

Salt

SISTERS OF CHARITY
OF THE BLESSED
VIRGIN MARY



50

The BVM story continues "... through
works of education, justice, and peace." — BVM Constitutions #16

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF SALT

Honoring 50 Years of Faith and Flavor

Dear Salt,

BLESSINGS AND CONGRATULATIONS!

For 50 years, you have told the BVM story with openness and creativity . . .

For 50 years, your writers, editors, layout artists, and printers have captured the spirit and heart of BVM life and mission . . . and worked hard . . .

For 50 years, you reached out to donors, families, institutions, libraries, and beyond to inform and educate . . .

For 50 years, you made ideas, words, and photos come alive . . .

For 50 years, you made us cry, laugh, question, wonder, and desire more . . .

For 50 years, you spiced up the ordinary and made the extraordinary down to earth . . .

For 50 years, you opened eyes to the needs and cries of the world and offered remedies and hope . . .

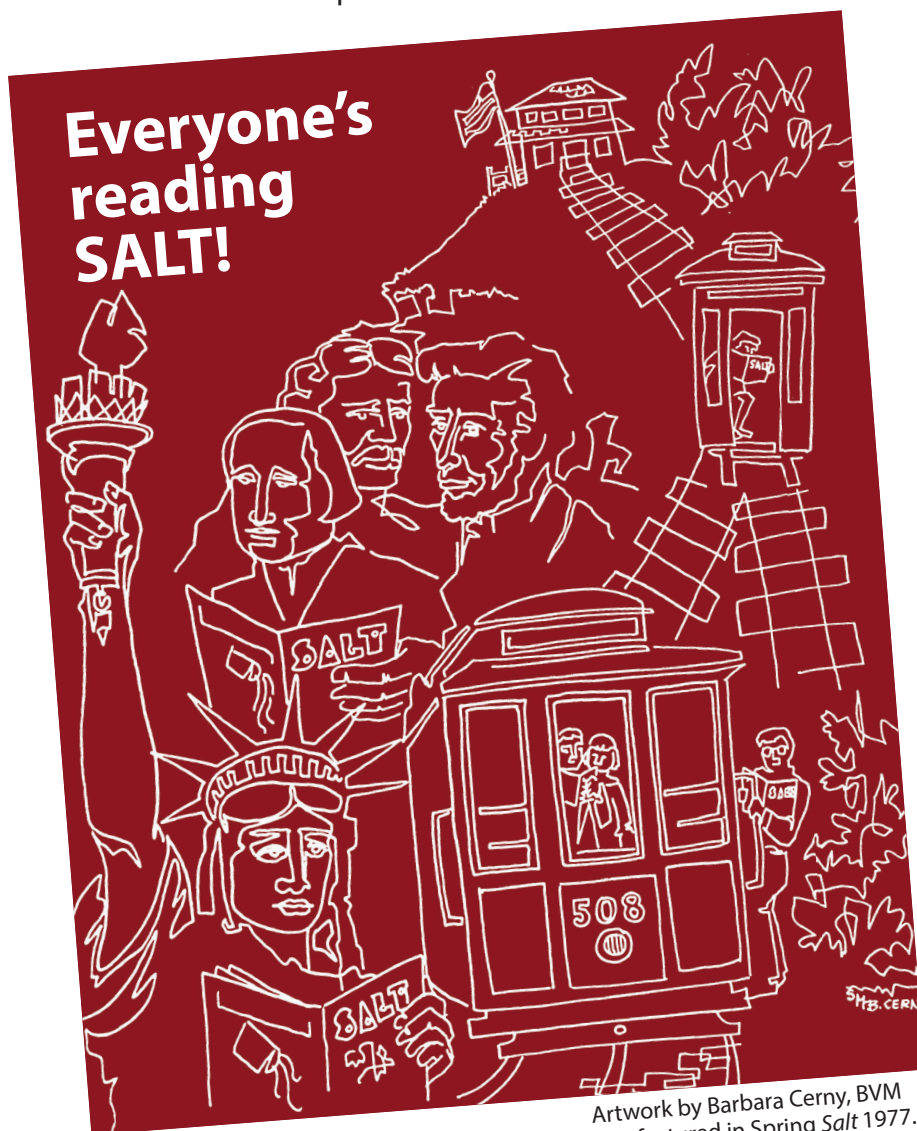
So we thank you: Communication experts, editors, writers, board members, readers, and everything in-between . . . Now we say: "Let's party and look to the future . . ."

