

Journey



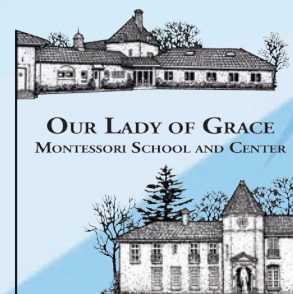
Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Scranton, PA Vol. 41, No. 2 Fall 2023

IHM Sponsored and Co-sponsored Ministries

Marywood University



Our Lady of Grace
Montessori School and Center



Sponsored

Saint Joseph's Center



Friends of the Poor



Co-sponsored

Mother Seton
Academy



African Sisters
Education
Collaborative



NativityMiguel School
of Scranton



Our Ministry of Sponsorship

by Kathryn Clauss, IHM

In an October 7, 2020, *Field of the Future* blog, author Otto Scharmer wrote about “action confidence.” He described it as “the courage and capacity to step into something new and bring it into being,” or, in the words of the late cognitive scientist Francisco Varela, “to lay down a path in walking, creating reality as we step into it.” As I reflected on the notion of action confidence, I was transported to the 1840’s, frontier Michigan, in the town of Monroe, where our founders, Redemptorist Father Louis Florent Gillet, C.Ss.R., and Mother Theresa Maxis, actively engaged in action confidence. They had “the courage and capacity to step into something new and bring it into being” as they founded the Congregation in 1845. Their purpose was to lay down a path that would “foster the human aspirations of the people in the area, specifically the preservation, deepening and spreading of the community of faith in Jesus Christ. They chose the work of education as the most appropriate to fulfill their purposes in that time and place” (IHM Constitutions). The essence of their intention has extended the teaching and healing mission of Jesus in the spiritual and ministerial life of the congregation to include pastoral care, faith formation, spirituality, social service, and health care missions in the United States and in Peru, Mexico, Guatemala and Canada where we serve and have served throughout our one hundred-seventy-eight years. Each ministry was developed in response to the needs of the Church and God’s people.

The teaching and healing mission of Jesus continues to enliven the IHM Mission and Charism today as we lay down new paths through our ministry of Sponsorship.

Sponsorship is a structured relationship through which the sponsor, in our case, the IHM Congregation, in the name of the Church, directs and influences a ministry that meets an apostolic need and furthers the mission of Jesus (Catholic Health Association 2021). The Mission of Jesus was to proclaim the reign of God and to be a visible sign of God’s reign. Our sponsored ministries are aligned with and participate in extending Jesus’ mission as sponsors discern more deeply and respond more fully to the needs of those they serve within the context of Biblical values.

This edition of *Journey* will focus on the ministry of sponsorship and its spiritual foundation and bring to your attention each of the ministries IHM sisters currently sponsor and co-sponsor. We sponsor: Saint Joseph’s Center, Scranton, PA founded in 1890; Marywood University, Scranton, PA, founded in 1915; Our Lady of Grace, Manhasset, NY, founded in 1968; Friends of the Poor, Scranton, PA, founded in 1986. We sponsored Saint Joseph’s Hospital, Carbondale, PA, which was founded in 1925 and concluded its services in 2012. In addition to our sponsored ministries, we co-sponsor three ministries in collaboration with other religious congregations of women and men: Mother Seton Academy founded in Baltimore, MD in 1993; The African Sisters Education Collaborative founded in Scranton in 1999; and NativityMiguel School of Scranton founded in Scranton in 2012.

While attending a conference recently, a question was raised that caught my attention: What is the shelf-life of the decisions we make? I think it is safe to say that over time we have seen variability in the shelf-life of decisions that are made. Unanticipated, intervening realities pop up and we are taken back to the drawing board. Reflecting on the ministerial decisions that



have been rendered regarding the sponsored and co-sponsored ministries, I believe that we, as a congregation and our sponsored and co-sponsored ministries, continue to be attentive, intentional, and responsive to the signs of the times, the needs of the Church, and the people of our time with an eye toward the future. The life of our sponsored and co-sponsored ministries is kept fresh and enlivened by our fidelity to and participation in the redeeming Mission of Jesus and the IHM Mission. Mission unites us and gives us the courage and capacity to recognize together new possibilities on the horizon and the action confidence and energy to bring them to life in service of God and God’s people.

Sister Kathryn serves as president of the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Scranton, PA.



Our mission as Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Scranton, Pennsylvania, is to follow Jesus as a community of disciples, aware that we are sent to be a clear and understandable prophetic witness to the presence of God in the world. - from the IHM Mission Statement

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SPONSORSHIP: A CALL TO STEWARDSHIP AND INFLUENCE

by Mary Persico, IHM

A contemporary description of sponsorship of ministries identifies it as “a structured relationship through which the sponsor, in the name of the Church, directs and influences a ministry that meets an apostolic need and furthers the mission of Jesus.” Sponsorship has been and continues to be a means by which religious congregations or their delegates preserve the good works founded and fostered by them throughout time. These ministries exist for a spiritual purpose and serve people who thrive as a result of their stewardship relationship with them.

At times the concept of sponsorship eludes us because it is not found in either civil or canon law. The concept has evolved primarily within religious congregations since the middle of the 20th century and has been institutionalized by expectations of oversight, leadership, and structure that were fulfilled in the formation of an entity known as the sponsor. In a word, sponsorship is a relationship with a ministry that is mutually supportive.

Sponsorship is enacted within a framework that is structured and organized through bylaws. These include the purpose of the sponsor, the duty to approve, administer, or alter the vision and mission of the ministry, and the delineation of the reserved powers held by the sponsoring body, such as the approval of Trustees and the significant sale of property, among others.

In spite of the technical aspects of sponsorship by which a group of people, known as the “corporate member” or “public Juridic person,” act in their leadership role, the true significance of sponsorship is inspired by the Hebrew and New Testament Scriptures that speak to us about a calling or a duty of stewardship.

“The Call” is a common theme in the Scriptures we pray. The prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, the disciples of Jesus, Mary, the first disciple, all experienced the mysterious, life-changing event of a call from God. Admittedly, a call such as the events described in their stories is deeply personal and unique. Ordinary people like us tend to believe that such calls are reserved for prophets and saints. Little do we expect that prophets and saints were once people like us, who just happened to pay attention when they were rocked from the routine of their daily lives.

We have learned from the study of Scriptural calls that in spite of objections and the flight from responding affirmatively, God consistently reassures those called that God will be with them, standing by to support and inspire. As Sisters, we have all experienced the power of the personal call that led each of us to the IHM Congregation, where we entered into the deep story of our collective call that evolves every day and draws us into a mission where these words of the



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prophet Isaiah, uttered by Jesus in the synagogue in Nazareth, define our ministerial work:

“The spirit of our God is upon me:
because the most High has anointed me
to bring good news to those who are poor.
God has sent me to proclaim liberty to those
held captive, recovery of sight to those who
are blind, and release to those in prison – to
proclaim the year of our God's favor.”

In decades past, our predecessors heard the cries of those who longed for healing, who needed the gifts of food, shelter, and clothing, and who were held captive by a lack of education and the skills to develop personally and professionally. In response to these needs of people, our predecessors founded and nurtured what today we call our sponsored ministries.

Those who serve as sponsors might also consider the *Parable of the Talents* from the Gospel of Matthew (25:14-30). A man set out on a long journey and entrusted his considerable assets to several of his workers. When much time had passed, the man returned to find that two of the co-workers had invested his wealth and

doubled its worth, while one had languished and had nothing to show for his time and labor.

It's important to note that the assets of the man were “on loan” and were invested not for the benefit of the workers but for the owner himself. Furthermore, the amount invested did not really matter; rather, the fact that those who had an already established relationship with him invested what was given to them and enhanced its worth.

Although this is an over-simplistic analysis of a time-honored parable, it offers a parallel to the meaning of sponsorship. The leadership of the sponsor lightly holds IHM ministries as precious assets wherein people grow better, wiser, freer, less vulnerable, and better equipped to do good in the world. The ministries grow and flourish, nurtured by the unchanging vision of those who have gone before us.

Many years ago, the IHM Sisters agreed that for us sponsorship in itself is a ministry. We attentively adhere to bylaws requirements for attending meetings and understanding the role of the sponsor. We accept our responsibilities for fiscal oversight and providing prescribed approvals. Furthermore, as a congregation, we realize that the “congregational” sponsorship model will evolve to a new form in order to meet the needs of an aging demographic even as our ministries serve God's people in the midst of a societal landscape that is politically charged and financially challenging. When all of these imposing realities present concerns about the future of “sponsoring” our cherished ministries, we pause to consider the core principles of this ministry of sponsorship.

The call to be an influential presence in the world is as real today as it was to the prophets and first disciples. It will always be at the heart of our vocation to lift up the downtrodden, heal the wounds of the sick and broken-hearted, and educate the underserved. By the very nature of who we are and who we strive to be, we cannot be the workers who didn't steward the assets of the One who called us. In a word, this is the real meaning of our desire to sponsor our cherished ministries – we are called to do so. The influence of our mission and values among the people we serve is invaluable and our stewardship of God's mercy, compassion, and unconditional love, uncompromising.

Note: The “definition” of sponsorship found in the first paragraph is taken from the CHA 2021 publication entitled *Guide for Sponsors in Catholic Health Care: An explanation of purpose, qualifications, structures, and competencies*.

Sister Mary serves as the president of Marywood University in Scranton, PA.

IHM Sponsored Ministries: A Response to the Divine Call

by Nancy Hawkins, IHM

The various world religions are certainly unique, with their own beautiful rituals, beliefs, and meaningful symbols. But they also have much in common. The sacred texts of these religions are filled with call narratives. Abraham, Moses, Jeremiah, Siddhartha Gautama, Mary, Jesus, Phoebe, Muhammed and so many others received a spiritual call or enlightened experience. In the religious and spiritual sense, a call means one is invited, summoned, beseeched and asked to be and do something for God.

This kind of call is individual and personal. It is also communal. God initiates the call, and we are asked to respond. Our call to be Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters fuels our mission to serve the people of God, and it is foundational to our God relationship. We can certainly relate to the call of the prophet Isaiah who heard God ask, "Whom shall I send? Who will be our messenger?" Isaiah's response is the response of those persons who open their hearts to these questions. "Here I am, send me!"

