



Sharing of Memories of Carol Frances Jegen, BVM
Caritas Studio, July 15, 2020

Evelyn Jegen, RC, sister

I want to thank all of you wonderful BVMs. I am speaking for my sister Carol, my sister-in-law Jen, our eleven wonderful nieces and nephews, our numerous grandnieces and grandnephews and great-grands. So on behalf of our family, I want to thank you for this wonderful celebration of Carol Frances' wonderful life. I want to thank you for the hospitality many of us have had visiting Carol Frances, or, as we know her, Julie or Aunt Julie. I remember going to Mundelein and then Wright Hall and more recently Mount Carmel. On my first visit to Mount Carmel after she entered (I was probably eight or nine), I remember my mother and Julie yelling at me, "Stop running down the bluff!" I was running down to the Mississippi River. In more recent years, it was wonderful to be able to come to Mount Carmel. We usually came on her birthday to visit and meet so many of you wonderful sisters.

My favorite memories, however, are vacations. Our sister Marilyn, who was Sister Mary Evelyn, ND, Julie, and I would drive to visit our sister Carol Belke in the East. We had some wonderful vacations visiting our family. From 2005 to 2013, we vacationed at the BVM house in Salem, Wis. It was wonderful to have that place for the three of us. In midweek, we had a family reunion that grew and grew with people flying in from all over. By the last year, 2013, we had four generations coming to that reunion. We filled the Salem house. It was a wonderful, very much looked forward to, annual event. I remember that some of us swam in the lake behind the house amid all the sea weed. One of the great events was a very competitive croquet game. Of course, there was lots of delicious food. Those are some of my happiest memories, both visiting Julie at Mount Carmel and our wonderful days at Salem house. Needless to say, I miss her, especially our weekly telephone calls on Sunday. The week before she died, she was still quite alert. It was a grace to be with her that week, at least by phone. Again, I want to thank everyone involved. I am more happy than sad. I can imagine her dancing with the Trinity in heaven. I much rather have her there than bedridden. I'll miss her, but I am so grateful to know that she is with the God she loved and served so well.

Paulette Skiba, BVM

When I began the formal process of entering the BVM congregation, a handful of Mundelein BVMs gathered for a prayer service. That evening Carol said this:

There are three things at the heart of being a religious:

To love Jesus

To be a person of prayer, and

To be on the cutting edge of where the church should be.

I never needed to ask for clarification. She was a living example of these three essentials.

To love Jesus . . . Carol told me that when she entered the BVMs she dreamed of teaching second graders so she would prepare children to receive the Eucharist. God perhaps surprised her in how this youthful aspiration unfolded . . . but the dream was richly fulfilled in the ways her love for Jesus inspired and touched so many.

To be a person of prayer . . . The most precious encounters I had with Carol during these last years is when I happened to visit her room when she was singing her evening prayers with her ukulele. At this point in our

friendship, our long conversations about theology, justice, church and community had all been set aside . . . but prayer remained. We cannot begin to imagine how well prayed for we are.

To be on the cutting edge of where the Church should be . . . Carol's prophetic commitment to peace and justice helped the church become a more faithful witness to the Gospel. In this, she followed in the spirit of the Francis of Assisi, the patron she shared with Mary Frances Clarke.

Mary McCauley, BVM

What a privilege it is to share a few memories of my friendship with Carol Frances Jegen, BVM. What a challenge it is to capture the beauty, the essence, the giftedness of her remarkable life in two minutes. I'll do my best!

Picture this: It was a beautiful fall day in September 1952 in Milwaukee, Wis., when as a frightened 14-year-old, I was warmly welcomed into Carol Frances' freshman homeroom. That day marked the beginning of a significant relationship and a deep friendship. Actually that day marked me for the rest of my life! Carol not only influenced my life but she influenced the lives of innumerable other people through her lifetime commitment to the teaching of an authentic, pastoral, well-balanced theology. If Carol had one goal, one hope, I believe it was for people to have a better understanding and relationship with their God. Without a doubt Carol Frances Jegen will forever be acknowledged as one of our church's finest Post Vatican II theologians.

Besides instructing people in theology, she also did all that she could to help people to pray, to help them to know that prayer is nothing more than a heart-to-heart conversation with God who loves them. It was clear to all who knew her well that she had an intimate relationship with her God and wanted others to have the same. She spoke to God as one friend speaks to another.

Carol also helped all BVMs to grow in our understanding and appreciation of our BVM charism and mission. She loved and emulated Mary Frances Clarke! In addition, I believe, that Carol will be remembered for her sincerity, her innate kindness, her acceptance of all people, and her strong commitment to issues of peace and justice.

