

Winter 2022

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A collection of recent discoveries and activities in the IHM Archives



Archives gallery exhibit: 4 things to know

An exhibit that presents aspects of IHM Heritage is open now in the Motherhouse Gallery.

Titled “Heritage: The Fire That Lights the Way,” the exhibit runs through Jan. 12.

IHM Archivist Jennifer Meacham said, “The heritage of this community is so much deeper than significant dates and well-known names and places. Over time, every contribution of every sister has built the story of the congregation. And we know this because the words and deeds and images of so many IHM Sisters are right here in our Archives!”

Heritage comprises the views and values, the symbols and physical artifacts, and the recorded experiences that are preserved and taken forward by and for each future generation. The Sisters kept their story alive.

The entire west wall is a tribute to the archivists, historians, chroniclers and volunteers who have preserved that story. Many had spoken eloquently about the power of heritage and why we remember.

In researching IHM documents and artifacts for this exhibit, the Archives staff drew encouragement from the minutes of the Archives Display Committee of 1975. “Our Heritage tells us who we are, why we are and why and where we are going,” the committee’s



notes state. “May our I.H.M. Heritage live to the Day beyond the last day!”

A few of the exhibit highlights include:

#1: Remembrances of the Founders, Mother Theresa and Father Gillet, in their own handwriting are shown. Both Founders have been gone from Monroe since the 1850s, yet their own handwriting remains here.

A new home for hair care, 1960s-style

Sister Gracelia Grekowi  was an unexpected pioneer in the in-house hair care service at the Motherhouse. In 1995, Sister Gracelia wrote out her recollections of how this project got started. Here are her words:

During the first administration of Sister Margaret Brennan, Sister Cyprian Maurer who had been appointed to assist with the administration of the Motherhouse conceived the idea to have hair care on campus for the Motherhouse sisters. The room she chose was a large room with terrazzo floor at the northwest end of the 2E corridor.

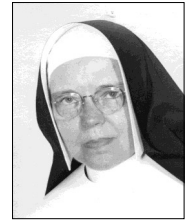
The part of the room with the door to the porch was set up for hair care. It had a wash machine (handy for care of towels), a sink with cupboards for supplies and a shampoo bowl. There were two work stations, two driers and eventually a cabinet for equipment and supplies was added.

Sister Cyprian arranged for Sister Virginia Schick and myself to go to Ubly (Michigan) for a week. My niece, Connie, a certified beautician, worked there. The first



**Sister
Gracelia**

day Connie washed, cut and gave me a permanent. Sister Virginia and I were to observe. The next day Connie trimmed Sister Virginia's hair and wig. The rest of the week we observed Connie as she worked with her customers. When the week ended we felt a little more confident. Connie sent us home with two cosmetology books to read. Her parting comment was, "You learn by doing."



**Sister
Virginia**

Our third member was Sister Loretta Mary LaPointe who received training at the home of the good Shepherd Nuns in Chicago. We three 'musketeers' began work on a day-by-day basis. Because we were not certified we could not charge regular prices. We had a donation box hoping to cover our necessary supplies. We worked well together enjoying many a laugh. At the end of the first year it was announced that we cleared one thousand dollars. We were dumbfounded and our customers were delighted.



**Sister
Loretta**

Heritage continued from Page 1

#2: Separation and silence in the early decades could not destroy the Common Bond of the IHM charism. Those bonds continue today with the three IHM congregations and the Oblate Sisters of Providence creating a house of welcome for migrants at the border in Texas.

#3: The video clip is part of longer film taken during the community's centennial in 1945. It shows Sisters from a dozen different congregations arriving to be part of and celebrate the milestone. The full film is about 30 minutes long.