When we study the call narratives in the Bible, we see that there is a pattern to these passages. First there is an encounter between God and the person being called. God commissions certain persons and tells them what needs to be accomplished or attended to. On most occasions, the persons being called have objections or concerns with God's invitation. "I am too young!" "I know not man." "I am a sinner!" All of us can relate to these concerns, but our God moves to reassure in these passages. Those called are told that they will be overshadowed by the Spirit; they are consecrated and known from their time in their mother's womb. They hear that there is no need to be afraid. And a sign is usually given after God's reassurance. I am especially moved by two statements in John's gospel. Jesus declares, "I will go before you. There are many rooms in my Abba God's house." And "I am with you always, even to the end of time." These are statements of promise and comfort.

It is significant that the call from God comes when people are doing ordinary things like cooking, making pottery, looking at nature, weaving, and of course, fishing! The call from God is a call to be someone. And this might be disorienting because we may not be able to see what God has in mind for us. But then an amazing thing takes place! In a moment of grace, we who are called discover that God has a vision for us. And when we take this into our very being, God's vision becomes our vision. We see with God's eyes.

When I ponder IHM sponsorship, I think of the God vision that was Marywood, Saint Joseph's Center, Friends of the Poor and Our Lady of



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Grace. The sisters who dreamed these ministries into being aligned themselves with God's vision for the world community. They listened carefully to God's call and trusted that these ministries would evolve and bear fruit. Every time I have discerned something significant for my life, at some point I needed to understand that I was connecting with God's vision for me. The biblical narratives of the prophets Jeremiah and Simon Peter have much to teach us about this process.

Jeremiah was not enamored of God's call. He protested crying out "I am a child." In other words, I am not ready for this! Jeremiah gave God a hard time. I love that God refuses to accept that Jeremiah sees himself as a child. God

tells Jeremiah that he is consecrated, dedicated, and set aside for the prophetic role. "Do not be afraid, for I am here to protect you." Then, in a moment of lovely intimacy, God puts out his hand and touches the mouth of Jeremiah. This is the moment of grace. This is the moment when Jeremiah sees with God's eyes.

Simon Peter is a fascinating character! His story appears in the passages focusing on the call of the first apostles in Luke's gospel. I love the way this scene is portrayed in the inspirational film *Jesus of Nazareth*. Jesus has befriended Matthew and is heading to his home for dinner. Of course, Matthew's house is filled with those considered undesirable in Jesus' time. Simon Peter refuses to go in and clings to the mast of his small boat saying, "This is my life, this is where I belong." He is not yet ready to hear the call. Later, on an ordinary day, Jesus approaches Simon and his friends as they moan about their futile search for fish. We hear Jesus say, "Put out into deep water!" One can make an entire retreat based on these five words!

Our call is always about going deeper. If we want to catch more fish, we must cast our nets deeper! I am not surprised that Simon Peter falls on his knees after seeing the amazing catch of fish in his nets. He is overcome, but now he sees a freeing vision of himself because Jesus shows it to him. Words of reassurance follow, "Be not afraid, from now on it is human beings you will catch." And bringing their boats back to land, they left everything and followed Jesus. The verb used for "follow" in this sentence is *akoloutheo*, and it is the verb for discipleship. Simon Peter and his friends have now become disciples of Jesus!

This meaningful call narrative echoes the significance of our IHM sponsored ministries. Over the years they have "caught" people who were in need, who sought knowledge, who were wounded and abandoned. The foundation for all who work and participate in our sponsored works is the sacred call from our God.

This call sustains all of us who are Jesus' disciples. We are reassured by his words and by the words of the prophet Isaiah 49:6. "It is not enough for you to be my servant, to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back the survivors of Israel; I will make you the light of the nations so that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth."

Sister Nancy serves on the faculty at Marywood University in Scranton, PA.

A Peace and Justice Perspective

Risking Kinship

by Chris Koellhoffer, IHM



When we encounter the other, change begins. We learn names. We discover something about who they love and what they cherish. We can identify and remember them. They are no longer some indistinguishable face in a crowd. And when this happens, we are in danger of a shift of sorts. Because of our deepening encounters, we can no longer stay the same or remain in the same soul space we once inhabited. We are impelled to move to a place of deeper and wider relationship.

I experienced this inner soul journey in 1993, when I represented our IHM Congregation on a human rights delegation to Haiti. At the time, Haiti's democratically elected president had just been ousted by a military coup. Pax Christi USA invited US citizens to join a delegation to Haiti that was charged with one simple task: to collect and document stories of human rights abuses, bring those stories home, and publicize them to the rest of the world. I saw my role as an agent of change, ready to assist the poor and oppressed people of Haiti.

Then I arrived in Port-au-Prince at the Hospice St. Joseph where we would be staying, and read a sign over the front door. That sign stopped me in my tracks. The words, attributed to an aboriginal person, read, "If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then come, let us walk together."

In that moment, I did a spiritual about face. I had been placing so much emphasis on what I was doing for Haiti, on what a difference I would make. But I had completely missed the mutuality of it all. I had overlooked the truth that, yes, I would be of service by listening to stories of brave souls who had endured imprisonment, torture, exploitation, and silencing by a brutal regime. But I hadn't considered that I myself would be converted by those stories. That I would be forever changed by the witness of people's raw courage and deep faith. That I would form lasting bonds with those who risked their lives to come out of hiding and speak with us.

This is what happens when we move from service to kinship. Relationships pull us in and demand our attention. They put a particular face and a specific name on reality. They move us to approach people not as generalities but with the intimacy of *that* face, *this* story, *that* flesh and blood person.

In this issue of Journey focused on sponsorship, you will read in detail about the meaningful sponsored and co-sponsored ministries of our IHM Congregation. These works invite others to join us in promoting and sustaining the mission of Jesus to people in need. The need may be the availability of quality education for those who are poor, or offering hope and services for individuals and families with special needs, or sharing spiritual outreach programs to address our shared hunger for God.

Underneath all of these connections, underneath all of these sponsored and co-sponsored ministries are relationships. They are about the work of justice, right relationship with God, self, and others. And the works of justice always invite us into a conversion of heart.

When Jean Donovan and Sisters Maura Clarke, Ita Ford, and Dorothy Kazel were martyred in El Salvador in 1980, Melinda Roper, then president of the Maryknoll Sisters, noted that it was the women's solidarity with their poor neighbors, their own conversion of heart, that led to their deaths. They came to identify so deeply with the struggle of the Salvadoran people that they simply couldn't abandon them. "The Church," noted Roper, "is finding her mission in her life with the poor. She is learning to read the Gospel with new eyes. Now she understands that the reign of God really does belong to the poor, and that only they are able to tell us where it is."¹

Where is the reign of God? Within and around us. Often most visible in those who are most vulnerable. That is the gift our partners in mission and those we serve offer us. They invite us to risk entering a world that will stretch our familiar boundaries. To risk being challenged to see with new eyes. To risk having our comfortable world broken open and finding it no longer large enough to accommodate what our hearts once held. To risk greater spaciousness of heart.

As our worldview expands, our lens becomes more focused, more intimate, more specific in the way Thomas Merton described, "you start more and more to concentrate not on the results but on the value, the rightness, the truth of the work itself. And there too a great deal has to be

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gone through, as gradually you struggle less and less for an idea and more and more for specific people. The range tends to narrow down, but it gets much more real. In the end...it is the reality of personal relationships that saves everything."²

In sharing our IHM charism of God's unconditional love, may we grow together into new understandings of what it means to authentically live the Gospel. In promoting God's dream of a world where all are welcome and none are excluded, may we grow together in Jesus' redemptive mission to proclaim the Good News of God's universal love and to recreate the face of the earth.³ May it be so!

¹ Melinda Roper, MM, then president of the Maryknoll Sisters, Statement on the deaths of the four churchwomen, December 1980.

² Thomas Merton's letter to Jim Forest, published in *The Catholic Worker* and later published as *Letters to A Young Activist*. The letter is in the Thomas Merton Center Archives in Louisville. Forest notes that this is incarnational theology; that words and slogans and theories are not nearly as important as how we see and relate to each other—the relationships we build.

³ Mission Statement, Supplement to the Constitutions of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Scranton, Pennsylvania, S.2.

Sister Chris is a writer and spiritual guide who offers retreats and presentations internationally through her Mobile Spirituality Ministry. Visit her blog, Mining the Now, at chriskoellhofferihm.org

Saint Joseph's Center

rooted in the core values of care, concern, compassion and commitment

by Maryalice Jacquinot, IHM

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

- Margaret Mead

Saint Joseph's is living proof that there is truth to this famous quote by Margaret Mead. On November 20, 1888, a small group of women formed the Saint Joseph's Society. The group was initially convened by Mother M. Francis Henry, IHM, with concern for the needs of children whose parents were unable to care for them adequately.

As this volunteer group established private homes to provide nurturing care for local children, the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary received approval from Bishop William O'Hara to undertake this ministry. Decades later, the relationship between the IHM Congregation with the ministry of Saint Joseph's would be understood as sponsorship. Uniquely, Saint Joseph's was developed by volunteers in 1888 and became a formal IHM ministry in 1890.

In its earliest years Saint Joseph's services included small residences for children, a downtown day care for the children of working mothers, an orphanage and adoption services. In the 1950s, the Commonwealth of PA requested that Saint Joseph's provide nursing care in a residential setting for children born with intellectual disabilities. Around this same time, foster care was replacing the traditional orphanage for the care of children without parents.



Today, the services provided by Saint Joseph's Center are influenced by its history and growth. Maternity and Family Services assists mothers in residential settings with an emphasis on parenting, housing and employment. Adoption services are an extraordinary expression of the mission as the parents and child are blessed to form a family. A Baby and Children's pantry helps families to fulfill everyday needs with the generous support of the community. There is great joy in helping to create and sustain loving, nurturing families.

Services for those with intellectual disabilities are varied just as the people supported are diverse. Depending on the individual's needs, services might be provided occasionally such as Early Intervention, Outpatient Therapy, Community Support Services, or daily support like Adult Day Services and Trinity Child Care Services. Others might manage best with 24-hour residential services such as the Intermediate Care Facilities or Community Living. Operational support from other areas such as housekeeping, foundation, volunteers, laundry/central supply, finance, maintenance, pastoral care and IT fosters teamwork with a focus on the people supported. Services are developed with a desire to help each person reach for their God-given potential and enhance their abilities, so each will live the best life possible.

It's always an honor to speak or write about Saint Joseph's. It's also challenging to contain all that is part of this very special ministry marking 135 years since its foundation. Descriptions of the foundation often refer to the "humble beginnings," but humility remains an important aspect of our story today. The people supported are the center of why we exist and what we do. Each day, there are valuable life lessons to be learned about acceptance, perseverance, humility, joy and unconditional love.