—by Marilyn Wilson, BVM



On the Cover

Looking back on 50 years of Salt, we feature the evolving ministries of BVM sisters.



Artwork by Barbara Cerny, BVM was featured in Spring Salt 1977.



SEASONing

A Message from BVM Council

*There is always light.
If only we're brave
enough to see it!
If only we're brave
enough to be it!*

Gorman, A. (2021). "The Hill We Climb."
Delivered at the Inauguration of
President Joseph Biden

Daily reports of war, poverty,

homelessness, loss of employment, and so much more can negatively impact how we see our world. It seems all too easy to shut off the news, unsubscribe to current events sites, and ultimately disconnect from the challenging environment in which we find ourselves. Amanda Gorman dares us to do otherwise, to be brave enough to see the light, to see hope in whatever unexpected form it takes, and ultimately, to be brave enough to become a glimmer of hope for others.

The stories told in this edition of *Salt* magazine exude the light of hope of those who are "brave enough to see it and be it." For Such a Time as This, an organization inspired by hope amid disaster and poverty in Puerto Rico, invites partners to meet the needs of the most vulnerable when a single woman is brave enough to act.

Similarly, another young woman sees the light of hope as she visits her grandmother, a resident of Damien House, in Guayaquil, Ecuador. With the support of BVM scholarships, she was brave enough to embark on a journey to become an optometrist. Now she is brave enough to be hope for others as she offers free eye exams for children and serves others in the rural communities of her homeland.

Sister Lynn Winsor, BVM commented that being a teacher and coach is all about accompanying students along their journey from learning skills to becoming "respectful faith-driven individuals." Stated differently, being a mentor is all about helping students be so brave and

hopeful that they "deal with their challenges in life" and become a sign of hope for others.

Many BVM associates have been inspired by other associates, BVM sisters, and the BVM core values. While hope didn't make our list of core values, there is little doubt that the "light of hope" is an outcome of living the values of freedom, education, charity, and justice. Associate Laura Field braved the journey in association and certainly has become a "light" for so many others who grace her life.

The Sisters of Charity, BVM joined with Catholic Sisters throughout the country in bravely sharing our vision for a future full of HOPE. We know this is only possible when we lead with love, compassion, and empathy.

In the prayer celebrating the anniversary of this *Salt* magazine, we are reminded of the 50 years that this volume has challenged us to be "brave enough to see" to "open our eyes to the needs and cries of the world and offered remedies" so that we are "brave enough to be" the light of hope!

Ladonna Manternach, BVM

Katherine J. Kendefer, BVM

Kate Kendel, BVM

Carol Marie Baum, BVM

Habemus Papam: We Have a New Pope

by Kate Hendel, BVM

Vatican Media (2025)



Leo P.P. XIV

White smoke signaled “Habemus Papam” and in short order, the world met Robert Francis Prevost, Pope Leo XIV. In his first greeting to those watching in the square, around the world, and on television throughout Mount Carmel Bluffs, he said, “We have to be a church that works together to build bridges and to keep our arms open, like this very piazza, welcoming.” This statement provides a glimpse of what might be expected of our new pontiff:

A person who values others and calls all to actively participate in the mission of the church:

This first statement extended an invitation to all to join him in sharing the mission of Jesus, spreading the good news, and taking part in the work of the church.