What else can I say except thank you, Carol! Yes, thank you for your life, for your presence, your leadership within our BVM Community, your years in the ministry of education, and your leadership within our church. And last, but not least, thank you for welcoming a frightened 14-year-old into your freshman homeroom!

Judy Callahan, BVM

When I returned from Ecuador in 1987 after five years in Quito, I wanted to rest a bit, maybe audit a few current theology classes at Mundelein College for a year. Carol Frances quickly and effectively urged me to enter a two-year MA Program in religious studies with an emphasis in Hispanic ministry. She mentored me in the development of a large bi-lingual religious education program in Joliet, Ill., which launched me into 25+ years of Hispanic ministry in Illinois and Iowa.

Her guidance in the Hispanic Institute and the Capacitación Pastoral Programs in the Chicago and Joliet dioceses enabled tens of thousands of Hispanic youth and adults, many with little more than a basic, third-grade education, to receive solid current theology from Loyola and Mundelein professors, to become pastoral leaders in their parishes. Her legacy lives on in Hispanic regions throughout the U.S. Muchas gracias, Carol. Que descanse en paz!

Birdie Rosso McElroy, former student and former BVM

It was in St. Louis, Mo., at Xavier grade school that I first met Sister Mary Carol Frances. We were converts to Catholicism. Our family, especially our mother, had been searching for a community to call home. In 1950, when I was 10 years old, we found that community at St. Louis University Xavier church and with the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. So as an impressionable fifth grader, I met for the first time a Catholic nun. She was kind, compassionate, very smart, and gave her all to the children she taught. She really saw you, saw inside your spirit. She was my inspiration for later following the call and entering the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

after graduating Xavier High School in 1958. Then, as a student at Mundelein College we met again; this time she was teaching theology. There were many stories that I could share from our first meeting and later from being her student in Mundelein. But it is her spirit that I remember most, her kind and direct manner, and most of all her devotion to the Lord that was evident in everything she said and did. I am forever grateful for her and I always feel that when a loved one dies who lived a life of love, we pray to them not for them. She has her reward in an eternal embrace.

Rich Jegen, nephew

I realized when we are talking about the person we called Aunt Julie, her selfless spirit, her acts of compassion and kindness, we could literally be here all day. So many examples. I'm from Chicago, the eldest son of Dick Jegen, Sister Carol Frances' only brother. Recently in Chicago, our lakefront opened up again. I found myself with some friends riding along the lakefront. We ended up at a café on Granville Ave. I told my friends about the building we used to call the "yellow house." When we were kids, the yellow house was the place where we would go to sometimes celebrate Mass and sometimes to visit Aunt Julie and her sisters. It was also the place where we first learned about Cesar Chavez and Martin Luther King. It was a beautiful yellow house right on the lake. There was a room in the back where windows looked out right at the lake. It was a place where we felt something was really happening. We didn't understand it as kids, but it was a place of joy and celebration where all people were invited to participate. Aunt Julie was right in the center of it. When I think back on those memories, I think of her who in every detail always displayed excellence. She had the most beautiful handwriting. She wrapped presents better than anybody. She sent birthday cards to everybody up to the very end. It was always a beautiful, handwritten card. I want to thank everybody for participating today and especially to thank the sisters at Mount Carmel for making such a beautiful home for her. She often talked about the walks that she would take late in the afternoon. When we visited Mount Carmel, it was always such a great environment. We could go right to the edge of the bluff to see the Mississippi River and then turn around to see the beautiful building with a beautiful chapel. It was always a nice place to be and we knew she was in good hands.

Bob Belke, nephew

My mom Carol is Sister Carol Frances' sister. Peacefulness, humility, doing what was right, actions over words were reoccurring themes in my aunt's life. We enjoyed visiting her whether at Mundelein College with Lake Michigan storm waves crashing over the breakwater, Wright Hall with the fantastic rooftop views, or more recently at Mount Carmel overlooking the mighty Mississippi. My Aunt Julie exuded an aura of calm and peacefulness. We always felt that when we visited with her. We would often visit her during hectic, stressful times and always departed with a renewed outlook on life. One example of her humble nature stood out. We always wanted to know more about Cesar Chavez and fledgling Farm Worker Movement. She always minimized her role and diverted the topic to something else. We later found out that she was detained for two weeks and kept in contact with the group and its leader for many years after. I think she was the first relative who was actually incarcerated. As a kid growing up, that was pretty cool. Through her dedication to the BVM sisters and religious life, social injustice reform, education, and mentoring of others, Sister Carol Frances, my Aunt Julie, left the world a better place. I will miss her.

