

# HOLY ANGELS

## *Alumnae News*

Fall 2008 • Volume VI



Ann Harrington, BVM (l.) visits with Mary Quirk Thompson (center) and Janet Desmond, BVM.

## *BVM Jubilee Celebration in Milwaukee*

by Janet Desmond, BVM

The Wisconsin celebration of the 175th anniversary of the BVM congregation was held in Milwaukee at Holy Rosary Church, now part of Three Holy Women Parish, on April 19. Former students, families, friends and parishioners packed a standing room only Mass and a reception in the church hall.

The location of the church between the waters of Lake Michigan and the Milwaukee River, and the blessing with Easter water during the liturgy connected with the anniversary theme of "Crossing the Waters, Currents of Hope."

The history of the Sisters of Charity, BVM, in Milwaukee is long-standing. BVMs founded three schools in Milwaukee within 14 years: Holy Rosary, 1885; Holy Angels Academy, 1892; and Gesu, 1899.

As our first mission and the parish with the longest BVM presence in Milwaukee, Holy Rosary was a fitting setting for our celebration. Parishioners and pastor Fr. Tim Kitzke welcomed us with loving hearts and fond memories, especially of Ellen Therese Barrett, BVM. Ellen carried out our BVM commitment to service and fidelity in education and parish

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*Dear Holy Angels Alumnae,*

We have a special favor to ask of you...

We have always valued the bond you have with the Sisters of Charity, BVM and the special place the alumnae of Holy Angels hold in the hearts of all BVMs.

For the past five years, the BVM Development Office has provided the ***Holy Angels Alumnae Newsletter*** to you free of charge. However, we are at a point in time that we need to analyze the future of this alumnae newsletter.

One of the challenges we are facing is that fewer and fewer HA alumnae are submitting alumnae updates which makes the task of publishing this annual newsletter increasingly difficult.

Another challenge is the escalating costs of paper, printing and postage associated with this newsletter often fall to the BVM Congregation.

Last year, for the first time, a donation envelope was included in the newsletter with the hope that incoming donations would at least cover the newsletter production expenses. In 2007, the cost of printing and mailing the ***Holy Angels Alumnae Newsletter*** to 3,736 alumnae was \$1,969.56. This figure did not include the cost of staff time for editing and layout of the newsletter. Four donations were received through the newsletter envelope for a total of \$225.00 or just over 10% of the cost. The remaining 90% of the production cost was absorbed by the BVM Congregation.

So we ask for your assistance if you want to continue receiving the ***Holy Angels Alumnae Newsletter*** into the future. Please send in your alumnae updates and consider making a donation. If you have suggestions for how to continue production of this newsletter, please contact the BVM Development Office.

We will be making a final decision regarding the future of the ***Holy Angels Alumnae Newsletter*** based on the response we receive to this year's publication. Any assistance you can provide would be most appreciated.

*You are always remembered in the prayers  
of the Sisters of Charity, BVM.*



(Clockwise from top left) BVMs (l. to r.) Vivina Bly, Thea O'Meara, Barbara Gaul and Theresa McNerney join the celebration. Margaret Menzia (center) is welcomed by BVM Joellen McCarthy and Associate Gabe Blood. Virginia Stone, BVM shares her reflections at the parish liturgy. BVMs Joanne Schneider and Diane Barabe connect with Associate Joanne Crowley Beers and Mary Naber. Mary is a niece of BVM Richardine Quirk and cousin of BVM Ann Ellen Quirk.

## Class Notes

### 1940s

**Rosemary Roettgers Smith** ('40) is living in Shalimar, Florida.

**Betty Flynn Stefanec** ('41) had a stroke in July 2001 and has been wheelchair bound since then.

**Gloria Prado Reyes** ('45) sent us a correction for her last name. She is living in Puerto Rico.

**Sister Mary Elaine Waddell, BVM** ('48) entered the Sisters of Charity, BVM in 1955 when she was 25 years old and living in St. Louis. The BVM Sister who helped her get ready for entering the BVM community was Sister Mary Sergius, BVM who was her freshman home room teacher in 1944 and her geometry teacher in 1945 at Holy Angels and Sister Mary Sergius' sister, Sister Mary St. Lawrence, who taught at Xavier High School in St. Louis. Sister Mary graduated from Mundelein College in 1960 with a BS in Biology and Chemistry.