A proponent of Catholic Social Teaching:

Our new pope chose the name Leo primarily for Leo XIII’s emphasis on Catholic Social Teaching. Leo XIV is known for his views on the importance of defending human dignity and promoting justice, a justice that is expansive and includes addressing the environmental crisis and tending to our relationship with all of creation.

A leader who acts locally and thinks globally:

In 2023, Cardinal Prevost is quoted as saying, “The spirit of synodality included the need and desire to listen not only to the bishop, but to many people in the diocese to see what the best way is to promote an authentic



“I am thrilled he has been elected. I’m thrilled he’s American but also he’s a worldwide traveler and a worldwide missionary who speaks the peace of Christ to all of us.”

—Jan Pertle, BVM (r.)



“It was an exciting moment to be in the Eternal City of Rome when the white smoke indicated that a new pope had been elected. The approximately 1,000 leaders of congregations of women at the UISG (International Union of General Superiors) Mass had just finished receiving communion. The election was on all our minds since the gathering began on Monday. The room erupted in “alleluia!” and dancing. Some left the event hall immediately to make their way to St. Peter’s Square in time for the announcement of Pope Leo XIV.”

—LaDonna Manternach, BVM (above, center)



“I was stunned at the announcement and surprised at my emotional reaction! I was moved to tears! I never expected an American and one from Chicago! The name he chose, Leo XIV, gives me hope.”

—Mary Gene Kinney, BVM

Salt: Still Seasoning the Story

The Third Article of a Three-Part Series

by BVMs Teri Hadro and Mira Mosle

As sisters changed, so did the congregation and *Salt* was right there with them:

Following Vatican Council II's challenge to BVMs to return to the vision of Mary Frances Clarke, TOPA (Totally Open Personnel Application allowing sisters to pursue individual ministries) was the most intense of the changes for the BVM Congregation. However, growth in other areas of religious life happened as well.

Ministry in New Forms

Ministry, the product of education, thought, prayer, and conversations among BVMs underwent the most radical change. Yet, in reality, it was the congregation itself that became more diverse. The mission stayed the same but was understood more deeply: BVMs continued to serve others whose needs were greater than their own. Their minds and hearts moved beyond the parish school to a world full of need and *Salt* moved with them—telling story after story of sisters doing something new, feeling something different, committing themselves to a new awareness of basic human needs across the globe.

Sisters joined networks organized by others—Bread for the World, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Justice, the NAACP, Doctors Without Borders, to name a few. Funds were secured to enable sisters to receive Third World

Experience Grants, opening BVM minds and hearts to the deep poverty of peoples in Africa, India, and Central America. Some sisters remained in Guatemala and Ghana doing what they discerned would best serve their sisters and brothers. These stories, and those from long-term ministries in Ecuador graced the pages of *Salt*.

From seeking out unique ministries with hearing-impaired and Indigenous peoples to covering the outreach of BVMs and associates in various locales, writers explored the many manifestations of the BVM charism—alive in its members and expressed through diverse spiritualities, simple lifestyles, and collaborations with a wide range of groups: Nuns and Nones, other congregations, college students, and justice-seekers of all kinds.

As more BVMs retired from “boots on the ground” service, *Salt*



Advocacy against gun violence is one of many social justice causes sisters and associates support.

increased its coverage of how BVM scholarships continued the legacy of education, charity, and justice. Profiles of scholarship recipients appeared regularly. Features on legacy scholarships to schools in dioceses where BVMs had once served illustrated how these funds were leveraged to provide even greater financial assistance to young people in need.

Thanks to technology, recipients of Ministry Partnership Grants—especially in Africa—were able to share and show how BVM funds transformed lives through nutrition projects, healthcare, and education at all levels, particularly for women and children. Some sisters from these communities shared their stories in person at Mount Carmel Bluffs, and *Salt* was there.

Sisters and associates gathered at



Young women around the globe have received Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Scholarships for Women.