Rosemary Belke, wife of Bob Belke

On behalf of Carol Jegen Belke and our family, we would like to thank the staff of Marian Hall including the receptionist, the groundkeepers, the housekeepers, the dining staff, and the caregivers for all their efforts and many years of outstanding service and compassionate care of our dear aunt. We would also like to thank the BVM sisters, in particular Sister Mary McCauley, for their warm hospitality. Whether it was a delicious meal in the dining room, a comfortable bed in the guest wing, a shared story or just a smile, we felt extremely welcomed at Mount Carmel and we appreciate and are grateful for you sharing your home with us.

Julie Taylor, executive director, National Farm Worker Ministry

Her life blessed the world and the Farm Worker Movement specifically and our lives are enriched by her example.

Betty J. Skonieczny, former student, Mundelein College, Class of 1988

My dear Sister Carol Frances, as Scripture has it, "Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles and I will sing your name." Again, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, all you people." And "Praise the Lord all you Gentiles and sing his glory, all you peoples." Once more Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse will appear, he who will rise up to rule the Gentiles: in him the Gentiles will find hope. So may God, the source of hope, fill you with all joy and peace in believing so that through the power of the Holy Spirit you may have hope and peace in abundance." Enjoy the peace and joy of eternity. May God continue to bless all the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary! My condolences to the BVM Sisters. With joy I rejoice in the resurrection of Sister Carol Frances!

I came to Mundelein College in 1975, seeking an education in religious studies to become a chaplain. Sister became my mentor. Oh, what a mentor she was!!! During my initial interview with Sister Carol Frances, she said, "We will have to devise a course curriculum for a lay woman who wants to become a chaplain. You are one of the first women to come forth seeking this degree." Semester by semester she recommended courses. It took me 12 years to graduate from Mundelein College, magna cum laude. By 1983, I had taken the required coursework to become a board certified chaplain of the National Association of Catholic Chaplains, and remain active until today

Sister Carol Frances is a teacher beyond acclaim! She was born to teach. My favorite memories of Sister Carol Frances are her arriving for class in Piper Hall or Mundelein Tower, dressed in a heavy winter coat, scarf, gloves, and of course one of her hats. She carried her briefcase of books and papers. I don't ever think I recall Sister Carol Frances with rosy, red cheeks from the cold weather. After removing her outer hat, coat, scarf, and gloves, there was always at least one sweater underneath her coat. Her face was pale and she wore thick prescription eyeglasses. It seemed as if one could touch her lightly and she might fall over. I often wondered how many hours she spent daily reading and writing. Is there a count on how many books and papers she read and corrected over the years? Once Sister Carol Frances started teaching, she became alive. She became Goliath. She did not lecture, she joyously professed Biblical Studies: I took Old Testament, New Testament and Psalms, as well as a several other classes with her. She didn't need to refer to her notes. Whatever she studied was embalmed inside her mind.

Sister Carol Frances transformed my life by teaching the course, "Jesus the Peacemaker." I still cherish her book, *Jesus the Peacemaker*. When she taught she'd get so excited she would spit. If you didn't learn from Sister Carol Frances, you couldn't learn from anyone. One of my favorite Sister Carol Frances stories is my very first meeting with her and her suggestion that I begin my studies with the course "History of Christianity." I responded to her suggestion saying, "Sister, why would I take that course? How will the 'History of Christianity' help me become a chaplain?" She swallowed and responded, "Honey, it's because you're ignorant that you don't understand why you need to take 'History of Christianity.'" I responded, "Yes, Sister, I'll take 'History of Christianity.'"

I was a young mother of three children, newly diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, desiring to become a chaplain. Sister Carol Frances arranged for me to receive scholarship funds each semester. At graduation, Sister Carol Frances recommended me to the Kappa Gamma Phi Sorority. After finishing my undergraduate degree at Mundelein, I began a master's program at Loyola University Institute of Pastoral Studies in 1995 and graduated with highest honors in 2000. Sister Carol Frances and Sister Mary Donahey led my graduate oral exams in pastoral studies. Sister Carol Frances gave me such a solid foundation in religious studies, that today, almost 40 years later, I remain a Board Certified Chaplain of the National Association of Catholic Chaplains (NACC).

My second fondest memory is the homily she shared at the graduation of the class of 1988. She spoke of the body and blood of Christ. During most her homily, tears streamed down my face as I heard her proclaim the Word of God. What I remember most was "Rejoice you married women who have shared your blood with your children! You are the Body of Christ!"

I am sad that I cannot personally come to honor and celebrate her life and her countless contributions to understand and proclaim the teachings of our Catholic faith. My deepest condolences to the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Shalom, my dear sister. Pax Christi! May God continue to hold you in the palm of her hand!

