

# Salt

Fall 2011 • A Publication of the Sisters of Charity, BVM



**... we strive to seek out and  
attend to those in need ...**

*BVM Constitutions, 15*

**Mission Statement:** We are the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a community of Catholic women called to live the mission of Jesus through our core values of Freedom, Education, Charity and Justice.

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## 2011 Calendar of Events

### September

25 Immaculata Alumnae Mass, Felician Sisters Convent, Chicago

### October

7-9 "Evolutionary Christianity: A New Moment of Grace" Misericordia, Chicago

15-16 60th Set Anniversary for September 1951 and February 1952, Mount Carmel, Dubuque, Iowa

30 Benefactors' Mass, Holy Family Church, Chicago

### November

6 Benefactors' Mass, Mount Carmel, Dubuque, Iowa

11-12 Dubuque's Got Sisters: Discernment Weekend, Mount Carmel

18-20 SOA Prayer Vigil, Columbus, Ga.

### December

15 Mary Frances Clarke Birthday Party, Mount Carmel, Dubuque, Iowa

**For more information, visit:**

[www.bvmcong.org/whatsnew\\_calendar.cfm](http://www.bvmcong.org/whatsnew_calendar.cfm)

## BVM Website Feature:

**Did you know you can send prayer requests to the BVM sisters from our website?** The BVM sisters will pray for any persons in need. To submit your prayer request, complete our online form. The request

will be placed on the prayer boards outside the chapels at Mount Carmel, Dubuque.

**To find the prayer request form visit:**

[www.bvmcong.org/contact\\_requests.cfm](http://www.bvmcong.org/contact_requests.cfm).

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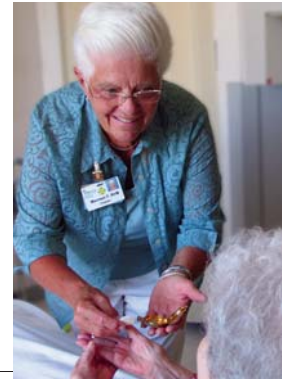
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**On the cover:** BVMs Otilie Sana and Marion Murphy (John Patrice) walk from Westside Employment Education Center (WEEC) to Holy Family food pantry for the next part of their day. Both locations are vital parts of their Chicago ministry. In the pages ahead, read stories of other BVM sisters and associates who "minister in the here and now."

# SEASONing



BVM Leadership team members are (l. to r.) Teri Hadro, Mary Ann Zollmann and Mira Mosle.

**Compelled by the example and word of Mary Frances Clarke in her sensitive response to critical human situations, we strive to seek out and attend to those in need whatever this may require of us.**

(BVM *Constitutions*, 15)

At this year's congregational jubilee event (July 29–31), 46 women who first arrived at Mount Carmel on July 31, 1961, gathered in the Motherhouse chapel to remember, to celebrate and give thanks. Thirteen of those women were celebrating their golden anniversaries as BVMs; they were joined by silver jubilarian Luann Brown.

In a reflection on her commitment, Luann related a story of a young girl whose bedtime ritual routinely involved multiple requests for water, conversation and parental attention.

One night, her no doubt exasperated mother asked her what lay behind the requests and heard her daughter say, "I don't like to be all by myself." The mother responded, "You're not really alone, you know. God is always with you." There was a thoughtful pause on the daughter's part. Finally she shared, "Yes, but sometimes it's just nice to have someone with skin."

The stories in this issue start with flesh and blood BVMs, associates and friends working with and on behalf of their flesh and blood sisters and brothers.

Each illustrates that presence, "skin-on" and responsive, is where ministry begins.

If presence is where ministry begins, the 35 words in article 15 of the BVM *Constitutions* identify the touchstone—the ministry imperative born in the experience of God's unconditional love, and nurtured into mission by Mary Frances Clarke and generations of BVMs. Each vignette in this issue adds to the mosaic that is BVM ministry here and now; each individual portrayed describes in her own words how being compelled to seek out and attend to those in need becomes real.

BVM Nan Ross' guiding principle is "doing whatever needs to be done." Justine Hejiik, a participant in the Dubuque in-service weekend, brought a "spark for service" and experienced its fanning into a "fire that burns inside." For BVM Dolores Becker, the death of a friend from HIV/AIDS proved to be a call she could not refuse. Janine Wolff, BVM is impelled to *retread* rather than *retire*.

Associate Kay Derner Brown offers school children a "safe haven," a place where a caring adult listens to a child's true feelings or fears. Mary Therese Freymann, BVM writes grants to obtain 21st century technology for poor schools and teaches teachers to use that technology with their classes.

BVMs, associates and friends, compelled by the example of Mary Frances Clarke, seek out flesh and blood need. They are flesh and blood responders who know that presence, "skin-on" and responsive, is where ministry begins. May their stories inspire you!

*Mary Ann Zollmann, BVM*

*Mira Mosle, BVM*

*Teri Hadro, BVM*



# Claiming an Apostolic Visitation as a Moment of Grace

by Mary Ann Zollmann, BVM

**Though defined as an instant in time, there are moments that contain the whole of our lives.**

They reach back to our origins and stretch toward our future. Such was the “moment” in January 2009 when the Office of Consecrated Life in Rome announced an Apostolic Visitation of religious sisters in the United States for the purpose of evaluating the quality of our life. Given our 177 years of BVM fidelity to God and to the church, our immediate response was one of disbelief and betrayal. Yet, as a congregation, we committed ourselves to claiming the event as a

**“moment of grace.”**

In the first phase, major superiors were invited to meet with Mother Clare Millea, ASCJ, the Rome-appointed facilitator of the Visitation. In preparation for that visit, we BVMs turned to our foundress, Mary Frances Clarke, retrieving her spirit alive in us. In our individual and communal reflection and conversation, Mary Frances Clarke drew close and drew us close to one another.

On the day I met with Mother Clare to share the fruits of our congregational process, BVMs all over the world gathered in a prayer of solidarity. The experience of communion in the affection of Mary Frances Clarke, generated by our response to the first phase of the Visitation, will inform our BVM life forever into the future.

Phase two arrived in the form of a questionnaire about our prayer, community life, ministry and governance. In formulating our responses, we turned to our *Constitutions*, our Rome-approved rule, for words capable of communicating the true lived experience of our life. Realizing that we could not authentically confine the freeing spirit that inspires all we are and do in answers to fact-seeking questions, we BVMs and many of our sisters in other congregations chose to respond by sending our *Constitutions*.

In this second phase, we rediscovered the beauty of our *Constitutions*, renewed our resolve to live in accord with their invitation, and bonded with our sisters across the country as we took a communal action of integrity.

The third phase consisted of an on-site visit of selected congregations by a team representing the Apostolic Visitation Office. One of the selected congregations, we engaged the visit as an opportunity to

make our BVM life and mission visible in our words, rituals and manner of presence. We told and celebrated our story as vibrant and faith-filled women of the church who, in the image of a limitlessly loving God, attempt to live lives of compassionate care for all.

In this third phase, we discovered our kinship with many of our lay sisters and brothers who live a similar vision of church; and we grew stronger in our courage to co-create, in companionship with the people of God, a church founded on, guided by and sustained in unconditional love.

The fourth phase is yet to come, a report from Rome about the findings from the Visitation process. Although we await Rome’s response, we do so non-anxiously in a spirit of calm certitude about who we are as BVMs, as women religious, and as part of the family of God.

No matter what may be asked of us, we stand in this moment blessed by the abiding affection of Mary Frances Clarke, the sure companionship of one another, the new-found solidarity with the laity, and the unfailing directional spirit of our *Constitutions*.

Claiming this moment as a moment of grace, we hold here and now in this instant of time the beauty and the power of our past, our present and our future. Trusting in the gifts of recognition and insight given to us in this Visitation, we move forward in hope freed for our mission at the heart of the church.

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**About the author:** Mary Ann Zollmann, BVM (Clement Mary) is the president of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Dubuque, Iowa.