Living out the BVM core values and the spirit of Mary Frances Clarke, sisters and associates work together to “help those most in need.”



In 2017, the BVM Congregation experienced a transformative change at “Our Mount Carmel Home” partnering with Presbyterian Homes and Services (PHS) to establish Mount Carmel Bluffs, an expanded senior living community. This development included the deconstruction of existing buildings and the construction of new facilities on the campus. With PHS becoming the managing partner, this new living community allows sisters to age in place while also welcoming residents from the Dubuque area and beyond.

Salt closely followed and documented this transition, capturing the emotional farewells, the progress of construction, the sisters’ moves into their new homes, and the return of sisters from across the country. Today, BVMs continue to live out their mission by offering care, companionship, and spiritual support to all residents of Mount Carmel Bluffs,



Catholic Sisters of the Tri-State Area posted billboards in support of Pope Francis’ *Laudato Si’*: On Care for Our Common Home.

embodying a spirit of love, respect, and shared community.

A partnership with a community of Vietnamese IHM Sisters has enriched the BVM Congregation over the past decade. These sister students came to Mount Carmel Bluffs to learn English while continuing their academic studies.

Their presence has brought renewed joy, energy, and cultural vibrancy to the lives of the BVMs embodying the spirit of global sisterhood.

Life and Mission Continue

Of course, celebrations are in abundance: new members, associate commitments, silver, golden, and diamond jubilees, annual assemblies, school anniversaries, funerals, and donor thanksgivings.

Over its 50 years, *Salt* has captured the essence of the congregation’s understanding of Vatican II’s intent: serving others whose needs exceed one’s own is best done by those who use all that God has given them and who recognize that individuals are more than their needs.

As long as BVMs continue to evolve, *Salt* will tell the story of a congregation that keeps discerning and striving to meet the needs of the people among whom it lives. Happy 50th year, *Salt* Magazine! ■



BVM sisters and associates serve a meal twice a year at a local parish.



Moving day has arrived at Mount Carmel Bluffs.



A peaceful start to the day on Two-Spiders Lake in Hayward, Wis.



Nearly 5,000 women have professed vows in dedication to the legacy of Mary Frances Clarke.

About the Authors:

Teri Hadro, BVM is a former member of the BVM Leadership Team, co-founder of *Salt* magazine, and is currently retired and happily learning to live without an alarm clock.

Mira Mosle, BVM, a former *Salt* editor, is actively retired at Mount Carmel Bluffs and serves on the Assembly Planning Committee, Opening Doors Board of Directors, Tri-State Coalition Against Trafficking, and UN Day of Peace Committee.



Reflections at the Border: *BVM Sisters Journey to Nogales*

by Katie Anders, BVM and Colleen McGinnity, BVM

On a Heritage Tour to visit BVM missions in the West, novice Katie Anders and Colleen McGinnity, BVM made a stop to visit the border in Nogales, Ariz. *Salt* invites you to journey with them as they share their emotional reactions to thoughts about what they witnessed, reflecting on the challenges, struggles, and human stories tied to the border experience.

Called to Welcome the Stranger

Katie Anders, BVM



On April 3, Colleen and I travelled from Phoenix to Nogales, Ariz., to learn more about immigration. Upon arriving, we met with Mobilization Specialist Sister Eileen McKenzie, FSPA and Mission Engagement Officer Father Pete Neeley, SJ who introduced us to the work of the Kino Border Initiative.

This is a non-profit organization that works on both sides of the border assisting migrants. Their vision is migration with dignity, and their mission is to promote humane, just, and workable migration through direct humanitarian assistance, holistic accompaniment of migrants, and policy advocacy in both Mexico and the United States.

Eileen walked with us to one of the three ports of entry along Nogales' border to get a sense of the fluidity of movement into and out of both countries.

People were walking and driving, going to work, going to school, visiting family and friends, attending church services, and doing their shopping. It has become such a violent system for the migrants as well as for the border patrol with the wall and barbed wire as a constant reminder, and yet there was a sense of normalcy in the rhythm of what was happening.