During her teaching career, she taught at St. Paul's High School in San Francisco, St. Vincent's High School in Petaluma, Calif. and St. Joseph's Academy in Des Moines, Iowa. She ended her teaching career at The Working Boys Center in Quito, Ecuador. She then served

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ministry in the parish for 40+ years until her death on Nov. 13, 2007.

During the liturgy BVM Virginia Stone (Alice Rose) in her reflection called on all present to be faithful to the challenges of today's Gospel. "To take what the gospels offer, what we have garnered from this remarkable BVM community of women, what we treasure in our own lives—and become a more powerful and healing presence on this beautiful, broken planet."

At the reception alums reminisced about school days and the influence BVM teachers had on them.

- **Lorraine Sharko Pozayt**, *Gesu* '43, *HAA* '47 was thankful for her strong Catholic faith and ideals.

- **Beverly Post**, *HAA* '57 mentioned the excellent religious and academic education.
- **Anne Catalane**, *HAA* '62 said, "I got a great education and still have many wonderful HA friends."
- **Lorraine Lobotzke**, *HAA* '32 praised the good teaching.
- **Phyllis Crawford Bell**, *HR* '32, *HAA* '36 fondly remembered the nuns who taught her and her children. She added, "One of my sons said he learned more from the nuns at Holy Rosary than he learned through all of his education. I thought you would like to hear that!"

Today, BVMs continue to serve in Milwaukee. Sisters are active in adult literacy, day care, jail ministry, social services, justice and peace work, spiritual formation and parish ministry.

The BVM congregation has been blessed with 193 members who entered from Milwaukee; 622 Sisters served in the Milwaukee Catholic school system through the years and 17 BVMs will remain here forever, either in Calvary or Holy Cross cemetery

The BVM presence has lasted here 123 good years and it continues.

**About the author:** Janet Desmond, BVM is a Milwaukee native and coordinated the celebration there.

as a pastoral minister at St. Catherine's Parish in Phoenix. Sister Mary returned to school to become an RN and worked at the Maricopa County Hospital. After 12 years in Phoenix, Sister Mary answered a call to direct the medical clinic of the Diocese of Helena, Montana in Santo Tomás La Unión, the department of Suchitepéquez, in Guatemala. Two years ago, she retired from the position after 20 years of service. Sister Mary currently lives in Guatemala where she continues to serve as a volunteer.

1950s

**Sister Suzanne Effinger, BVM** (^50) entered Mount Carmel on September 8, 1950. She was a primary teacher for most of her years with a few interruptions to do elementary school administration. Sister Suzanne taught and worked in Glendale, Calif., Chicago, St. Louis and Kansas City. When she returned to Milwaukee, she trained volunteers to tutor in reading and did some tutoring herself. Sister Suzanne is now retired.

**Andrea Merkel Phelps** (^50) married Richard Phelps in December 1961. He passed away in 1996. Andrea has six children and eight grandchildren with a 9th grandchild on the way.

**Sister Terese Shiners, BVM** (^50) entered the BVM Congregation after graduation from HA. This began a life of travel, glamour and adventure as she taught grades four through seven and all levels of high school (not necessarily at the same time) in Chicago; St. Louis; Milwaukee, Casper, Wyoming; Mundelein, Illinois and Wichita, Kansas. She is now retired and living in Milwaukee.

**Mary Ann Kuesel Wagner** (^51) is the proud great grandmother of Donovan and Seanna, who she takes care of during the week!!

