symbol of the call to BVM ministry world-wide and were worn around the shoulders to remind us that *1 Peter 2:9* calls us to be "priestly" people, i.e. "those who can risk coming close to God" (*Christian Community Bible*).

The stoles came from BVM ministries in Quito, Guatemala, and (most recently) Ghana.

However, in response to concerns over the years, and after much discussion, the Associate Coordinating Committee and the Associate Coordinator Team have decided that stoles will be used during the commitment ceremony to surround the candle, the associate pin, and personal items brought forward rather than presented as a garment.

As the number of stoles in the office diminishes, alternative symbols that remind us of our commitment to service and prayer within our



growing circle of friends will be considered.

Many blessings on your sharing with one another.

—Eileen, Grace, and Suzie
Associate Coordinator Team (ACT)

Meet an Associate: Therese Hawks – Park Ridge, Illinois



For as long as she can remember, the BVM core values of charity and justice have been a part of Therese Hawk's life.

She met the BVMs as a child. Her father's cousins BVMs Rose Therese Donnelly and Louise Donnelly often visited her childhood home in DeKalb, Ill. Therese was taught by BVMs at St. Mary Elementary and visited Mount Carmel.

Therese volunteers at Catholic Charities in the crisis nursery where she works with babies born with addictions and at

an animal shelter. In the past, Therese was a nursery volunteer at Well of Mercy which serves unmarried women and their children in North Side, Chicago, but a health crisis required her to quit.

Therese was reconnected with BVMs when she attended a talk by Ann Harrington, BVM at St. Gertrude's Parish in Chicago. There she met BVM Ann Chaput who invited her to consider association. Therese accepted and began her discernment process with Margaret Haas, BVM and Associate Marilyn Hass as her companions. Although she

has been an associate since October 2015, Therese remains the only associate in her cluster and would like to be more connected to other associates.

Therese was widowed in 2015. She met her late husband during her time studying nursing at St. Xavier College in Chicago. The two raised a daughter and son together in Darien, Ill. Today, Therese enjoys spending time with her four grandchildren and three great-granddaughters; she also loves reading, going to movies, and playing card and board games.

—Eileen O'Shea, ACT



Meet the ACC: Mary Frances Reis, BVM

I'm new to the ACC, but a long-term believer in this extended community of BVM life and mission. I've served before; have dear associate friends. I believe in its future to plant seeds of compassion along varying paths where the charism of Mary Frances Clarke beckons us to trod anew, bringing hope and joy support and love through contemplation, community sharing, outreach to the poor and advocacy for justice in a world aching for a sign of spring!

My name is Mary Frances Reis with Frances spelled with an "e" that proclaims my identity as woman in the Church.

—Mary Frances Reis, BVM

Space for Spiritual Silence

Many sacred silences take place at Mount Carmel in Dubuque, Iowa. Some are individual, some are congregational, while others are created in small groups. One regularly scheduled silence is hosted by a prayer group that has met together since 2002. They faithfully gather on the first Monday of each month, in a third-floor turret of the Caritas Center.

"Over the years the style has changed," shares Donard Collins, BVM. "At the very beginning, we didn't have as much sharing. Now we are doing a *Lectio Divina*, and share a word or phrase. Then we look at a different translation, read it aloud again, and see what words would stick out. After we have shared, we move to contemplative prayer for the remainder of our time together."

Participants share the scripture selection process and reading duties. They meet for an hour, sharing stories, texts, intercessory prayers, and silence. After the time of silence, members spend time in unity building over a shared meal, where they often expand on an inspiration gained in the silence.

Members have come and gone from the group for various reasons (as is the natural order of all groups). The group is made up of an equal number of sisters and associates. BVMs C. Jean Hayen and Mary Angela Buser and Associates Marilyn Wasmundt and Mary Chapman are the remaining founding members. They have been joined by others: BVMs Donard Collins and Elizabeth Olsen, and Associates Holly Bernhardt and Christine Olsem.

When asked, many of these members share they treasure this monthly gathering; it's uplifting.

"I look forward to this group," adds Christine. "It gives me such peace, and it is unlike any other time in the month."

Christine joined the group in 2014, soon after becoming an associate. For her, "It is easier to spend time in quiet prayer when in a circle of friends than when at home alone, surrounded by distractions."

Finding a sacred silence has been a joy for this circle. Consider reaching out to your prayer partner and be silent together soon.

—Suzie Wright, ACT



Sharing prayer and spiritual silence at Mount Carmel are Associate Christine Olsem (back, l.), BVM Donard Collins, Associates Holly Bernhardt and Marilyn Wasmundt, and BVMs Elizabeth Olsen (front, l.), Mary Angela Buser, and C. Jean Hayen.

Meet New Associates



**Maureen
Frommelt**



**Laura
Field**



**Marybeth
Coleman**

Maureen Frommelt

Maureen Frommelt will have her commitment ceremony at 2 p.m. on April 28, 2019, at the Motherhouse Chapel at Mount Carmel.

Maureen is blessed to be a wife, mother to four, and grandmother to six. When she was a teen, she volunteered at Mount Carmel in Marian Hall and spent a short time in the BVM novitiate at Mount Carmel.