Nick Patricca, friend and Mundelein colleague

I met Carol in the spring of 1973 when she invited me to join the recently formed (1968) graduate program in religious studies at Mundelein College. Carol and this program opened up my mind and heart to re-think the foundations of Catholic theology to explicitly include the history and thinking of women as well as of the Hispanic and black Catholic traditions which were already an emerging part of my thinking. Carol's steadfast commitment to social justice and the poor forced me to always relate even my most theoretical and scholarly thoughts to their practical applications for justice. Carol and Mundelein pioneered so many great new traditions that sometimes I could hardly catch my breath. After one full year of doing all that Carol asked of me, I went to her and said: "Carol, I've taught everything I know and have done everything I know how to do to make our programs work and meet the needs of our students. I have nothing left to give. I'm finished." She looked at me and said: "We're just getting started. We haven't yet begun to do . . ." She proceeded to give me a list of things she wanted to do next. So, I took a deep breath and said, "OK, what do you want me to do?"

Carol, I am grateful to you now and always for your total dedication to social justice and the poor, even when you tired me out and made me work 24/7. I always understood that you love the poor, hate injustice, and wanted to help to make things right. Thank you, Carol, for keeping me focused on what really matters. And guess what? We still need your help. Things are still not right here on earth. So, get the heavens aligned, seed the clouds, and make it rain justice upon us. We've got work to do. Gratefully, your friend.

Janet Sisler, vice president, Mission Integration, Loyola University-Chicago

Carol Frances inspired and influenced thousands of us with her passion for sharing a life characterized by a depth of faith, an unswerving love for Christ and his body the church, a dedication to theological inquiry, and a passion for social justice flowing from a hermeneutic and liturgy grounded in grace. As one of the first Catholic women theologians in the United States, Carol Frances tirelessly worked on international, national, and neighborhood boards, councils, advisory groups, and task forces. Firmly situated as a theologian of Vatican II, her theological work embraced the world at its fringes: integrating Black, Hispanic, Jewish, Protestant, Islamic theologians, as well as philosophers of no faith, into her work and into our regular course of studies at Mundelein College. She was a woman without boundaries and witnessed to the depth and complexity of the mystery of God and the personhood of Jesus who beckoned us into a world without boundaries.

In a quite insightful and beautiful memoir of Carol Frances written by Prudence Moylan, Prue describes Carol Frances as being a prophetic witness whose deep trust in God's faithfulness called her to a life focused on action for justice. It was not uncommon for Carol Frances to connect the dots between Scripture, sacrament, Catholic teaching and action on behalf of justice. For Carol, the paradigm of catechetical work engaged the faithful in word, worship, community building, and justice. For her, there were no shortcuts and the work of the catechist was one of professional excellence.

Carol Frances was honored by a plethora of ecclesial and inter-faith organizations during her very fruitful professional life. Today, she is embraced in our dedication to engaging in faith development and by her lifelong friend, Jesus. We thank God and Jesus for her love, brilliance and goodness.

Dominga M. Zapata, Society of Helpers

I am Sister Dominga Zapata, a member of the Society of Helpers community. I graduated from Mundelein College with a BA and a Ma. The last thing I wanted to do was to go to college, thinking I had no need of it to be among the poor. Once I met Sister Carol Frances, my entire personal and ministerial life changed. One of your sisters gave her summer vacation to teach me English so that I could start college. I was given a full four-year college

scholarship at Mundelein. This was not the only way I felt like an adopted BVM. It was more the care and love I received not only from Sister Carol Frances, but many others who were there always to affirm me in my vocation as a Helper and to join them in serving those in the margins.

Carol Frances' vision dared to allow me to teach with her so that mutually we could learn from each other how to serve the increased population of Hispanics in the Archdiocese of Chicago. Together we established the Instituto Pastoral Hispano that not only served Chicago but other regions as well. Graduates from the master's degree and certificate programs brought about the first Hispanics leaders to be seated among college students in a Catholic institution. Theological resources came from Spain and Latin America to make Mundelein the first college offering such quality pastoral education. Mundelein College under the influence of Sister Carol brought to light the struggle of the farm workers with Cesar Chavez on campus. This Institute continued at Loyola University for several years. Today one of its directors, Nelly Lorenzo, is presently the director of the Instituto de Liderazgo Pastoral at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake, at Mundelein, Ill. The legacy of Sister Carol Frances continues to bear fruit in so many hearts of Hispanics in many parts of the United States. My perseverance and quality of life as a religious among the Hispanic, African American, and Native American communities has been always rooted in the influence and witness of Sister Carol Frances. My only sorrow is that I never visited her at Dubuque to continue to share with her my deep gratitude for who she was in my life and the life of so many other Hispanics. Today I plead to her to continue to be who she was in our lives.