**Margaret Mathews Sankovitz** (^51) was unaware of the *Holy Angels Alumnae Newsletter* and wrote requesting to be added to our mailing list. She resides in Shorewood, Wisconsin. Margaret has been a representative for the Class of 1951 since 1964. She was honored to be selected as the 1995 Alumna of the Year and Jubilarian of the Year in 2002. Margaret and her husband Jim celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in August 2007. They are blessed with five children and eighteen grandchildren.

**Mary Therese Freymann, BVM** (^52) taught in elementary schools in Emmetsburg, Iowa and in Illinois at Grayslake, Maywood and Chicgo from 1955-2000. She is a member of the Maywood Human Rela-

tions Council of Chicago Office of the Laity to help establish parish councils. Sister Therese also serves as Technology Coordinator for various Chicago inner-city schools, obtaining technology, training staff, writing grants and moderating computer clubs. She has received the "ISTE Making It Happen" Award from the Illinois Computer Educators for her work at Our Lady of the Westside School in Chicago, where she is Technology Coordinator.

**Suzanne Tracy Ryan** (^52) wrote that her experience at Holy Angels Academy in

1951 and 1952 was a positive and enduring one and the Sisters were very much a part of it. She was a new Catholic and learned much about what that meant during those years.

**Lois Schaezner Fisher** (^54) sent us her new address in Rockford, Illinois.

**Sister Mary McCauley, BVM** (^56) was awarded an Outstanding Service Award from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Office of Migration and Refugee Services for her work and

*Class Notes continued on p. 4*

## Prayer Requests

*When you pray, I will answer you.  
When you call to me, I will respond*  
Isaiah 58:9

**Prayer is an important ministry for the Sisters of Charity, BVM. If you have specific prayer requests, please share them with us.**

**Prayer requests may be submitted in the following ways:**

- 1. Visit the BVM website at [www.bvmcong.org](http://www.bvmcong.org).** Go to the "Benefactors & Alumni" section click on "BVM Prayer Association," enter your intentions under "Requests for Prayers."
- 2. Mail prayer requests to:**  
BVM Prayer Association  
Office of Development  
1100 Carmel Drive  
Dubuque, Iowa 52001
- 3. By phone at 563-588-2351 extension 5554,** or by fax at 563-588-4832

Your intentions will be included in the daily prayers of Sisters at Mount Carmel. Please keep the Sisters of Charity, BVM in your prayers.

service to the immigrant and Hispanic community in Postville, Iowa during the recent ICE raids in this northeastern Iowa community.

**Catherine Sendik Ross** (^56) Catherine's husband, Ford Ross, sent a letter to let us know that he is alive and well! In the last Newsletter we reported him to be deceased! Our apologies to Catherine, Ford and all of the readers of the newsletter!

**Ann Harrington, BVM** (^57) is speaking at the triennial Conference on the History of Women Religious this summer. Sister Ann will chair "Catholic Sisters at the United Nations...a Collabor-

ative Cross-Cultural Global Ministry." She is also on the program committee for this conference.

**Mary J. Weller** (^57) was honored as the 2007 Jubilarian of the year at the Woman's Club of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. The Holy Angels Academy Class of 1957 celebrated its 50th reunion October 5-7 of 2007. Sisters Ann Harrington, Eunice Desmond and Margaret McCullough (in absentia) were honored. DSHA High School welcomed all 50 year and above graduates into the Golden Jubilarian Club at a mass and brunch.

**Elizabeth Zintek Azpell**

(^58) Betty Jo is currently the Science Dept. chairperson at DSHA. She taught with Sr. Janet (Janice) Schewe, BVM. Janet was a great role model for Betty Jo. This is her 31st year at DSHA.

**Susan Smrz Roemer** (^59) asks for prayers for her husband and herself. They have been plagued with health issues for over two years.

**Pauline Strazis Stilp** (^59) has retired after almost 37 years of teaching in Wisconsin and Illinois public schools plus 4½ years in college where she taught language arts and writing. She is currently teaching adult students who are working for their high school diploma.