# BVM Dolores Becker

## From the Classroom to AIDS Ministry

by Marjorie Heidkamp, BVM

"Ours is a pioneer heritage enabling us to move into the future responsive to the Spirit speaking in the exigencies of the times" *Constitutions*, 1. "Our mission finds expression in our traditional commitment to education and in ministries emerging from new needs in church and society" *Constitutions*, 13. "We are called to prepare ourselves and others to respond fully and competently to the imperatives of ministry" *Constitutions*, 18.

**This is the story of how one BVM has** been responsive to the spirit speaking in the exigencies of the times, meeting emerging new needs, and preparing herself and others to respond competently.

### Vatican II Inspires Change

Dolores Becker, BVM left Mundelein College in Chicago in 1962 filled with enthusiasm for life in the classroom. As the church and world responded to the call of Vatican II, Dolores felt the call to change the direction of her education ministry to catechist training. These were exciting days when the church was reaching out to empower and educate adult members of the community to take responsibility for the education of themselves and their families.

While working as an adult educator, Dolores had a profound personal experience which once again moved her to change focus. Her friend, Romana Marie Ryan, BVM (Edmunda), died of Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in 1985, after receiving a blood transfusion from an infected donor. This was a wake-up call that brought a mysterious new disease from back page stories to headline consciousness for BVMs.

### AIDS Ministry Comes into Focus

For Dolores, Romana Marie's death was an aching call to know and do more. She began to educate herself through workshops and lectures. While working



Retreat participants Mary Jane Hernandez (l.) and Susan Jones (r.) work together on the Faith Sharing Committee with BVM Dolores Becker.

**For further information about ACTS/HIV retreats, visit:**

- [www.actshiv.org](http://www.actshiv.org) or
- [www.actshopeministry.org/retreat\\_description.html](http://www.actshopeministry.org/retreat_description.html)

in New Hampshire, Dolores and other directors of Christian Life Centers became certified AIDS educators and brought this program to many parishes.

At one point Dolores worked as an LPN with AIDS patients. In 2005, she met a charismatic nurse, Monica, at the National Catholic AIDS Network (NCAN) conference. Monica, from San Antonio (where Dolores planned to visit the following year), invited Dolores to attend an Adoration Community Theology and Service (ACTS)/Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) retreat while there. The retreat so inspired Dolores that she moved to San Antonio, where she continues to be a vibrant part of the ministry.

While serving as one of the team members for a retreat, Dolores became ill. She prayed at home and was only able to join the group for the closing Mass, where she noticed a woman near her in the chapel who seemed to be glowing. Susan later told Dolores that the glow was because she was afraid of nuns. However, Dolores' interpretation of the glow might be more accurate; since that retreat, Susan, diagnosed 26 years ago with HIV, has become a daily minister in and to the community. She and Dolores have become fast friends.

### Retreats Offer Hope

ACTS sponsors retreats that provide a safe haven for sharing, acceptance and hope. Established 11 years ago in Texas,

ACTS/HIV retreats are coeducational, and open to anyone "infected or affected" by HIV/AIDS. Another new type of ACTS retreat is Healing One Body with Peace and Empathy (ACTS/HOPE), open to men or women with a chronic and/or terminal illness other than HIV or AIDS.

Held under parish auspices, these retreats are based on the CURSILLO (meaning a "little course in Christianity") retreat model; they begin on Thursday evenings and last until Sunday afternoons. Retreat participation doesn't end with the closing ceremony; it spills out into ongoing community service, faith-sharing and fun. One member of the ACTS/HIV group closes his restaurant the first Friday of each month so members can enjoy a shared meal. On the second Friday of the month, retreat participants meet for faith-sharing. The third Sunday of the month features a Mass for both groups followed by a potluck.

Dolores has been responsive to the spirit speaking in the events of her life, leading her step-by-step to this group of persons in this specific time and place. Mary Frances Clarke surely smiles on this new pioneer spirit in her sister.

**About the author:** Marjorie M. Heidkamp, BVM (Herberdette) spent many years in elementary education and pastoral ministry before moving into hospice chaplaincy. She now enjoys volunteering, gardening and retirement in Chicago.



BVM Diane Rapozo (l.) discusses the Tibetan meditation, “Mandalas,” with Sr. Rachel, as they view some symbolic drawings.

# Pastoral Care Minsters ‘Walking on Holy Ground’

by Judith Callahan, BVM

## Diane Rapozo, BVM (Malia)

“Where true inner freedom is, there is God. And where God is, there we want to be.” For Diane Rapozo, BVM (Malia), pastoral care minister at Mount St. Francis in Dubuque, the BVM charism of freeing oneself and others to enjoy God’s steadfast love is a daily event. These words of Henri Nowen, in *Bread for the Journey—Daily Meditations*, describe the evolving of the spiritual journey of Franciscan sisters who are retired and/or receive skilled care. Diane is often touched emotionally and spiritually as she receives trust and sharing from the sisters. She is awed, too, by the depth of the sisters, who now have time to explore new ways of growing spiritually and intellectually.

### Prior Ministries, Education Provide Preparation

Prior to her ministry of six years at Mount St. Francis, Diane’s mother in Hawaii developed Alzheimer’s disease. Able to visit twice a year to accompany her mother in her final journey, Diane learned much about the effects of demen-

tia on a sister and her family. She was well-prepared for her present ministry by her previous work in pastoral care at Marian Hall, Mount Carmel, for eight years, and in her ministry as regional representative for the BVM congregation for seven years.

Some sisters define their identities by

their formal ministries—such as teaching, nursing, administration and more—and have often been workaholics. Others have difficulty accepting health issues like dementia, fatigue and painful illnesses.

Diane learned in her Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) training that she cannot take away the pain her clients suffer; she has learned to be compassionate, acknowledging the pain, but gently challenging them to find their own answers. She assists them in letting go of past ministries, successes and status, and guides them to caringly minister to one another. They learn to rejoice in the freedom of having *time* to pray, read, relax and yes, even play computer games without feeling guilty.

### A Companion on the Journey

Pastoral care for the elderly has its joys as well as its challenges. Diane companioned a sister in the dying process who had a very difficult time letting go. Each day the sister shared part of her story. Diane had no answers for her, but assured her that she had done the best she could in her lifetime, and finally the sister was able to die peacefully. Another sister had been verbally abused by family members in her childhood, and grew up believing the demeaning things said to her. Diane met weekly with her, encouraging the sister to use consistent, positive self-affirmations. Approaching death, the sister was able to feel much better about herself.

Diane enjoys working with the sisters using “Mandalas,” a form of Tibetan meditation based on symbolic drawings—artistic representations in color, form and design of some aspect of a sister’s spiritual life. In this sense, the drawings become a kind of spiritual autobiography. The depth of the sharing of spirituality with one another is rich and inspiring.

For relaxation and leisure, Diane enjoys reading, nature experiences, movies, music and being with friends. Currently and for the past three years, she mentors a child weekly after school, encouraging him to share how his life is going and helping with homework. “But in my work, I continue to be inspired by the wisdom, courage, insights and openness to life and learning as well as the continual spiritual growth in these women.”

## Maureen Patrice Fury, BVM

**“Sister, will you pray with us?”** These words help Maureen Patrice Fury, BVM know how to proceed in her role as pastoral minister at Mercy Medical Center in Dubuque, Iowa. “I let the patient and family set the agenda,” she says. When called into the trauma unit or emergency room, or for a “code blue” situation, she silently prays, “Lord, let me be what I need to be for this person and his or her family at this time.” Each patient and family’s needs are unique and require appropriate adaptation.

