

Marion Pasdiora, BVM (Jean Victor)
Wake Stories/Reflections
Marian Hall Chapel, Nov. 29, 2017

Sister Diane O'Donnell, BVM

I lived with Marion at Carmel HS in Mundelein, Ill., for about 15 years. Those of you who lived with Marion here know that she was quite reserved. She wasn't that way when I lived with her. I was talking with her nieces and nephews today and they said, "No, Aunt Marion was full of life." Marion did not like crowds. At Carmel, I said, "OK, Marion, it's time to register for the Senate." "Oh no," she said, "I'm not going. You go and tell me about it." I said, "No, you better come. We have to find out about things." So she came. When we arrived at the big assembly, I said, "Marion, we need to sit up front because I'm going to introduce you to the whole congregation." She said, "I'm going home."

Sister Peggy Geraghty, BVM

I have so many stories about Marion. She was such a dear friend. She was somewhat introverted. In fact, on the Myers-Briggs, we were the four opposites. Anyone who knows me knows I'm an extrovert. The BVMs consider her an introvert, but we understand from her family that there was a whole other Marion there.

The day I met Marion, I knew we were going to be friends. She was the person delegated to pick me up for my interview for the principal position at Carmel. She was the business manager. We had never met before, so at the Libertyville train station, we looked around and decided that we probably were the people who were supposed to connect. She was driving me back to Carmel and I asked, "Where were you born? Where did you grow up?" "Chicago." I said, "Me too. What parish did you live in?" If you are from Chicago, you know that's the next question you ask people. She said, "St. Andrew's." I said, "I did too. Where did you live?" She said, "I lived on Bosworth." I said, "I lived on Greenview." There are parallel for one-half block with an alley between the two streets. It turned out that we lived on the same block across the alley for five years when we were younger. I was really young and she was older, so we never connected, we never knew each other. Until that day in the car, we never realized we had grown up across from each other.

That was the beginning of our friendship; it paved the way. She was my partner in crime at Carmel. Being the business manager, she helped me make decisions. I tended to be liberal in my spending; she tended to be very conservative. When I was going to Ecuador in 1981 for the summer, I said, "Now when I'm gone, if you have to make the decisions. I trust you completely." She said, "I don't know. What would you suggest?" "Think of what I would say and of what you would say, and then go in the middle." When I came back, she said, "You know that worked really well." I could tell many other stories, but I just want to say that she was one of the most generous people I've ever known. All I can think about is her giving and giving; I can't think of her taking. She was always looking out for other people. I feel lucky for having been part of the circle.

Sister Joan Newhart, BVM

I met Marion for the first time about 65 years ago. It was my first mission and very nearly hers also. It was in Lead, S.D. That mission had a very, very small high school with three BVMs in it, while the grade school was normal size. A certain sleight of hand had to be done in order to get a typing teacher because none of the three qualified as typing teachers, but Marion did. More sleight of hand was required to get someone to take Marion's place. When she came over to the high school, we found ourselves in adjoining rooms separated by a rather thin accordion door. She was in the typing room and I was in the

study hall. At that time, the technique to give typists a certain rhythm was to play recordings with definite beats. As a result, Marion and I are still the only two people whose favorite song is “The Busy Fingers March.”

Sister Mary Sattgast, BVM

Marion and I were on the original faculty at Carmel Catholic HS. At that time, we were Carmel for girls. She would pick me up when I came from California and a number of other times when I came back from home visits. She never was reluctant to do so and didn’t particularly care what time she would be needed. She was always available. We were also kitchen partners on the weekends when the regular cook was not there. We managed quite well. “I’ll do this and you do that” worked just fine. She was a grand person to live with. I’ll miss her.

Sister Kathleen McGrath, BVM

A couple of months ago, Josie (Sister Joanne Lucid) called me and said, “Wouldn’t you like to go to dinner with Marion to celebrate her 70 years as a BVM? I really did not know Marion until that evening. She shared so much of her life with us—teaching, ministry at Carmel HS and Mundelein Seminary. It was a wonderful evening. I am most grateful for Marion sharing her experiences with us. It made it a very special evening for all of us. Thank you, Marion.

Michael Pasdiora, Nephew

I have three brothers. The oldest is Mark, then Greg, and me and my little brother Bruce, who is much bigger than I am. I was trying to think of good stories, but I didn’t really have any. My brother Greg, who couldn’t be here, said, “Well, I have a good one.” He was talking 1961, so I would have been four and Bruce would have been two.

We had our annual barbeque. Grandma and Grandpa, Uncle Vic, Marion’s oldest brother, and Aunt Marion would come and sometimes she would bring a friend with her. It was in the old days and she had on the habit. That was how I knew Aunt Marion, even if I didn’t know why she was dressed that way. Greg was telling me that every year we would play a game of running bases. It’s basically a game of catch with a base on each side. Two people would throw the ball back and forth and two people would be running from one base to the other. The idea was to get to the other side without being tagged. Aunt Marion wouldn’t run the bases, but she would throw the ball. Greg said, “Aunt Marion could bring it. I couldn’t get across.”

