



IHM SISTERS
E-NEWS

JANUARY 2024

Learning from nature

Gloria Rivera, IHM

This reflection began in November as I participated in the Coordinating Council. The trees in the courtyard were sharing their wisdom as we attended to topics such as the transfer to Saint Therese, changes in governance structure and financial realities. The trees had let go of their colored leaves and the perennials and squirrels were ready to hibernate. This process reminded me of the future spring buds that would become leaves, flowers, fruit and seeds - the endless dying and rising story, the Paschal mystery.

As winter's 2024 invitations and challenges are upon us, let's ponder the future changes in our governance structure. How can we continue to create distributive leadership utilizing everyone's expertise? What if we could think in eco-cycles, creating a culture of adaptation with clarity of purpose and function? How can we recognize this and adapt accordingly when forms no longer follow function?

We are a *community on a mission* that promotes personal and communal growth. What if we could pass our wisdom from all down the years to others as we become a community of elders? We could discern how our decisions design adaptable systems for future generations. We want to witness our communal, *contemplative response to the needs of the Earth community*. What if we practiced cross-pollination among various entities as we shared our spiritual richness? What if this would continue to be the basis of our activism for justice,

peace and sustainability? As we welcome a new Leadership Council, what if we encouraged trust and abundance and let go of scarcity and fear? Thrive in diversity, let go of monocultures and welcome inclusivity. What if these networks would lead us to use feedback loops to develop creative, robust systems? Administrative tasks have blessed our lives with committees and meetings. Now, we are invited to be part of only those needed and use our time to explore other possibilities for membership and partnerships, beginning with our associates.

As we prepare for Chapter, let us remember the butterfly. As the caterpillar moves into the chrysalis stage, it lets go of its form. As its components dissolve, imaginal cells emerge. They wake up, look for each other and cluster. These cells are not the majority and are subject to attack from the immune cells. Yet they connect; they use their genetic directions to create the butterfly that will emerge in time. We are like those imaginal cells; our past living, our letting go, and our hopes for the future are the nurturing substances that will help us emerge this spring. We will appear hopeful, having spent a winter letting go and cultivating possibilities as we step into our future.



*I acknowledge the following sources as my guides: our IHM Constitutions and **Leading from the Roots** by Dr. Kathleen E. Allen.*

Conference honors Sandra Schneiders, IHM

By Judith Coyle, IHM

Sandra Schneiders, IHM, was the honoree at a conference entitled *Resurrection in the Age of Uncertainty*. The conference was held at the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas, from Nov. 15-17.

Three of the six main presenters were former students of Sandra's and the others borrowed heavily from her works in their presentations. All began their talks by acknowledging the significance of Sandra's influence in their academic, pastoral and theological positions. Sandra's presentation was entitled *Christian Spirituality in an Age of Uncertainty*. She addressed the present era – not as one of uncertainty, but rather as “non-certainty,” - arguing with Rahner that “the Christian of the future will be a mystic or will not exist at all.” In an exposition of the Emmaus story, she demonstrated how the theology of the Resurrection stands as the possibility of a mystical encounter with the Risen Jesus.

Special guests were two previous honorees of this conference, Bernard McGinn and Ronald Rolheiser. McGinn acknowledged as the preeminent scholar of mysticism in the English-speaking world, introduced Sandra, acknowledging the significance of her place in establishing spirituality as an academic discipline. This was further recognized with a standing ovation by all speakers and participants after her own presentation.

The range of topics of the presenters gave some indication of the “reach” of the academic study of spirituality, including resurrection - in the life of prayer, in a time of ecological uncertainty, in the borderland, as symbolizing social salvation, and as addressing an age of deconstruction and despair. The conference was a singular honor for Sandra with its acknowledgment of her work, which has



contributed to establishing an entirely new academic discipline of spirituality through her research, writing, and teaching worldwide. Although it is as ancient as faith itself, it is ‘new’ in its recognition and impact within the academic world, perhaps itself a sign of resurrection.



Left to right: Patricia Ferris McGinn, Sandra Schneiders, IHM, Bernard McGinn.

Worthy of Note from the Alphonse Liguori Library ...

