

# Currents of Change

A Newsletter for Alumni and Friends of the Sisters of Charity, BVM

## Diane Palmer—Climbing Mountains for Charity

*There are many different ways to partner with the Sisters of Charity, BVM—but climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa in a one-woman fundraising campaign for charity is likely a first.*

At age 65, Diane Palmer is an adventurous spirit who has crossed off many items on her “vision board” list of goals to pursue.

One might hazard a guess that this independent woman was taught by BVMs! Diane attended high school at Mount Carmel Academy in Wichita, Kan. “The BVMs instilled in us a respect for ourselves, in the way they taught and in the way they expected us to excel. They never thought we couldn’t do it!”

Diane had other women religious as teachers, too: the Dominicans in elementary school, and the Adorers of the Blood of Christ and the Congregation of St. Joseph sisters in her first two years of college.

All four religious orders’ African missions will reap the benefits of Diane’s efforts in gratitude for the influence they played in shaping her life.

She has also sponsored a little girl in Kenya and a young boy in Guatemala through the fifth charity recipient, the

Christian Foundation for Children and Aging, in Nairobi.

The BVM Ghana Library Project holds special significance for Diane. As a child taught by the Dominican sisters, she recalls they had no library at school, only bookshelves in front of the classrooms. One of nine children, Diane says, “We also didn’t have books at home . . . I love libraries and bookstores today.”

Though Sister Laurene Brady, BVM was a teacher at Mount Carmel Academy when Diane was a student there, their paths didn’t cross until years later, when they became “reacquainted” through Diane’s interest in the Ghana Library Project.

BVM Sisters Laurene and Irene Lukefahr initiated and worked to accomplish the dream of a new library and literacy center in Kumasi, Ghana, recently completed in November 2010.

Diane has volunteered, cycled and walked for various health organizations and the St. Vincent de Paul Society, among others, working to involve more people, including seniors, in walking for charity and personal health.

“This desire stems from my education and from my parents,” says Diane. “They didn’t talk about doing charitable works . . . they just did



Diane Palmer works out in preparation for her charity climb in January.

it. We observed this, growing up. And when you see that, it sticks with you.”

By the time she finished her climb to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro in January of this year, Diane had involved many schools, organizations and individuals in her efforts.

After her climb, Diane remains in Africa until April to visit and volunteer at each of the five African missions.

She urges others to “help someone else to become the best person that he or she can be” and shares her favorite quote by Edward E. Hale:

*I am only one, but still, I am one. I cannot do everything, but still, I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.*

Follow Diane Palmer’s blog at: <http://www.adventurediane.blogspot.com/>

We must

be the

change

we wish to

see in

the world.

-Gandhi

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The information in this publication is not intended as legal, tax or investment advice. For such advice, please consult an attorney, tax professional or investment advisor.

# Donor Profile: Ray & Marilyn Ethington

*As a youngster growing up at St. Mary's Training School, an orphanage in Des Plaines, Ill., Ray Ethington's first experience with unconditional love came from religious sisters. "Their example has been in the back of my mind ever since," he says.*

Ray was a member of the last graduating class of St. Joseph/Alleman High School in Rock Island, Ill., in 1949, and the only one of his five siblings to earn a diploma.

Admitting that he was a "handful" in school, Ray says, "If it came down to a battle between whether one of my BVM teachers would go to heaven—or I would learn—my education would have won! This shows me the

heights of human endeavor of the sisters."

His wife, Marilyn, graduated in the same class with Ray. High school sweethearts, they have been married 56 years and have six children, 13 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

"We've never forgotten the debt we owe to the BVM sisters," Ray and Marilyn share. "There is no way we can ever repay what they have done for us." As regular monthly donors to the BVMs for nearly two decades, Ray explains, "Our only regret is that we can't do more; I feel I owe everything to them."

Ray served in the National Guard and was called up for active duty in Korea, where he served as a master sergeant.

After the armistice was signed, he and Marilyn married. Ray started out as a foundry worker at John Deere



Ray and Marilyn Ethington are grateful to the BVMs.

in East Moline, Ill. Later he became a pattern-maker at the company, a job he held for the next 35 years.

St. Joseph/Alleman High School has played a central role in the Ethingtons' lives.