Polly has three adult sons, five super grandchildren and a terrific husband to whom she has been married for 44 years. They both volunteer at the animal shelter.

1960s

**Kathleen McCormack Torzala** (^61) recently co-authored two books, *Tips for Creating Your Second Career* and *Tips for Creating Your Own Retirement*, both published by Capstone Legacies. She is also working on a series of mysteries located in Milwaukee. Her "mystery reader" who keeps her on track and advises her of changes in Milwaukee is HA classmate, Serene Oberg.



## Just Released!!!

"Joyfully Our Voice We Raise," a compilation on CD of music composed by BVM Sisters and sung by the choirs of Xavier College Preparatory, Phoenix.

Recorded in celebration of the 175th Jubilee of the BVM congregation, these 27 pieces span over 150 years and represent the work of 15 BVM composers and writers. Included are hymns sung for years at BVM schools such as "Jesus, Light of All the World" and "To Christ the King" (also known as "Praise Be to Thee, O Lord"). A booklet with the lyrics of each song is included.

The CD also features two new pieces composed especially for this Jubilee, "The Journey" and "Let Us Sing, Alleluia." Music for both is by Eliza Kenney, BVM with lyrics by Mary Alma Sullivan, BVM.

This professional-quality CD is available for a donation. Please complete the form and send to:

**Office of the Secretary – Attn: Rosie Bechen**  
BVM Center, 1100 Carmel Dr., Dubuque, IA 52003-7991

### Joyfully Our Voice We Raise Order Form

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**Please mail completed form and payment to:**  
Office of the Secretary - Attn: Rosie Bechen -  
BVM Center - 1100 Carmel Dr. - Dubuque, IA  
52003-7991

CDs will be sent to the address of the person placing the order.



## In Memoriam

*"Lord, for your faithful people life is changed, not taken away"*

1927 Neomi Schuetzmann Sickinger  
 1931 Harriet Papka Pilger  
 1932 Patricia Muench Zuercher  
 1933 Sr. Kathryn Marie Reichard, BVM  
 1935 Dorothy Dean Grau  
 1936 Ruth Zwengel Dugan  
 1939 Gloria Tomasik Wank  
 1942 Rose Pacini Prock  
 1954 Sr. Therese (Dorinda) Kulas, BVM  
 Sr. Antoinette (Ton) Daeger, r.c.



**Sr. Lorraine (LeRoy) Tierney, BVM**  
 May 31, 1916 – June 19, 2007  
 Sister Lorraine taught 7th grade at Gesu in Milwaukee from 1944-1945.



**Sister Janet Schewe, BVM (Janice)**  
 October 3, 1915 – July 5, 2007  
 Sister Janet was a 1933 graduate of HA. She also was a member of the faculty at Divine Savior Holy Angels from 1971 to 2001 serving as assistant principal, curriculum director and Chemistry teacher.



**Sr. Margaret King, BVM (Ann Corita)**  
 March 7, 1914 – July 20, 2007  
 Sister Margaret was a music and kindergarten teacher at Gesu in Milwaukee from 1936 to 1939 and again from 1948 to 1952.



**Sr. Mary Elizabeth Niemann, BVM (St. Theodore)**  
 August 20, 1916 – July 27, 2007  
 Sister Mary Beth taught 1st grade at Gesu from 1947-1949.



**Sister Rita Finnigan, BVM**  
 September 4, 1910 – October 3, 2007  
 Sister Rita taught business classes at Holy Angels from 1942-1943.



**Sister Patricita O'Donnell, BVM**  
 January 24, 1909 – October 12, 2007  
 Sister Patricita was at Holy Angels from 1958 to 1961. She taught Freshman Home-room, Religion and English.



**Sister Ellen Therese Barrett, BVM**  
 April 29, 1928 – November 13, 2007  
 Sister Ellen Therese ministered in Milwaukee for 45 years. She ministered at Holy Rosary Parish as principal and 7th and 8th grade teacher and also served as principal at Ss. Peter and Paul School.



