



## **Wake Stories of Mary Paulino Crabb, BVM**

Caritas Studio, June 16, 2020

### **Mary Jean Ferry, BVM**

I lived with Paulino in Pasadena, Calif., for seven years and I taught with her in an inner city school in Los Angeles, Assumption, where Theresa McNerney was the principal. Paulino grew up in West Hollywood, which means she grew up in the atmosphere of the movie industry. That's why you saw those daring photos of her dancing costumes. She loved tap, ballet, ballroom, and, best of all for us, beautiful liturgical dance. Paulino had many different hobbies and things she was interested in that you might not know about. Right now, I'm thinking of astronomy. She loved the stars and loved to show us the constellations. Paulino was involved in the Associate Program in Southern California. She companioned Barbara Gill, who was in the movies and taught us a lot about using different accents.

It was wonderful to be with Paulino in so many different ways, especially her garden. We would sit at our table surrounded by windows and looked out at her garden, which was very characteristic of Paulino—very neat, everything in order. She would go to the beach and haul many rocks and stones and then outline the flower beds with her beautiful designs. In Southern California what we remember Paulino the most for is the Rose Parade. She put so much effort into it—selling tickets to parishioners and to friends, setting up a hundred chairs the day before. Of course, we had to help her and guard the chairs. The morning of the parade, she and I would go out at 5:30 a.m. and have to climb over all these bodies in the street. Everybody came early for the parade and slept there all night. So we would put names on all the chairs and then serve a delicious breakfast for our guests.

We had to vacate St. Philip's Covent to make a parking lot for the parish. That's when Virginia McCaffrey, Paulino's dear friend, and Paulino came to Mount Carmel. She did so much at Mount Carmel, which we know. But what I remember her most for is her smile. Paulino couldn't talk for many, many months. But, she had the most beautiful smile. When she smiled at you, you knew that she was recognizing you. I give thanks for Paulino's beautiful life and I know she is with us today celebrating. Thank you, Paulino. We love you so much.

### **Roberta Ann White, BVM**

I remember Paulino from St. Philip's when St. Philip's closed. She was Miss Organization. She organized it so that all the BVMs and Associates in the area could come and look at all the things that she had out to close the house. If anybody wanted anything, they could take whatever they needed. The sisters from Montrose were amazed. She gave us all of her gardening equipment, which was wonderful. Plus, she had organized earthquake preparedness to the hilt. She was definitely Miss Organization. She gave us all her earthquake preparedness things, including a 65-gallon container to preserve portable H<sub>2</sub>O so we would be ready. Sister Sue Stopper, BVM took care of it. It was outside in our garden in Montrose and it still is, I believe.

When I came to Mount Carmel in 2017, Paulino no longer taught art in the Roberta Kuhn Center. I was so sad that I couldn't take a class with her. She had helped for many years not only teaching art and organizing Roberta Kuhn, but she helped with the move from the Barn over to the Motherhouse ground floor. We here at Mount Carmel are very grateful to Paulino because she has lots of her beautiful artwork on our walls. Once I said to her, "Oh, Paulie, I missed getting your classes. Could you give me private lessons?" She gave me her absolutely beautiful

smile and she said, "Anytime." Paulie, thank you very much for your generous, wonderful, and kind spirit. Please keep us in your prayers these days. Thank you, Paulino.

### **Pauline Crabb, friend**

Naturally, one of the first reasons I was attracted to Sister Paulino is that we almost shared the same name. She was Paulino Crabb, and I am Pauline Crabb. We weren't related, as far as I know, but every Crabb family member I have met has been a kind, sweet, helpful, and thoughtful person. Sister Paulino had all those same characteristics. Sister Paulino was first a friend of my husband, Leon Crabb. They met in a watercolor art class that both were taking at Pasadena City College (PCC) in the fall of 1990. Both were members of the Mid Valley Art Association. I joined them in a class when I retired in 1994. It was then I also became a friend of Sister Paulino. Leon and I moved from Pasadena in 2000, so our relationship with Sister Paulino is not counted in the years spent sharing art experiences together. But Sister Paulino will live in my memory for as long as I am able to appreciate the painting of a color wheel she produced while at PCC, which Sister Mary Anne Bradish sent to me. She got an A on it (written on the back of the painting), and I marvel at how she accomplished mixing the hues so exactly. It is hanging on a wall in my condo and I see it every day. It inspires me to keep my brushes wet with paint. I am grateful to have had Sister Mary Paulino Crabb enrich my life. Sent with love and admiration.

### **Vivian Wilson, BVM**

While I was still at Wright Hall, Sister Mary Ann Zollmann and company came to prepare us for the great big move to Mount Carmel. At that time, Mary Ann asked if I would take over the art department as Paulino wanted to retire. I told her that I would. What Wright Hall didn't have was cupboard space. Dubuque's art room was really different. It had lots of cubbies. Frankly, I was impressed as art supplies are expensive. Even the watercolor paper was costly. Then to mat and frame an art piece could cost from \$30 to close to \$100 depending on the price of oil. That is why it was important to have your supplies in a controlled space. That is why I loved Mount Carmel's art room. After a long talk with Paulino, I began to clean out her two units. Then I could turn my attention to all the cubbies that were filled with supplies for each BVM artist. Paulino explained to me that most just weren't coming to classes anymore as they didn't have the energy. They had to finally admit they couldn't paint anymore. Like Paulino, they all wanted me to clean out their cubbies. Paulino had two units. She kept telling me to get rid of everything, and I mean everything. Needless to say, my students were thrilled to get the items. While cleaning out Paulino's cubbies, I found some of her art work that hadn't been framed so I took these pieces to Sisters Judith Dewell and Eliza Kenny who worked in the curator's office. They agreed with me and framed more of her work. Paulino was a dear friend. Her confidence in me was amazing. My admiration of her artistic talent is endless. She was a close friend. I think of her often.