### A Lifetime of Preparation

Before her 18-plus years in formal pastoral ministry, Maureen had early practical training for pastoral care in her own home, where extended family elders lived and had special needs. As a teenager, she worked in the kitchen at Marian Hall, Mount Carmel. The compassionate BVM Carmelette Kennedy sent Maureen to terminally ill sisters to find out what they wanted for dinner, saying, “They can have anything they want!” In her summers as a teacher, Maureen volunteered at Marian Hall. Her five years as a volunteer in hospice care taught her how to minister

to the dying. Not knowing Spanish, Maureen learned from an experience in Quito, Ecuador, that body language—a smile, a gesture, a hug—can convey compassion better than words. Her primary teaching experience taught her the importance of response to individual needs.

Maureen believes that her own vulnerability and grief in the illness and death of loved ones in her life have prepared her to be compassionate and sensitive to the same in patients. “I’m blessed, broken and gifted; in those gifts, I’m able to help patients experience God’s love for them.” Her own faith, nurtured in prayer and

reflection, provides a solid base for her prayer for and with others in ministry.

Pastoral ministry is not without challenges. The fatigue factor is real. Emotionally burdensome and anxious situations can cause Maureen to “mull over” situations, in prayer and in time off, carrying the sadness and burdens in her heart. She realizes the importance of healthy self-care, especially in the area of recreation and leisure.

### Comforting Presence

The BVM charism of freeing oneself and others to enjoy God’s steadfast love is lived out daily. One former patient, who prayed daily in the hospital chapel, developed terminal cancer. He was distraught that he could no longer pray. Maureen assured him that his cancer was his prayer. Accepting this, he was freed from the need to multiply words in prayers, and was peacefully able to accept God’s loving presence in his suffering.

Maureen indicates that effectiveness cannot be measured in quantitative terms. Sometimes she meets patients or family members in other places who gratefully tell her how much her presence meant to them in their times of need. Then she knows that she is effective. She senses a building of a relationship of trust that encourages peace and comfort for people. While being present and making a difference can be difficult, it can provide immeasurable comfort for patients and their families. “We are called to be a non-anxious presence in an anxious situation.”

What tugs most at Maureen’s big heart is any situation involving children. The death of a child, or terminal illness for anyone, is always difficult. A family asks, “Why? Why doesn’t God hear our prayer?” When she lost a two-year-old nephew in death, she, too, asked, “Why?”

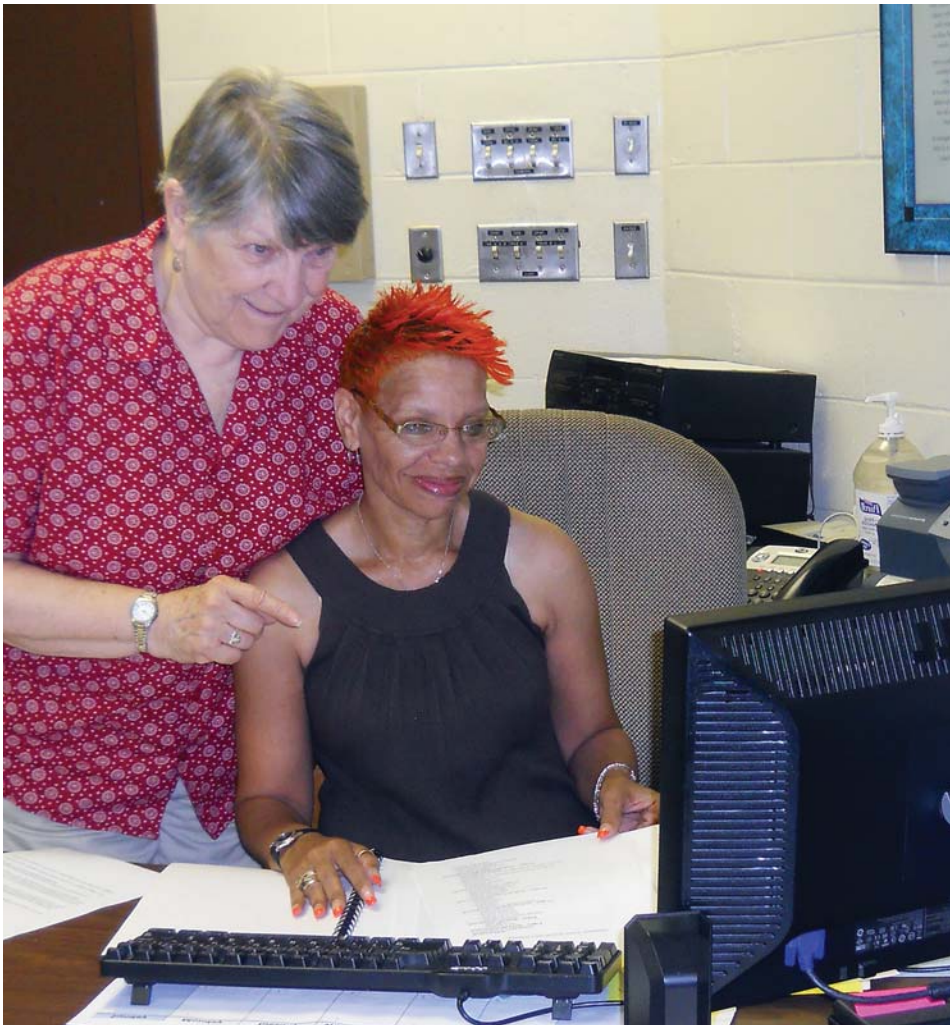
“My firmest belief,” Maureen adds, “is that as a pastoral care person, we walk on holy ground. Nothing is more sacred than the request of a family: ‘Sister, will you pray with us?’”



Photo: Keri Gockel, Mercy Medical Center

BVM Maureen Patrice Fury brings Eucharist to a patient.

**About the author:** Judith Callahan, BVM (Eugene Mary) has served as educator, administrator, director of Hispanic ministry and parish minister. Currently she works as a tutor/translator and does computer training in Dubuque, Iowa.



MaryTherese Freymann, BVM coaches Djun Williams, a PK aide at St. Agatha Catholic Academy, in software technology.

## Implementing Takes Time

My ministry is rooted in the above vision. For the past 30-plus years, I have worked with educational technology.

Seven years ago the principal of Saint Agatha Catholic Academy in Chicago asked me to implement a technology program. Where do you start in an environment that is devoid of any technology? It would be a slow process, getting grants, equipping and training the teachers, then working to support the teachers in their pedagogical changes to integrate the technology into the curriculum.

Funding is a challenge and a long and tedious process. Before you even begin the mountains of paperwork, you must search for the funding sources through networking, meetings with donors like “Big Shoulders,” dialoging with colleagues, and searching the internet. Once a grant source has been found, hours are spent gathering exact statistics and data, creating a budget, presenting evidence of needs while following stringent grant guidelines. Even after the grant is obtained there is tracking and evaluating progress. The funding from grants is on an annual or one-time basis, so the entire process must start over again the following year.

Once the grant is awarded, up-to-date technology equipment is obtained. Then the inventory tracking begins. Another challenge is to keep up with repairs once you have equipment. It is much cheaper to learn to repair equipment yourself when problems arise. One source that has helped me is Illinois Computing Educators (ICE), composed of teachers who collaborate and share. This is also a resource to learn new technologies like the interactive boards or iPads.

## Training is a Creative Challenge

The next step is training the teachers to use the equipment in an educational setting. Basic computer skills are a starting point for some and others come with experience, but all have much to learn. Some teachers have never even used a laptop or heard of an interactive board. You have to get creative in order to find time to train as needed.

This is done through group meetings and one-on-one assistance. The training challenge is to keep teachers motivated

# Bridging the ‘Digital Divide’

by MaryTherese Freymann, BVM



**While embracing the thought that education provides freedom and some sense of opportunity, it must also include 21st century technological skills. Technology is not an end in itself. Correct technology use has been shown in studies to engage students in learning and increase achievement if the focus is on the student and learning.**

to get comfortable with new technologies. One teacher was frightened using a laptop (“I’ll break it!”). Now she uses the interactive board almost daily and has her students using Skype with students in Vermont. She is now anxious to use the document camera with her science projects. That learning took time and energy. Such progress is very rewarding for me.