Eileen commented several times that part of the work they do through education, advocacy, and encounter is to help change the narrative that is given to us through the media. Sadly, migration has come to be criminalized in our perceptions, but the vast majority of the people trying to migrate are simply seeking a safe and healthy life. Yet, nothing about their journey is simple.

As we walked along the wall together, the scene I will carry with me was a family celebrating a birthday on both sides of the wall. A young couple on the U.S. side and the rest of their family on the Mexico side.

The young man was cooking on the tailgate of his pick-up, and the woman was reaching her fingers through the grate that has been placed over the slats of the fence, trying to touch a small baby that a woman was holding on her lap on the other side.

It was a family picnic like nothing I have ever seen. They were smiling and laughing together, and while I too smiled with them as we passed by, my heart also ached as I'm sure theirs did, too.

This experience reminded me not only about what a complicated issue immigration is, but after spending time with Eileen walking the wall, I experienced in a new way how we are called to welcome the stranger and that this can be done with dignity, compassion, and joy.

The border wall in Nogales, Ariz., marks a physical and symbolic boundary in the ongoing story of migration and hope along the U.S./Mexico border.

“Sista” Lynn Celebrates 50 Years at Xavier College Prep

by Kari Litscher

For 50 years, “Sista” Lynn Winsor, BVM has ministered at Xavier College Preparatory (XCP) in Phoenix, leaving a significant mark on the school and its athletic programs. As both a coach and an athletic director, she has touched the lives of countless young women, shaping not only their athletic abilities but also their character.

The Role of a Coach: Teacher and Mentor

In her role as a coach, Lynn always stresses the importance of the coach-athlete relationship. “Coaching is about being a teacher—someone who urges their athletes to become better, teaching them the skills they need,” she asserts. She believes that coaching isn’t about being a “friend” to the athletes but rather being a mentor. “I never approached coaching as being friends with my student-athletes. I wanted to be their teacher and their coach.”

While she maintains a professional relationship with her athletes during their time at XCP, she acknowledges the rewarding relationships that develop when they return as adults. “After they graduate, that’s when we become friends. When they come back, we talk about their families, their careers, and how they’re doing. To me, that’s really a special thing.”

Memorable Milestones: State Championships and Lifelong Connections

Lynn’s coaching career has been filled with remarkable achievements, and one of the most significant moments was when her team won its first state golf championship in 1980. She recalls, “You always remember your team’s first championship,” acknowledging the emotional significance of that victory after years of hard work. She

continued to lead her teams to victory, with XCP’s program winning a total of 37 state championships and seven runner-up finishes.

The impact of one athlete, Heather Farr, stands out as particularly pivotal to the growth of the program. “Heather came in 1979, and she was an outstanding junior golfer,” Lynn recalls. “Her arrival at XCP and her outstanding golf talent and her love of XCP, has really impacted our program to this day.” Heather’s decision to attend XCP played a key role in the program’s success, laying the foundation for many championships to come.

Beyond the Golf Course: Lifelong Success

Lynn takes pride in her athletes’ success both on and off the field. “Six of my golf team athletes have gone on to the LPGA, which is wonderful,” she shares. “When one of them was selected for the 2024 Solheim Cup [where the United States golf team competes against the Europe golf team], like Sarah Schmelzel was this year, one of my XCP golfers helped the U.S. team win. It’s a proud moment.”

Other XCP golfers, such as Amanda Blumenherst and Cheyenne Woods, have gone on to achieve great things in the world of golf, broadcasting major women’s and men’s golf championships on networks like ESPN and the Golf Channel.

But for Lynn, it’s not just about athletic success. She’s proud of how her athletes have thrived in many other fields. “Many of them are now doctors, teachers, mothers, professional athletes, or involved in other successful careers. That’s what makes me proud and happy,” she says, noting that her former athletes frequently return to share their successes and the impact XCP had on their lives.