Mary Emma Jochum, OSB

I am sister of St. Benedict Monastery, Ferdinand, Ind. I was very stunned to know of her death. It is like a death of one of my own sister religious. I attended six-week summer school at Mundelein in the late 70s and graduated with a master's degree in religious studies, summer of 1981. I had the highest esteem for her because she directed me in a direction that was long lasting in the field of parish administration as director of religious education. It was most rewarding! I love pondering about saints like her. I will remember her forever. May she rest in God's peace, a God she placed in many hearts.

Avis Clendenen, colleague

What a privilege it was for me to serve as the final director of the graduate program in religious studies at Mundelein College. What a gift to share that part of the Mundelein journey with women at the water's edge. Sister Carol Frances Jegen became an integral part of my life journey more than 30 years ago. Her homecoming in God gives me this opportunity to thank the BVM community for sharing her with me and for all the ways sharing friendship with your community has enriched my life.

The last time I was in her presence, she did not know who I was but was her gracious self towards me. Paulette had done her best to prepare Carol Frances for my visit. Carol was alert and present. At one point when we both were quiet she said to me, "Do you know that I am 93 now?" I replied yes. She continued, "When you are this old you think a lot about eternity. Do you know what I think about when I think about eternity?" I responded, "What do you think about?" Looking directly at me, cleared-eyed and convicted she said, "We need eternity because it will take that much time for us to meet all the people we knew and we will know who they all are." Then she gazed at me for a time. She resides now in this mystery and mulling about meeting all the people she once knew who abide where she is now, and in that eternity she knows who they all are. Our day will come to greet her again in the mystery.

Mary Anne Hoope, BVM

I was deeply saddened by the news of Sister Carol Frances Jegen's death, though I know her health has been failing in recent years. I met Carol as a student at Mundelein College. She touched me greatly with her deep faith and prayerfulness. When I was Prefect of the Sodality, I had the joy of working closely with Carol and again as a member of the religious studies faculty. She also played a major role in my discernment of vocation and my becoming a BVM. I was deeply touched by Carol's theology classes and decided as a senior in college that I wanted to continue studying theology. During my last visit with Carol last summer she spoke of the gift of faith

and how awful it would be to live without a belief in an afterlife. Carol is now living the gift of that afterlife as she continues to live in the grateful hearts of many, especially mine.

Joan Marie Ward Hoffmann, friend and former student

Dear Sister M Carol Frances, you could “walk with kings and paupers.” You had friends in high places and in low places. You advocated for the less fortunate. For 64 years, you have been my friend, role model, and mentor. In addition, you have been my all-time favorite teacher. Being a student in your classes at Holy Angels Academy in Milwaukee, I realized you taught so much more than academics. As more is “caught than taught,” you exuded kindness, caring, understanding, patience, and love. You understood my need to defray tuition costs. Through you, I attained jobs such as cleaning classrooms, working the switchboard, assisting in the kitchen and cafeteria. How I looked forward to your religion, English, and guidance classes during my freshman year! However, after my freshman year, your mission sent you to Mundelein College in Chicago. I missed you, though we kept in contact through mail. At Mundelein, I became a student in your Mariology course—truly my all-time favorite course with my all-time favorite teacher! I also treasured a course taught by your dear sister Sister Evelyn, a Cenacle sister. You were selfless, bringing love and joy to others. One of my coworkers in the kitchen at Holy Angels Academy remarked that you always took the day-old baked goods, leaving the fresh items for others!! I will miss sending you greetings and notes. (Sister Catherine Jean Hayen has been so helpful in personally delivering them.) I miss you! I love you! May you be rewarded in heaven for all eternity. I believe you will intercede for those of us left on earth. This is not a goodbye, dearest Sister, but until we meet again.

Mary Anne Bradish, BVM

As I think of Carol Frances with joy, I imagine a teacher who taught and lived what she shared with her students. She and Cesar Chavez were on the same page for dignity and justice for the farm workers. I had the privilege of sitting with her in the early Sunday morning hours before she died. After a long time of quiet, I told her my thanks and sang "O Maria, Madre Mia." I felt the farm workers were sharing this moment of gratitude. During these past years at Mount Carmel, I knew the simplicity and love in her eyes as she thanked others who helped her in the dining room or the hallways. She was a woman of prayer and action: a gift to us all.

Kathleen Mullin, BVM

Carol Frances taught hundreds of us Mundelein scholastics. Her theology classes were memorable. What I took from sessions on the Mystical Body of Christ extended into the value and living of community. Not just BVM community life but broader concepts of community.