Working to support the teachers in their pedagogical changes to integrate the technology into the curriculum is the greatest challenge of all. Most teachers teach how they were taught. Instead of chalkboards or overheads, one teacher will now use the interactive board with a child-centered interface; instead of outdated texts or movies, another will use electronic resources such as *discovery education*. Instead of one-size-fits-all, teachers will use differentiated lessons, and interac-

tion, problem solving and collaboration will take the place of lecturing.

How do we facilitate these changes? We provide online training that is accessible anytime, anywhere, such as *atomiclearning*, which has a module for 21st century technology skills for teachers and training for most software programs, showing how to integrate them educationally.

### Technology Fosters Learning

The final goal of all the challenges is to help students learn as much as possible. Many assume the young of today are very technologically literate. That is not true for all, because there is still a “digital divide.” When introduced to a laptop, many of the Saint Agatha students do so for the first time.

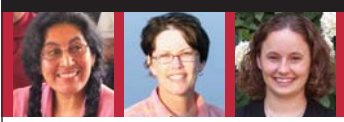
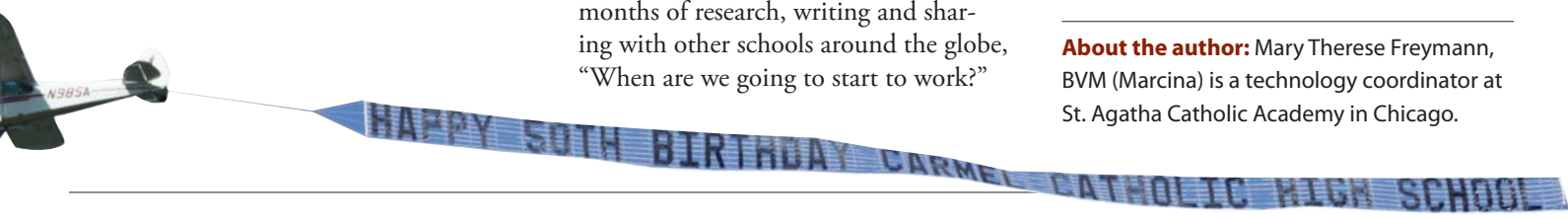
We see the excitement in electronic learning. An 8th grader said, after doing months of research, writing and sharing with other schools around the globe, “When are we going to start to work?”

Another wrote an additional research paper investigating the danger of smoking. She wanted to get her mother to stop smoking. A preschool child, when first using the activeboard, said in awe, “It’s magic!” Something good happens when technology is buried by learning.

We must not forget the support of the administrator. Without that support all my efforts would be in vain. I am most grateful for our principal, Mrs. Patricia Williams, who is a graduate of Saint Agatha Catholic Academy and is now giving back, in return for the educational start she had at Saint Agatha. She is an inspiring leader in educational technology benefiting the students, teachers and staff.

Let’s hope and pray these 21st century technology skills help the staff and teachers to lead now and equip the students to be future leaders in our society.

**About the author:** Mary Therese Freymann, BVM (Marcina) is a technology coordinator at St. Agatha Catholic Academy in Chicago.



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## Carmel Catholic High School Celebrates 50 Years

**Carmel Catholic High School** (CCHS) began its year-long celebration of 50 years of Catholic secondary education in the BVM and Carmelite traditions with a liturgy and dinner on Sunday, Aug. 21, 2011, at Baker Stadium in Mundelein, Ill. BVM President Mary Ann Zollmann (Clement Mary) was the guest homilist. Nearly 50 BVMs were present to share in this landmark event.

Jointly founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Charity, BVM, and the Order of the Carmelites (OCarm), Carmel Catholic High School began in the early '60s as two separate high schools—one for boys and one for girls—and became coeducational in 1988. Today CCHS educates over 1,400 students and excels in the area of Catholic identity.

Mary (de Porres) Sattgast, BVM and Kathleen Sinclair, BVM serve at CCHS in school staff positions. BVMs Lois Dolphin, Sheila O'Brien (Mary Trea) and Teri Hadro (Teresa) serve on the Corporate Member Board of CCHS.



Left: Celebrating 50 years are (l. to r.) BVM Mary Ann Zollmann, Judith Muccheck, president of CCHS, and Rev. Carl Markelz, OCarm. Left center: BVMs (l. to r.) Mary Sattgast, Therese Jacobs (Therese Carmelle) and Nancy McCarthy (Josephine) were part of the founding faculty in 1962. They were joined the following year by



Mary Lou Caffery (James Mary) (second from l.). Below: BVMs attending the celebration include (l. to r.) Anne Buckley (Joan), Virginia Stone (Alice Rose), Rosalie Glanz (Victor Ann), Carol Cook (Conrad Ann), Therese Jacobs, Lois Dolphin, Teri Hadro and Kathleen Conway (Richard Marie).



Photos: HR Imaging Partners

Ten participants made the 2011 journey to Ecuador for the 4th annual 'Immersion Trip.'



# Service Experiences

## 'Igniting the Spark'

by Kathy Carr, BVM and Lou Anglin, BVM



**"We walk with our hands empty seeking to be filled with your presence. We go full of poverty to be enriched."**

These words aptly describe the experience of the many volunteers who have participated in the service experiences cosponsored by the BVM Initial Membership and Associate Coordinator teams in recent years.

These volunteer experiences in the U.S. and Ecuador provide opportunities for BVMs, associates and friends to give service and reflect on their experience in the context of prayer and community.



Flo Heflin, BVM (Floretta) (l.) paints the bathroom at Maria House while Sara McAlpin, BVM (Philip Mary) cleans windows.

## Dubuque Service Experience

This year's "in-country" service experience took place in Dubuque, Iowa, April 8–10. A diverse, enthusiastic group of 28—including BVMs, associates, Clarke University students, Mount Carmel employees and others interested in volunteering—gathered at Mount Carmel to share a weekend of service, reflection and community.

The journey began Friday night as the group shared a meal, got acquainted, and listened to local women religious describe the ministry organizations, putting faces on the people volunteers would soon meet and work with.

## Experience Provides Insights

On Saturday morning, volunteers were divided into groups and sent to help at three local nonprofits: Teresa Shelter and Maria House—a women's shelter and a transitional living house, both established collaboratively by Dubuque area women religious—and the Presentation Lantern Center, an educational center devoted to helping immigrants from many countries learn how to speak English.

Memorable experiences, ranging from the profound to the humorous, marked the day . . . windows that were opened to clean and then couldn't be shut; painting the wrong room, hearing the moving story of a Russian immigrant, and helping a

5-year-old celebrate her birthday! Six of the participants also served the noon meal to folks who gathered at the Dubuque Rescue Mission, a downtown shelter that provides a daily meal for anyone who needs it.

In the afternoon the group went to Hills and Dales, a residential center for children and adults with mental and physical disabilities. Many volunteers were deeply moved by their experiences with these residents, and by the care and respect given them by their caretakers. Associate Norm Freund articulated it well when he said, "It taught me the value of letting go of tangible results and just being with someone in need."

## Reflections Reveal Spiritual Growth

The group's prayerful reflection on Sunday revealed the deep spiritual impact of the weekend. As Clarke student Brittany Gosse shared: "The BVM service weekend allowed me to fuel my passion for serving by being with others who desire to change the world, impact lives, learn about/challenge themselves, and share love with those in need . . . I experienced joy, hope, love and much more from those I served and the people with whom I served."

Justine Hejlik, another young participant, used the image of fire to describe the impact of the weekend: "I began this experience with a spark in my heart for service. Now, the people I met and the service experience I have had created a fire that burns inside!"

Indeed, the participants of the Dubuque volunteer weekend experienced the spirit of Mary Frances Clarke as described in the BVM *Constitutions*: "Compelled by the example and word of BVM foundress Mary Frances Clarke in her sensitive response to critical human situations, we strive to seek out and attend to those in need whatever this may require of us."

