

SAVE THE DATES FOR 2019–2020

Nov. 9

A BVM Heritage Society Meeting
“Fiery Moments,” Mount Carmel

Nov. 30

New Associate Commitment
Ceremony and Associate Promise
Renewal, Mount Carmel*
Contact: swright@bvmsisters.org

Dec. 1

Advent Carols and Lessons
Service, Mount Carmel
Contact: swright@bvmsisters.org

Dec. 9

Renewal of Sisters’ Vows*

March 7–13

UN Commission on the
Status of Women 2020
Contact: rwhitebvm@aol.com

***Note:** Because Dec. 8 falls on a Sunday in Advent this year, associates are invited to renew their promises on Nov. 30 during the new associate commitment ceremony. All are invited to attend the renewal of sisters’ vows on Dec. 9.

For more information about associates and events, contact:
bvmassociates@bvmsisters.org.

We would love to share your associate events, stories, and photos. Send submissions to:
swright@bvmsisters.org.

For a complete list of events, visit the members’ website:
members.bvmsisters.org>
Resources>Calendar of Events.

For a list of volunteer opportunities, visit:
bvmsisters.org/volunteer.

BVM Associate News will be emailed and posted on the associate page of the members’ website. Copies mailed on request. Contact:
swright@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

Fall 2019

Dear Circle of Friends,

Please join us in welcoming Jeanie Fritscher to the Associate Coordinator Team. We are delighted that she has accepted the position and will be sharing the duties with Eileen and Grace. Jeanie is from Stanton, Iowa, *the hometown of Mrs. Olson (Virginia Christine) of Folger’s Coffee fame!* She is a retired nurse who shares her caring personality ministering to those who are grieving.

Thanks for answering the call to associate leadership, Jeanie.

What happened to Suzie Wright, you may ask? Suzie is still part of the Office of Life and Mission as the administrative assistant. She is sharing her many talents full-time at the BVM Center in Dubuque.

Never fear, Grace and Eileen are still here, as is our director, Lori Ritz. Keep us all in your



prayers and let us know if we can help you in any way.

Many blessings!

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

Tees Go South!

Four hundred miles south of Dubuque and almost two months after the BVM Summer Gathering, associates in our Missouri area happily received BVM tees.

During the Summer Gathering, BVMs and associates wore the tees to honor the past, live the present, and imagine the future.

We gathered at the Walnut Grill in Sunset Hills, Mo. With the backdrop of a purple wall, it was a fun photo op!

We reviewed the highlights of the Gathering, shared a Marian prayer for the year’s celebration, and caught up on everyone’s joys and challenges since we last met.

—Mary Frances Reis, BVM



Modeling the new purple T-shirts are (seated) Associate Christine Middendorf; (standing, l.) Mary Frances Reis, BVM; Associate Mary Clair Wenger and daughter Christine; and Associates Theresa Koetting and Jill Burleson.

Commitment Ceremonies for Artistic Associates

Raymond (Ray) Komar's Commitment Testimonial Statement

While at the 2017 gathering, "I discovered my desire to be a BVM associate and to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with all of you bold, courageous women, today's witnesses and truth speakers. And today, that desire becomes a reality as I make my commitment as a BVM associate and pledge to join all of you on this Gospel journey."

While creating this piece of art during the 2017 Gathering, Ray Komar met BVM Ruth Evermann and became inspired to seek association. This is the sixth window from the left in the Caritas Dining Room in Mount Carmel. If you missed Ray's ceremony, you can go to the BVM live videostream link and watch it on demand: portal.stretchinternet.com/bvmsisters

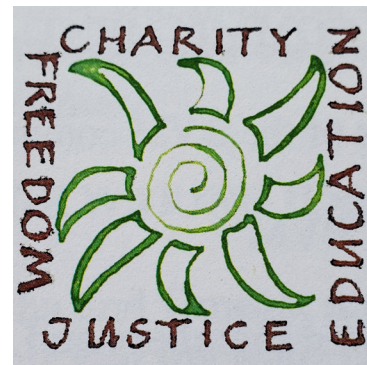


Gathered for Ray's commitment ceremony are (l.) BVM Roberta White; Associate Marilyn Wasmundt; BVMs Mira Mosle, Ruth Evermann, and Anne Harrington; guest singer Peggy Jackson from First Baptist Church in Dubuque, Iowa; Associates Kathleen and Ray Komar; BVM Annamarie Kane; Associates Christine Olsem, Jolene Clauer, and Eileen O'Shea; BVM Nic Catrambone; Associate Sharon Scully; BVM Carol Cook; and Associate Suzie Wright.