Advocacy and Legacy: Title IX and Expanding Opportunities for Women

A significant part of Lynn’s impact has been her advocacy for women’s sports. Through her efforts, she has worked to level the playing field for women’s athletics, both at the state and national levels.

Her work didn’t stop at maintaining traditional sports. For example, Lynn has been involved in bringing new high school sports to Arizona, such as flag football, crew/rowing, beach volleyball, soccer, and e-sports. “When I got involved with flag football, I was excited to help

Mahalo “Sista” Lynn!

Xavier College Preparatory (XCP) celebrated the 50th anniversary of “Sista” Lynn Winsor, BVM in Hawaiian style. The luau themed celebration captured Lynn’s heart, joy, passion, and energy. From the first tiki torch to the last hula, XCP expressed their love and appreciation for Lynn and her many impactful years on the lives of XCP students, faculty, staff, and families.

For Such A Time As This:

The Power of Love, Hope, and Community in Puerto Rico

by Kari Litscher

Yanira Ocasio Hernández, the

Foundress and President/CEO of For Such A Time As This, has witnessed firsthand the incredible impact of community outreach and faith-driven work. Growing up, she was inspired by her missionary mother and pastor grandfather, whose selfless service paved the way for her passion for charity and community empowerment. Over the years, she has worked tirelessly to bring hope to underserved communities, most recently in Puerto Rico, in the wake of natural disasters.

The BVM Connection: A Story of Hope

Yanira's connection with the Sisters of Charity, BVM began when she met Congregational Secretary Ann Sweeney during her service trip to Puerto Rico. Ann, who has worked twice with Global Volunteers on the island, explained to Yanira how the BVMs support programs around the world through the BVM Hunger Fund Grants. Inspired by this conversation, Yanira applied for a grant to further her mission of helping those in need.

For Yanira, the partnership with the BVM Sisters has been more than



Yanira Ocasio Hernández, Foundress and CEO of For Such a Time As This, serves hope and nourishment to the poor and homeless in Puerto Rico.

just financial—it has been a source of encouragement and solidarity. The funds have been instrumental in supporting their work, which includes serving the homeless community. BVM Hunger Funds have helped purchase food, including perishable items like fruits, vegetables, and proteins, as well as non-perishable goods like canned foods, grains, and snacks.

A Story of Resilience

In September 2017, Puerto Rico was hit by the devastating forces of Hurricane Irma and Maria. With winds exceeding 155 miles per hour, the Category 4 hurricanes caused widespread destruction—homes, schools, roads, and the electrical grid were decimated. In the midst of the chaos, Yanira knew she had



Throughout our congregation's history, the BVM Legacy of Love has remained constant: "to seek out and attend to those in need." How we engage in that mission has changed. As BVMs have retired from active ministry, we have established BVM Ministry Partnership Grants and Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Scholarships for Women to ensure our legacy will continue through individuals and organizations who hold similar values.

Milena's Dream: Helping the World See

BVM Scholarship Recipient Becomes an Optometrist

by Kari Litscher



Scholarship recipient Milena Izquierdo masters the tools that shape her future as an optometrist.

Milena Izquierdo's path to becoming an optometrist is a story shaped by determination, family, and the generosity of others. A recipient of multiple Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Scholarships for Women, Milena's journey is proof of the power of education and community support. Her BVM sponsorship, provided by Annie Credidio, BVM, who founded Damien House, helped Milena navigate higher education and the financial hurdles it brings.

Milena's connection with Annie and Damien House started through her grandmother, who suffers from Hansen's (Leprosy) disease. Damien House provides around-the-clock care for residents and free medical help to poverty-stricken outpatients.

Milena's grandmother has been a resident there for many years. During Milena's visits to see her grandmother, she met Annie. Over time, Annie's support expanded beyond helping her grandmother to include helping Milena—supporting her in her goal of attending college and becoming an optometrist.