## Ecuador 'Immersion' Trip

Ten people, including six associated with St. Mary Parish in Los Gatos, Calif., and four from the Midwest, journeyed together in April to Quito for the 4th annual Ecuador service immersion trip, to share an extraordinary 11-day experience.

### 'Family of Families' Provides Base for Service

Home while in Quito was the Working Boys' Center (WBC), where BVMs

have ministered for over 40 years. Each day, volunteers went out to give service or to experience the rich culture of Ecuador. The days ended with prayerful reflection and sharing the evening meal with other guests at the Volunteer House.

The first day began with an orientation given by John Halligan, SJ, and BVMs Cindy Sullivan and Miguel Conway, who explained the philosophy of the Working Boys' Center, describing it as a "Family of Families."

WBC began with hopes of educating shoeshine boys to improve their lot in life. John and Miguel soon realized that by educating the entire family, the cycle of poverty might be broken. Today the center provides education, meals and health-care for over 2,000 people.

In addition to basic education, young men and women learn auto mechanics, cosmetology, woodworking, sewing, baking and other skills—giving them the means needed to support themselves and their families. The center focuses on specific areas of life—loyalty, personal formation, family, religion, education, economy, work, recreation, health and housing—incorporating values to provide a foundation for success.

Service work for the center included tutoring, creating advertising posters and educational materials, and cleaning out the "bodega" (storeroom) and other areas. Participants joined a "minga" (work gang), where members of the center agree to help each other build a home or home addition. Volunteers hauled bags of dry cement up to a third floor addition under construction.

The group visited Yachay Wasi in Quito, a school dedicated to teaching the unique Quechua culture, where Luann

Brown, BVM ministers. Due to the economic situation in Ecuador, many indigenous people have to leave their villages in the Andes Mountains, where the Quechua culture has thrived for centuries. Students provided a tour of their garden, danced and sang, and shared a bit about their spirituality.

### Guayaquil Ministries Foster Education, Hope and Dignity

A day journey to Guayaquil, where BVMs and associates share a long history, was a moving part of the service immersion experience.

At Nuevo Mundo Foundation, begun by Associates Pat McTeague and Sonia Rendon, participants learned how the foundation provides healthcare and preschool education to the poor. Volunteers toured Nuevo Mundo School, where those who can afford tuition come in the morning and the poor come in the afternoon, both to receive an excellent education.

A visit to Damien House was next on the agenda, where Ann Credidio, BVM provides a safe and healthy place for people with Hansen's disease to live and receive care. Working on a limited budget, Ann helps to bring dignity and joy to these often ostracized people.

BVM ministry presence in Ecuador is about hope and joy. Sometimes it means teaching others how to live a life of faith, dispensing medication to people who otherwise would not receive it, or lending a helping hand to those who want to provide better shelter for their families. Other times it's about supplying a safe place to learn to fix a truck, giving a scholarship so a young mother can get a degree and a better job, or helping young workers speak out for their rights.

As one participant shared, "We were a part of a history that continues to instill hope and educate from a deeper vision of personal responsibility and the gift of family." The service immersion trips offer this firsthand experience . . . where volunteers receive more than they could ever give.

**About the authors:** Kathy Carr, BVM and Lou Anglin, BVM are Initial Membership Coordinators for the BVM congregation.



Volunteers Sheila Fitzgerald (l.) and Monica Mack visit with a resident of Damien House in Guayaquil.

1 *Prayer Without Borders, Celebrating Global Wisdom*. Catholic Relief Services, 2004, p. 12.

2011-2012  
BVM Sisters & Associates  
Volunteer Opportunities

For more information about BVM Volunteer Opportunities, email Kathy or Lou at [newmember@bvmcong.org](mailto:newmember@bvmcong.org), or visit our website: [www.bvmcong.org/join\\_volunteer.cfm](http://www.bvmcong.org/join_volunteer.cfm).

**2012 Opportunities**  
Ecuador – March 12-21  
Milwaukee – April 27-29

*Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary*  
Fondly by Love, We Serve the World  
[www.bvmcong.org](http://www.bvmcong.org)

## Life on the Tundra

"I do better on the fringe," Nan confided with a smile. Then she reflected on her move from elementary school principal in California to fourth grade teacher in Alaska.

In 1980, Nan's regional representative, Michaelita Kelly, BVM, placed a notice in the region's newsletter announcing that Bishop Frank Hurley had just opened a new elementary school in Anchorage. Was anyone interested? "I immediately picked up the phone and called Michaelita," Nan remembered.

"I spent six of the happiest years of my life there," she continued. She was living on a geographic fringe of BVM community with Mary Faith Lautz, BVM and Pat DaCosta, BVM (Patricia Ann), many years before email connections reduced time and distance. They were years rich with memories of a unique experience of life and ministry in a vast tundra landscape where the annual ice break-up of the frozen rivers was cause for a town celebration.

## BVM Redefines Ministry Roles

Returning to the Midwest, Nan was assistant administrator at the Mount Carmel Motherhouse and then administrator of the BVM Center. She didn't exactly follow an administrator's role description, and could often be found doing odd jobs around the campus grounds and buildings. She characterized her ministry as "doing whatever needed to be done."

In 1996, congregational Vice President Mary McCauley, BVM (Mercedie) inquired, "Nan, how would you like to go to Maloy, Iowa?" Several Midwest congregations belonging to the local Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) were launching a collaborative ministry to the people in a rural area of southwest Iowa.

Nan jumped at the chance, joining BVM Joanna Rettenmeier and Franciscan



Using steel wool, Nan prepares a piece of furniture for refinishing.



BVM Nan Ross spends much of her time in the courtyard flower garden at Mount Carmel spreading mulch and replanting flowers.

# Nan Ross, BVM: Relationships Define Ministries

by Mary Martens, BVM

The needs of the times elicit responses according to one's talents and personality. For Nan Ross, BVM (John William), simply "living life" is her approach to ministry.

Marian Klosterman in “a ministry of presence.” The idea was for the three to live among and be in relationship with the people of Maloy, discerning ways of being helpful according to each one’s skills and talents. Nan was in her element, able to do something she does well, relating to the people and surroundings in which she finds herself.

Nan, the former teacher, volunteered to tutor kids in the local public school so they could meet then-President Clinton’s goal that “no child should leave third grade without knowing how to read.” There were also Wednesday after-school religion classes in the small Catholic parish, and a host of other activities.

Since Nan was “retired,” she appointed herself “to keep the home fires burning” for Joanna and Marian, who had become involved fulltime in a variety of activities in and around Maloy. “So I puttered as cook, gardener, mower, cleaner and doer of odd jobs.” She also volunteered at the local food pantry, in charge of packing and delivering food.

### People are Key in Relationships

Whatever she did, it was in relationship with people—many of them, like her, retired. In small towns, it isn’t always easy for newcomers to fit in, but Nan had a way of sharing easily around anyone’s kitchen table or lending a hand with someone’s chores. She found the pace of

rural Iowa much to her liking and in sync with her own rhythms of daily life.

One incident holds a special place in her memory. It happened on the Feast of the Three Kings, when a stranger joined the small congregation for the church service. Not one to let a newcomer go unnoticed, Nan started into conversation with him. Complimenting his extraordinary singing voice, she asked his name. “Emmanuel,” he replied.

Thirteen years of ministry in Maloy ended when the bishop announced that the parish would close. Nan had known that sooner or later she would move back to Mount Carmel as a resident. The years in Alaska and Iowa had seen her responding to the needs of the times in different settings and at different stages of her life. In Anchorage, “ministry here and now” meant using and adapting her skills as an educator to a challenging geographic setting. In Maloy, she adapted to a rural setting where her relational skills won her a place in the life of a small, close-knit community.