One practical application of that in her life was shown in her relationship with Cesar Chavez and her commitment to the United Farm Workers. Some of us remember boycotting grapes and lettuce for years, in solidarity with that community, largely because of the urgings of Carol Frances. In the summer of 1975, Carol Frances organized and got funding for BVMs and Associates to give service at the UFW headquarters in La Paz, Calif. Barbara Kutchera, then associate Sheryl Hughes and I spent weeks living simply in their community, doing clerical tasks, joining hundreds in a Huntington Beach protest march with farm workers, visiting retired Filipino male farm workers in their UFW housing complex as they shared experiences of U.S. federal government oppression, and praying with Cesar and the community on weekends.

Carol Frances initiated and became a leader at Mundelein and far beyond as she launched the Hispanic Institute, the Summer Institute in Religious Studies, the Interfaith Jewish-Christian Relations and many other experiences building community, providing service, and peace building.

In recent years I have used Carol Frances' *Transformed by the Trinity* [published by Loyola Press in 2008] in Christian Initiation sessions [RCIA]. Her materials on the tripersonal communitarian aspects of the Trinity and the Befriending Spirit are gems. Thank you, Carol Frances. You and your gifts remain with us.

Eileen Healy, BVM

For many of the years during which Carol Frances attended Mass in the Motherhouse Chapel, I was one of the communion ministers. When I would say the words, "Body of Christ," Carol's face lit up. There is no other way to describe it. She radiated joy and faith. She truly was a reminder to me to continue to pray for that kind of faith and love! I am deeply grateful.

Monica Seelman, BVM

In September, 1954, I entered Holy Angels Academy, Milwaukee, as a 13-year-old freshman. My first BVM teacher was Carol Frances. I had her for religion, English and history – most of my day. Her unique gift to us that year was how she taught us, young teenage girls, how to pray. She didn't talk or read articles about prayer to us. Instead, she invited us into her own sacred prayer life by starting each religion class with a short guided meditation. When I later became a Scholastic and attended Carol's theology classes, she shared her own inner life by again beginning each class with a short spontaneous reflection. In the early 1980s, Carol, a member of Mundelein's Religious Studies faculty, once more became my theology teacher. I was privileged to participate in her brief, but profound, period of prayer before each class. Thank you, Carol, for your generous invitation to all your students to witness your deep faith and enter with you into that sacred time and space.

Carol Frances had a special devotion to Mary; this was so evident on the evening of March 24, 1984, at Presbyterian St. Luke's Hospital in Chicago. Maureen Cleary had been ill with a rare systemic disease and then suffered a massive stroke three weeks earlier. She was dying and about seven of us, including Carol Frances, had gathered around her bed in the ICU. We tried to say some of the common English prayers: Hail, Holy Queen, the Memorare, even the Hail Mary, but the words had changed and we just couldn't get through them. Even the words to the old hymns we all knew had different lyrics and we hadn't memorized the words to the new ones. Then someone said, "Let's sing the Ave Maria." And we did, all joining in unison. We did so well, Carol Frances suggested, "How about the Salve Regina?" And we again sang the chant perfectly together, each person remembering the many times we had sung these words at Mass, in the Office, at the end of recreation. We had just finished singing "et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exilium ostende," (show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus) when the machine's reading of Maureen's heart beat flattened into a straight line. The ICU nurse immediately came up to us and said, "You can stop now. She just died." Carol Frances spoke up and said, "Oh, no. We have to finish this hymn." And so we all sang through our tears, "O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria," Carol Frances ensuring that we filled the room and sent Maureen to God with Mary's song.

Thank you, dear Carol, for your faithful life of service. Thank you for helping so many witness your own spirit and encounter Jesus and His Mother through your guided prayer.

Mary A. Healey, BVM

The sharpest memory I have is from an afternoon when I was a BVM Newsletter reporter at Los Gatos during our second Senate. The chair announced that Carol Frances and Mary Ellen Caldwell were in jail—and told us all not to tell anyone. The vision of those two gentle theology professors being arrested was flabbergasting. We accepted the news in silence. Most of us probably could have named a dozen firebrand BVMs as more likely candidates.

When Mundelein merged with Loyola, Carol Frances came to live at Wright Hall, where I was treasurer. We both were senators. At that time, the Senate always was at the end of July, an extremely busy time for my job because new residents were moving in, people who had stayed for the summer were leaving, other odd things happened, and I had my usual EOM report to send. It was a relief to me when Carol asked if I would like her to buy our plane tickets and register us as roommates at the hotel. Two fewer things to think about! Later Carol told me she had reserved our tickets for the day before we needed to be there, because tickets were so much cheaper on Thursday than Friday and that difference more than paid for the extra day at the hotel. I was aghast. A whole day lost from the busiest week of the year! But what could I do? We took the plane to Denver, checked into the hotel and Carol immediately went to bed with altitude sickness. I left our room and decided to take a walk. In the parking lot I met Joan Stritesky and Therese Frelo, who had deliberately come early because Joan who used to be

in Boulder wanted to show the sights to Therese. They invited me along; we had a good time. By the time I returned, Carol was up though still a bit woozy. I brought her some supper and she was fine the next day.