Changing with the times and responding to new needs have enabled the ministry to grow in meaningful ways. To balance change, there have been many constants associated with Saint Joseph's evolution over 135 years. Saint Joseph has always been the patron of this ministry. Saint Joseph is an example of humility, courage, nurturance and unconditional love. Across the years, Saint Joseph's has been blessed with the generous support of others as donors and volunteers. From door-to-door campaigns to initiate the building fund in 1893 to this summer's lemonade stands, along with Auxiliary fundraising, individual bequests, and charitable giving, each gift affirms the important work of this mission. The dedication of professional, loving staff is a Saint Joseph's hallmark and enables each person to be met with care, concern, compassion and commitment.

The Auxiliary of Saint Joseph's which traces its origins to 1888 engages hundreds of volunteers to increase awareness of services and raise funds throughout the year. Funds raised ensure the continuation of the maternity residential locations, program enhancements, facility renovation, equipment replacement and so much more. The impact of this dedicated group continues to inspire generosity and goodwill within the community.

As the sponsor of Saint Joseph's Center, the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

have cherished this ministry, fulfilling different roles and working in collaboration with so many to uphold the mission as a witness of God's unconditional love for all.

Reflecting the words of Margaret Mead—the impact made by this thoughtful, committed, group for the past 135 years, has enabled Saint Joseph's Center to indeed change the world.

Sister Maryalice serves as President and CEO of Saint Joseph's Center in Scranton, PA.

Marywood University: Moving Forward with Purpose

by Sheryl Lynn Sochoka

The story is told that, when the former IHM Motherhouse-Mount Saint Mary's Seminary (the original home of Marywood College) was being constructed in the early 1900s, Mother M. Cyril Conway, IHM, Congregation Superior, would walk (due to a streetcar strike at the time) from St. Cecilia's Academy on the 300 block of Wyoming Avenue in Downtown Scranton to the building site in the heights of Green Ridge, to ensure the project's proper progress. She followed the leadership of her predecessors, Mother Mary Magdalen Jackson, IHM and Mother M. Crescentia Foster, IHM, in continuing the important work they had done by procuring the 50-acre tract of land and breaking ground. Mother Cyril's ambitious agenda was not without its challenges; namely, preventing the Lackawanna and Wyoming Valley Railroad from building an extension line through the heart of the new campus, where the Shrine of Our Lady of Victory was built instead, as a testament of faith, perseverance, triumph, and gratitude.

These bold efforts at the turn of the last century and the courageous women who carried forward Marywood's founding vision still serve as role models for us today. While the pressing societal and educational issues may differ vastly, the willingness to embrace reality and to persevere in the face of difficulty was required of them then; it, too, is required of us now.

What higher education looks like and how it is delivered have changed dramatically. Yet, the role of IHM sponsorship is as important now as it was then. While the blueprint for Catholic institutions of higher education in the 20th century was comprehensive, those who survive and thrive in the 21st century (and beyond) require that blueprint to be reworked to ensure continued success.

Marywood University recognizes the challenges of today's employment and higher education environments and is taking steps to meet them. To that end, Marywood just launched the EMPOWER Campaign, a multi-year effort to raise \$30 million, with three priority areas in line with our mission: to create access to education through scholarships for students with financial need, to reimagine the campus through the construction, renovation, and renewal of buildings and spaces to support growing programs and next-gen learning, and to enhance the student experience through annual and



endowed philanthropic support. As of this writing Marywood has raised more than 80% of this goal from alumni, benefactors, members of the campus community, and friends.

We can already see the outcomes of some of these priorities in action:

- Given the urgent need for advanced practice and allied health professionals, Marywood, through its Health & Wellness Initiative, is taking the necessary steps to fill gaps in healthcare

services, both in our region and throughout our nation. The Pascucci Family Health Sciences Pavilion, a 15,000-square-foot addition to the Keith J. O'Neill Center for Healthy Families, will support growing enrollment in the Nursing program, Physician Assistant program, and other health sciences programs.

- Marywood's nationally-renowned School of Architecture is offering a new undergraduate Construction Management Program, which provides students the opportunity to learn about buildings and construction alongside architecture, interior architecture, and business students. Marywood is also recruiting students for its newly established Master of Architecture (M.Arch) graduate program, which will start in Fall 2024.
- The iconic Liberal Arts Center, Marywood's first dedicated educational facility beyond the former Motherhouse, has begun to transform classrooms from the traditional desks-and-chalkboard model to the look and feel of multimedia centers for learning.
- The School of Business and Global Innovation's new undergraduate Financial Crime Investigation (FCI) program is unique to northeast Pennsylvania and provides a solid foundation for students interested in accounting and criminal justice.
- The wave of pilot retirements has created an industry-wide shortage of aviation professionals, but Marywood's signature program in aviation management, the only one in the region, is ready to meet that need with qualified pilots and aviation management professionals.

There are so many more stories of curricular innovation, enhancements to the student experience, investments in our signature programs, and, of course, in our students. Marywood's mission and core values, inspired by those of the IHM Congregation, are the driving forces that create the right atmosphere and community, so students feel safe and empowered to think critically, to find their purpose, and to discover and ignite their passions from Day One.

Marywood Board of Trustees Chair Lisa Lori, Esq., an IHM Associate who is co-chairing the EMPOWER Campaign, observes, "Marywood's

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OUR LADY OF GRACE

Let the children come to me. Come to me all who are weary.

by Sister Kelly Quinn, IHM

Our Lady of Grace Montessori School and Center is a unique sponsored ministry of the IHM Congregation. As you drive onto the property and proceed along the tree-lined driveway, you arrive at a beautiful retreat house which is a spiritual oasis for those seeking to get away from the everyday hustle and bustle of life. Proceeding further down the road will bring you to Our Lady of Grace Montessori School which seeks to provide young children with a love of learning in an environment that envelops them in the love of God.

For over sixty years, the retreat house has been a source of refuge and peace for those seeking spiritual programs, recovery programs, faculty renewal days, days of prayer and mindfulness offerings. People come from near and far to savor the prayerful atmosphere offered here. The sign along the driveway that says “respect the serenity of this place” immediately brings a sense of calmness, peace and quiet to those who arrive on the seven-acre campus. People have been known to reflect on the healing that has taken place in their lives after visiting this sacred place.

Those entering the Montessori School are greeted with our core values on the front wall. The values of beauty, community, respect, spirituality and love are the staples of our program. Children learn in a mixed-aged environment where they learn to respect each other’s similarities and differences. With attention to our outdoor garden, they learn to value and tend to our beautiful yet fragile earth through planting, sowing and harvesting. They reap what they sow as they prepare mouth-watering delicacies to share with others. At the retreat house there is a memorial garden, honoring the memory of students and teachers called home to God, that is tended by our elementary students. It is a place of prayerfulness and peace. The children take great pleasure in birdwatching throughout the campus. Ask any of our Kindergarten students to identify the birds and you will be greatly surprised to hear the correct answer.

The retreat house with its small chapel is a blessing for all on the property, especially the school children. The children gather to pray with the community in this sacred space. Children who have received the Sacrament of Holy Communion in their local parishes gather at Our Lady of Grace to celebrate together with their school community. Children dress in their Communion suits and dresses, prepare every aspect of the Liturgy and take part in a Mass of Thanksgiving with their families. Prayer services are held at various times

throughout the year, and the children are fully engaged in the preparation and presentation of the services. There is a beautiful statue of the Blessed Mother on the campus where children will stop with their parents and say a prayer, and the Second Grade children prepare a lovely May crowning for the school population.

An important part of Our Lady of Grace is the



IHM League. The League plans all of our friend-raising and fundraising activities, many of which are held at the Center. League members find refuge from their busy lives as they come together to celebrate and pray. Christmas is a particularly wonderful time for retreatants and school families alike because the Center is beautifully decorated. Retreatants gather together in Advent prayer, and the school children present a Christmas show celebrating the

Nativity of our Lord. Of course, it wouldn’t be Christmas without some carols and the arrival of Santa Claus!

A priority for us as a sponsored ministry of the IHM Congregation is our outreach to those in need. We have been richly blessed as a community, and our commitment to helping those in need motivates us to never take for granted what we have been given. Our school community has participated in the St. John’s Bread and Life ministry run through St. John’s University every year. Children bring in gifts for less fortunate children as well as clothes, baby necessities and food. Our elementary children engage in a fundraising activity each year where they choose a need within the community and educate the rest of the student body about it. We are a caring community that reaches out to those who are sick by providing meals for families, and we gather together in prayer for healing. This year we will be taking part in a program called “Halo Helpers” in memory of Rosie Beagan. Rosie passed away at the age of two, and her family has created this organization to collect toys and clothing for underprivileged children at Christmastime. Rosie’s mom, Laura, is a graduate of our school, and Rosie’s sister, Olivia, began our program this year.

Our Lady of Grace Montessori School and Center has been a place of “homecoming” for so many of our former families and retreatants. We

are blessed with a loving, generous community who value our core values and eagerly look for an opportunity to return to OLG. This sponsored ministry is a gift to so many and we in turn thank God for all of our incredible blessings.

Sister Kelly serves as the principal at Our Lady of Grace Montessori School in Manhasset, NY.



What I Have Received...

by Meghan Loftus

DISCLAIMER: I've written this article from the heart, with as much honesty as possible, in order to illustrate what my experience has been as a lay-leader of an IHM sponsored ministry. It reflects only my own thoughts and feelings as I've navigated these last several years, and I hope it also shows the incredible personal growth I've been afforded because of my connection to each of you.



On the morning of July 10, 2017, I anxiously got dressed in what I thought was the perfect “business casual” look: cropped dress pants, a lightweight blouse, and a comfortable pair of flats. Not quite the fashion statement I’d imagined a young CEO would have on her first day, but this was Friends of the Poor. I needed to be ready and able to do some manual labor, right? Oh, the naive.

What would follow that week would be the emptying of an entire warehouse of food, program supplies, and furniture (including a baby grand piano) into trailers while we searched for a new storage facility. We would feed hundreds of people, get dozens of children up and on the school bus to our STEM summer camp at Keystone College, help families with outstanding water bills, and be a welcoming, comforting presence to all who came through our doors. There were also 4 pairs of dress pants and 4 accompanying blouses that were destroyed. Sister Ann would, of course, replace them immediately with items she found in just my size and color. (Only 4 ruined outfits because, although probably much too slowly, I did learn by Friday to wear jeans, sneakers, and a Friends of the Poor T-shirt. I promise, I have become a much quicker learner since.)