### Move to Motherhouse Presents New Opportunities

In 2009, Nan moved to the Motherhouse. Not wanting to be idle, she set out to create a ministry for herself. After announcing her availability, she started doing small repair jobs for individual sisters. Refinishing a coffee table or a “what-not” stand, a bookcase or a desk, gave

her a start. Using the corner of a garage gave her a workspace. Having previously worked with several Mount Carmel supervisors when she was administrator at the BVM Center gave her connections to other possibilities.

Among the situations which have benefited from Nan’s willingness to address whatever needs arise, at least two major accomplishments deserve mention: power washing the mausoleum and crosses which mark the grave sites of the first five BVM sisters, Father Donaghoe, the BVM mothers general and presidents; and creating and maintaining a beautiful, easy-care flower garden in an enclosed space which no longer needs mowing because the grass has been replaced by mulch.

Meantime, Nan anticipates the completion of a real workshop, now in progress. Also, she is itching to put one more coat of varnish on the central stairway in the Motherhouse. Besides her work on the Mount Carmel grounds and for individual sisters, she can be found visiting elderly, frail and ill sisters, or simply chatting with her many friends. Her relational skills remain strong, as does her determination to keep busy living life and doing her ministry in the here and now.

**About the author:** Mary Martens, BVM (Loras) is administrative assistant for the BVM congregation and a member of the Communication Advisory Committee.

## SALT | BRIEFS



**Ann Chaput, BVM** was honored June 25, 2011, for her ministry in religious education in the Chicago Archdiocese. Cardinal

Francis George presented Ann with an Archdiocesan candle and certificate at a prayer service held at Our Lady of Hope in Rosemont, Ill.

Ann recently completed two years as director of faith formation at St. Dismas Parish, a small multicultural parish in Waukegan, Ill. Her second book, the *Lectio-nary for 2011–2012 for Intermediate Grades*, was published in April 2011 by Liturgy Training Publications (LTP), Chicago.



**Mary Christine Athans, BVM (Christophil)** wrote the chapter, “Fr. Charles E. Coughlin: The Radio Priest,”

included in the book *Reclaiming Catholicism: Treasures Old and New*, published in 2010 by Orbis Books, Maryknoll, N.Y.

The book, a collection of original essays and reflections by leading theologians and spiritual writers, received first place in the history category of the 2011 Catholic Press Association (CPA) Awards.

Christine is professor emerita at the Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity of the University of St. Thomas (Minn.), and adjunct faculty of Catholic Theological Union (CTU) and Loyola University Chicago.



**Joan Lingen, BVM (Ramone Mary)** received the Distinguished Alumni Award for Outstanding Achievement from Clarke

University on Saturday, Sept. 24, 2011, at the Alumni Recognition Brunch.

Joan is the provost/vice president for academic affairs at Clarke University, where she was also an art professor.

Joan says, “I feel humbled and honored to receive this reward. It is wonderful to be acknowledged for doing what you love to do. My many years at Clarke have been exciting and rewarding. It has been ‘home’ to me for more than 44 years.”



**BVM Pat Thalhuber's (Herbert Mary)** book, *Building a Home for the Heart: Using Metaphors in Value-Centered Circles*,

co-authored with Susan Thompson and originally published in 2007, is now available on Amazon.com in the Kindle Edition.

The book presents a “Circle-based” framework designed to stimulate thinking about the meaning of core values and to describe specific ways to generate dialogue about them in groups.

To order your Kindle version or read more about the book, go to: [www.amazon.com/dp/B005AXWD66](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B005AXWD66)

# Fostering Hope Through Love

by Mary Frances Reis, BVM

## Responding to the needs of the times

is deeply rooted in our BVM heritage. Sisters and associates today continue to respond in the spirit of our charism: *freed by love, acting for justice*. Living in a period of history with multiple serious needs, one that strikes a chord with many BVMs and associates is the wide prevalence of violence among youth.

## Reaching Out to Children's Needs

Confronting the need of preventive and curative intervention has been in the heart of Associate Kay Derner Brown for decades as a social worker facilitating children's groups in schools, agencies and parish situations. Today, Kay continues her mission by volunteering at Emerson School in the inner city of Tulsa, Okla., and at New Hope, a Tulsa organization that reaches out to the needs of children whose parents are incarcerated.

Kay's untiring efforts with children are based on her belief that "anger, bullying and other antisocial behaviors stem from a child's feelings of no control that arise from living situations that have gone completely out of control and have landed the child in a homeless or undesirable new living space."

## A Safe Place to Talk and Listen

Most of the children that meet Kay bring stories of loneliness, abuse, verbal harassment or self-hatred. Kay states that "while small groups cannot address all



Associate Kay Derner Brown spends time counseling a young student at Emerson School in Tulsa, Okla.

issues, they do give students a safe haven in which they must respect and listen to each other, while receiving that same opportunity to voice their feelings."

The "safe haven" that Kay provides offers a place for children to express their true feelings and fears. These are children like "Jane," who fantasizes her incarcerated mother as a successful attorney, or "Joe," a bully, whose dad beats him regularly, or "Jim," who holds the burden of family food shopping via his bike to stores or food pantries for his handicapped single mom. Each child has a story; each child has a need.

## Caring Offers Hope and Coping Skills

In her experience Kay has seen that whenever something happens to a family—death, divorce, unemployment, tornado, imprisonment—the children are left out because the adults are too busy trying to get their equilibrium back. Her goal has always been to be that "someone who takes the time to listen to the kids, knowing that they will cope much better for their entire lifetime."

The small groups at Emerson have come to know that "someone," and the faculty has come to deeply appreciate this caring woman who also helped them through the trauma of this year's potential closing.

"Seeing so many kids at Emerson with one or both parents in prison led me to New Hope, an Episcopalian program primarily for older children with a parent in prison," states Kay, who is already scheduled to begin small therapy groups for third to fifth graders in the fall. The program offers the children hope when life as they know it ends.

Both programs reflect Kay's commitment to the BVM core values of freedom, charity, education and justice. Kay puts it this way: "I get much more than I give. The kids keep me young and on my toes as their lives are changing so fast. It helps me to stay involved with school and community. They also give me a daily dose of a perspective of 'real' life and how fortunate I have been throughout my life."

**About the author:** Mary Frances Reis, BVM (Paul Adele) ministers in pastoral care at Mercy Hospital and St. Francis Parish in Lebanon, Mo.

# Association:

## Responding to a Spiritual Hunger of the Times

by BVMs Elizabeth Avalos and Nancy McCarthy and Associate Elizabeth Fitting

### Why do individuals decide to become BVM associates?

Although many reasons are given, in essence they all reflect the same longing and hope: “To follow the spirit of Mary Francis Clarke, develop a deeper prayer and spiritual life, and experience loving support,” as stated by one discerner. Another says, “I have a deep admiration for the BVMs, especially their dedication to charity and social justice.”

The example of BVMs, associates and vibrant “cluster groups” seems to attract individuals to association. In this new age of technology, individuals who feel a call to be an associate have also found the associate community through the BVM website.

BVM association was formally established at the BVM Senate in 1974 and was originally called the “Affiliate Program.” From the early years until today, association

has evolved to meet changing needs—from attracting mainly former BVMs to now including a wide range of individuals—a number of whom have little or no prior contact with the sisters. Association is gender inclusive; there are currently 172 associates, including 16 men.

### Association Meets Needs of Lay People

Currently 19 individuals are discerning association with the BVM community, indicative of the widespread and growing interest in association that many religious communities are experiencing. This seems to reflect a hunger on the part of ordinary people for a deeper spiritual life in the context of community, and the wish to engage in social justice endeavors. This hunger may not be met through some of the more traditional channels; in their searching, individuals discover the possibility of association.

Those discerning asso-

ciation are only a part of the equation. Equally vital to becoming an associate are the “companions” who are willing to walk this faith journey with the discerners. During this year-long process, the individual and companion (or sometimes several individuals and companions) explore the BVM history, charism and core values together—to prayerfully discern how these resonate for the discerner.

Companions, who are both BVMs and associates, express the often unexpected sense of renewal they experience by participating in the discernment process. Walking with another person on a faith journey is a mutual gift.

