

# From Our Associates

## Dear Circle of Friends,

On June 11, we officially ended the 50th Anniversary of BVM Association. We have come a long way over those 50 years and have made some dynamic strides during this past year such as the summit on association, the creation of a steering committee to address the

future of association, and the hiring of a full-time coordinator to work with our current part-time coordinator. Together with the director of BVM Life and Mission, we are engaging in the day-to-day needs of the associates and visioning what might be possible.

A substantial conversation was held during the Congregational Assembly

on relationships. We encourage you to continue reflecting on the BVM relationships you have and to widen your circle of friends.



—Associate Coordinators  
Eileen O'Shea and Suzie Wright

## Pondering

### Ask and You Shall Receive



Prayer of petition is its own kind of mystery.

So many people ask, "Please, pray for this," and we tell them we will. Jesus assured us, "Ask and you shall receive." Don't we trust this, even when we don't get what we ask for?

On the other hand, doesn't God know, before we speak, what is in our hearts? "Even before a word is on my tongue . . ." the psalmist writes. So, do we really need to ask?

Maybe it is only in speaking my desires aloud that I know them myself. This knowing then invites me to ask a question: What is the deeper desire that lies beneath my requests? What is it I really want, in the depths of my being, where maybe only the Divine can say? And what is the relationship between what I desire and what God desires?

I've got a lot of listening to do!

—Sean Bradley  
Spiritual Care Minister

## Welcome New Associates:

### New Associate Andrea Fitzpatrick

Andrea "Andy" Fitzpatrick is a new associate from Lake Villa, Ill. Andy and her husband Robert have one son, Bobbie, and four daughters, Abrielle, Addison, Amira, and Anaise.

Andy is the Director of the Multicultural Center at Carmel Catholic High School (CCHS) in Mundelein, Ill. She also organizes the CCHS 2050 Scholarship Program which aims to use education to disrupt the poverty cycle.

In Andy's application, she shared, "The core values of freedom, education, charity, and justice are hard to separate in my mind, because I believe that they are all tied to LOVE."

BVM Mary Fran McLaughlin and

Associates Maureen "Mo" McGrain and Mary Vallely were Andy's discernment companions. Mo served as her primary companion, sharing, "Andy's role as director of diversity, equity, and inclusion at CCHS has her already living out the core values as she works with minority students—as well as providing exposure to other students, faculty, and staff on issues of race."

During Andy's commitment ceremony on June 18, most of her family was able to attend and participate in her ceremony.

—Suzie Wright, Associate Coordinator



Associate Andy Fitzpatrick (front row, l.) was joined by her husband, four of their five children and her mother. Second row supporters include two of her companions, as well as associates, sisters, CCHS staff, and friends. The ceremony was held in the St. Titus Brandsma Chapel at CCHS.

## New Associate Catherine Smith

Catherine “Cat” Smith is a new associate who lives in Dubuque, Iowa. She is the Director of Residence Life at Clarke University.

Cat was born in Hollywood, Calif. Her mother is from Guayaquil, Ecuador, and her father is from California. Cat and her three brothers are first generation Ecuadorian Americans. Their grandmother, for whom she was named, Catherine McBain, is her greatest role model. Cat is married to C.J. Smith. She is a graduate of Youngstown State University.

Since Cat’s first day in Iowa, she has felt the support of the BVMs, first by Kathleen Sinclair and later by the BVM sisters who are prayer partners with the

campus RAs, and with her discernment circle. In her application for association, she stated a desire to “support the mission of the BVMs and make a change within the community as well as the world.”

Cat’s companions were BVMs Mary Martens, Catherine Dunn, Joan Lingen, Dee Myers, and Associate Pat Maddux. In her letter of affirmation, Mary Martens stated, “She has embraced freedom, education, charity and justice through living them herself along with the students and within the Clarke community.”

Cat is planning on having her ceremony in Dubuque later this year.

—Suzie Wright, Associate Coordinator



*Helping make a difference, new Associate Cat Smith serves meals at a June LGBTQIA2S+ Pride event in Dubuque, Iowa.*

## New Associate Mary Valley



Mary Valley is a new associate from Gurnee, Ill. Mary was born and raised in Chicago and attended Our Lady of Lourdes and Mundelein College. She has known BVMs since kindergarten—Sr. Mary Norrell was her principal and close friend of her mother. Mary currently works as a real estate broker and has an adult daughter, Rebecca.

In her application, Mary shares, “I have felt an affinity and a resonance

with the BVMs since my time at Mundelein College. They were strong, educated, and leaders at a time when men ruled the world. They were my models . . . These were the women I wanted to emulate. The values they boldly lived by and the women they became because of the ‘freedom’ they received being a BVM was a statement and huge attraction.”

Mary’s discernment circle included her primary companion, Associate Maureen “Mo” McGrain, BVM Mary Fran

McLaughlin, and Associate Andrea Fitzpatrick. Mo shared in her letter of affirmation, “Mary is passionate about being a BVM associate and becoming part of the community. She is eager to begin being part of something where she can put her spiritual energy . . . Mary will bring all of herself to the BVMs.”

Mary’s commitment ceremony will be July 27 in Gurnee.

—Suzie Wright, Associate Coordinator



## Commitment Ceremony

Associate K Kriesel (front row, center) is surrounded by relatives, companions, and other associates and sisters in the Sacred Heart Chapel at Clarke University in celebration of K’s commitment to BVM Association, on April 20.



# Associates in Action

## Announcements and Requests

### Directory Updates

Did you receive and return your form confirming your current contact information? It is important that all be returned to ensure that the *BVM Directory* is accurate when sent to the printer. For associates, Suzie Wright can resupply the form if needed.

### Prayer Support Request

Please consider including the work of the Associate Steering Committee and Associate Coordinators in your prayers.

## We Remember Our Associate

Read Obituaries for Associates:  
[bvmsisters.org/associate-obituaries](https://bvmsisters.org/associate-obituaries)



### Gabrielle (Gabe) Blood

May 22, 1946–

May 23, 2024

Accepted June 22, 1999



## Associates and Sisters in Ecuador

Associate Sandra Molano (back row, l.), BVM Saskia Alquina, Associate Sonya Rendón, BVMS Miguel Conway, Paulette Skiba, Annie Credidio, Associate Pat McTeague; Associate Gladys Robles (front row, l.), Germana Moran, and Fanny Bolaños unite in Ecuador for a memorable gathering.



## Dubuque Associates

In May, Dubuque associates Sharon Scully, Diane Kopp, Betty Takes, and Marilyn Wasmundt joined six local associates for breakfast in Dubuque, Iowa. On the menu: newfound and timeless friendships.



## Clarke-Connected Contemplate Conflagration

Associates Marabeth and Norm Freund hosted their 10th annual Gathering of Clarke Sisters, Associates, and Friends—a time of reflection, eating, and community building.

Among the 40-plus people in attendance were current and former faculty and staff from Clarke University comprised of BVMS, associates, congregational staff, and partners.

The 40th anniversary of the 1984 Clarke fire was the focus of the reflection and prayer. BVM Catherine Dunn, president of Clarke at the time of the fire, was celebrated for her leadership. BVM Sara McAlpin read her reflection about losing her office and home in the fire. Those in attendance shared how they experienced the fire and how it has impacted them since.