



Sharing of Memories of Jane (Janette) Haslwanter, BVM

Caritas Studio, Oct. 16. 2020

Mary Anne Hoopé, BVM

Jane was a kind and caring presence in my life. We were both members of the religious studies faculty at Mundelein College. When I received my PhD, Jane had a special dinner for me, for my BVM friends, and for Dave Hassell, SJ. Jane was an excellent cook and hostess.

Since I went to Africa, Jane and I have stayed in touch and she remembered me on every feast and holiday. When I returned to the States and visited her, I always left laden with gifts. I was deeply touched the last time I visited her at Mount Carmel. She had noted that I said Father Mike was watching his sugar level and she arranged sugar free candy for him. That candy lasted a long time.

I give thanks for the life of Jane and pray that she is now at peace, that her wants and desires are being fulfilled. I am sure she will help with any heavenly banquets.

Patricia Kerz, BVM

I have known Jane since high school, and we've been friends ever since. Jane called me one day during our younger years and asked if I would like to go to Austria with her. Jane's parents were born in Austria, and they always wanted her to see it. We visited Bregenz, her mother's birthplace, and Kauns, an Austrian mountain village in the Alps where her father was born. We both had a beautiful experience there.

Later in life Jane had breast cancer and, following that, many other physical problems. She told me after a while that she was going to Mount Carmel because she was tired of driving to doctor appointments. May Jane rest in peace now, free of all her physical ailments, and happy in God's loving arms.

Mary Nolan, BVM

On my first mission at St. Patrick School in Dubuque, Iowa, in 1963-1966, I was a young and inexperienced teacher and Jane was a 'seasoned' teacher. I taught first grade and she taught second grade. She shared her love for students, her teaching expertise and a lot of encouragement. Her favorite time of the school year was preparing 50-plus second graders for their First Communion. No class was better prepared!

Almost every Sunday, weather permitting, we would go for long walks around the neighborhood. St. Patrick was located in downtown Dubuque near the corner of Main and 14th Street. Jane enjoyed being outdoors and watching the seasons fly by. She knew where some of her students lived and would point out their homes as we walked by. Jane had many friends, former students whom she kept in touch with for many years. She treasured their pictures and good memories.

The years went by and I remember the trouble and pain she went through from a knee replacement that never seemed to work for her. Whenever I was at Mount Carmel I would see her in the dining room and she would beckon me over for a brief visit. I think she was always in a lot of pain and felt deep loneliness. I'm happy Jane was called home on the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. I'm sure it is the best reunion ever.

Nancy McCarthy, BVM

This memory is really from one of my college roommates Liz Leech, who worked with Jane in Mokena, Ill., for several years. Jane was director of religious education in a parish and Liz was one of her catechists. Liz always told me Jane was the nicest sister she ever met and she'd gone all through Catholic schools and worked in parishes after she married. Liz was especially impressed with the way Jane was able to relate to people—those she ministered with and those she served. My own most 'recent' memory of Jane is from whichever summer we had the 'gathering' at tables in the Motherhouse Chapel. Jane was at my table and participated in the sharing. We had some good conversation together. I had no idea that would be the last time I'd ever see her, since she'd already moved away when I came to Mount Carmel two years ago. I also appreciated Jane when she worked in the audio-visual lending library at Mundelein College. She is always in my prayers.

Jane Nienaber, OSF

Jane and I shared many memorable times beginning in 1984 when Jane was director of religious education at St. Marcelline, Schaumburg, Ill., and I was director of religious education at Hanover Park, Ill. This was the beginning of our friendship for these many years—years filled with Jane's intensity of mission in her ministry, her delicious cooking, holiday concerts, visits of her sister Marie and brother-in-law Joe who came to her home for each holiday, and Jane's love of her congregation.

I miss your sense of humor, Jane, your loyalty in friendship and your resilience in living! Enjoy the beauty of your new home in the presence of your cherished family and your beloved God!

Lois Prebil, OSF

My sympathy to all BVM sisters, especially to those who were Jane's friends. Jane Haslwanter was a friend I met through Jane Nienaber in the late 1980s. We visited with her and enjoyed a meal together several times each year. She was an excellent and welcoming host. After she moved to Dubuque, she was so proud to show us around, especially introducing us to other BVMs and pointing out the beautiful view of the Mississippi River, and showing the memorabilia and beautiful artwork around the buildings!