Jeanette Barnes' Commitment Testimonial Statement

"What began as a longing for a small prayer group has turned into my commitment to the BVM values of education, charity, freedom, and social justice. In this I join the many BVM sisters and associates. I hope to work interdependently with the BVM community as I develop my own mission based on these values. I ask God to teach me his ways and I pray for the grace to live the BVM values in all my comings and goings."

Jeanette Barnes hand-crafted this square piece of art for her commitment ceremony program. She was inspired by the discernment process focus on the BVM core values. Jeanette is a calligrapher and artist.



Associates (seated, l.) Mary Kay Craig and Jeanette Barnes, and George Waring, Francine Coombe, relax in Francine's garden, where they held Jeanette's commitment ceremony.



Associates (l.) George Waring and Jeanette Barnes; Liz Olsen, BVM; Associates Mary Kay Craig and Francine Coombe celebrate at Jeanette's commitment ceremony.

Associates in Action



New Associate Victoria Roehl hosted a small gathering of BVMs and associates at the Chicago Art Institute. Attending were BVMs (l.) Peggy Geraghty, Gwen Farry, Saskia Alquinga, Diane O'Donnell, and Rose Mary Meyer; Associate Victoria Roehl; BVM Barbara Gaul; and Associate Virginia Pieuch.



Taking a Look Back: Associate Joni Davis (l.) and her sister C. Jean Hayen, BVM read their parents' signatures in the original Associate Signature Book. Their parents, Joseph and Mildred, were the second married couple to become associates.

Meet New Associates

The commitment ceremony for all four of the new associates will be Nov. 30, at 4 p.m. at Mount Carmel, in the Motherhouse Chapel. All associates attending will be invited to make their annual renewal of promises that evening, which is normally held on Dec. 8.



Paula Schmidt from Dubuque, Iowa, completed the discernment process on Aug. 27 with the guidance of her companion, Lynn Lester, BVM.

Paula is the dean for the college of professional and graduate studies at Clarke University in Dubuque.

Paula and her husband Daniel live in Dubuque with their children, Alaina, Avery, and Broderick. Paula and her children are monthly visitors and volunteers for the fourth floor Marian Hall residents.

Paula wrote in her associate application, "To me, the BVM charism is about incorporating the core values into all that you do. It is a sense of calling that blends freedom, education, charity, and justice into a way of being that leads to compassion and action—each person called to carry this out in their own unique way.

"To me, the BVM charism is difficult to put into words as it is an all-encompassing feeling of love and freedom. I can help to further the BVM charism by incorporating the core values intentionally into my daily work and interactions."

Lynn shares, "I believe she will be a strong influence in 'spreading BVM Mission' now and in the future."

Welcome, Paula!



Diane Maura Broderick, from Poulsbo, Wash., completed the candidate process and was accepted as a BVM associate on Oct. 10.

She was born in Des Moines, Iowa, and raised as part of a large farm family. Carola Broderick, BVM (deceased), was Diane's aunt.

Diane is a retired teacher and an active seeker of social justice. She married James Russell 36 years ago.

According to Diane, "From birth, I treasured the BVM family of women in which I was raised. Our family lived for church, community, and connection with the larger world."

BVM Sisters Kathy Carr, Nancy McCarthy, Mira Mosle, and Associate Lori Ritz, were her discernment companions. Lori shares, "To Diane, the charism is the 'heart and soul' of Mary Frances Clarke and those sisters and associates who followed her."

Diane enjoys water sports, hiking, walking, cycling, and traveling.

Welcome, Diane!

—Suzie Wright

Administrative Assistant to the
Office of BVM Life and Mission



Katie and Kraig Pfiffner from Dubuque, Iowa, were accepted as BVM associates Sept. 3 and Sept. 9, respectively.

They have been married for 27 years and have two children: Alex, 26, and Lauryn, 25.