Horse by Geraldine Brooks

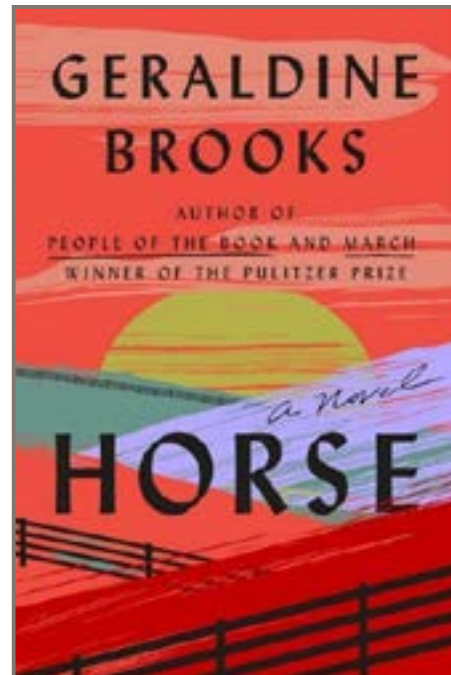
By Elizabeth Strout and reviewed by library staff

James Conrad, novelist and short story writer, once wrote about fiction that it is the writer's task "by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel – it is before all, to make you see... all you demand; and, perhaps, also that glimpse of truth for which you have forgotten to ask."¹ Such a glimpse of truth unfolds in Geraldine Brooks' sixth novel, *Horse*. Originally intending her story to focus on a real-life racehorse named Lexington, one of the most famous thoroughbreds in American history, Brooks discovered, as she delved into the history of thoroughbred racing in America, "that this novel could not merely be about a racehorse, it would also need to be about race."

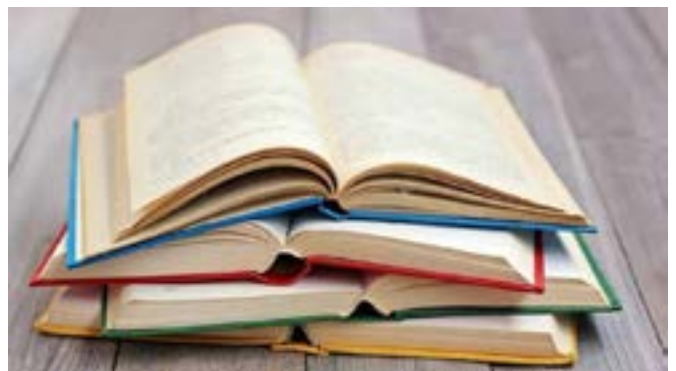
Horseracing was the popular pastime of the 1800s. The world of horseracing was built on and powered by the labor of highly skilled, enslaved black trainers, jockeys, and grooms who had no rights.

Horse weaves three main stories: that of Jarret during the 1800s, an enslaved, skilled groom of Lexington, the stallion he has raised and trained, and with whom he has forged a bond of understanding and trust; that of Theo, a Nigerian American Ph.D. candidate in art history who, by happenstance, pulls a lost painting of Lexington out of a neighbor's trash in 2019; and that of the horse itself, whose life alters the lives of both Jarret and Theo, living a century and a half apart. The stories of a 19th-century portrait painter and a 20th-century gallery owner support the narrative and linkage to the horse's portrait.

¹ Quoted in a feature, Joseph Conrad on Writing and the Role of the Artist, in the 2012 digital issue of *The Marginalian* <https://www.themarginalian.org/2012/12/03/joseph-conrad-on-art>



Brooks' decision to parallel Jarret's and Theo's stories arose from her witnessing the riots in Charlottesville and the death of George Floyd during the time she was researching for her novel. The power of her fiction, then, is not in using history as a backdrop but rather probing history to hear, feel, and perhaps see the glimpse of truth for which we have forgotten to ask while seeking wisdom for the present.



Catholic Sisters and students partner for peace

By Elizabeth Walters, IHM

This fall, the IHM Peacemakers received a deeply appreciated invitation from Kim Redigan, Campus Minister at Detroit Cristo Rey High School (DCR), inviting us to partner with them to bring peace to Earth. We wanted to intentionally support and partner with the DCR community. In accepting their invitation, we planned to pray for peace, study peace and do peace actions in Monroe while staying connected. We chose some notable dates for our actions in the hopes of bringing that energy to our cause. Our dates coincided with Mahatma Gandhi's birthday (Oct. 2) and the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi (Oct. 4). Smaller groups of IHMs and friends joined our activities. In spite of our efforts, on Oct. 7, the tragic war in Israel and Gaza began. During Advent 2023, we were joined by a larger group of like-minded individuals.