Through watercolors and other art, she shares a unique world view. She is an active volunteer in her parish, St. Joseph the Worker in Dubuque, Iowa, and recently began working to promote human trafficking awareness as a member of the Tri-State Coalition Against Human Trafficking and Slavery.

"I have been educated by BVMs [such as Colette Stanton (St. Denis)] from grade school through college," shares Maureen. "As an adult, I have learned from them through the Roberta Kuhn Center, *Salt Magazine*, and BVM acquaintances.

Because I have come to admire these women—and their associates—I want to emulate them more fully."

Maureen has been companioned by Associate Marilyn Wasmundt and a circle of friends that included many BVMs and associates.

Laura Field and Marybeth Coleman

Longtime friends Laura Field and Mary E. "Marybeth" Coleman are two of the newest associates from Chicago and went through the discernment process together. Their companions were BVMs Ann Kathleen McDonnell, Peggy Geraghty, and Diane O'Donnell, and Associate Eileen O'Shea.

Professionally, Laura is a spiritual director, retreat leader, and freelance public relations professional. She was born in Beech Grove, Ind., raised as a "cradle Catholic" in Indianapolis, and has a loving relationship with her companion Dan Quinn and dogs, Chester and Lily.

Laura co-led the associate retreat on joy a few years ago and increased her circle of friends among those who attended. Soon after that, she embarked on her discernment process to become an associate.

"I fell in love with the women of the community for the good work that they do and the spirit of joy and laughter that

I sensed when visiting Mount Carmel," she says. "... I've noticed that the BVM community that I've experienced models the charism of freedom, and I want my life to model the charism for others as well."

Marybeth has a long and rich history with the community. She was taught by BVMs at Saint Paul the Apostle Grade School and Assumption High School in Davenport, Iowa, and entered the BVM novitiate at Mount Carmel following graduation.

"The BVMs who taught me not only provided me with a good education but were also models on how to live," shares Marybeth. "I wanted what they had (lives that made a difference—lives that modeled charity, justice, and joy) so I entered the community. Although ... I chose a different path, I've always felt connected to the BVM community. Association allows me to formalize my commitment to the core values, to join with sisters and associates; and to learn, work and pray together, helping each other grow into wholeness."

Laura and Marybeth's ceremony location and time will be announced at a later date.

—Suzie Wright and Eileen O'Shea, ACT

Save the Date: Summer Gathering 2019

"TOGETHER we make the path by walking."

Friday, July 12–Sunday, July 14

Best Western Plus Dubuque Hotel & Conference Center | 3100 Dodge St. | Dubuque, IA 52003

Because the Associate Coordinating Team would like as many associates present at the gathering as possible, there will not be a separate associate retreat this year. Instead, as part of the event on Friday evening, the Office of Life and Mission will host a conversation on what's happened and what's to come. There will also be opportunities to share stories over refreshments.

If there are any Dubuque area associates willing to extend hospitality to visitors from other parts of the country, please contact Suzie Wright, swright@bvmsisters.org or 563-588-2351 ext. 5498.

Hope to see you there!

—Suzie Wright, ACT

Mrs. Berkeley Funds are available for associates who need assistance with travel expenses; contact one of the associate coordinators for details.

For the Summer Gathering agenda and local arrangements, visit the members' website:
members.bvmcong.org>Meetings and Committees>Summer Gathering

Associates in Action



Associate Carmella Huser (top, r.) and Marilyn Wilson, BVM (bottom, r.) present during an end of year reflection at the Holy Spirit Chapel in Los Gatos, Calif., (above). Dolores “Dee” Myers, BVM assisted with the presentation.



In January, BVMs, associates, and other members of the Tri-State Coalition Against Human Trafficking and Slavery recognize a Dubuque, Iowa, hotel for its efforts to end human trafficking.



In Glendale, Calif., Steven Moss, a veteran, joins Associates Bill and Francie Lee in selling raffle tickets at a St. Patrick Day cook-out for Wellness Works, an organization that serves veterans.



BVM Associate and Clarke University Professor of Philosophy Dr. Norm Freund presented, “Spirit, Sacrifice, Struggle, and Success: Clarke’s 175 Years,” at Clarke. His heart-felt talk was informative, engaging, and ended with a standing ovation from an audience of students, faculty, staff, BVMs, and associates.

Associates React to the 63rd U.N. Commission on the Status of Women

Read more about CSW63 in the April *BVM Center News*.



“The most informative and moving talks I attended . . . focused on the world’s indigenous women, international sex trafficking, and the role of women in peace processes . . . I hope to continue to work on building peace as a concerned global citizen.”

—Associate Kathy Linhardt



“We live in dark times . . . It can be hard to feel hope for our broken world. Yet hope was what I felt when encountering the energy of CSW63 and the passion of so many fighting for gender equality and women’s access to basic social services. These days spent listening and learning from my global sisters restored my faith and empowered me to fight ahead.”

—Associate Kimberly Emery

BVM Mission:

We are the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a community of Catholic women called to live the mission of Jesus through our core values of

FREEDOM, EDUCATION, CHARITY, AND JUSTICE.

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