Katie taught at Clarke University, which is where she met the BVMs and first learned of the charism

and core values of the congregation. Two years ago, she joined the pastoral services department at Mount Carmel. In her free time, Katie enjoys reading, hiking, and yoga.

When not working as a funeral director, Kraig enjoys working around the house, bicycling, cooking and baking, reading, and watching documentaries and programs on PBS.

Kraig and Katie's discernment journey was shared by BVMs LaDonna Manternach, Mary McCauley, Margaret McCulloch, Karen Pollard, Regina Qualls, and Helen Wolkerstorfer. They share, "We are grateful to Katie and Kraig for requesting to consider membership in our BVM Associate Community, for their request caused us to refresh our memories, deepen our appreciation of our BVM spirituality and to renew our daily commitment."

They continue, "Kraig's presence and Katie's presence will be a blessing. They bring gifts as a couple and as individuals."

Katie feels particularly drawn to the core value of freedom, reflecting "am I using this gift of freedom to be a light for others to find their own inner freedom, or am I getting in the way of that happening?" (A good challenge for us all!)

She sees the gifts she brings to the community as "the gifts of listening and presence, a love of learning and teaching, and a desire to grow with others as we explore ideas, both old and new, of what it means to be the hands and feet of God in our world."

Kraig states, "The charism comes to life through the core values of freedom, education, charity, and justice. My hope is to be able to contribute by living the core values daily."

Welcome, Katie and Kraig!

—Grace Mendez, ACT

Associates Recognized



Congratulations to Associate **Andy Schroeder** for being named a "Rising Star in Business" in the September 2019 issue of *Biz Times*, a Woodward Communications publication in Dubuque, Iowa.

Andy was chosen for his diligent work ethic, community service efforts, and stellar personality.

In the two-page article highlighting Andy's work history and personal story, he shared how his mother inspired his desire to serve others and embrace the fun and sense of well-being that comes from acts of charity. Well done, Andy.



Associate Dan Abben became Dan Abben, Ph.D. this summer. Celebrating with him are Chicago BVMs (I.) Pat Bombard, Eileen Fuchs, Barbara Gaul, Susie Beckman, Dan, Mary Anne Hoope, Saskia Alquina, and Mary Lou Wetzell.

Associates in Action



BVM Associates (I.) Teresa Tiffany from California and Kimberly Emery from Virginia, as well as many other BVM associates and sisters, attended the Lights for Liberty Rally held in downtown Dubuque, Iowa. The rally was in solidarity with immigrant and refugee advocates.



Volunteers at Not On Our Watch, sponsored by Wellness Works in Glendale, Calif., to bring awareness to suicide and awareness of suicide prevention programs for veterans, are Associates (I.) Bill and Francine Lee, Cheryl Hannah; friend Mary Lu Coughlin; BVM Vicki Smurlo.



Marilyn Wilson, BVM (I.) and Associate Carmella Huser share a happy moment during a group discussion at Santa Clara University in California. Marilyn facilitated a five-person panel discussion on the future of the church. Elizabeth Avalos, BVM was a panel participant.



Also volunteering for the Not on Our Watch Event are Associates (I.) Grace Mendez, Cheryl Hannah, and Clara Schwartz.

Montrose Associates Making Merry

The Montrose, Calif., Cluster held a summer potluck luncheon in August at the home of Associate Clara Schwartz. We gathered to see BVMs Mary Jean Ferry and Roberta White, who were in town for a visit.

In the few hours we shared, we were excitedly chattering, complimenting each other on the delectable food items each brought, and for some, having a refreshing dip in the pool. There was even some "business" included! It was such an enjoyable afternoon that we quickly decided it should henceforth be referred to as our first annual summer potluck. We hope we can enjoy the gracious hospitality of Clara and her daughter and son-in-law, who hosted this amazing get-together, for more years to come.

—Vicki Smurlo, BVM



Enjoying the potluck feast are Associates (I.) Clara Schwartz and Cheryl Hannah; BVM Anne Kendall and Associate Francine Lee.



Associates Carol Walsh (I.) and Francine and Bill Lee stand poolside, while Roberta White, BVM and Associate Teresa Tiffany enjoy the water.

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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