### Association Offers Spirituality, Community & Service

There is a need to be attentive to this movement of the spirit and offer the kinds of spiritual development, community and social justice opportunities that individuals seek.

In response to the request of associates to meet others from around the country and come together in a prayerful setting, a weekend retreat was sponsored for associates, candidates, BVMs and friends in Dubuque, Iowa, in May 2011.

Over 35 people participated in the weekend that featured a presentation on foundress Mary Frances Clarke by Kathryn Lawlor, BVM

(John Laurian), including a visit to the “Old Motherhouse on the Prairie;” a session on BVM spirituality; and another session focusing on justice, a BVM core value. This same retreat will be offered in Los Angeles in 2012.

Associates have helped organize two area gatherings on spirituality in Los Angeles. The most recent one, at Mount St. Mary’s College, focused on the topic of Prophetic Witness and was held in conjunction with the Women & Spirit exhibit now in Los Angeles. In the past year, associates have also participated in service projects in Quito, Ecuador; Chicago and Dubuque. They are currently organizing a service project in Milwaukee.

Association, though over 40 years old, is still in its beginning stages. At this time, it seems appropriate to explore the best way to nurture this evolution. A visioning process is planned for the fall of 2011, dedicated to examining trends and gathering suggestions from associates and sisters, as well as conferring with other associate directors. The spirit always surprises and challenges the imagination.

**About the authors:** Elizabeth Avalos, BVM (St. Augustine); Nancy McCarthy, BVM (Josephine Mary); and Associate Elizabeth Fitting are the Associate Coordinators for the BVM congregation.



Elizabeth Avalos, BVM (far l.) gathers with a group of associates on the steps of Mount St. Mary’s College in Los Angeles.

At Westside Employment Education Center, BVM Otilie Sana works with a mother of three to determine which grocery store in the area is the better bargain.

# 'The BVMs on Roosevelt Road'

by Margaret A. McGinn, BVM



Carol Cook, BVM volunteers in the weekly food pantry.

## First BVM Mission in Chicago

**When Agatha Hurley launched the first BVM mission in Chicago in 1867,** it was at Holy Family Parish. BVMs continued to teach at Holy Family and the surrounding schools for over 100 years, but by the 1990s school closures and mergers diminished their presence. Only a small contingent of BVMs remained to serve in the neighborhood.

Because this had been occurring in parishes throughout the country, the BVM Long Range Planning Committee designed a vehicle to enable groups of BVMs to live in community and work with local residents, especially those in poverty.

## Responding to Changing Needs

This proposal was a perfect fit for Holy Family. In 1995, BVMs Otilie Sana, Theresa Gleeson (Dorothy) and Marion Murphy (John Patrice) joined the three BVMs already there—Francilla Kirby, Angela Buser and Remi Caldwell. This group would form a team of BVMs to respond to the unmet needs of a poor area, one of the stated priorities.

Today, in spite of expensive condominiums encroaching on all sides and neighboring parishes revitalizing, many still struggle to survive on Chicago's near West Side. Here you will find Marion and Otilie continuing the ministry site begun in 1995. Their goal is to provide for the basic needs of mind and body: education and food.

## Feeding the Body

To serve the 400 families who qualify for assistance, a weekly food pantry operates from a small space in the basement of Holy Family Church. Although the pantry is open each week, attendance is restricted to once a month. In addition to the generous donations of goods and money from the Holy Family parishioners, the pantry has benefited from holiday collections from other parishes and individuals and from a longtime contributor, Faith, Hope and Charity Parish in Winnetka.

Marion, as the coordinator, oversees the ordering of the weekly food allotment from the Chicago Food Depository, receives deliveries, supervises volunteers, checks in clients and keeps all necessary records.

Volunteers from Holy Family pack grocery bags one night while others arrive from city and suburbs to staff the pantry each week. One such volunteer is Eileen Crowley, who was motivated by a memory of Georgita Griffin, BVM, her 7th grade teacher at St. Gertrude School in the '50s. After Eileen's father died suddenly, Georgita unobtrusively provided a regular supply of groceries for the Crowley family. As a result, Eileen has always

found ways to help others in their need.

Another loyal volunteer is Pat Harrison. Her sister, BVM (St.) Cornelia Harrison, was a faithful helper at the pantry. When her sister died, Pat took over her spot.

From Oak Park, BVM Carol Cook (Conrad Ann) comes regularly to add the food pantry to her list of volunteer duties. Her specialty is distributing the odds and ends that don't fit in with the cereals and pastas.

### Nourishing the Mind

Along with the food pantry, a vital part of the ministry site is the Westside Employment Education Center (WEEC). Initially, clerical skills were taught to young women hoping to enter the job market; at one point English as a Second Language (ESL) classes were offered. Now it is primarily a tutoring center for students completing their General Education Development (GED) diplomas.

Four days a week, individual instruction is given by Marion, Otilie and dedicated volunteers—mostly retired

teachers—who frequently recruit their friends to join the effort. Besides tutoring, Marion and Otilie act as co-directors, organizing the registration, assigning the volunteers, and communicating with the neighborhood.

WEEC operates out of the lower level of the 1903 BVM convent, which is now part of St. Ignatius High School. Along with the space, St. Ignatius provides computers for the center, and their campus ministry includes the food pantry and WEEC in the students' mission collections.

It takes little imagination to see the spirit of Agatha Hurley and her companions in this adaptation of the BVM mission begun in this very neighborhood 144 years ago. Whether in Dublin, Philadelphia, Dubuque or Chicago, the BVM goal has always been to assess the local needs and address them. This vision continues today on Roosevelt Road.

**About the author:** Margaret A. McGinn, BVM (Daniel Ann) is on the adjunct faculty at Truman College in Chicago.



Otilie Sana, BVM (top) organizes groceries in the food pantry while pantry coordinator Marion Murphy, BVM (above) checks in a customer.



BVM Marion Murphy (r.) tutors a WEEC student with the help of a computer.

# 'Crossing the Waters—Currents of Hope'

by Gwen Farry, BVM

Embrace the future with us:  
CROSSING THE WATERS  
of global concerns and needs

BVMs and associates, with worldwide presence and partnership,  
will listen to the cries of the oppressed and poor.

CURRENTS OF HOPE  
will sustain their work for freedom in God's steadfast love  
that brings health, education and well being  
to earth and its people.

Working unitedly, we will leave the future to God.

—Excerpt from 175th Jubilee Proclamation



Preparing to take the ICCR Chicago River Tour are BVMs (l. to r.) Barbara Gaul, Mary Kay Dum, Associate Mary Ann Krems, Carol Cook, Gwen Farry and Marge Clark.

**Since its beginning, the** BVM Shareholder Education and Advocacy group (SEA) has sought to educate its members about socially responsible issues that involve corporations, and advocate for change within those corporations. In 2008, in preparation for the 175th Jubilee of the congregation, SEA wanted to honor the chosen jubilee theme with a relevant, connected issue.

## Coca-Cola Story Begins in India

SEA learned that an investment group in California planned to file a shareholder resolution with Coca-Cola, requesting that the company

hire a third party to assess their water use in severely water-stressed India, where three liters of water were being used to produce one liter of beverage.

SEA asked the BVM Community Council to purchase enough shares for its Shareholder Activity Fund in order to co-file this resolution. The investment group later decided not to file; SEA then became the lead filer and attended the 2007 Coca-Cola Annual Shareholder Meeting. Hearing a man from India testify at the meeting strengthened SEA's resolve to bring attention to this critical situation.

The resolution received enough votes to enable SEA to re-file it in 2008. SEA then received a call from Coca-Cola asking the group to withdraw the resolution, because Coca-

Cola had hired The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) to assess their water management practices in India.

SEA agreed to withdraw the resolution on the condition that it would be apprised of the results of the assessment as well as Coca-Cola's subsequent plans to comply with TERI's recommendations.