The Power of Scholarships

Milena reflects on how the BVM scholarships she received allowed her to continue her studies. "I remember the day I received the news as if it were yesterday. It was a moment of immense joy and excitement . . . thanks to the BVM Community, I could continue my studies without the heavy financial burden that worried me so much."

With the help of BVM scholarships, Milena attended classes and completed her degree at Universidad Técnica de Babahoyo. For her, BVM support was more than just a financial boost—it was a reminder of the people who believe in her and in her future.

Volunteering and Finding Her Passion

Volunteering at Damien House played a pivotal role in Milena's personal and professional growth, giving her an early understanding of the importance of serving others, especially those who are often overlooked. Her commitment to service continued while studying at university, where she created a group that visited the elderly in a home near campus. Milena saw this as an opportunity not only to apply what she was learning but also to encourage her classmates to value the importance of personal connections in care.

Making a Difference in Her Community

Milena's passion for helping others extends to her work with children. While in school, she organized free eye exams for children in rural communities. Milena recognized a need for basic eye care in these underserved areas, and with her growing knowledge as an optometry student, she sought to address that gap.

Because many children don't have access to simple eye exams which can affect their learning and development, Milena wanted to offer something practical that could help these children succeed.

Milena recognized a need for basic eye care in these underserved areas, and with her growing knowledge as an optometry student, she sought to address that gap.



In Memoriam

Please pray for BVM sisters and associates who have died January 2025–May 2025.



*Katherine "Katie"
E. Heffernan, BVM*
April 14, 1923–Jan. 31, 2025

Katherine was born in Omaha, Neb. She entered the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in 1958 and transferred to the BVM

Congregation in 1973.

With God as her foundation, Katie was fearless and resilient. The richness of how she lived life was a foretaste of the joy she now knows. Surely her heavenly homecoming was the party of a lifetime and, knowing Katie, she quite possibly cajoled everyone in heaven into line dancing.

Katie served as a district social worker, clinical social worker, and special education care manager in the Chicago area. In retirement, she served on the board of the American Women for International Understanding, a member of American Architectural Society, and Chicago Council for Global Affairs.



*Eugena
Sullivan, BVM*
June 26, 1931–April 13, 2025

Eugena was born in Chicago and entered the congregation in 1953 from St. Kilian Parish in Chicago.

She was a gentle, kind, and loving person who never wanted to draw attention to herself. She was far more interested in learning about people . . . She loved to cook and was generous, gracious and the essence of hospitality. Eugena loved bringing people together and treating them, whether welcoming new Clarke faculty by inviting them to dinner or organizing a pizza party for the members of her set who meant so much to her.

Eugena worked in the computer center at Clarke University, in Dubuque, Iowa, prior to becoming the registrar, a position she held for nearly 40 years. She also taught in Glendale, Calif., Santa Ana, Calif.; Kansas City, Mo.; and Chicago.



*Susan (Michaela)
Rink, BVM*
Aug. 8, 1927–April 27, 2025

Susan was born in Tulsa, Okla., and entered the congregation in 1948, from St. Patrick Parish in Dubuque, Iowa.

Sue put her gifts to good use in a life of service. She was a strong woman, yet there was a gentleness about her. She could state her opinion, speak her mind, and then go with the flow and not fret about the outcome. Her twinkling eyes and warm smile welcomed everyone as a friend.

Sue taught high school and/or college in Dubuque, Milwaukee, and St. Louis. She was the assistant dean at Mundelein College in Chicago before being named president. Later she became a youth and substance abuse counsellor. Interested in alternative investments and helping provide funds for the poor, Sue served as the treasurer for the congregation for eight years.



*Edissa Mary
Szczepanski, BVM*
Dec. 29, 1933–April 29, 2025

Edissa Mary entered the congregation in 1952 from Our Lady of Angels Parish, in Chicago.