### **Marilyn Geerdes, cousin**

I have a memory of being proud of my cousin Annabelle (Sister Mary Paulino). It was during a time of sit-ins and general student unrest when my Aunt Pauline (Annabelle's mother) and I visited her for lunch at the school where she was principal. The day before our visit, the students at the school had held a sit-in, refusing to cooperate with adult directions. That night, Annabelle called every student's parent on the phone; and the next day all of the students, each and every one, arrived minding their manners and ready to work. I will be with you in prayer at Sister Mary Paulino's funeral. She was loved.

### **Theresa McNerney, BVM**

Paulino is one of the most forgiving women I have ever known. When she left the classroom, she took aptitude tests to find out what she would like to do with the rest of her life and they determined that art fulfilled her creative spirit, so she took classes at Pasadena City College and then taught art in the upper grades in several schools in the Los Angeles area. When she had a stroke that limited her ability to communicate, she used what she could. Her beautiful smile always told you she knew you. For my golden jubilee, she painted me a large scene of the retreat walk at a Southern California retreat center. The beautiful picture still hangs in our living room in Brookfield, Ill.

**Kim Donovan, resident assistant, Caritas Center**

It was a joy working with Sister Paulino and I will miss her very much. The highlight of my day was seeing her smile, but I am glad she is in a better place now.

**Catherine Jean Hayen, BVM**

One very grateful memory I have of Paulino is her sensitivity to the needs of others. When Sister Laurian McDonald could no longer assist me in the low vision room, Paulino offered her assistance. Paulino filed cassette tapes, CDs, and other equipment as long as she was able. She did this with her big smile.

**Carolyn Farrell, BVM**

Paulino taught art at the Roberta Kuhn Center. She was there when I arrived as the director in 2005. The center was in the barn at that time. She was a great teacher and the adult students enjoyed and appreciated her. We also were the ones who organized the move out of the barn to the lower level of the Motherhouse to form a strong RKC presence on campus. She retired shortly after our move to the Motherhouse.

**Mary Anne Bradish, BVM**

She was there. Like Elizabeth, welcoming Mary. When visitors came for overnight, their cars were wiped down from the dew the next morning, and windshields were ready for travel. When I came from work over the mountain pass to spend the night, the first question was, "Did you have dinner? And, would you like a drink?" When my brother who was handicapped fell, she went with me, took the clothing and the glasses to be cleaned or repaired. I stayed with him overnight, she returned the next day with items. She was there. She offered her seat on the plane so a mother and her child could sit together. She sat in the back near the restroom! She was there. She planted and tended a beautiful garden for all to enjoy.

When closing St. Phillip's Convent in Pasadena, she cleaned and shared items that many would enjoy after the sisters left. She was there. She enjoyed riding a jeep in Sedona, telling the story of the rocks: a geologist and scientist. She shared her astronomy information with eighth graders in two parish schools in Phoenix via a star party, enlightening both parents and students of the gift of the constellations, which they watched from their sleeping bags. She was there. She made lasting friends: BVMs, artists, young adults, students, and many others. She is a community woman, a giver of her talents and care.

When she came to Mount Carmel to live, she organized the art department, and then moved it from the Barn to the Motherhouse: a huge task, and done with much efficiency and organization. She was there. She loved music and dance. She learned ballet and tap dancing as a youth, and played the piano. A true artist of the gifts of art and music! We shared some trips together. Associate Hilaire Daly gave her place to her when her spouse, Skip, was ill. We traveled with the St. Philip of Bakersfield group to Turkey and Greece. An amazing trip, following the area of St. Paul. Betty Voss and Jackie, her longtime friend, also were in our group. Paulino painted all her 40 postcards before the trip: Hagia Sophia in Turkey, and wrote her cards from the Greek Islands. Her creativity was also known one morning as we left. We put our suitcases outside the door to be picked up by 2 a.m. That morning she realized that she had not saved a blouse, so she used her pajama top and decorated it with a scarf. Then there was the fabulous trip to Hawaii. Four of us—Loretta Hubl, Virginia McCaffrey, Mary Paulino, and myself—traveled to Kauai in 2003, enjoying each other, the ocean, the gorgeous area, daily trips, especially the helicopter, and our evening \$9.99 dinner with music and song, right in our neighborhood! It was a trip of a lifetime and one Paulino desired as her parents celebrated their special anniversary there. She had requested to hear Larry Rivera, his songs and guitar playing. We had a night in our comfortable chairs while he serenaded for a couple of hours! She treated us to a luau as well. She was so happy and we were, too, for this special trip!

Thank you, Mary Paulino for the life you are and shared with so many. You are a true work of art and heart! We will be with you in our hearts forever and we will see you again! With much love and gratitude.

**Sister Diane Forster, BVM**

While we hear much about Paulino's generosity, there was a note that she left for us in her Five Wishes that also speaks of her generosity. She said, "If possible, I'd prefer a less expensive casket, especially, if available, a used one."