Carol Spiegel, BVM

While I was sorry to hear that Jane could not be at Mount Carmel, it was somehow reassuring to know she was in Guttenberg. That town holds good memories for my family because of our annual fall drives there to see the leaves. Jane had a real appreciation of beauty, and I am hoping that she got to experience the special fall scenes in that area.

Alice Caulfield, BVM

I spoke with Jane the week before her death. Usually she doesn't wear her hearing aids and so it is a frustrating event. This time we had a nice conversation including her asking about the sisters and the building. She heard everything and so I asked if she was wearing her hearing aids. She said, "Just a minute." I think she checked her ears and then said, "No." She was happy and peaceful—very peaceful as I have not seen before. We ended with her usual statement: "Remember, be sure I am buried at Mount Carmel." Her death was a surprise, but knowing she was so peaceful—a peace she has not always known—was a blessing.

Diane Rapozo, BVM

For the past three years I have been assisting Jane in downsizing her belongings for our new phase of living. During this time it gave me a chance to get to know Jane. I learned about her family and missions through her photos. In letting go of these photos, she was able to share her experiences—some difficult, some joyful.

When it was necessary for her to move to another facility, Alice Caulfield and I made many visits to Jane. We always brought the love of our community with us and expressed this to her with each visit. She would always share with us the large envelope she received in the mail from BVMs at Mount Carmel. Our last visit with Jane was to celebrate her birthday. Alice ordered a large birthday cake which Jane wanted to share with each resident and staff member. It was such a very joyful time for Jane.

Since the lockdown last March, communications continued with phone calls. In one of the readings Jane chose we heard that to believe in Jesus is to celebrate life. Not a piece of life, but all of it—the good, the bad, the happy, the sad. So, now Jane, we say to you let God look upon you with love and let your God love you.

Elfriede and Brigitte Nocker Family

Dear Jane, We are your Austrian relatives and we have had the opportunity to see each other only twice in life, but we have been constant and good pen pals. Every Christmas we told each other the stories of what had happened in the past year. I always fondly remember the time when I visited you in Chicago, USA. It was a great time for me with you, your sister Marie and her husband Joe. We enjoyed a few open air concerts and met some of our relatives there. I liked that very much. Furthermore, you have shown me so many exciting places. I was 14 years old when I came to the United States to improve my English. And yes, my English improved. After my visit, I much more enjoyed the English class, because my English professor was quite surprised.

You made it possible and organized a really nice family that I stayed with for four weeks. Thank you!

Unfortunately we couldn't come to visit after that. So we kept in touch through letters. We will keep you in our memories and miss you, Jane. Rest in peace.

“When through one
woman a little more
love and gladness,
a little more light
and truth come
into the world
then that woman's
life has had meaning.”

Cheryl DaPrato

How deeply saddened I am to learn about the passing of Sister Jane. We became wonderful friends when she spent time at St. Walter in Roselle, Ill. She was the person who inspired me to become a catechist at our parish and, actually, I just finished my 20th year with first graders. During one of our conversations, we realized that when I was in first grade myself at St. Ferdinand School in Chicago, Sister Jane was the teacher in the other first grade classroom! So many memories of wonderful times spent together. She will be greatly missed.

Mary Jo Shepherd

Sister Jane was just one amazing woman. She was a gifted teacher of many whether she was teaching students or teaching catechists. She had such fun ways that you did not know that you were being taught. Her words were some of the most valuable words I have ever heard. I remember her amazing ability to work with everyone. She gave me the support when I needed it and she gave me the business when I needed it! If I could say one word about her life, it would be *strong*! She let nothing ever get in her way; she served the Lord every day. I remember how she would invite all of us over to share Christmas tidings and her wonderful Christmas Village. When my daughter with Down's syndrome was born, she was the first person to congratulate me! She also told me not worry because my daughter would achieve greatness. She is 14 and is achieving greatness. Jane, I love and miss you. 'Til we meet again.

Alicia Growney

Sister Jane has been a family friend for almost four decades. She and my mom became friends after working together at St. Marcelline in Schaumburg, Ill. She was a kind, gentle woman who always had a smile on her face. She would always be interested in hearing about the latest escapades of mine and my siblings and took a genuine interest in our lives. She could make a mean hot crab dip, something my father always looked forward to during our get-togethers. She was a wonderful friend to my mother and for that I am so grateful. Rest in peace, Sister Jane.