Those first few weeks were a whirlwind. There was never a shortage of work to be done, people to help, or calls to return. I looked at Sister Ann Walsh and her Jesuit Volunteer at the time, Peter Kramer, in complete awe. They never stopped. I don’t think I saw either of them eat or use the

“We aren’t just a social service agency. We are a sponsored ministry, and that means we are so much more. We are a sliver of hope, a safe place to land, and hand to hold when the journey becomes too much to bear alone.”

restroom once. I was, for the first time in my life, completely exhausted physically and emotionally. How could these two people, so different at first glance, share the exact same energy, compassion, and temperament? They didn’t even speak to each other in full sentences. Was I witnessing telepathy for the first time?

I now know that I was witnessing sponsorship in action. Later that first week, or maybe it was into the second or third, Sister Ann recommended I move from our “mobile office,” aka her car, to the IHM Center on occasion to address the administrative work. I was given a home in a corner office within the same hallway as the IHM Leadership Team. It was so quiet I could hear a pin drop. I was terrified. I had not had much interaction with any sisters outside of my elementary school days and the interview process for my new role, much less the head honchos of all the nuns! At that point, most of what I knew about the sponsorship relationship was that Sister Ellen Maroney was my boss’s boss, and I was technically also the boss

at Friends of the Poor. Talk about a metaphysical conundrum. If I messed up in this hallway, would I be out of a job? If that happened, who would work at FOP? Peter would be finishing his service year any day, and Sister Ann was working towards retirement. Clearly, at this point, I was still too deeply entrenched in the organizational hierarchy mindset of some of my previous employers. But, not for long.

At some point within the first few weeks, I was scheduled to meet Sister Terry O’Rourke for our first sponsorship lesson. I was told Sister Terry coordinated special projects for Friends of the Poor, like our seasonal programming, but that she knew quite a bit about sponsorship and would be a great teacher. What was left out, though, was that this calm, articulate, and incredibly intelligent woman was the former President of the Congregation, of St. Joseph’s

Center, a principal, a superintendent, social worker, and teacher with more degrees, awards, publications, and presentations than I could count. She was one of the most impressive people I’ve ever seen on paper, and here she was going to teach me about sponsorship. As I walked into her tiny office on the 3rd floor of the IHM Center, and for the umpteenth time since that July 10th morning, my brain could not process what my eyes were seeing. What in the world had I gotten myself into? Here, again, was another office, another location, of Friends of the Poor. I could now count three different spaces within the IHM Center, a half-dozen Scranton Housing Authority Family Developments, a warehouse, and Clothes Line for Men. Eleven locations in all, not even considering the dozens of kitchen tables and desks where our volunteers and donors gathered on their own time to further our mission. What agency, especially with so few staff, can possibly operate, much less thrive, moving so quickly in so many different directions?

Turns out, Friends of the Poor does. And we still do. What I learned from Sisters Ann, Terry, Regina, Carleen, Maria Goretti, Amy, Dolores, Leonnette, Mariette, Jean Louise, Betty, Mary, Jean, and so many more over the last 6.5 years, is that the existence, operations, and impact of Friends of the Poor is nothing short of divine grace. That very first lesson, Sister Terry gave me a framed picture that says, “Sponsorship is what the world looks like when God is present.” I’ve seen, and lived, that sentence every day since. What I learned, then, is that Friends of the Poor, along with other sponsored ministries, are not your typical nonprofit organizations. We aren’t an abstract entity. We are a living, breathing team, the embodiment of our mission. We are adaptable to the needs of our participants, always willing to do whatever it takes to help our friends and neighbors. The staff positions we fill are not jobs. They are vocations, and the people who hold them long-term are those who have experienced a calling they could not ignore. Our volunteers are those that come back, again and again, because they genuinely believe in what we do and feel safe and welcome in the environment we created. Our participants jump out of their spot in the food line to help another person carry their groceries down the stairs. We aren’t just a social service agency. We are a sponsored ministry, and that means we are so much more. We are a sliver of hope, a safe place to land, and hand to hold when the journey becomes too much to bear alone.

What I have received from Friends of the Poor extends far beyond what I could ever give in return. I’ve seen relief in thousands of parents’ faces when they realize they can now feed their children and wrap presents to put under their

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IHM Sponsored and Co-

Marywood University

In 1915, the abiding faith and the far-reaching vision of the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, made the founding of Marywood possible. The first college for women in Northeastern Pennsylvania and the first Catholic college for women in the state, the sisters' ongoing faith and joyful, loving service have nurtured Marywood's growth from a groundbreaking college for women into a vibrant, comprehensive university that serves the educational needs of women and men of all backgrounds. Marywood offers more than 80 undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral degrees taught by outstanding faculty, along with 22 Division-III varsity athletics teams. Marywood University is a thriving tribute to our founders and a vital contributor to the strength of our region, nation, Church, and global community.



Saint Joseph's Center

In 1888, a small group of women, including one IHM sister, came together to discuss the problem of deserted orphans in the city of Scranton. They immediately organized and adopted the name, Saint Joseph's Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and Aged Persons. By 1890 it became a sponsored mission of the Sisters of IHM, with the Society promising financial support. Prayerful and visionary leadership has enabled Saint Joseph's to maintain its essence while adapting to a changing world. Saint Joseph's Center has grown into a multi-faceted service provider whose common thread over time has been the enduring dedication to do all with great care, concern, compassion and commitment. Today Saint Joseph's serves people who are diagnosed with intellectual disability and those who seek pregnancy support, adoption assistance, outpatient therapy or medical day care services.



A second century of care, concern, compassion and commitment.

Mother Seton Academy

Named after St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, founder of the first tuition-free Catholic school in Baltimore, Mother Seton Academy opened in the fall of 1993. The Sisters of IHM are one of six sponsoring religious communities of MSA. Based on the Nativity School model and empowered by Gospel values, MSA serves more than 80 boys and girls, grades 6 through 8, from underserved, low-income families of all faiths and cultures. Promoting dignity and respect for each person, MSA challenges students to realize their God-given talents and become leaders who serve their families, communities, and society.



African Sisters Education

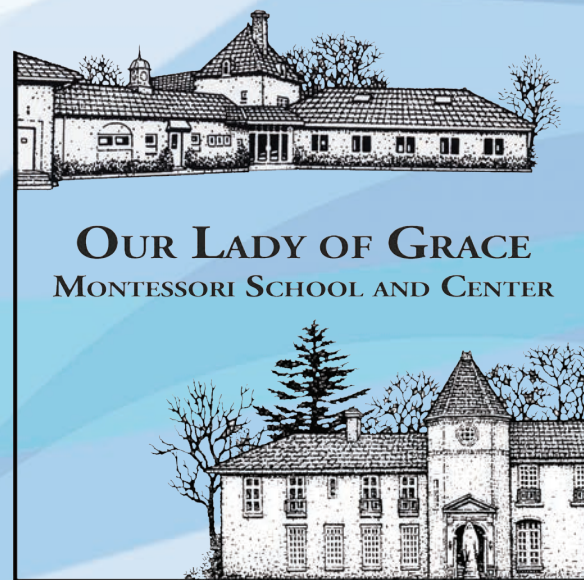
The African Sisters Education Collaborative was inaugurated in 1999 by leaders of four congregations of women religious in Pennsylvania and the presidents of the colleges and universities founded by their congregations to address the issue of educational access for women religious in Africa. The Sisters of IHM and Marywood University are co-sponsors of ASEC. The sponsors of ASEC recognize that women religious in Africa profoundly impact their communities and societies. To advance their efforts, ASEC provides educational opportunities for women religious in ten African countries so that they can further develop their talents and potential, build their credentials, and enhance the leadership and ministerial roles they assume at all levels of society.



Co-sponsored Ministries

Our Lady of Grace Montessori School and Center

Our Lady of Grace Montessori School was established in 1968. Integrated into the Catholic faith-based tradition of education, its classrooms are beautifully crafted environments designed for experiential learning for children from age three years to grade three. Today there are 225 children at OLG taught by highly qualified and experienced faculty. The school is a not-for-profit corporation, sponsored by the Sisters of IHM. Our Lady of Grace Spiritual Center provides days of quiet reflection for faculties, parish staff, societies, and individuals. The Center offers programs that encourage spiritual, psychological, and physical renewal. The beauty of the surroundings and the charm of the estate place guests in a relaxed and peaceful atmosphere.



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Friends of the Poor

Friends of the Poor is a non-profit organization founded by Sister Adrian Barrett, IHM, in 1986 and sponsored by the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The mission of Friends of the Poor is to bring together in friendship those who have the desire to give with those who are in need of assistance, in order to ease the burden of living in poverty and enhance the quality of life for all. Friends of the Poor manages food pantries and the distribution of clothing, household items, and furniture. Friends of the Poor sponsors seasonal activities for senior citizens, adults, families and children, holiday dinners, food baskets for families, and recreational and educational field trips for children.

NativityMiguel School of Scranton

The NativityMiguel School of Scranton, co-sponsored by the Sisters of IHM and the Sisters of Christian Charity, opened its doors in 2015. This private, co-educational, tuition-free/all scholarship middle school serves diverse students of economic need in grades 5-8. Located on the campus of Marywood University, the school serves more than 60 boys and girls from the Scranton area and seeks to empower students to reach their full potential. The school offers a holistic approach to academic and character development through the core values of faith and honor, integrity and respect, and leadership and perseverance.



Co-Sponsorship

The Heart of the Matter Through the Lens of ASEC

by Sister Anne Munley, IHM

The African Sisters Education Collaborative is a prime example of the WHY, WHO, and HOW of co-sponsorship. It is an initiative that emerged from POSSIBILITY THINKING in response to acute awareness of a profound need, motivated by passion for mission, and a deep sense of sisterhood.

The origins of ASEC trace back to late 1980s and early 1990s. Vocations were growing throughout Africa; new institutes were being established and conferences for women religious in various African nations were evolving as central locations for intercongregational collaboration, especially in the areas of initial formation and collective response to urgent needs. Simultaneously, the International Union of Superiors General (UISG) in Rome was drawing increased attention of sisters throughout the world to the needs and vast potential of African women religious.

The moment was ripe for SYNERGY rooted in RELATIONSHIP, the IDENTITY and MISSION of RELIGIOUS LIFE, ORGANIZATIONAL CONNECTIONS and INFLUENCE, COMMITMENT TO COLLABORATION, CLARITY OF VISION, and the AUDACIOUS BELIEF that with the grace of God, an idea conceived through “what if” conversations could spark an educational movement with outreach to ten countries in East, Central, and West Africa: Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, South Sudan, Malawi, Zambia and Lesotho. In the years since its inception, ASEC has educated approximately 9000 sisters from 394 distinct congregations as well as other individuals, empowering them as transformative leaders and as a dedicated force for systemic change.