Ray served on the school board and the couple helped organize activities like bingo games and fish fries. They also worked to obtain the first bingo license in the state of Illinois. Bingo helped to pay school salaries and keep the high school open. As Marilyn puts it, "We've done it all!"

In retirement, Ray attends

daily Mass. Every Tuesday for the past three years, he stands outside the Planned Parenthood office in Bettendorf, Iowa, and talks to people, hoping to guide them to the Women's Choice Center directly across the street.

"My wife and I both feel that the BVMs were prime examples of those who give their lives for others. The biggest reward for us is to be where we are at today . . . we aren't overwhelmed by current problems because we have the foundation of faith that the sisters instilled in us."

## Sister Spotlight

### Sister Mary Adele Henneberry, BVM



If being a singing teacher is Sister Mary Adele Henneberry,

BVM's first love, then teaching kindergarten is a close second!

"I also loved my time teaching in Hempstead, N.Y.," she recalls. "The students in the upper grades loved music, putting on shows and programs. And New York City was electrifying."

Sister Mary Adele played a large role in the changing dynamic of BVM leadership; for eight years she was a vice

president during the terms of Sister Roberta Kuhn, BVM and Sister Joan Doyle, BVM. "Ours was a team approach," she explains. "Our example of needing to work together was helpful to the congregation and healthy for the times. We found that if we're all in this together, we'll all be together."

Today, Sister Mary Adele takes history and opera classes at the Roberta Kuhn Center.

A voracious reader, she's a crackerjack at crossword puzzles. She also visits other sisters, encouraging them to get "out and about" if they can. She cheerfully admits, "I'm a chatterbox!"

### Sister Mary Frances Reis, BVM (Paul Adele)



"For the past 25 years, I have ministered in southern Missouri in

the 'Bootheel' and now in the Ozarks," says Sister Mary Frances Reis, BVM.

A visitor to the Bootheel once remarked on its extreme poverty, but to Sister Mary Frances, her ministry there was a very rich experience in her life, with people she has come to know and love.

Though she is the only BVM in Ozark county, Sister Mary Frances is much closer

now to larger cities and other BVMs.

She says, "While I am not as immersed in migrant, hospice and outreach to the poor ministries, I have found a call to respond to spiritual needs in the hospital and parish pastoral care areas."

Serving on boards and at a local pantry in the Bible Belt cause Sister Mary Frances to often ponder the BVM core values of freedom, education, charity and justice.

"It seems that every day I am impelled by these values to respond to critical human situations, especially among women and the poor."

# Remembering Beloved Friends

*Rabbi Robert Rosen and the Sisters of Charity, BVM share a 30-year kinship that began in Chicago in 1980 with his teaching assignment at Cathedral High School and later at Carmel High School in Mundelein, Ill.*

Rabbi Bob then returned to the Associated Talmud

Schools of Chicago to teach, and will retire in June 2011 after 45 years in teaching.

As a member of the BVM Monthly Partner Program, he is grateful for the sisters' support, friendship and love over the years.

In October 2010, Rabbi Bob and his wife, Dawn, visited Mount Carmel to pay respects to living and deceased BVM friends.

In the Mount Carmel cemetery, he placed stones on each

sister's grave to mark his visit and then recited the *Mourners' Kaddish*, a prayer of thanksgiving and remembrance for loved ones who have passed.

The *Mourner's Kaddish* is said daily and in some Jewish communities, two to three times a day.

"I was very much moved and grateful to visit my beloved friends," he says. "The BVM sisters, both living and those who have passed on, are family to us!"



Rabbi Bob prays the *Mourners' Kaddish* over the BVM sisters' graves.

## IRA Charitable Rollover Provision

On Dec. 17, the Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization and Job Creation Act of 2010 was signed into law.

This legislation includes a two-year extension of the IRA Charitable Rollover Provision, which allows people age 70½ or older to make charitable donations, up to \$100,000 per year, directly from their individual retirement accounts (IRAs), without having to count the distribution(s) as taxable income.

The IRA Charitable Rollover was first introduced in 2006 as part of the Pension Protection Act. Since this legislation was introduced, many charitable organizations including the Sisters of Charity, BVM have benefited from new gifts.

The extension of this rollover provision is good news for both donors and charities!

Everyone's financial circumstances are different, so it's a good idea to check with tax advisors about the best way to take advantage of this giving opportunity.

