

Sister Carmelina Meyers, BVM
Wake Stories/Reflections
Marian Hall Chapel, May 16, 2017

Sister Anita Therese Hayes, BVM

We claim Carm as our set. Carm entered just six months after we did. We entered in 1941 and she entered in February of 1942. For six months, we were in the postulate together. We had great times and developed a warm friendship. When the remnant of our set began having our Friday breakfast, we said, "Carm, you come along. You're part of our set; you join us." That's what we did. Every Friday we would get together and talk over all the things that were important to us, and not so important to us. We had some great times together. So, we claim Carm as part of our set. Carm, I know you are up there with your own set, but you know who else is there. The big set too. You are all together rejoicing. You were so good to us. We loved you greatly, and we still love you. So rejoice, Carm, and we will rejoice with you.

Sister Patricia Fitzgerald, BVM (Chrysostom)

I had the joy and privilege of living with Carm at our house in Oak Park, Ill. It is a very, very old house. The wasps like to get into the stucco outside and build their nests Carm had a back bedroom on the second floor. One summer, we had plugged up some of the holes on the first floor. The poor wasps were looking for another home. It happened to be the back bedroom of Carm's two-room living area. It was Sunday morning and I heard Carm say, "Pat! Pat! There are wasps in my room!" She and I battled the wasps. Carm, it was a joy to live with you. You were so wise and happy. It was privilege. Be happy now.

Sister Nancy McCarthy, BVM (Josephine Mary)

I am also from the house in Oak Park and had the privilege of living with Carm and Pat for several years. I want to mention one little thing that I was so happy to see on the remembrance table with all the photos—that little plaque with the word "Whatever." I don't even think I was aware of that word until I lived with Carm, and then I was more than aware of it. I never heard anything as often as I heard "whatever." However, it wasn't in the sense of "whatever will be, will be." It was, in a beautiful way, whatever happens in life, is okay, even more than okay. It can be beautiful. Those are the kinds of things she taught me—acceptance of whatever happens. Thank you, Carm.

Sister Margaret Sannasardo, BVM (Paul Joseph)

I also lived with Carm in Oak Park. We had lots of fun together. She was a very calming force on me. I remember another funny thing that happened in that back room. We were trying to remove an air conditioner when it fell out and right down to the ground. The two of us, like Lucy and Ethel, were laughing. Luckily, it didn't hurt anything. She always liked to have Chinese dinners on the Chinese New Year. She also loved celebrating St. Patrick's Day with the Bailey's and Irish whiskey. Carm, *whatever* you're doing, have a wonderful, blessed time. God bless you and peace be with you.

Sister Carol Cook, BVM (Conrad Ann)

I'll finish it off with another Oak Park story because I lived with Carm there too. When I heard in the welcome that her mother cooked, I understood where Carm got all of her cooking skills. She was not only creative in art, doing cross-stitch and more, but she was also creative in cooking. She was willing to try just about anything. I remember that for Mardi Gras, she got a recipe from somebody and that's how we celebrated. We still have those glasses that she gave us because we were going to celebrate. She was lots of fun to live with. She was also a very wise woman. She never preached, but rather showed by how she lived what life really means. I, too, am most grateful for knowing Carm. I was the one who got to

bring her here. It was a beautiful day. She was ready at that point to come and be here and to experience a new part of her journey. Thanks, Carm.

Patricia Krase, Sister (Read by Jean Rice, Pat's Daughter)

Memories of my sister Fran (Carmelina): Using her free time to care for her mother and dad in their later years. She also enjoyed barbeques and birthday parties at their house. She kept St. Nicholas alive with apples and oranges each year when she was close by. Love always, Pat.

Jean Rice, Niece

I would like to add that she was, as it was said, very wise. A few years back, she gave me some words of wisdom that I would like to pass down to my sister, Betsy. Betsy, don't think of them as hot flashes; think of them as power surges.

Sister Irene Lukefahr, BVM

That sounds like Carm, doesn't it? A number of you have already referred to Carm's wisdom. As a valued member of our house counsel, we saw in her that wisdom so often. Carm was probably the first house member who represented the sisters who received skilled care. Carm always brought that particular perspective to our house counsel decisions. She listened, she expressed herself well, and she spoke up for those who were in need. She was faithful to the house counsel so much so that she waited until the last two house meetings were held, and after she received a bouquet of flowers from Sister Donna Schauf, the next day she finished her term and went to God. Thank you, Carm, for all wisdom and love.

Sister Catherine Jean Hayen, BVM

Carm was a prayer partner for Sister Carol Marie Baum and myself. We treasured those times with her. I traveled to Wisconsin to the American Luxembourg Center and learned of Carm's Luxembourg heritage. I saw the lake that is named after some of her family. I was able to give to her, and now to the family, pictures of her mother, dad, and grandparents who were honored when the lake was named. Carm, enjoy your heritage now in heaven.

Sister Eileen Powell, BVM (Robertrese)

Carmelina was one of many who taught in the school that I was in—Our Lady of Loretto in Hempstead, N.Y. I know that she, along with the other sisters there, is responsible for my being a BVM today. Every year there were changes, a new community actually, but the same spirit prevailed year after year after year. Carmelina was part of that spirit. I am very grateful to her. I know that she prayed me through the novitiate and many other times in my life. I live in Oak Park now, but I never did live there with Carm. At our morning prayer, we end by saying, "God, hear us." The response is "God, graciously hear us." I would like to pray this morning in thanksgiving for Carmelina, for her spirit of generosity, and her spirit of love of the BVM community. So, we say together, "God, hear us. God, graciously hear us."

Sister Mary Angela Buser, BVM

I know Carm through my sister Danetta who was in the same set. Danetta had a great love for Carm. They were the last two here. When Danetta went to heaven, Carm was the last member of her February 1942 set. I got to know Carm in these six years that we have lived together. I've always found her a great friend, a great supporter. She was also in our Morning Star Cluster. She was a valuable member who always participated, volunteered to lead, and gave words of wisdom. I will miss Carm very much.

Sister Anne Buckley, BVM (St. Edwin)

I just want to say, thank you, Carm, for your wonderful laugh. It just came out of her and trickled all over. I just loved it! Thank you, Carm.

Sister Janet Mary Desmond, BVM

I never lived with Carm. The first time I met her was at the BVM house in Salem, Wis. We had some new chairs there. She volunteered to make the arm covers for those chairs. Those arm covers are still in use. Also, when Sister Rosalie Glanz and I received a couch from Wright Hall when it was closing, I felt very confident to ask Carm, who was already at Mount Carmel, if she would make some arm covers for our couch. Then I saw how precise she was. She had me bring the measurements to her here. Then she tried them on some couches here to see how they fit. Rosalie and I kept saying, "Just do it!" Well, she did do it, but with precision. They are still in use on that couch. Thanks, Carm, for your hidden generosity.