The ASEC story is due to consistent efforts to attend to key principles essential to the intensive collaboration necessary for effective co-sponsorship. Many of these principles stem from ASEC’s beginnings.

Nobody can do it alone, but together we can do it!

Interactions made possible by overlapping involvement by ASEC’s “founders” in three significant religious life organizations focused attention and a desire to participate: the Neylan Commission -an association of Catholic colleges and universities founded by US congregations of women religious; Region 3 of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR); and the International Union of Superiors General (UISG), the worldwide leadership organization for Catholic Sisters.

Strong commitment to education, shared awareness of the transformational impact of the Sisters’ Formation Movement in meeting spiritual, educational, health care and social service needs in the United States, and a desire to assist African sisters in developing their potential for the sake of mission forged a bond and a common goal at the leadership level of the four congregations and colleges/

universities that ultimately would become the core of ASEC as an organization in its own right. The vision for ASEC was collaborative from the very first moment.

Be willing to put skin in the game!

Resources are necessary to launch any ministerial initiative. When the Neylan Commission dissolved, it contributed its remaining resources to ASEC as an affirmation of its educational potential. Each of the sponsoring congregations and higher educational institutions committed to an annual financial contribution of \$10,000. These entities are Chestnut Hill College, Marywood University, Neumann University, Rosemount College, the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Philadelphia, the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Scranton and the Society of the Holy Child Jesus.

Leverage your connections and know how!

There were a number of times in the early years of ASEC that various leaders stepped up to move ASEC forward. Mary Reap, IHM and Carol Jean Vale, SSJ both served in Neylan Commission leadership and brought attention to the compelling outreach possibilities of ASEC. Kathryn Miller, SSJ gave meticulous attention to maintaining minutes and pertinent records. Marcia Sichel, SHCJ helped ASEC receive its first planning grants from the Hilton Fund for Sisters. I was privileged to serve as facilitator for and delegate to UISG gatherings in Rome and Nairobi and was joined at an UISG open space gathering by Geraldine McCarthy, SHCJ and Patricia Kelly, SSJ where we listened to impassioned pleas for assistance with education of sisters by 55 African superiors from various congregations and countries and subsequently prepared a survey to assess specific needs. Carol Jean Vale,

SSJ was instrumental in getting a grant from the Connolly Foundation to fund travel of 17 African leaders to a gathering with ASEC counterparts in Philadelphia, where the plans to create the first ASEC computer labs in Kenya and Ghana were formed. Margaret Gannon, IHM used sabbatical time to research the state of distance education in Africa, a step necessary to determine an effective mode of delivery. Dr. Ann R. Henry acquired re-purposed computers from Hewlett Packard for the first ASEC computer lab at the Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya (AOSK) in Nairobi.



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Mother Seton Academy, Baltimore, Maryland

A Dream... A Mission... A Cause...

by IHM Sisters Eileen Clinton, Denise Lyon, and Kathleen Lunsmann

Who is... what is... Mother Seton Academy that is located in the heart of inner city Baltimore?



Thirty years ago this year, a dream became a reality when the doors of Mother Seton Academy opened. Six religious communities joined to co-sponsor this school and serve the neediest Baltimore students. Students of grades 6, 7 and 8 comprised the school, located in a vacant convent in the Fells Point section of Baltimore. I was privileged to become its principal in 2005. This was one of the most rewarding and unique experiences

I have ever had in my years in education. I call it unique because the majority of these students were not Catholic but were the most spiritually gifted students I have ever worked with. They freely and openly expressed themselves and their needs before the entire school community at prayer sessions.

Their day began with breakfast and ended at 5:00 p.m. Homework was done between 3:15 and 4:45 p.m. with the assistance of the Notre Dame AmeriCorps volunteers. One interesting feature was that each class was given the name of a founder/foundress of each co-sponsoring congregation which included Theresa Maxis. Students were expected to learn about the person, pray to them and present their life to the entire school community.

It was also a privilege for me to work with the co-sponsoring communities and their desire to serve the poorest of the poor. Together we enabled these students to grow in spirit and knowledge, to be accepted tuition free to Baltimore's Catholic high schools and then on to college. The sponsorship of many people enabled this to happen and continues today.

In 2009 the school was relocated to the former St. Ann's school in the Northern part of Baltimore. It continues today and thrives because of our co-sponsorship.



The mission of Mother Seton Academy grew out of a need to offer a Catholic School education to low-income middle school children whose families could not afford the usual tuition of Catholic schools. Six religious congregations came together to find a way to offer this opportunity to bright and talented youth, both girls and boys, who otherwise might end up on the streets and continue to perpetuate a life style whose potential was

disaster and destruction.

In 1991 the School Sisters of Notre Dame, the Sisters of St. Francis, Philadelphia, the Daughters of Charity, the Xaverian Brothers, and the Sisters of IHM of Scranton, followed by the Marianists who joined in 1997, banded together to follow the Spirit's lead to found and commit to sponsoring a middle school based on the NativityMiguel model of education. This style of education supports the children and their families beyond the usual "school day" with a structure of extended day and extended year schedule. As each young person discerns where they will move into high school and beyond, a graduate support system offers a continual underpinning to their educational evolution and success.

I had the opportunity to serve as a teacher, the librarian and administrative assistant during my eight years of ministering at MSA. I witnessed the

miracles of learning, development and growth of underprivileged youth into confident and mature young people who understood that they had the potential to be the best they could be through embracing the dream that the religious congregation co-sponsors saw in them.

MSA Mission Statement

"Empowered by Gospel values and rooted in the tradition of Catholic Education, Mother Seton Academy, a tuition-free middle school for young men and women, educates in a multicultural environment those with the greatest economic need. Promoting dignity and respect for each person, Mother Seton Academy challenges its students to realize their God-given talents and become leaders who serve their families, communities and society."



When I was invited to join the board of directors of Mother Seton Academy, I was not sure that I had the skills necessary to serve in this capacity for the cause of a school. What did I know about middle school? How could I provide oversight or strategic direction for a ministry I did not fully understand and had never experienced? These questions are probably similar concerns for all who are invited to consider board service at

our sponsored and co-sponsored ministries. As board members, we do not need to be experts in the primary service offered at our institutions. We do not even need to understand the day-to-day operation. What we do need to understand is our role in being an advocate for the organization and a steward for its mission.

In several orientation sessions for board membership over the years, I have learned that the legal responsibilities of a board member fall into three areas often called duty of care, duty of loyalty and duty of obedience.*

Duty of care requires that board members attend and participate in board meetings and committee meetings and ensures the administration is using the assets of the organization in a trustworthy manner. Assets include not only financial accounts but also physical assets such as the building and facilities and even personnel.

Duty of loyalty requires that board members ensure that all activities of the organization advance the specific mission. Board members of a middle school such as Mother Seton Academy need to speak up if (hypothetically) staff members are engaged in running a pet clinic at the school. That's not the mission of MSA.

Duty of obedience requires that board members follow all federal or state-specific requirements of nonprofit law and ensure that legal documents are filed.

Board members need to have a high-level view of the organization, sometimes stated as the 30,000-foot vantage point, a big picture perspective. They must provide oversight and insight from their personal experience and professional expertise. The professional expertise I bring to Mother Seton Academy focuses on fundraising and administration, but my personal experience is that of an IHM Sister. The lens through which I look at MSA from that perspective is asking how we care for and serve those most in need.

*National Council of Nonprofits, Board Member Roles and Responsibilities
<https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/running-nonprofit/governance-leadership/board-roles-and-responsibilities>

NativityMiguel School of Scranton

A Seed was Planted...

by Sister Susan Hadzima, IHM



A seed planted in May 1996 broke through the soil sprouting forth a sapling in September 2015 with the opening of the NativityMiguel School of Scranton, a co-sponsored ministry of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Sisters of Christian Charity, Eastern Province.

In 1996 Sister Margo McCormick wrote to Sister Terry O'Rourke, then serving as Director of Apostolic Planning for the IHM Congregation, saying, in part:

"I have a dream that together we can make a difference for at risk young adults. I have a dream that the spirit of our founders/foundresses is alive and moving in our midst. I have a dream that poor, floundering students can be turned on by caring, creative teachers, who are willing to engage them in hands-on-learning. I have a dream that there are religious educators in our midst who would love the opportunity to engage their talents in this exciting adventure. I have a dream that together we can make happen what alone is impossible. Together we can build an Academy of Hope."

Sister Terry brought Sister Margo's dream to the Collaborative Ministry Group, a gathering of Religious Women and Men and co-workers, who met monthly to consider ways to respond to unmet ministerial needs in the diocese. A meeting of educators from the diocese was organized where Sister Margo shared her dream. Energy and enthusiasm were evident, suggestions given, finances and possible buildings considered, yet the dream remained dormant.

Not to be easily thwarted, Sister Margo waited and again raised her burning desire at an Assembly of the IHM Congregation in 2011 where Sister Terry, now President of the IHM Congregation, invited suggestions or questions from the group at large. Sister Margo went to the mic and questioned, "When will we open a school for the poor in Scranton? It's who we are!" Applause and affirmation resounded from the Sisters gathered there. Remembering well the history of this dream, Sister Terry assured Sister Margo that the leadership team would sit down within the week and figure out a way to make it happen and they did. Sister Terry knew we could open a school but it would need additional co-collaborators to sustain it. She also believed, "If it comes from God, it will happen."

Various meetings followed, invitations to religious congregations, other educators, interested pastors, lay leaders. Interest and enthusiasm grew; various possibilities explored. The Sisters of Christian Charity expressed interest in joining with the IHM Sisters to develop this initiative. Msgr. John Jordan offered the

NativityMiguel model of schools, originally designed to serve underserved immigrant children who were educationally capable, a model he recommended for the population needing to be served. A feasibility study indicated viability for the school. A sapling had finally broken through the earth.

Locating a place to begin presented one of many challenges. The branches of the dream needed to spread wide. In a wonderful spirit of hospitality and collaboration, Rabbi Daniel Swartz and Temple Hesed opened their doors to welcome the first 5th grade class of boys and girls in fall 2015 to the NativityMiguel School, a faith-based, tuition-free middle school with Sister Josephine Cioffi, IHM, as principal and Sister Marie Angeline Weiss, SCC, fifth grade teacher. Co-sponsorship was established and evident. With an extended day and year-round program, the school was open to all faiths, providing a rich educational experience and opportunities for future pathways to high school and higher education.