Carol Spiegel, BVM

Carol Frances embodied the love and peace that she proclaimed, casting an unending net of goodness. Her teaching alone transformed our theology and spirituality. A person of such deep conviction, she was willing to be and was jailed for her nonviolent stance. A happy vision: Carol Frances and Mary Frances meeting in heaven.

Diane Fraser

I met Sister Carol Frances Jegen, BVM when we did a retreat for Mundelein College and Loyola University alumnae in the early 2000s. I was working for Charis Ministries across the street from Wright Hall, and we and Father Michael Sparough, SJ led a group through several days of reflection and prayer.

What struck me first was the excitement of the alumnae of Mundelein to be in Carol Frances' presence. While my 30ish year-old self was annoyed at being called "Sweetie" and "Honey" by this diminutive lady, I quickly realized what an honor it was to sit and listen, to learn and to savor the Lord's presence through her eyes, words, and actions. I watched as middle-aged women, former students of hers, hung on every word that Carol Frances spoke in a presentation. I watched as the same women lined up to be prayed with and for by her. I saw tears and joy and consolation and peace . . . and felt it myself after just a few hours being around her and those who clearly loved her.

Some time passed after that retreat, and in that time I became pregnant and lost the baby (our second miscarriage in two years). On my first day back at work in the "Sky" building, I met Sister Carol Frances standing at the elevators. She was aware of my loss and, in an instant, was friend, mother, co-griever and comforter. I don't remember what she said, but she told me in her words and tears and hopeful smile what I needed in that moment. She was then, as I'd seen her be for others, a vehicle of grace and the love of both Mother Mary and her Son.

We began a "spiritual companion" or director or advisor relationship; I don't remember what we called it! But we met regularly to talk and pray, discern and seek wisdom. She routinely spoke words of hope, of simple faith, of even theology once in a while, though at the time I really had no clue what a giant she was, and how her early work actually informed my own post-Vatican II catechesis in Michigan, my own draw to the theology that speaks to both Catholics and non-Catholics, and to social justice and to peace. I had no idea that much of what I was drawn to in my own tradition, she had written about, taught, and lived for decades.

We stayed in touch after I moved away from Chicago in 2003. Just before we left, just after my last meeting with Carol Frances, I became pregnant again, and the following year my husband and I welcomed twin girls. Two more followed in three years, and Carol Frances celebrated every one of them when I told her. We only corresponded at holidays after her move to Iowa, but her words, her actions, and her kindness have never left me. She pledged her prayers for me after that early loss, and for my daughters after their births. I am grateful to know they will continue, and our friendship will continue, now that she has gone to her reward. Thank you for your love of her and your care for her. I am sorry for your community's loss. Christ's eternal Peace.

Sharon Lesikar, former BVM

Sister Carol Frances was a hero of mine when I took theology classes from her in the 1960s. I still remember key points she made in her lessons that have become a deep part of my faith journey. She was a beautiful soul who will be deeply missed.

Kathleen Jackson, former BVM

God bless this dear, wonderful sister who touched so many, many lives.

Maggie Cullen

I met Sister in 1962 It was my freshman year at Mundelein and she was head of Sodality. She was a loving, caring person. Her spirit of kindness affected us all. May she look down from heaven and help us through these trying times. She was there for us in the 1960s to give us support and I know she will not let us down.

Mary Eileen Donovan Sorenson, former BVM Sister Laurence Mary, Set of 1957

I had Carol Frances as my freshman homeroom teacher and religion teacher at Holy Angels in Milwaukee. Already then she was filled with the messages and how-to of peace and social justice. She made a lasting impression on me in both my spiritual and intellectual life only to be recharged at the Scholasticate. A great woman. I am, in part, who I am today because of her. RIP

Elena Duarte, Mundelein Class of 1969

I am heartbroken by her passing. She took me under her wings when I was in her theology class and helped me tremendously. I was questioning religion and being Catholic or Christian, the significance of the Mass ritual, etc. She was amazing. We started meeting to discuss religion, just the two of us, and discussed the various philosophers. I was inspired by her and never forgot her. She was compassionate, engaging, and extremely bright. I visited her when I was there. May God welcome her with opened hands and give her peace.