### Here are some important points to keep in mind:

- The provision permits taxpayers age 70½ and older to make charitable contributions of up to \$100,000 in a given year from a traditional or Roth IRA without any tax consequences.
- The contribution must be made *directly to the qualified charity or charities from the individual's IRA account.*
- Charitable rollover contributions for the 2010 tax year can be made retroactively through Jan. 31, 2011.
- An individual who makes a direct transfer of up to \$100,000 from his or her IRA for the 2010 tax year is still eligible to contribute another \$100,000 for the year 2011, totaling gifts of \$200,000—tax free.
- Charitable contributions must go directly to a public charity that is not a supporting organization.
- Donors may not receive any goods or services in return for their tax free IRA distributions to charity.
- Donors must obtain written substantiation of each IRA rollover contribution from each recipient charity.

This extension is in effect through Dec. 31, 2011.

## Connect With BVMs:



### "Like" us on Facebook

[www.facebook.com/bvmsisters](http://www.facebook.com/bvmsisters)

Would you like more information about the life and mission of the BVMs? When you "like" the BVM sisters on Facebook, you can comment on our wall, flip through photo galleries and have our latest updates posted straight to your news feed.



### Follow us on Twitter

[twitter.com/bvmsisters](http://twitter.com/bvmsisters)

Follow BVM tweets to find out the latest happenings, news, blog posts and more.



### Watch our videos on YouTube

[www.youtube.com/bvmsisters](http://www.youtube.com/bvmsisters)

Watch our latest videos and find out how you can partner with BVMs in mission and ministry or learn about the service trip to Ecuador. These are just two of our videos available on our YouTube channel.

### Join our Blog

[www.bvmcong.org/blog.cfm](http://www.bvmcong.org/blog.cfm)

To give you a more personal insight into who we are as BVMs, our blog shares reflections on spirituality, daily life and our charism. We invite you to share your comments, reflections and questions.



### BVM Website

[www.bvmcong.org](http://www.bvmcong.org)

On our site, you'll find the latest news about our sisters, calendar of events, prayer request form and online donation and much more.

## Currents of Change

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**Generosity is giving more than you can, and pride is taking less than you need.** —Kahlil Gibran (1883 – 1931)

## 2011 Calendar of Events

### February

18–May 22

Women and Spirit Exhibit Opening, National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium, Dubuque, Iowa

### March

- 11 Dubuque-area Friends of BVMs Event: Women & Spirit Exhibit, Dubuque, Iowa
- 12 Women's Leadership at the Crossroads, Clarke University, Dubuque, Iowa
- 25 BVM & Former BVM Event: Women & Spirit Exhibit, Dubuque, Iowa

### April

- 2 Midwest Associates, Sisters and Brothers Gathering, Dubuque, Iowa
- 2 Mundelein Alumnae: Women & Spirit Exhibit, Dubuque, Iowa
- 4-13 Ecuador Service Project
- 8-10 Dubuque Service Project
- 10 Immaculata H.S. Alumnae Luncheon, Chicago
- 29-30 Dubuque's Got Sisters!

### May

- 1 St. Mary Alumnae Luncheon, Chicago
- 22 Mass of Remembrance for Friends, Family of Deceased BVMs, Mount Carmel, Dubuque, Iowa

### June

- 23 W & Spirit Donor Event, Mt. St. Mary College, Los Angeles

### July

- 29-31 Silver and Golden Jubilee Celebration, Mount Carmel, Dubuque, Iowa

### August

- 3 Ice Cream Social for Friends and Donors

### Fall 2011

- TBD Chicago Benefactors' Mass

### November

- 6 Dubuque Benefactors' Mass

### December

- 15 Mary Frances Clarke Birthday Party

## WOMEN & spirit

CATHOLIC SISTERS IN AMERICA



DISCOVER A WORLD  
FEW HAVE SEEN, BUT  
MILLIONS HAVE SHARED



Discover courageous, independent American women who helped shape the nation's social and cultural landscape. They entered the professional ranks earlier than most women, prevailing through periods of controversy and struggle, in order to extend a promise of equality and opportunity to all Americans regardless of faith, color, nationality or economic status. We call these women...Sisters.

**FEBRUARY 18 – MAY 22, 2011**

## WOMEN & spirit

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