Since Oct. 7, our IHM Peacemaker's primary focus has been to pray, study and take action to end the war in Gaza and to identify and address the root causes of war in the Holy Land. In that spirit, the IHM contingent created a plan to support and partner with DCR. We used the peace prayer cards given to us by DCR. We prayed for our DCR and Marian students and faculty each day.

" May the students grow in God's peace. May they never have to go to war ... "

We continue to pray daily for peace on Earth. We watch the news and study resources redressing the horrors of war, the roots of war and alternatives to war. We encourage participants to follow the responses of Pope Francis and other leaders and share messages that touch their hearts. Also, we share and discuss with others the learnings and insights we gleaned from our prayer and study of poetry, art, music, and essays. In addition, we contacted the US President and Senators, calling for a ceasefire and promoting peace. Most importantly, we collaborated with other peace groups on the many dimensions of war. The focus of DCR students

and faculty is to pray for peace and to learn about and experience the power of nonviolence. At DCR, students and faculty organized peace, prayer and action opportunities. Twenty-five students participated in a daylong nonviolence training. Students and faculty organized a peace march for Oct. 2. Students and faculty gathered for prayer on Fridays at their school's peace pole. They participated in a liturgy for peace in October and a special community-building liturgy in December. Some in the community are doing actions for peace as a follow-up to prayer and study. They have been creative in their efforts in contacting the President and our Senators. Together, DCR and IHM helped bring about God's peaceful kingdom in our beautiful and broken world!

continued...



IHM Peacemakers Committee

Standing L-R: Sisters Joan (Mary Virginia) Kusak, Peg (Cornelia) O'Shea, Elizabeth (John Raphael) Walters, Nancy (Grace Ann) Ayotte and JPSO Coordinator Jennifer Shankie. Seated L-R: Sisters Judith (Ann Raymond) Bonini, Amata Miller, Ann (Marie Nora) Nett, and Patricia (Marie Sara) Rourke.

Detroit Cristo Rey High School

The IHM Sisters and Basilian Fathers sponsor Detroit Cristo Rey High School. It is a school that offers excellent college preparatory Catholic education to the most potential-filled and hardworking youth in the city of Detroit. The basics of the Cristo Rey model are academic excellence, corporate work study and college success. There are opportunities to deepen in prayer, service, and social justice.

DCR is part of the Cristo Rey Network of high schools nationwide, which utilizes a unique work-study program. The school's outstanding academic program is complemented with one day per week of real life work experience in many of the finest businesses and organizations in metro Detroit. The school integrates four years of rigorous college preparatory academics with four years of professional work experience through the corporate work study program. Learn more at

<https://detroitcristorey.org/>.



From the archives... a look back

From log cabin to snug complex: IHM buildings filled city corner

Although the IHM's sprawling W. Elm Ave. campus today is striking, the original location of the IHM complex was also impressive. This photo looks north and slightly west, showing the Monroe St. bridge over the River Raisin in horse-and-buggy days. Beyond the bridge is the IHM campus as it looked in the late 1800s at the corner of N. Monroe St. and W. Elm Ave. Called the quadrangle, these buildings were constructed under the direction of Msgr. Edward Joos between 1866 and 1895. They included St. Mary's Convent, a chapel and classrooms. The house nearest the bridge (far right)



is where the Custer statue stands now. St. Mary's Catholic Church is in the background (right). The history No Greater Service lists the total value of this property in 1899 at \$96,579. That year, the sisters had 118 boarders and 52 day students. Tuition and other revenue brought in \$18,374.79.

****This article originally appeared in the Fall 2017 issue of the IHM Archives newsletter, Today and Yesterday).
All issues of the newsletter can be accessed [here](#).***

From Educator to Principal

Stacey Cushman to Shape School Life

With 16 years dedicated to the Marian Community, Principal Stacey Cushman shares her vision for Marian education:

Can you tell us a bit about yourself and your journey at Marian?

I'm Stacey Cushman, and I've been a part of the Marian community for 16 years. Coming from a family of educators and attending Catholic schools, Marian has felt like home to me from the beginning. Initially hired to teach AP Spanish in 2008, I've had the opportunity to teach a diverse range of subjects. Seven years ago, I transitioned to the role of academic dean. With many years at Marian, I have a deep understanding of our school's values, traditions, and the unique strengths of our community. This familiarity will enable me to build on what makes Marian exceptional while introducing fresh ideas that align with the evolving needs of our students.



How does your role as principal differ from your previous position as academic dean?