Dorothy (Dodie) Dwight, BVM

I remember Carol Frances as a quiet prayer force and an unassuming, persistent, passionate advocate for a peace through justice for which our world so longs and cries out; a wise woman of strong faith with deep love for the church and its liturgical prayer; and an educator to the core through whom God worked to touch the hearts and minds of generations of catechists and children, college students and farmworkers, leaders of prayer and persons who advocate for right relationships among peoples.

Carol's teaching in the Religious Studies Department at Mundelein College was holistic, solid, reflective, and engaging as she would deftly cut through the dense writings of Karl Rahner and the hot-off-the-press, newly-translated texts of major Latin American theologians, and get to "the heart of things," teasing students to make connections to their own experience, stretching them to perceive the integral connections between liturgy and life.

Carol expanded awareness of the wider world as she brought the Midwest Hispanic Institute to the Mundelein campus as well as summer fiestas with Cesar Chavez and the initial gatherings of fledgling organizations Pax Christi USA and Bread for the World for week-long meetings in mid-1970s. Leading theologians and religious educators from the United States and Europe graced the campus during the summer catechetical institutes in the 1960s and following years. Carol founded and nurtured the flourishing of the Mundelein Center for Religious Education, which provided parishes with access to the best print and audiovisual, catechetical materials available, and under her leadership, a Peace Studies program was developed. She did not stop!

For Carol's simplicity, for her total presence to life and to each person in front of her, and for her passion and compassion and her persistent encouragement always to stretch a little bit more, we give thanks this day.

Prudence Moylan, former BVM

I came to Mundelein College in 1961 as a BVM scholastic and graduated in 1963. I met Carol Frances when I took her theology course on the Trinity, where she changed and expanded my understanding of God. She introduced me and many others to the theology that is the foundation of the Second Vatican Council not only in her classes but also by bringing noted theologians to summer lecture series at Mundelein. In these years she also introduced the whole BVM Community to the theology of Vatican II so that members were well able to engage wisely in the

challenges Vatican II required of religious communities in asking them to re-engage their founding charism for the contemporary world. Carol Frances and I had different experiences in California but we both found a commitment to justice for farm workers shared with many other BVMs. After my graduate work, I returned to Mundelein as a faculty member and again benefitted from her insight and energy. She and her sister, Sister Evelyn Jegen, who has now greeted Carol Frances in eternal life, deepened my developing interest in Peace Studies. I worked with Carol Frances and other Mundelein faculty in creating a Peace Studies Minor as an interdisciplinary program that included women's studies. Carol Frances and Sister Evelyn created a Women and Peace Center at Mundelein in 1989 funded by the MacArthur foundation. The Center became a charter member of the new Peace Studies Association in the United States. When Mundelein affiliated with Loyola in 1991, I worked with Carol and Loyola faculty to advocate for the development of a Peace Studies minor that had an interdisciplinary focus and included women. In addition to her work in establishing the undergraduate and graduate programs in religious studies at Mundelein, she worked from the 1960s on to create new forms of catechesis for children and adults based on theological foundations in Vatican II documents. She also created a pioneering program to meet the needs of a growing Hispanic ministry in Chicago that had a national and international impact. Both in writing an essay about her and now writing this remembrance, I enjoy the gift of her wonderful and inspiring influence on my life. She was and is my wise older sister. I grieve her loss here among us but celebrate her life and rejoice that I remain united with her in the communion of saints until we meet again.

Reverend Mary L Milano

I was drawn to Mundelein College in 1970 with the encouragement of teachers who were graduates, in great part to study theology in a department built and guided by Carol Frances. Who she was, and who had gathered around her as BVM instructors and professors and their lay fellow partakers in the journey, changed me irrevocably and set me on a course that continues to this day, some almost 50 years later. The deepest insights of the relationship between the community of scholarship and the community of faith, the prophetic call of the Gospel to justice, and the abiding presence of God in all, with all—of these we drank deeply in an atmosphere of prayer, of challenge, and of love. Carol Frances was more than a professor of theology and a pioneer. She was a true formator of the heart, mind, and spirit, extending grace and bringing us so close to the touch of our graceful God. May we continue becoming in the path marked out.

Sonya Rendon, BVM Associate, Guayaquil, Ecuador

I cannot pass the opportunity to let the whole community know how very grateful I am to Carol Frances. She was one of the most important people at the time I was studying at Mundelein College. She believed in our dream of building a NEW WORLD in Ecuador. I will forever be grateful to her for all the support and care displayed to all students, but I felt that she loved and cared just a little bit more for us the Latin and foreign people who were pursuing dreams and ideals. Thank you, Carol Frances!!! It is time now to celebrate in heaven!