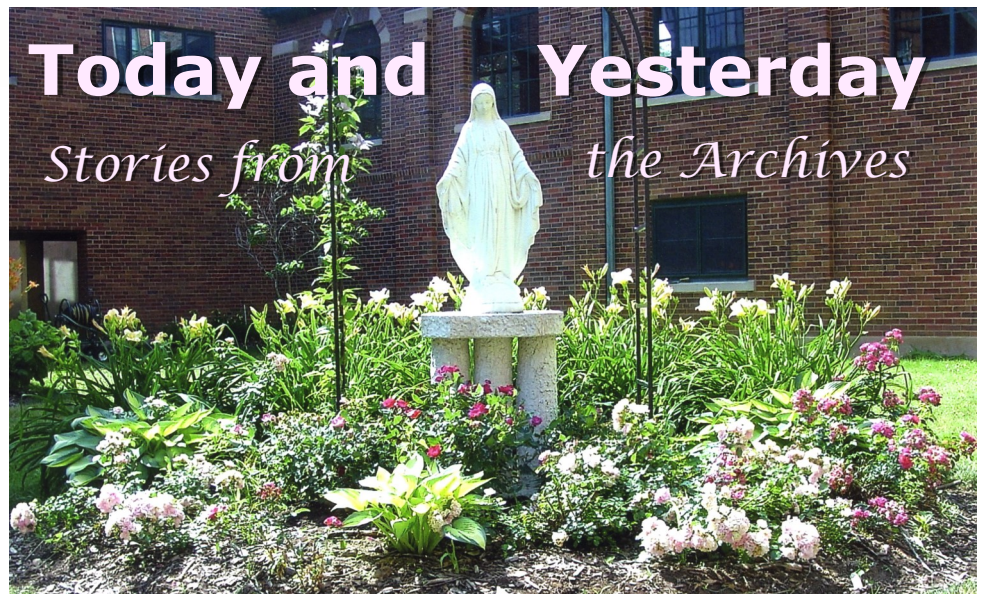


Summer 2021

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A collection of recent discoveries and activities in the IHM Archives

- Photo by Sister Ann Currier



## *Request yielded an unexpected bonus*

The Archives often is asked to find a specific quote, story, photo or art image from somewhere in the IHM's 176-year history. Usually once found and the information is passed along, the request is recorded as "completed."

One recent request, however, led us to an investigation that isn't quite finished yet. While the original question was answered, it also came with a realization that we had a gap in our collection. We don't like those.

Sister Vita Pierce had been thinking about her dear friend Sister Therese LeBlanc. An image came to mind and the Archives was approached. Did we have it? It was in a paperbound book written by IHM Sisters and had been used to teach religion in the classroom.

We have a box labeled "textbooks authored by IHMs." Seemed simple enough. But when we pulled out "Come Lord, Jesus" by Sister M. Johnice Cohen and Sister M.

Elizabeth Fowkes, it was not the right book. We learned there were more volumes — and we didn't have them.

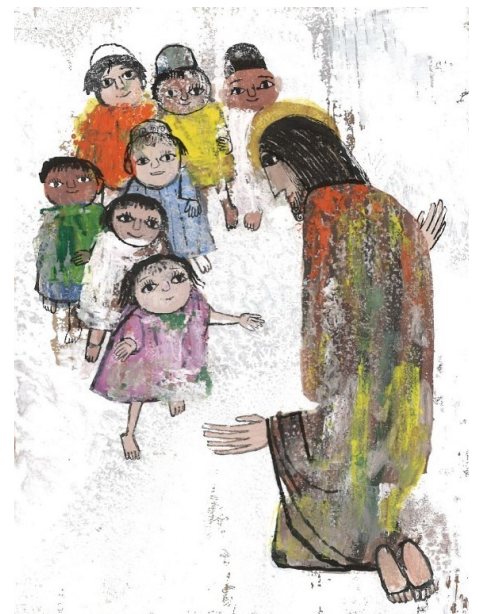
So, on a quest both to find the image in question and acquire the missing books, Archivist Jennifer Meacham began searching. Various online used booksellers turned up only one, "The Lord Jesus." Sister Nancy Ayotte, now also part of the search team, assured us that was the one Vita wanted. The order was placed, but the book wouldn't arrive for two weeks.

