

Summer 2020

Volume 4, Issue 1

A collection of recent discoveries and activities in the IHM Archives



'In Harmony' photos reflect 'in community'

The latest Gallery exhibit – called *In Harmony* – opened this week to enthusiastic reviews.

The IHM Sisters themselves are the subject of the 26 photos taken from Archives collections. The Sisters are shown in small and large groups at recreation, conferences, or retreats. A few pictures are from pre-Vatican II days; many are more recent.

The centerpiece of the exhibit, and the image that gave the display its title, is the well-known photo from 1961 of junior professed, postulants and novice Sisters standing on risers as a choir in concert. Sister Alphonsus Mary Charboneau sits at the piano.

This time the photo is enlarged into an eight-



Sisters examine a 1961 photo during the exhibit's opening reception July 20.

foot banner that makes all those faces visible. Also provided is a key to the three separate groups with many of the names included. The Archives invites anyone with more information about a photo, either for a correction, addition or context, to write it on the slips of paper provided

and leave it in the Lucite container.

About two dozen Sisters attended the opening reception for the exhibit late Monday afternoon.

"This is marvelous," Sister Celeste Schoppy said. "Beautiful job. This is a stroll down memory lane, for sure."

"Everybody looks so young," Sister Jean Booms said, looking at a photo of her younger self.

Sister Diann Cousino worked on preparing the exhibit in her role as Archives assistant. "We were young and full of wonder and awe.

(Continued next page)

'In Harmony' (continued)

Everything was new and fresh and we were doing so many things." Sister Diann is a novice in one of the pictures.

Sister Joyce Duroske was delighted with a photo taken at a Corporate Renewal retreat in 1989. She explained that all of the Sisters were expected to attend one of a series of gatherings to learn more about one another and to create bonds of friendship. It was a new and quite emotional experience for them.

"It was the first time they were allowed to talk about their past and their families," she said. "It was very healing."

The thrust of the exhibit grew out of the coronavirus pandemic which has led to postponement of the community's 175th anniversary celebrations; the absence of volunteers and visitors, including IHM Sisters who live outside the Motherhouse, and the truncating of the traditional Jubilee events. IHM Archivist Jennifer Meacham came up with the idea of showing the happy times of being in a community of friends growing up together, on mission, traveling the world and just relaxing.

"This is very much of and for the Sisters themselves," Jennifer said. "And there's no history lesson here, like our past exhibits. We chose not to provide the stories behind the moments captured in the photos. The smiling faces tell some of the stories, of course, but

my hope is that the Sisters who remember these people and places will share their stories with each other, and with all of us! What we really wanted to do was ignite happy memories and encourage Sisters to reminisce."

Sister Jane Farrell had two reactions: that it was nice to see one another's faces again (without masks), but also that "this can bring a tear to your eye."

The bulk of the photos span the time period from the early 1960s to 2014.

When asked which are her favorites, Jennifer Meacham seems hard-pressed to pick just one.

"Obviously, the image of Sister Alphonsus Mary's choir is just a great slice of history, and I'm so pleased at how the giant banner turned out! But there are two that I'm really drawn to. One is the photo of Mary McCann, Claudia Carlen, and Marilyn Mechtenberg at the 75th anniversary of Marygrove.

"I was a librarian at Marygrove for many years, so I knew of Claudia's many accomplishments and how respected she was. But I had no idea she was so *tiny*. Small and mighty, that's for sure!

"And the other is the group wearing their IHM Nuns for Justice T-shirts. I know most of the women in this picture, and it reminds me that IHMs continue

to write their history, and I am here to witness some of it. Plus it just looks like they were having a great day!"



The photos will remain on display until the end of August. The Archives staff hopes the exhibit brings up warm memories, sparks conversation and is just fun to look at again and again.



2020 Jubilee will be a little different

Since 1897 — the year Sister Celestine (Theresa) Renauld was the IHM's first Golden Jubilarian — the community has recognized years of dedicated service with special Jubilee celebrations. Sister Celestine, whose community number was 3, wore a gold wreath and had formal Jubilee cards printed. Originals of the card are in the Archives.

This year's 18 Jubilarians will celebrate on July 26, but with restrictions because of the coronavirus pandemic. Although they will have a special liturgy and meal together, they will not be able to invite friends and family members to attend.

One of the more unusual Jubilee celebrations took place in a tent! During renovation of the Motherhouse, resident Sisters moved into rooms at the Academy. Longtime employee Lori Herrera recalls how the kitchen in the Motherhouse remained in operation but they carted three meals a day through the cloister to the Academy for the Sisters to eat.

Jubilee Day in July 2002 was different. Three huge white tents (the photo below shows just one of the tents) were set up outside the H-wing doors. The staff made the day as special, memorable and celebratory as any other year. Gracious table settings included flowers, wine and unusual food; champagne grapes were served as a treat for the first time. Servers wore uniforms and Jubilarians were treated like royalty.

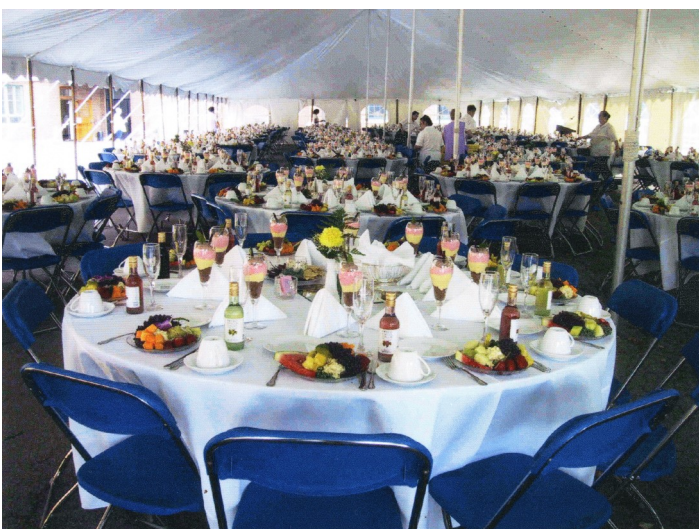
May the 2020 Jubilarians remember their unusual day with fondness for years to come.



Dec. 26, 1955 — Jubilee Day for Sister Agnita Donohue (right). She is shown here with her niece, Sister Ann Agnes Donohue. They were setting the table for lunch with family at St. Cecilia's, where Sister Agnita was teaching.



Jan. 2, 1973 — Jubilee Day for the Class of 1923. Seated are Sisters Frances Mary Griffith, Ursula Cronin and Marie Clement Althoff. Standing are Sisters Carmella Kusman, Mary Wagner, Mary Alfred Davis, Mary Roch Carter, Mary Grace Hackett and Regina Therese Suss.



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Today and Yesterday is published quarterly
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Since 2000, all IHM sisters have been encouraged to submit individual chronicles to the IHM Archives. These records about your own life and ministry over the course of a year or more add breadth and depth to the documented history of the IHM Sisters. Your contribution will enrich the future record of the IHM, so please be sure your life's story is included in the community's story.



Among Ourselves: IHM Sisters together



Place: Minnetonka,
Minnesota

Time: Fall 1986

**Sisters from left to
right:**

Mary Jane Hinks

Mary Jane Brennan

Gail Stackpole

Marie Sylvia Sullivan

Mary Margaret Davis

Mary Ann Bredice

Genevieve Petrak

Cecilia Schmidt

Marge Polys

Brigid O'Reilly

Rosalind Mogg