It brings a shift in focus and responsibilities. As academic dean, my primary role centered around curriculum development and educational programs. As principal, my scope of influence has broadened significantly to encompass overseeing all aspects of the school. This includes the overall school environment, student life, staffing, athletics, accreditation, and ensuring our mission aligns with our daily operations. I'm grateful to partner with President Heather Greig Sofran '96 to guide our young women toward becoming strong individuals of mind and heart.

How do you envision your role impacting the students and the Marian community?

My primary focus is creating a welcoming and empowering environment for our students. I aim to continue Marian's legacy of academic excellence while strongly emphasizing personal growth, leadership development, and holistic education. I'll work with the president to ensure our students are well-prepared for future challenges.

What are some specific initiatives for the school's growth ahead?

I'm thrilled about the potential for innovation and growth that the president-principal model brings. It's an exciting time to be part of Marian as we explore new ways to enrich the educational experience for our students and create a vibrant community that embraces change while honoring tradition. Our 2022-2027 Strategic Plan calls for action in student personal growth, strengthening school culture, increasing academic support, enhancing STEM programs, and expanding our Fine and Performing Arts program. Marian's tradition of holistic education—from academic rigor to diversity in programming—will be further strengthened through these initiatives, and we're already taking steps to bring these goals to fruition.



River Raisin Institute announces new program coordinator



Julie Conley came on board at the end of November as the new River Raisin Institute Program Coordinator! Her education, career, and life mission has been to explore and share the WOW and HOW of living in the gardens of the Earth.

Julie has administered multiple programs highlighting nature preservation, ecological restoration and conservation. Julie was the Education Coordinator for Hidden Lake Gardens where she created and implemented educational programming for all ages, recruited speakers, established passive education initiatives and worked with local school districts for student sessions.

In her role as RRI Program Coordinator, Julie will collaborate with many partners to provide the Lake Erie Water Festival on the IHM Campus and the River Raisin Water Festival in Adrian, the Climate Literacy Program, Environmental Career Days, Budding Naturalists and other programs.

Julie has a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from the University of Illinois and a Master of Science in Public Horticulture from the University of Delaware.

Please give a warm welcome to Julie!

River Raisin Institute, is a nonprofit organization founded by the IHM Sisters in 2003 to provide educational programming on sustainability. Learn more about the [River Raisin Institute](#).

Vocational Life

By Candace Rekart, IHM

Eighty juniors from St. Mary's Catholic Central (SMCC) were asked to consider the following qualities that they might have or want to grow into: helpful, generous, flexible, and God-people-centered. They were then asked to break into small, self-selected groups to consider what qualities it takes to answer God's call to be a Sister, Priest, Brother, or serve God's people as a married or single person. It will not surprise you to know that generosity, flexibility, God, and people-centered came out often in the written group responses. Did they make the connection? Who can say?



But their responses make me hopeful, not just their ideas about the qualities of religious vocations, but also to be of service as a layperson. Take, for instance: "God must be a major part of your life, devoting your time, having a balanced lifestyle, having integrity and self-awareness, being thoughtful, caring, and selfless, being open-minded and a good listener to God." Who knows what religious life will be like in the future? Can we hope these young people may grow the qualities they see as helpful to answer a call to serve God's people?

From the Development office ...

On Dec. 21, Sisters, staff and friends gathered in the Motherhouse foyer for the annual blessing and lighting of the Christmas Tribute Tree. We celebrated and prayerfully remembered the many tributes sent from our donors. The light and cheer of the tree were symbolic of the joy and thankfulness in our hearts. The generous support we received totaled \$24,250.

These gifts will help us replace outdated computers, laptops, tablets and TVs. New technology improves our Sisters' quality of life through continued connection to social justice issues, family and friends and avenues for personal and spiritual growth. Additional funds are applied to the area of greatest need. We are truly grateful for these gifts during the Christmas season and we thank our generous benefactors for their continued support.



Remembering



Judith (John Eileen) Dowd, IHM
Oct. 21, 1936-Dec. 2, 2023



Marion (Mary Mel) Duggan, IHM
Jan. 27, 1932- Nov. 5, 2023



Sharon (Mary Austin) Defever, IHM
April 30, 1940-Nov. 17, 2023



Mary (Grillo) Carey, IHM Associate
Sept. 28, 1942-Nov. 9, 2023



Margaret (Thomas Edward) McAnoy
Mar. 19, 1934 - Dec. 14, 2023



Gregory L. Dushane, IHM Associate
May 28, 1955- Nov. 10, 2023

The Shoes on their feet

Not everyone has the luxury of selecting shoes based on comfort, function, durability or style. Some migrants do not have this choice. Their primary consideration in shoe selection is money and access. The sisters at the border house reported they have often seen only well-traveled flip flops. When the Monroe sisters heard this they knew they had to do something.