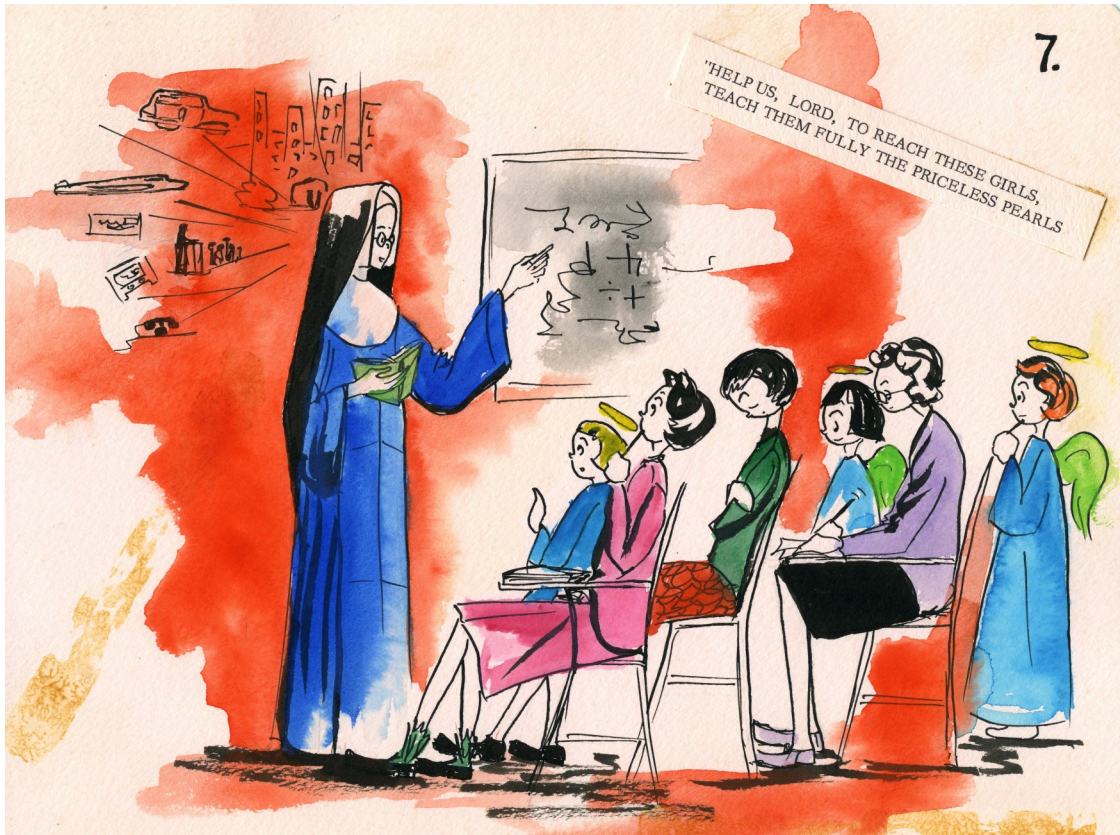
#4: The story of Sister Miriam Raymo's prowess in managing major construction projects and in running the farms is legendary. Fewer know of her days as a

music teacher and her own musical skill. Her violin is on display.



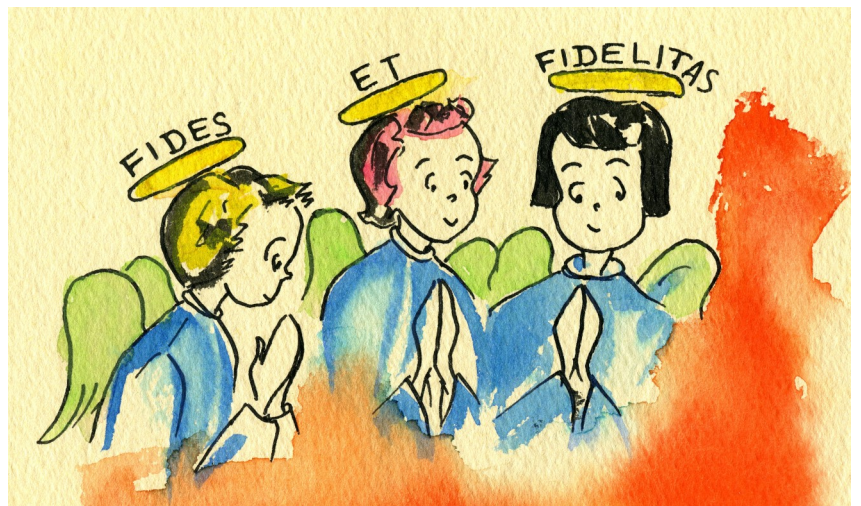
Apparently the oldest original photo in the Monroe Archives of an IHM Sister is that of Sister Mary Magdalene Martin. She was among the first to leave for Pennsylvania, where this was taken, yet the photo was procured and preserved even after the separation.

An homage to Marygrove and 'I H EM-ery'



Among the many treasures in the IHM Archives are examples of art done by Sisters. These pieces are part of an eight-page portfolio that seems to speak for itself. Although unsigned, the style reminds us of a young Sister John Louise Leahy.

THIS PORTFOLIO IS CONCEIVED
BY US - THE THREE
ASSIGNED TO SHOW TO THEE
HOW MARYGROVE IS
PERCEPTIBLY
TRUE
I H EM-ERY



CHERUBS OF THE SPIRIT - THREE ARE WE
DOWERED FROM ON HIGH TO SEE - FORESEE

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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: Belton, Texas

These IHM Sisters were visiting Cedarbrake Retreat Center in Belton, Texas for a Mission Unit Meeting. They are (front row left to right): Sisters Rose Huelsman, Jean Burbo, Gina Joseph and Marge Basso. Back row (left to right) are Sisters Madeleine Sophie Weber, Marie André Walsh and Kate O'Brien.