## Company Implements Water Use Measures

SEA members represent the BVMs at the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), a pioneer coalition of active shareowners working to promote justice and sustainability in the world. Over 300 ICCR members help shape corporate policy on many environmental, social and economic justice issues.

Three Coca-Cola representatives came to the next ICCR meeting in New York and gave a detailed presentation on TERI's recommendations. Since then, SEA has had regular meetings with Coca-Cola, with company progress updates on the following: reducing water use, recycling water used in manufacturing through wastewater treatment standards, and replenishing water by supporting healthy watersheds, rainwater harvesting and sustainable community water programs.

Coca-Cola claims to have reduced factory water consumption by 34%, projecting a goal of using 1.25 liters of water to produce 1 liter of beverage in the next three to five years.

SEA members have participated in company dialogues and have filed resolutions with several other corporations regarding issues of human rights, access to health care and medicines, worker rights,

environmental sustainability, corporate governance and political contributions.

This is the "Advocacy" part of SEA's purpose. Its other aim is "Education," both of SEA members and others. SEA educates itself by participating in meetings and conference calls with other members of the ICCR. Writing articles for the *BVM Center News* represents SEA's attempt to educate both sisters and associates.

## ICCR/SEA Visit Sites Adversely Impacted by Corporations

ICCR meets in New York for a week in September and February. Its annual meeting each June alternates among cities where members reside, with opportunities to visit sites impacted by corporate irresponsibility and/or sites where efforts have been made to correct these impacts.

The group has taken a "toxic tour" of New Orleans to see the effects of Hurricane Katrina, witnessed the devastation caused by loss of auto industry jobs in Detroit, and taken a toxic tour of Little Village in Chicago, guided by Little Village Environmental Justice Organization (LVEJO). "Friends of the River" also provided a tour and lecture about the history of the Chicago River and sustainability efforts made on its behalf.

Working unitedly, SEA continues to embrace the future, "crossing the waters" of global concerns and needs.

**About the author:** Gwen Farry, BVM (Leontia) became a member of SEA in 2000. She served as the BVM representative at 8th Day Center for Justice in Chicago, from 2004–11 and continues there as a volunteer.



## Sister on the Hill:

Mary Janine Wolff, BVM

by Jody Iler

“People are often ‘retired,’ but all they really need is a retread!” So says Mary Janine Wolff, BVM—and she should know. At 81 years young, this tiny, energetic sister has added numerous “retreads” to her resume of ministries over the years.

A Chicago native, Janine grew up in Maywood and entered the congregation in 1950. The years from 1952–80 found her teaching large classes of elementary school students ranging from first to seventh-graders in Iowa and Illinois. She jokingly refers to the year that she taught only 18 first graders in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, as her “sabbatical” year.

As her teaching treads began to wear thin, it was time for Janine’s first “retread,”

as director of religious education (DRE) at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Chicago from 1982–89. She was responsible for the CCD program comprised of 400 children and parent/volunteer catechists, and the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) program, preparing adults for entrance into the church. “I loved this ministry and working with the adults,” she recalls.

In 1989 Janine came back to Iowa, where she spent three years as DRE in two parishes, one in Urbana and one in Walker.

Her next retread found Janine “on the outside” for five years—first employed at a temporary agency and later at a small credit union. Then came a three-year stint as parish secretary at St. Wenceslaus Parish in Cedar Rapids.

Janine celebrated her golden jubilee in 2000 and, with a brand new set of retreads, became a volunteer teacher at the Catherine McAuley Center in Cedar Rapids. For 10 years she taught English as a Second Language (ESL) in the center’s Adult Basic Education Program, working one-on-one with adult students from over 40 different countries. In recognition of her hours of volunteer service at the center, Janine received the “10 Year Individual of Service

Award” in 2010 from the 27th Annual Governor’s Volunteer Awards.

Janine treasures the 20 years spent with her special roommates in Cedar Rapids, BVMs John Thomas Hackett and Charmaine LeMaire. Both sisters got Janine involved in other areas of local service; she served as museum and library docent and helped with projects for a homeless shelter. During the flood of 2008, the sister roommates assisted flood-affected people and volunteered with cleanup crews. In her last year in Cedar Rapids, Janine was a greeter in the radiation therapy department of Mercy Hospital.

In February 2010, Janine came to Mount Carmel—for yet another retread. She explores the beauties of nature, takes pictures, sings in the Schola, and makes note cards from her nature photos.

But Janine’s main ministry is being available to others. She serves breakfast on the 3rd floor of Caritas Center, works in the Mall in the Hall, helps with the mailing for the *BVM Center News*, and assists sisters in wheelchairs or in any other way she can. She is also accomplished at creating soft, unique afghans as cherished gifts for others.

Retire? Not this BVM. “All I really need is a retread!”

## IN LOVING MEMORY

“Lord, for your faithful people life is changed, not taken away.”

**Please pray for the Sisters of Charity, BVM who died June 7, 2011 – July 15, 2011.**

**Elizabeth Pleas** (St. Laura)  
Aug. 3, 1922–June 7, 2011

**Mariella Stratton**  
August 9, 1914–June 9, 2011

**Lurana Cranny**  
May 9, 1925–June 10, 2011

**Ann Galvin** (Syrá)  
Oct. 16, 1919–June 20, 2011

**Mary Philip Fitzgibbons**  
Oct. 17, 1908–July 7, 2011

**Eileen Dugan** (Dominic)  
Dec. 26, 1923–Aug. 24, 2011

### BVM Associates

**Eleanor** (Lani) Hoch  
Aug. 25, 1939–July 15, 2011



To read a sister’s obituary/reflections, visit: [http://www.bvmcong.org/whatsnew\\_obits.cfm](http://www.bvmcong.org/whatsnew_obits.cfm). A memorial fund has been established for the sisters. If you would like to add to this memorial, please send your gift to the BVM Development Office. For online giving, go to [www.bvmcong.org](http://www.bvmcong.org).

**WOMEN & Spirit**  
CATHOLIC SISTERS IN AMERICA

**Discover a world few have seen, millions have shared.**

**Women & Spirit Schedule:**

**Sept. 2 – Dec. 31, 2011**  
Center for History in association with the University of Notre Dame and St. Mary’s College, South Bend, Ind.

**Jan. 24 - June 3, 2012**  
The California Museum of History, Women & the Arts, Sacramento, Calif.

**For more information, visit Women & Spirit:**  
[www.womenandspirit.org](http://www.womenandspirit.org)

**BVM docents share their experience of the exhibit at the National Mississippi River Museum:**



**Catherine Jean Hayen, BVM:**  
“The benefit of the W & S exhibit is getting a bigger picture of women religious and their contributions to American history and culture. The exhibit elicited many memories and displayed how women religious are continuing today to be women of prayer responding to the exigencies of today.”



**Jean Beste, BVM:**  
“As a docent, it was great to hear where people came from and what community taught them, and then to direct them to places in the exhibit where those sisters were featured.”



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## 2011 JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

Golden and silver jubilarians celebrated with friends, family, BVMs and associates at a liturgy on Sunday, July 31, at Mount Carmel in Dubuque, Iowa. To read more about each jubilarian and send them a congratulatory message, visit [www.bvmcong.org/whatsnew\\_jub.cfm](http://www.bvmcong.org/whatsnew_jub.cfm).



Celebrating her silver jubilee is Luann Brown, BVM.



**BVM golden jubilarians are:** (first row, l. to r.) Yvonne Mattioli (Angela), Joellen McCarthy, Maureen Patrice Fury, Dolores Mary Peppard; (second row) Joyce Mary Rohlik, Irene Lukefahr, Mary B. Breslin (Brenan), M. Colleen McGinnity (Rose Maureen); (third row) Joan Lingen (Ramone Mary), Theresa Caluori (Martin Jerome), Sandra Rodemyer (St. Philip), Peggy Nolan (Timothy Maura), Marguerite Murphy (John).