A little more digging revealed that the University of Mississippi Children's Literature Collection held copies of all the titles in the series, "Bible, Life and Worship." They also had copies of all the books' original illustrations. After a brief email, their archivist kindly sent us a scan of "Line of Children and Christ," shown here.

Vita's simple request was an unexpected gift. Knowing

something is missing in our collection motivates us to fill in those gaps, which we have begun to do. And the discovery of the resources at the U of Mississippi will save us time when a similar question comes in the future, which it likely will.

(If you have copies of any of the volumes of the "Bible, Life and Worship" series, the IHM Archives would be very glad to accept them.)



## Lesser-known facts about the amazing farm

A recent request for information came in from a company doing an environmental impact study on one of the individual farms that comprised St. Mary Farms. Many Sisters know about the immense scale of the operation. We found an article published in The Monroe Evening News on Dec. 24, 1937. It had been 10 years since the first farm was purchased by Sister Miriam Raymo.

Here are some of the lesser-known facts from the newspaper article:

- Fred Tomkinson, an Ontario Agricultural College graduate,

was superintendent of the farms. He and his wife lived at farm No. 1. Each of the five parcels housed a married man and his family and a boarding house on Farm No. 2 housed another 22 male employees.

- 1,500 eggs produced daily were gathered three times a day and stamped with the date and St. Mary's Farm.
- All buildings had electricity.
- There were 18 large farm horses, four tractors, 12 silos and nine dogs. A 14-year-old shepherd dog

followed Mr. Tomkinson around as he did his chores throughout the day.

- All vegetables and small fruits were grown on 30 acres behind the Motherhouse.
- A 24-by-24-foot chicken hospital was available for any hen appearing not "perfectly normal."
- Quote from the article: "One duck can make considerable noise and when this is multiplied by one thousand quackers perhaps you can get an idea of the bedlam to talk above."



## Among Ourselves:

South/West Province Assembly 1993

Sisters Anne Wisda,  
Annette St. Amour,  
Rosaline Mogg.

Right, left to right:  
Pat Guthrie, Ann  
Oestreich, Chris  
Dobrowolski, Betty  
Leon, Trudy Baltes,  
Marguerite Gibbs,  
Sandra Schneiders,  
Marge Polys, Doreen  
Lynch.



# Summer House improved and moved as the Motherhouse moved, too

The old Motherhouse across from St. Mary's Church was a campus with a garden attached. Paths wound around trees and flower beds, giving the Sisters a private escape and a place of refuge.

The Motherhouse Chronicles for June 1929 makes this note: "Our park was never so attractive as this year. A beautiful new grotto, made mostly by our men under Sister Miriam's direction, of tufa stone replaced the former one which Sister Flora had made, the Summer house remodeled, and most prettily designed, roses planted here and there, a lily pond near the grotto."

When fire destroyed the Academy across the street, the Sisters began the process of moving school and Motherhouse farther west on Elm Ave. to land they already owned.

The move to a new Motherhouse was difficult as the Sisters found so much that was unfamiliar. Some thought it looked like a grand hotel. Some got lost and just waited to be found. The night noises were all different and unsettling.

The Chronicles report how happy they were, then, when they realized some things moved with them: furniture, statues, the old bell and windows. Later the summer house arrived, too, taken apart and rebuilt next to St. Joseph's Lake.



Written on the back of this photo it says: "This picture is a relic of the past. It is the garden along the river — when the original building still existed — now a public park. We were never allowed to go nearer Elm Ave than the summer house. Picture given to Sister Theodosia Drawe by Josephine Weidner Dudzinski '26 in 1952."



Sisters Henrica Whelan, Agnella Bullinger and Edward Ellen Whaling canoe on St. Joseph's Lake near the summer house.

## Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

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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.*

## Facebook favorite: IHM impact

We remember three Detroit girls whose diverse and accomplished careers flowed through one root: the IHM and religious life. In this 1998 photo, we see (left to right) Sisters Elizabeth Mary Larson, John Louise Leahy and Ann Garbriel Kilsdonk as they were retiring from Marygrove College.

Each of them had been both student and instructor at Marygrove. Each had taught elementary grades through college students. All earned Ph.Ds. Each one traveled internationally for work and study. Sister Elizabeth Mary worked 33 years at Marygrove in sociology. Sister John Louise was an artist, art



instructor and art therapist for more than 40 years. Sister Ann Gabriel was at Marygrove 45 years in home economics, textiles, family

ecology and interior design. Each one contributed to transformational change in her field.