Eight years have passed since the NativityMiguel School took root and began to grow. In May 2023 the first class of fifth grade students returned to the Art Show/Donor Reception where their plans for college and other educational endeavors were revealed. Eight years since they began this journey had brought



them to this great milestone. Much growth and many changes had occurred during this eight year span. As the school continued to grow, initially one grade at a time, enrollment increased and the well-loved space at Temple Hesed became too small. The time there had been richly blessed with such warm and gracious hospitality, many kindnesses extended, and multiple opportunities to learn and experience the Jewish traditions. New space was offered by Marywood University, where in September 2021, NativityMiguel found a new home in the Liberal Arts Center. Again opportunities provided by the University richly enhance the educational program and in turn, the Marywood students benefit from their

interactions with the NativityMiguel students. The opening liturgy and picnic, work with the architecture students, or conversations with Sister Mary Persico, IHM, Marywood's President, a frequent visitor to their classrooms, are encouraging reminders that college is an option for them, a thought initially far from their expectations.

The 2023 school year opened with 68 students, the largest enrollment to date. True to the NativityMiguel model, the school remains a private, Catholic, co-educational, tuition-free/all scholarship middle school proudly serving ethnically and religiously diverse students of greater economic need in grades 5-8. The students engage in a rigorous academic program with an extended school day and an extended school year with a four-week academic enrichment program in the summer. Committed to educating the students in the arts and humanities, the school provides classes in music, art, architecture, and health. A Graduate Support Program offers critical support in navigating the challenges of high school and college admissions: school and college visits, applications, workshops on financial aid along with support, encouragement, and mentoring. Often these students are the first in their families to strive for these goals.

The NativityMiguel School flourishes as a co-sponsored ministry of the Sisters of IHM and the Sisters of Christian Charity. Mr. Ron Prislupski, President of the NativityMiguel School, explained that when the students begin 5th grade, they learn about the influence and spirit of both congregations responsible for founding the school and keeping the school focused on its mission and values. Co-sponsorship allows them to do what neither congregation could do alone. The students have opportunities to meet Sisters at various school events. The congregations join with many dedicated co-collaborators, other religious congregations, board members, scholarship providers, donors, volunteers of all kinds to nurture, sustain, and grow this tree of life and hope.

A dream shared, a seed planted, the earth readied, roots strengthened, the tree thriving in the energy of co-sponsorship making happen what alone would be impossible.

Sister Susan serves as Mission Coordinator for the Catherine McAuley Center and as a member of the Board of Directors of the NativityMiguel School of Scranton.

In Memoriam

As women of faith, we find ourselves in communion with all who stand at the crossroads where death is giving way to risen life. As we grieve the loss of our own cherished IHM Sisters, we also celebrate their lives poured out in love and service to our beautiful yet wounded world.

We invite you to join us in honoring the memory of these beloved and holy women.



Sister Maria Rose Kelly, IHM
October 17, 1942

April 9, 2023

by Eileen Schiller Toomey, IHM

By whichever name, was she not dear to our hearts?!

Whether you were gathered here together yesterday or have been thinking about and talking about Rose elsewhere, we can be assured that there have been many eulogies already uttered for Rose. I am honored and touched to be able to speak about her here today.

A small plaque I recently saw made me think of Rose in many ways. She was the daughter every parent would treasure. The sister that every little brother would look up to. The teacher that enriches and encourages every student. The friend that anyone would value. Regarding “friend,” I have been thinking that in a room filled with folks that knew Rose well, if you asked, “Do you think Rose was your best friend?” hands would shoot up all around. Not that we would think we were her best friend, but we knew she was ours. She was there for us. She cared for us. She welcomed and celebrated us.

Rose and I came into one another’s life in 1960 when we were 17 and became IHM postulants. Though we were band mates, shared classes and chores, we did not really get to know one another until 1969 when my assignment was changed to Maria Regina High School on Long Island. I was not so happy about this change. I really thought it was a terrible mistake. I had loved my former mission in Masontown, PA and was so sad to leave it. But Rose was very happy at Maria Regina and she did everything she could to comfort me and make me welcome. Only now, only NOW do I realize what a true blessing that change was. It brought me close to Rose, Sister Josine and many other beautiful women as well as to the Kelly family.

Even after I left the community, Rose and I stayed close and continued to share in each another’s life. Newton Lake was always a delight. I got to know her parents, her brothers, Frank and Paul and her cousin, Joe and his wife, Elaine.

Rose was part of John’s and my wedding; she is godmother to our daughter, Anne, and has played the part of silly auntie to her and to our son, Michael. She read at Michael and Abby’s wedding and has rejoiced in our little granddaughters. And, thankfully, over all these years, Rose has kept me connected to the IHMs.

Unsurprisingly, Rose took great, unabashed delight in children. Each and every child born to family and friends was “The most beautiful child!” That never took away from the one before but simply reflected how Rose saw them all... each one perfect. I think that children frequently surprised Rose. How quickly they grew and changed, how they understood and used language, how they could engage in a game, how they could get a joke and give a joke. Children for Rose were always a gift that kept giving. “Send me pictures,” she would say. “More, more, more!”

Have you ever taken a walk with Rose? Well, if you have, you have never gotten quickly from one place to another. Not because physically she wasn’t up to it (that did come later), but because, if someone was passing on the street, Rose would not only give a wave and say hello, but she would stop and chat usually finding something to compliment about the person or what the person was doing. This trait did not come from nowhere. Rose was the daughter of Kitty Kelly, the woman who one day after Mass tapped the shoulder of the man in front of her and said, “Excuse me, but I have to tell you that you have beautiful ears!” Reasons to compliment were always found by mother and daughter.

That brings me to another observation about Rose. No matter what, “we” (the collective we) were all superlatives. We were the best hosts, the finest cooks, the most clever artists, the funniest companion, the most thoughtful... whatever. Now this is all very nice but what did it mean to try to live up to that? She was very sneaky in forcing us to be our best selves. And since we never wanted her to see us any differently, it was hard work for us to keep trying.

Rose knew the art of contentment. She would say how much she loved her room, her view, her chair, aka her “precious.” She valued the ease of her retirement, her easy access to liturgy, her daily life with Sister Franny and those in her

small community of Sacred Heart and with her larger community at this IHM Center and beyond. In these later years as many of you know, Rose began to write poetry. Very simple words usually tied into a reflection on nature. She would send a poem along with a card or a note. Nothing flashy. Just something to share in the moment. It was always something to make you pause.

My husband, John, and Rose used to kid about her physical “activity,” or lack thereof. He would say that we would only charge her half the usual rate for staying with us since she slept so much of the time. John and Rose were great talkers together and she was a great audience for his stories and his humor.

Rose’s true activity was in listening. She paid attention and gave attention. She remembered about people and what was important to them. She was the Mary who “took the better part.” Our son, Mike, whose communications with her were mostly on the phone says he never had an awkward or forced conversation with her. As he said here yesterday, her voice was unique and uniquely soothing. He feels she was an expert at knowing how long a conversation should go. She always ended by saying how much she loved him, his wife, Abby, and his girls.

I have never doubted that Rose’s life was centered on God and the goodness of God. She was a true lover of God and she did her best always to make her life a reflection of God’s love for all. Last Valentine’s Day, Rose sent a card to our daughter. Anne shared that card with her family and I would like to share a bit of it with you to let Rose now have the last word.

This is what she sent—an excerpt from *The Tender Lord* by Will Kent Krueger: “Do you believe in God?” I could see him rolling his eyes around in his head. “I don’t know if I believe in the God in the bible,” he sighed. “But I know you and Albert and Emmy and Sister Eve. And I think about Herman Volz and Emmy’s mother. I know love. So, if it’s true like Sister Eve (Sister Rose) says that God is love, then I guess I believe.”





Sister M. Anysia Donohue, IHM
October 8, 1932
April 22, 2023
by Sister Janet Milan, IHM

Jesus appeared to the eleven and said to them,
“Go into the whole world and proclaim the
Gospel to every creature. Whoever believes and
is baptized will be saved.”

In his work, *A Book of Grace-Filled Days*, Tom McGrath speaks of those people we encounter who are quiet proclaimers of the Gospel. “They proclaim by their example and their actions. They proclaim by their example and their care. They proclaim by their confident trust that ‘all will be well.’ And they proclaim best by their trust in the intervention of the Holy Spirit at every turn. Pay attention today to the quiet proclaimers you meet.” When I read this, my mind and heart went right to my memories of Sister Anysia.

Sister Anysia left her native Pittsburgh as a teenager to enter the IHM congregation in 1950. Many years passed before she returned to the city as a distinguished teacher, having ministered in schools on the east coast and in Lima, Peru.

Sister Anysia was baptized Lillian. She was the youngest of five children born to Irish immigrants, Timothy and Catherine Donohue. Her brother Jack and sisters Peg, Catherine and Ann joined her in filling their home with joy and love.

Anysia relished sharing stories of her teaching career. At St. Paul’s School, she “almost” taught President Joe Biden in fourth grade, but his family moved to Delaware the previous summer. While teaching in St. Mary’s School in Upper Marlboro, she taught seventy-two students in a classroom where she could not see every child because a big coal stove that heated the classroom was located in the center of the room. One famous story from her days in Peru that she liked to tell involved her breaking one of her own rules. She had instructed the children not to remove any pages of their accumulated work from their notebooks, when she realized that her penmanship lesson had unintentionally included a rude and unacceptable Spanish word that would have caused an uproar had it been circulated outside the classroom. Anysia quickly and frantically removed the pages from each notebook explaining to the children that she just wanted to show the other sisters how well the boys and girls were doing. Thus, her quick thinking averted a catastrophe!

Anysia was recruited as one of the pioneer Scranton IHMs to open a mission in Lima, Peru in 1965 and served there for five years. She first learned the language then taught the Peruvian children. Because life in Lima was not stable at times, she always made sure that there were funds available to get the sisters back to the states if the need arose.

One notable, frightening memory that Anysia often shared involved an earthquake in Lima which struck suddenly when she was in the parking lot of a Sears store. As the earth started to shake all around her, she prayed, “Please God don’t let me die in this parking lot in the middle of a foreign country!” Needless to say, God answered her prayer.

A few years later Anysia returned to western Pennsylvania, first to Masontown and then to Pittsburgh. She taught in St. Rosalia’s, then returned to her beloved alma mater, St. Mary of the Mount. In all, Anysia taught in her beloved city for forty-two years. In those early years at St. Mary’s, she also spent her weekends caring for her elderly parents until their passing.