My dad asked the older boys to clean up the yard from the dog before the party. Of course, they did . . . or so they said. They were playing running bases and running back and forth. Every time my brother Greg would run towards Mark, Aunt Marion would throw it and bring it right in. Mark is a big guy and he wasn’t being gentle. He would shove Greg every time he would get close to the base, so Greg was getting mad. Now he’s running towards Aunt Marion, going full speed and suddenly sees the ball going over his head to Aunt Marion who catches it. At the last second, he decides he can’t run into Aunt Marion so he slides, but she got him and he was out. He got up and was very upset.

At first, she thought it was because he was out, but no, it was because of the dog poop that he failed to have picked up. It was now all over his clothes, particularly his shirt. She says to him, “It’s OK, Greg, don’t worry. God will remember you.” He felt very little relief. He thought, “*Dad is going to kill me.*” His brother Mark gave him advice on what to do and he did it. He rolled it up, stuck it in a drawer, and left it for Mom. There was one other story. My brother Bruce was reminding me of this yesterday. My Mom loved Aunt Marion. She would say, “I love her. I just love her” before she arrived and when she was

there and after she left. One day Bruce asked her, "Why do you love her so much?" My mom said, "Because she's fun." That really describes her.

Edward Pasdiora, Nephew

Most of you know me as Junior; she always called me Junior. Something that Michael said reminded me of a story. My Uncle Larry and my dad and Aunt Marion used to go out to lunch occasionally and I would meet them. They talked about stories from the old neighborhood on Bosworth. Aunt Marion mentioned that she was allowed to go to the park if Ed and Larry went to the park and would watch her. The boys from the neighborhood would come over and say, "Hey, Larry and Ed, come on! We're going to the park to play baseball. They all went to the park and Grandma let Aunt Marion go. Uncle Larry told me that probably the only reason the boys came and got him and my dad was that they wanted Aunt Marion to play because she was better than most of the boys.

Sister Kathryn Lawlor, BVM

I was among the sisters who were with Marion when she died. She died at Mercy Medical Center. We were gathered around her bed and she so quietly and peacefully slipped away without a stir. The nurse came in, the nurses were so solicitous, and she told us that Marion was gone. We silently stood there and prayed very quietly as Marion would have done.

Bruce Pasdiora, Nephew

I remember a story my mom loved to tell about Aunt Marion when she got her first teaching job. I don't know if it was a regular class or if she was substituting, but she walked into the classroom and the kids were all over and wouldn't listen to her. She said, "Calm down. Quiet down, quiet down." Some of the boys thought that they were going to give her the business because she was a new teacher and they could get away with anything. Finally, she put her two fingers in her mouth and laid out a big whistle. The way my mom told it, there was one kid who had his feet up on the desk and it knocked him over.

Well, she taught her class and then it was time for recess. The boys were throwing a football around and it came over by Aunt Marion. The boys were like, "Hey, Sister Marion, throw us the ball." They were all chuckling, "Watch this, watch this!" Aunt Marion looked down, hiked up her skirt and booted the ball way over their heads. They just watched that ball sail over their heads. They ran up to her and said, "How did you do that?" She said, "Let me tell you something. I grew up with four older brothers. You guys have nothing on me." That's just one of the fun things I remember about my aunt. As my brother said, she was just fun. Whenever Aunt Marion was in the room, it was a lot of fun. She had a contagious laugh. One of her sayings after she laughed was, "Oh, boy!"

Sister Terese Shinnors, BVM

I have good memories of Marion from the years we shared at Carmel. We lived there and taught together. I had the opportunity to watch her physical changes over the years, how she adapted her ministry to the passage of time and the changes in her body. In her later years, she had a phone ministry that was just amazing. She called her brother Vic twice a day and she had other friends to whom she would reach out. What a beautiful way to age. She continued to minister but changed the ministry in accordance with her own physical capabilities.

Peg Connolly, sister of Sister Mary K. O'Brien, BVM

Speaking of her ministries, Mary K. was one of her ministries. I am just so grateful for the time and effort that she put into taking care of Mary K.

Karen Kane-Herber, Director of the Roberta Kuhn Center

I was working reception when Mary K. and Marion moved to Mount Carmel. The phrase that most reminds me of Marion is faithful companion. She and Mary K. would sit in the lobby and people watch. Marion would look at Mary K. and would say, "Well, are we done here?" Mary K. would nod and they would go to a new spot or up to eat.

One day, Marion and I were talking about our mothers. Marion said that her mother was wonderful, but had her own special way about her. I had shared that so was mine. Marion said, "One of my best memories of my mother was when the kids would go places, Mother would say, 'Now as bad as you are, things wouldn't be the same without you. Please be careful.'" I said to Marion, and my mother's name was Marion as well, "I think we might be related." She laughed.

Sister Mary Angela Buser, BVM

I go back 65 years ago with Sisters Joan Newhart, Marion, Vivian Wilson, our dear S.M. Rupertine Garlick, S.M. Everita Graham, and S.M. Verelyn Kelly. Living way up in Lead, S.D., we didn't see many people so we became very, very close. I just remember Marion as being a wonderful community person. I didn't see her for years, maybe in a meeting or something, but she wasn't one to come to many meetings. When she moved here, it was just like the days in Lead; we were still good friends.