While spending retirement with her BVM sisters at Mount Carmel Bluffs, Edissa shared that, "being a BVM is a special way of loving and brings joy, peace, and happiness to my heart and to others with whom I interact in my daily life." Even though she was quiet, she was deeply interested in other people and enjoyed one-on-one conversations. Sewing was one of her favorite pastimes.

Dedicating 22 years to elementary education, Edissa taught in Cedar Rapids and Clinton, Iowa; Chicago, and Memphis, Tenn. In Chicago, Edissa served as a media specialist and school librarian.

Salt Briefs



Fathers Thomas J. Ascheman, SVD (back row, l.), and Thang Hoang, SVD, present the Donaghey Service Award to Sisters LaDonna Manternach, BVM (front row, l.); Kathy Knipper, OSF; and Carmen Hernandez, PBVM. *Contributed photo.*

BVM Sisters Receive Donaghey Service Award

The Sisters of Charity, BVM received the Fr. John Donaghey Award for Outstanding Service for their support of Divine Word College's mission to prepare students for missionary service. BVM President LaDonna Manternach accepted the award, emphasizing the congregation's commitment to nurturing future women religious leaders. She noted the meaningful partnership with the IHM Sisters of Nha Trang, based in Vietnam, saying that their initial "yes" to hosting the sisters sparked a valued relationship that has deeply enriched the BVM Community.

Effective June 1, 2025, the Office of Development for Sisters of Charity, BVM will no longer receive mail via a PO Box.

Instead, mail will be delivered directly to Mount Carmel Bluffs. Therefore, we ask you to utilize the following address for all future correspondence:



**Sisters of Charity, BVM
Office of Development
1100 Carmel Dr
Dubuque IA 52003-7911**



BVMs Mary Ellen Meckley (l.), Lynn Lester, Mary Nolan, Irene Lukefahr, Janet Desmond, and Paulette Skiba stand for justice.

BVMs Stand for Justice

BVMs and associates joined the 'May Day Strong Dubuque' peaceful protest as part of the #NationalDayofAction, standing for justice and calling for an era in which working families lead, immigrants are protected, and no one is left behind. They also participated in 'Hands Off' events in Chicago; Dubuque; Gurnee, Ill.; and Northern California, joining 1,300 registered events across the nation and around the world to make their voices heard.

CSW69—'FOR ALL WOMEN FOR ALL GIRLS'

The UN Commission on the Status of Women plays a vital role in advancing women's rights, shedding light on the realities of women's lives around the world, and shaping global standards for gender equality and women's empowerment.

BVM Roberta White, BVM (front row, left); Mariah Reeves, BVM representative to Loretto at the UN; former Wahlert instructor Barb Ressler; and Opening Doors Marketing and Development Director Natalie Finley traveled with Dubuque Wahlert High School students to participate in this impactful international gathering held in New York.



Jeffrey Bruno, Creative Commons

A Pope for Our Times

We are saddened to hear of Pope Francis' death. This humble man was a pope for our times and for all the world. As a spiritual leader, he gave hope to the people, making space to accompany, listen, and dialogue with them. He was a true brother of the poor instructing those who proclaim the gospel to take on the smell of the sheep, to be in solidarity with the poor.



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OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

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Message of Hope and Welcome

A banner has been placed at the entrance of Mount Carmel Bluffs, offering a message of hope, love, peace, and welcome to immigrant communities in accordance with our Congregational Immigration Stance.

We pray that all who view this banner will receive this message with open hearts and open minds and will strengthen others to act with compassion and work for justice.

Sisters and Students Share Stories

Students from Carmel Catholic High School in Mundelein, Ill., visited Mount Carmel Bluffs, where they joined BVMs—including Diane O'Donnell (r.)—in writing notes of encouragement to adult immigrants studying English at Dubuque's Presentation Lantern Center. The BVMs reflected on the powerful stories shared by the students, many of whom have personal ties to immigration.