Many years later I came under her tutelage at St. Mary of the Mount. I was her driving companion, be it shopping, vacations, medical appointments or visitation trips. I drove and she provided directions and shopping points along the route. When given the opportunity, she could retrieve her purse and walking shoes at a moment’s notice and be ready to travel. It was a good thing that I was a native Pittsburgher and knew my way to various frequented destinations.

Anysia was famous for this adage, “If you repeat it enough times, it’s yours for life.” Former students who met her in a chance encounter would begin to list all the pronouns or their knowledge of the multiplications tables which they recited before each class. Sister would express her thanks with a big smile and a chuckle.

In later years Anysia preferred to come home to the convent on Bigham Street after school, kick off her shoes and read the daily paper. We alternated days to prepare dinner. She was a meat and potato girl; vegetables were mainly for my fare. She preferred sandwiches to salads, especially those with broccoli. Anysia would fix a great mix of green leafy stuff, but meat or cheese between two slices of bread was her choice. We even provided IHM Meals on Wheels to Sister Mary Bride who lived nearby.

Our local convent served as the Pittsburgh Motherhouse! December eighth, regional meetings, Steeler Super Bowl festivities, whatever the occasion, local IHMs were always welcome at our door. She preplanned many of the celebrations far in advance of the date so we were able to have most preparations in place prior to the event.

Anysia, to those who knew her was, in her quiet manner, recognized as one of the kindest, most compassionate and generous people they knew. Any man begging on the street was sure to cause her to find funds for him in her pocket. She would say, “He might be Jesus or St. Joseph.” We tried to make sure that if a stranger came to our door, he or she would be housed in a warm

place to stay for the night. In every aspect Anysia embodied IHM hospitality and its welcoming spirit.

While we miss her, we rejoice with her that she has entered into eternal life. The Donohue family is once again reunited. May she, her parents, siblings and extended family rest in peace forever.



Sister Josephine Cioffi, IHM
August 6, 1940
May 20, 2023
by Sister Judy O’Brien, IHM

One of the blessings of serving on our leadership team and being here in Scranton is reconnecting with the Sisters who have been an important part of my congregation life. One of those sisters is our Sister Josephine Cioffi. There are many of you who could be up here, having this privilege of reflecting on the celebration of Jo’s life. I am so humbled that it is me.

Welcome to all, those here in the flesh, nephew Ben and niece Gina and those here on livestream. Jo’s love for her family knew no bounds. Her relationships and devotion to her parents and sisters, Jeanette and Fran, and their children, were always at the center of her life. Thank you to Father Gavitt for celebrating with us today as we remember our Sister Jo.

While sitting in my backyard last Saturday, it was Mother’s Day weekend, I observed a mother cardinal teaching her five babies to fly. She had them lined up on the edge of a garage roof, systematically showing them how to fly from one side of the roof to the other. The roof was always under them so as to remove the fear of falling in mid-air I suspect. A mother teaching her young to survive life’s journey. My mind shifted to thinking about what I would say about Jo today. The concept of teaching, just as the mother cardinal was doing, became an immediate and appropriate metaphor for my words today.

Of all of the sisters that I have been blessed to live with over the years, Sister Josephine Cioffi was the most committed and passionate educator I have known. Her dedication to the ministry of education was palpable. She lived to educate. Every child, every faculty member and every staff person was her student. She taught them to fly and protected them from the fall into mid-air whenever she could. Her desire for each of them to succeed in life was incredible, and she worked tirelessly at teaching them how to be their best.

continued on next page

She was the teacher and the leader par excellence!

I lived with Jo in community at St. Ann's in Harlem in the '90s. It was the neighborhood in which she had grown up, and she loved having the opportunity to return and lead. The neighborhood had transitioned from a predominantly flourishing Italian neighborhood to a depressed and dangerous section of New York City. No matter to Jo, it was home to her, and she embraced the new ethnically diverse populations as her own. From early morning to late at night Jo was in school pounding away at the dauntless responsibilities that were hers, and she loved it.

Because of Jo, our community of sisters during those years fell in love with the neighborhood as well. Most of us would arrive home to the convent at around 8:00 p.m. exhausted and weary. It was then that we would pray and share our daily lives. We would watch the news together, Jo sipping on a glass of red wine, discuss social issues of the time, and we would laugh, every day, we would laugh. Jo had an infectious sense of humor, very dry and very poignant, and it brought out the humor and laughter in all of us. Jo's ministry in that school and parish afforded all of us the blessing of calling Harlem home.

Sister Josephine also taught us the value of rest. Every Sunday she honored the Sabbath with prayer, Eucharist and spending quality time with family and friends. It was not unusual for Jo and a friend to walk to Little Italy, about a four-mile hike, on a Sunday afternoon to eat a meal, share conversation, and then to walk home.

Eventually, after many, many years, the congregation and the NativityMiguel School would beckon her to return to Scranton to pioneer a new school, a new model of education. She did this wholeheartedly and with the same passion she had for her native Harlem home and school. NativityMiguel School thrives today because of the love for education that Sister Josephine Cioffi passed on. She would be so proud of that school and those students today.

These last few years, Jo has embraced a different manner of teaching and education, it is called, "The School of Letting Go." This school was perhaps Josephine's hardest assignment of all. With the incredible attention given her by the amazing care-sharing staff here at Our Lady of Peace, Jo's end of life journey was slow and difficult but she was never alone on that path. Her students this time were all of us, family, friends, sisters and care-givers. What has she taught us? Well, for me, it has been the lesson of gracious departing. Saying good-bye to a lifetime of love and ministry and laughter. Suffering silently and giving over all that she has been to the Master Teacher, our God. Just as in Harlem, Josephine has taught us how to come home.

Thank you, Jo, for all you have taught, for all you have imparted. Fly now Sister, just as that mother cardinal taught her young ones. Fly to your new school, a school that we can only dream of, a perfect school of peace, love and forever Sabbath.



Sister Rose Marie Mozzachio, IHM

April 28, 1941

June 4, 2023

by Sister Gail Cabral, IHM

For me, Sister Rose Marie Mozzachio will always be the woman of a listening heart and a dancing spirit. Rose Marie was a great sister to Connie and her brothers, a wonderful aunt to nieces and nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews, and even great grands. She was a wonderful community member and friend. She brought to each relationship, indeed to each encounter, interest, warmth, and loving attention. People were quickly charmed by her sense of humor. Last week when she was finding it difficult to talk, a hospice worker who had never met her came into the room and looked questioningly at both of us as she asked for Sister Rose Marie. Rose, with little breath to talk, pointed a finger in my direction! Luckily, my reaction quickly let the nurse know I was not the patient.

Rose was a great sister and aunt. She was to her family, as she was to friends, kind, supportive and immensely interested. She gave advice infrequently but when she did, it was with wisdom, honesty, and respect.

The message on the cover of the Mass booklet "I hope you dance" was Rose's choice. As a matter of fact, Sister Eileen Coleman and I had explicit directions about the booklet cover. Rose had used a similar theme for her 50th jubilee celebration. She loved to dance! As a teenager every day after school found her at Dick Clark's American Bandstand, with a sweater over her Catholic school uniform, and her skirt rolled up. She moved to the music. When faced with a choice between sitting it out or dancing, Rose always chose to dance.

She always chose to learn, to explore, to engage. Whether it was new science, Reiki treatments, or Eastern spirituality, Rose loved to learn more about the universe and Life itself! She danced to the tempo needed in the variety of ministries and life experiences to which she was called. She was a teacher, an administrator, a vocation/formation leader, a parish worker. Her last educational ministry was coordinating a tutoring center at the IHM Center. To each ministry Rose brought enthusiasm and life.

Rose was a great teacher; she often taught French and religion. An elective course she taught at Holy Cross High School, Awakening to Prayer, was frequently over-subscribed and had a waiting list. Some students wanted to take it a second

time!

Rose was a much-loved administrator. Her explanation to me of her success as a principal was that she encouraged teachers who had suggestions about new things to do. She said, "I'd tell them 'Go for it.'" As a result teachers and staff worked very hard and very happily.

Rose's unbreakable spirit was always that of the spunky girl from South Philly, ready for fun. If you said, "Let's go to..." she always said "Oh, yes." Sometimes her energy didn't match her intention, but her love of life and fun was always there.

A few weeks ago, Rose was wearing colorful loungewear on her way down the hallway to get a pain pill. One of the sisters thought it looked Hawaiian and brought out a straw hat. A paper lei was later added to the outfit. Rose struck a few dramatic poses for the camera, bringing her flair and good humor to the group.

One time early in our years of living together on Marion Street, Sister Eileen Coleman was visiting. Both Rose and Eileen were in the kitchen, getting a little party supper organized. As I entered the room, I heard the end of a conversation. I heard "You can say that in the prayer service too." I asked if Eileen was working on a congregational prayer service for Haiti or something else. Both laughed.

One of them had done some simple kindness (like handing over a jar of olives, or a bottle of vermouth); the other said "I could share that at the wake prayer service for you." After that, we often said, "That can go in my prayer service." Or sometimes, "Don't mention that in the prayer service!"

Well, prayer services are written and spoken by the survivors. So, Rose, it is Eileen and I and all these loving family members and friends who grieve your passing, remember your valiant fight, and get to share memories and stories of your wonderful dance through life. We hope to follow your advice. We hope when we get a choice to sit it out or dance, we get up and dance!



Sister Jeanne Albrittain, IHM

February 21, 1933

July 23, 2023

by Sister Kathleen Mary Burns, IHM

In a recent article, entitled *Learning from the Radiant Presence of Jesus*, Sister Carol Higgins, a Sister of the Holy Name of Jesus and Mary, wrote "I deeply believe that one of the greatest gifts we give to the world today is the gift of our presence.

continued on next page

Our most important mission as women religious [may be] how we present ourselves to the people in our lives.... We know that to be the loving presence of Christ in today's world means to break open our hearts to all of creation, and to all of humanity."

I think this "Radiant presence" very much describes our dear Sister Jeanne.

She was an unassuming, gentle, soft-spoken woman. She might not always have a lot to say, but she was a deeply loving and devoted Sister, Servant of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. She served as an elementary school teacher, a principal, a religious educator, a pastoral associate, a nurse's aide, and a prayer minister. She shared the love of God through her presence wherever she was and whatever she did. She was always ready to lend a hand. And she had that radiant smile.