**Sr. Rosemary Coates, BVM (Walter)**  
 Oct. 23, 1912 – Nov. 24, 2007  
 Sister Rosemary taught Freshman Home-room at Holy Angels from 1940 to 1944.



**Sister Phyllis Kerrigan, BVM (Phileta)**  
 January 22, 1912 – December 8, 2007  
 Sister Phyllis taught music at Holy Angels from 1940-1941.



**Sister Ruth Schiffler, BVM (Rosula)**  
 May 8, 1915 – February 6, 2008  
 Sister Ruth was a 1933 graduate of Holy Angels. She returned to Holy Angels from 1970-1976 to teach Theology.



**Sister Mary Remi Caldwell, BVM**  
 May 2, 1923 – February 21, 2008  
 Rose Caldwell graduated from Holy Angels in 1941. Sister Remi returned to Milwaukee to teach as a primary school teacher at Holy Rosary in 1958.



**Sister Marcellita Brown, BVM**  
 April 10, 1912 – May 4, 2008  
 Sister Marcellita served at Gesu in Milwaukee from 1937-1940.



**Sister Agnes Celine Stokes, BVM**  
 June 23, 1906 – July 2, 2008  
 Sister Agnes Celine taught at Holy Angels from 1927-1930 and again from 1951-58. She served as librarian at Holy Angels from 1958-1970.

*Memorials have been established for these Sisters. If you would like to add to these memorials or establish a memorial for a classmate, please send your gift to the BVM Development Office or for on-line giving go to [www.bvmcong.org](http://www.bvmcong.org).*

## Holy Angels Grads Celebrate Golden Jubilee

Holy Angels alumnae, Sister Janet (Eunice) Desmond, BVM and Sister Monica Seelman, BVM celebrate 50 years as a Sister of Charity, BVM. Sister Janet and Sister Monica share their memories and journeys since Holy Angels days.



### Sister Janet Desmond, BVM

As a 1957 graduate of Holy Angels Academy and a 2008 Golden Jubilarian in the BVM Community, I have been asked to reflect on memories from my high school days and give a brief summary of my 50 years as a BVM.

One highlight of HA revolves around making friends from the other sides of town. The line "Make new friends but keep the old" captures my feelings. I grew up in a parochial setting, riding my bike around our East side neighborhood. Meeting new friends at HA broadened my horizons and enriched my life. Our class reunions and occasional lunches keep us in touch.

Other highlights include involvement in extra curricular activities, especially intramural sports, Boot & Spur Club, ski club and dramatic productions. Speech and drama teacher S.M. St. Genevieve, who became a life-long friend, directed the plays and involved us in dramatic competitions. One competition took us to the University of Notre Dame. I don't think we won any ribbons but we all had a wonderful time meeting students from other Midwest high schools.

Stopping at Schewe's Drug Store after school was a regular activity. We hoped to meet MUHS or even MU males while we sat there in our uniforms, giggling and sipping cherry cokes.



BVMs Laurene Brady (r) and Janet Desmond during activity time with children in Kumasi, Ghana.

Of course I took the required courses for college prep. Even though I did not make the honor roll, I did become a high school English teacher.

As a BVM, I loved teaching. For many years I interacted with high school young ladies and junior high boys and girls, teaching English along with speech and drama in Iowa, Illinois and 18 years in Colorado. I am proud of the accomplishments of the students. They became teachers, journalists, TV anchors, owners of their own businesses and loving parents, dedicated to improving the lives of others.

In 1989 I returned to Milwaukee and served as Development Director for S.E.T. Ministry, a social service agency that serves economically poor families and elderly in Milwaukee's central city. It was a broadening and challenging ministry.

I left S.E.T. after 16 years for an opportunity to volunteer for three months with our BVM sisters in Kumasi, Ghana. The people were very friendly and the children were eager to learn. The official language in Ghana is English but the folks in the Kumasi area spoke their native language, Twi, with each other.