Jeanne was a member of our Tierra Maria Mission Group/Circle since it began in the 1990s, or as I like to say, back in the last century. In the beginning, most of our members lived in the Baltimore/Washington area while Jeanne and I lived in Scranton. We frequently traveled together to the meetings, most frequently held on Kent Island in the Chesapeake Bay. During our travels, she often spoke of her family and life in and love of Maryland and of the sisters she cared for at Our Lady of Peace Residence.

She told me about how for her 75th birthday her family surprised her with something she always wanted to do: a hot air balloon ride. She really enjoyed that. It was a wonderful, memorable experience.

Jeanne enjoyed playing cards. After our mission meetings, many of us would stay overnight at the house on Kent Island that we borrowed from the Baltimore Franciscan Sisters, and we enjoyed playing games together. Jeanne was not so much interested in Scrabble, but she loved playing cards, and we often played 13 and Phase 10. More often than not I found myself receiving the cards she discarded, and I would sometimes pretend to telegraph the cards I needed to her telepathically. I'd scrunch up my forehead and put my fingers there and say, "I'm sending you what I need. Jeanne, give me what I need!" and she'd laugh. We rarely made that psychic connection, and I rarely got the cards I was looking for from her. But then, every so often she'd get a little bit of a wicked smile on her face as she plunked down a certain card and said, "Skip you!" She would never telegraph her status, but would simply win the hand (and often the game) by turning her cards over with a smile when we least expected it.

Jeanne loved nature and growing things. Every summer the tables at the IHM Center have been graced by the fruits of her and her partner, Sister Mary Ann Remus's, labor. I know more than one sister who will be missing her fresh tomatoes!

Jeanne, we will miss you. Thank you for the gift of your presence as IHM sister. Thank you for breaking open your heart to all of creation and all of humanity and for being a radiant, loving presence of Christ in our midst.



Sister M. Carlita Bird, IHM

March 20, 1941

August 8, 2023

by Sister Kathryn Clauss, IHM

I am grateful for the opportunity as we gather as a family to welcome you, Sister Carlita's family, Mary Lourdes and her husband Phil, Loreen, Sean, Carl and Frank, her friends, former students and colleagues in mission, our IHM Sisters and associates present and on livestream to this celebration of her life. Carlita entered the congregation in 1958 and joined her paternal aunt, Sister Clarencia Bird who entered in 1926, and her maternal aunt, Greta Collins, who entered in 1936. These three women through their lives as IHM sisters and their roles as teacher and principal helped to inform, inspire, and engender in their students a sense of God's love for them and God's desire for them to share that love with those they met. What a lasting legacy of 211 years of service the Bird and Collins families shared through the IHM Congregation with the hundreds, perhaps thousands of women, children and men whose lives were transformed as they engaged with Carlita, Greta and Clarencia.

It is safe to say that Carlita loved you, her family, deeply. Over the years I had many opportunities to be in conversation with her about her father, Carl and her mother, Mary Collins Bird, Aunt Rose, and her nieces and nephews. How deeply Carlita loved all of you. She spoke of you with great tenderness and gratitude. I was with Mary Lourdes and her husband, Phil recently when they were visiting Carlita. There was a moment when Mary Lourdes said her name and told her how much she loved her. Carlita opened her eyes, she looked at Mary Lourdes and smiled. It was Carlita's call, her rootedness in God and God's love and your love and support that graced her with the ability to bring God's unconditional love to her family and those she encountered in her ministry of education and her life as an IHM sister.

It is our practice during the wake service to place into the sister's hand the card that the sister signed at the time of her profession. I would like to share with you the statement that Carlita signed on her day of profession in 1961, 62 years ago:

Most loving, omnipotent and eternal God, I, Sister Carlita Bird who, though unworthy, am about to be numbered among the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, have an ardent

desire of consecrating my entire affections to Thy holy love, and of serving Thee with all my senses and faculties, in imitation of Your divine Son, Jesus Christ.

After serious reflection and fervent prayer, prostrate before Thy divine Majesty and in the presence of the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the celestial court, I make the simple vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience into the hands of Reverend Mother General, for all my life, according to the Constitutions of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

When Carlita was professed, she promised to commit herself through her vow of chastity to give herself totally, unreservedly, and perpetually to Jesus Christ as her primary relationship. This vow compelled her to become radically available to others in loving, mutual relationships and to live out her life for the sake of the Reign of God.*

In promising to live the vow of evangelical poverty, Carlita was committed to simplicity of lifestyle rooted in mutual sustainability and in interdependent sharing of the goods of the congregation with respect for justice and co-responsibility. Her dedication of time, resources and talents were shared to further the congregation's mission of service and love, and for the benefits of others, especially for those who were marginalized.*

By the vow of prophetic obedience, Carlita was inspired by the example of Jesus who lived his life responding to the Father's will. Through prayer, dialogue, and discernment, Carlita sought fidelity to the will of God for the building of the Reign of God through reflective, responsible listening and discernment in the decision-making processes of the congregation and by participating in our search for prophetic ways to live our vowed life.*

Our Sister Carlita desired to be in the midst of our world, sharing her giftedness and vulnerability in solidarity with persons who are poor in any way and with all of creation. In this context she heard the word of God and staked her life on it. It is the word of God who now beckons her home.

As I place Carlita's vow card into her hands, I invite you to quietly speak your words of gratitude to her for the gift she is to you as an aunt, family member, IHM sister, friend and colleague, and teacher.

* IHM Constitutions



Obituaries for IHM Sisters can be found at:
<https://tinyurl.com/2p99mkyk>

The IHM Communications Office is seeking old photographs of IHM Sisters who are deceased.

Send photos to
communications@sistersofihm.org

Meghan Loftus, continued from page 9

Christmas tree. I've seen the purest, most incredible joy on children's faces as they run through the creek at our summer camp looking for frogs and splashing their friends. I've seen strangers turn into family among the Jackson Terrace work crew, and I've seen shoulders you may not expect become comfort for those in distress. I've collapsed on my couch after our annual Thanksgiving events in pure exhaustion. I've stayed awake for 48 hours straight to meet grant deadlines. I've laughed. I've cried. I've failed, and I've succeeded. I have learned resiliency in ways I never even imagined. Our team at FOP has grown, shrunk, and grown again. We've opened dozens of new locations and closed dozens of others. We've fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the sick or imprisoned, and welcomed strangers every single day since Sister Adrian Barrett opened our doors in 1986. We've done it through three IHM leaders, continue to do it through my term, and will continue to do so for decades to come. That is the magic and power of sponsorship. Our mission, our values, and the culture we create here all flow directly from the Scripture, through the IHM Congregation, and into Friends of the Poor's every vein. I am confident that magic will continue well beyond the next 37 years of service Friends of the Poor can provide to our community. Deuteronomy (15:11) tells us there will never cease to be poor in the land. We know that, despite our best efforts to eradicate poverty, need will always exist in our community. And so long as that need exists, so will Friends of the Poor.

"But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?
Let us not love in word or talk, but in deed and in truth."
1 John 3: 17-18

Meghan serves as CEO of Friends of the Poor.



Ann Williams, Sister Betty Bullen, Todd Pousley, Dorothy Grill, Arnell Peters (FOTP Volunteer and Sierra Store Manager), Ingrid Husisian, Harold Strickland (FOTP Volunteer), and Meghan Loftus

Sheryl Lynn Sochoka, continued from page 7

steadfast, empowering students to believe in themselves and serve their communities...Together, we will create, reimagine, and enhance the future of Marywood University."

Marywood educates people of all backgrounds as trained professionals who are ethical, responsible, and in demand in this increasingly interdependent, ever-changing world. Students learn in person and online. They serve their communities—locally, nationally, and globally. They make their mark, both as students and as graduates, carrying forward that "special something" that is distinctly Marywood.

Sister Mary Persico, IHM, Ed.D., Marywood University's President, notes, "By empowering our students, by fostering innovation and learning, we are sparking a chain reaction that will uplift our local communities, stimulate economic growth, grow the workforce, and inspire a brighter future for all."

As a vital IHM-sponsored institution, inspired by its founding vision and strengthened by its willingness to respond innovatively and strategically to its emerging future, Marywood University is moving forward with purpose.

Sheryl Lynn is an IHM Associate (commissioned in 2013) and a 1992 Marywood graduate, as well as a Marywood employee for 30+ years. In her role as Marywood's Publications Director, Sheryl's deep interest in Marywood and IHM history, along with her ongoing work regarding their emerging future, informs her professional efforts to move Marywood forward and to ensure the university's continued prosperity.

Historical Resources: *The Sisters of IHM*, published in 1921 by "A Member of the Scranton Community" (a.k.a., Sister M. Immaculata Gillespie, IHM) and *Marywood College: The First Seventy-five Years*, published in 1990 by Margaret Yarina, Ph.D.

Sister Anne Munley, continued from page 12

When it became clear that for ASEC to receive large grants to enable access for African sisters to leadership training programs and higher education, Anita Cattafesta, OSF provided access to her congregation's legal services to assist with the preparation of corporate bylaws and documentation necessary to receive tax exempt status. With this status in place, Marcia Sichol, SHCJ who at this point was serving as a consultant for the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, came to Scranton where I was serving as ASEC's Executive Director to help write the initial Hilton Grant for \$2 million dollars which launched the Sisters Leadership Development Initiative (SLDI).

This pattern of leveraging connections and generous sharing of know-how has consistently been continued by countless other religious leaders—African and American along with an increasing number of lay partners resulting in the current flourishing of ASEC with its remarkable outreach and impact.

Stay close to core values!

Poets tell us that the power to change the world lies in the human heart. Deeply held values enable committed persons to draw from the heart to impact the world around them. For co-sponsored initiatives to succeed, organizational decisions need to be closely aligned to core values-- the values of the heart.

From the start, the values of collaboration, mutuality, subsidiarity, interculturality, excellence, service and empowerment were central. These values reflect a style of working together that has contributed to the ongoing effectiveness of ASEC's mission. It is also these values that shape and sustain the capacity of ASEC to further spiritual, relational, formative, transformational and servant leadership for the life of God's people in Africa as well as the life of the world.

Sister Anne serves as the Associate Director for Emerging Future Initiative with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious.



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SEASON OF CREATION



The Sisters of IHM, IHM Associates, and friends held a prayer service in the Friendship Garden at the IHM Center in observance of the “Season of Creation,” a monthlong commitment of prayer and care for God’s creation and to embrace actions for climate and ecological justice.



IHM Sponsored and Co-sponsored Ministries

Marywood University



Our Lady of Grace
Montessori School and Center



Sponsored

Saint Joseph's Center



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African Sisters
Education
Collaborative



NativityMiguel School
of Scranton