I helped Sister Laurene Brady, BVM with English composition for two classes of senior high seminarians. We also tutored a few grade school children and held after school activities including a very

popular lending library for the children. They were able to take two books home at a time, treasures since they did not have books or other educational materials at home. The children and adults remain in my heart.

Currently I volunteer with three non-profit organizations in Milwaukee and am a Eucharistic minister at the parish.

This summer, along with the BVM 175th celebration of the founding of our community, I celebrated my Golden Jubilee as a BVM with the other women who entered the BVMs in 1958. We are an impressive group of dedicated women.

I am very grateful for my formative years at Holy Angels Academy and my grace-filled life as a BVM.



### Sister Monica Seelman, BVM (Alvin)

As we get ready to celebrate our 50th anniversary of our graduation from Holy Angels this year, I can't help but look back on those four years

filled with fun, learning, meeting new friends and developing my intellect, social ability and faith life. The intellect of course was honed during our classes which encouraged us to think and analyze, to create and criticize, to question and to share. Sr. Mary Agnesita taught us chemistry and challenged us to think of a way we could do an experiment using what we knew and not following the directions in the book. I came up with a solution which she encouraged me to try. The fact that it didn't work was all right because she showed that she valued my idea and gave me courage to try new ways of thinking in other areas.

Holy Angels, being a centrally located school near Marquette University, brought together girls from all over the city. We got to know classmates from the South, west and near north sides of town which opened up our worlds to meeting more friends. Some of these friends have remained close throughout these 50 years.

For me, an important part of school was our sodality, my introduction to making an independent decision about my faith. We met in small groups with students leaders in junior and senior years, and even met by ourselves during the summer. I am sure that being a sodalist had a lot to do with me deciding to enter the BVMs in August, 1958. I also have to credit the BVM Sisters who taught us with such dedication and personal interest. We watched the Sisters work together on projects like the cantata and the school play. They had a spirit of fun and seemed very happy in their chosen life style.

Holy Angels gave me a great education and I am ever grateful. "Here's to the school we're proud to say is ours, yes ours, our dear HA."

## Faculty Lounge



**Sister Ann Regina Dobel, BVM**  
1948-1952

Sister Ann Regina fondly remembers her years at Holy Angels teaching Freshman Homeroom for one year, Junior Homeroom for one year and Senior Homeroom for two years. She also taught Religion, History, English and some Algebra and Physiology. Sister Ann Regina supervised the girls in the gym on Sunday afternoons. "Being at Holy Angels was a ++ assignment," Sister comments.

Sister Ann Regina is now retired and living in the Mount Carmel Motherhouse in Dubuque.



**Sister Carol Frances Jegen, BVM**  
1951-1957

"It was a beautiful blessing to be missioned at Holy Angels for six years in the 1950s, where I had freshman homeroom, taught religion, English and history, served as Sodality Moderator. Our students were both affluent and poor girls. We were close to Marquette University, where we took courses, and to Gesu Convent where other BVMs lived. The Mother's Club was one of our special blessings."

Sister Carol Frances is retired and currently lives at Wright Hall a BVM-owned building which is home to about 50 retired Sisters.



**Sister Josephine M. Roche, BVM**  
(*Mary Thomas Kathryn*)  
1956-1962

"I taught classes in Math, English, Religion, Spanish, Bookkeeping and Typing at various times. Then I was sent to Santa Barbara, then Wichita and finally Chicago (my hometown). Since I taught at my alma mater, Immaculata High School, I have served on the Board of Directors, and continue my retirement at Wright Hall, working with a generous and loyal Alumnae Association."

# HOLY ANGELS

*Alumnae News*

is published by the Office of Development of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Dubuque, Iowa.



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## *Holy Angels Alumnae Information*

Name (include maiden) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Year \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday \_\_\_\_\_

*The Sisters would like to include you, by name, in their prayers on your birthday.*

Additional information to share \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please advise us of address changes. We would like to keep our lists current!

2008