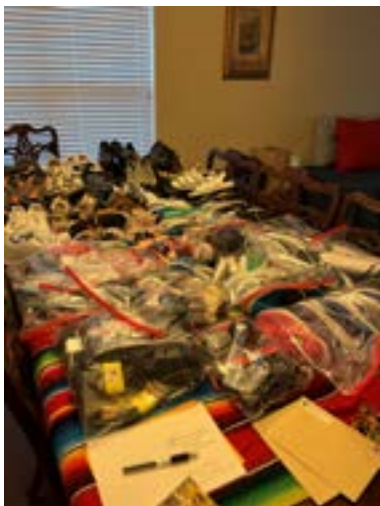
A few months ago, when the sisters in McAllen, Texas, held a Zoom meeting with our sisters in Monroe, they mentioned this desperate need for shoes for arriving migrants. Rosemary (Mary Assunta) Cassar, IHM decided to take on the challenge! Sister Rosie set in motion a shoe drive. To get the details about what was needed, Rosie contacted Carmen Armenta Lara, IHM, who lives at our Mary, Comfort of Migrants house in McAllen Texas. Sister Rosie then requested that each neighborhood in the IHM Senior Living Community have a person responsible for collecting shoes and packing them for mailing.

To date, 15-20 shipments have been sent to Texas. Some of the shoes are newly purchased, while others are gently used. The footwear is happily shared at the border for those who need them. Plans are to continue the shoe drive indefinitely. In a thank you note addressed to Rosemary, Sister Carmen shares,

"Thank you for your wonderful, supportive, creative support of our border mission. Shoes are in great demand when we see migrants crossover with nothing but the clothes on their backs and flip flops on their feet! Please thank the sisters who are so lovingly sending shoes and prayers."



Want to help?



Donate to our OSP-IHM collaborative ministry. Monetary donations will help buy food, clothing, medicine, toiletries and activity materials for migrants. Schools and youth groups may prefer to collect school supplies or other articles. In addition to shoes, donated articles might include travel-size toiletries, shoelaces, socks, gloves, hats and scarves.

Boxes with donated goods or checks can be mailed to:

Carmen Armenta Lara, IHM
Mary, Comfort of Migrants
905 N. 50th Street
McAllen, TX 78501

Checks can be made payable to Sisters of IHM and mailed to:

Mary, Comfort of Migrants
C/O IHM Sisters
610 West Elm Avenue
Monroe, Michigan 48162

Please include **Mary, Comfort of Migrants** in the memo line

Learn more about our OSP-IHM Border community [here](#).

Then & Now

Sister (Marie Peter) Suzanne Sattler

Sister Suzanne Sattler, the youngest of four children, grew up in Toledo, Ohio. Her mother was a homemaker, and her father worked three jobs to make ends meet during WWII. After the war, he established an insurance firm and worked out of their home, which fostered a warm relationship with him. When her brother returned from the Navy, he joined their father's business.



She attended Catholic schools from kindergarten through law school. After graduating high school, Sister Sue went to Marygrove College, where she met the IHM Sisters. At Marygrove, she recognized the humanity of the IHM Sisters and decided to apply during her junior year, but she waited a year before entering. Becoming an IHM gave her a sense of doing something purposeful. "I joined in '65 when all the significant reforms of religious life were beginning post Vatican II, which allowed me to truly grow to understand and appreciate the real meaning of religious life," she says.

Sister Sue's first ministry was teaching English, world history, and U.S. history at Immaculata High School in Detroit for six years; during the last two years, she attended night law school at the University of Detroit. Significant experiences while at Immaculata shaped her; she began to understand the reality of racism in society; a nephew was killed in the Vietnam War, and she commuted to Toledo on weekends to care for her dying mother. Upon graduation from law school, she was awarded a fellowship to work at Michigan Legal Services and then practiced law at the UAW Legal Services, representing Chrysler workers. She was employed at the Detroit Area Agency on Aging, working on nursing home advocacy and health policy and volunteering on many community boards.

[continued](#)

Sister Patricia (Ann Bernard) McCluskey

An attraction to Mystery has always been a part of Sister Patricia McCluskey's life. "I have always been drawn to and had a relationship with Mystery – the mystery of God's love, the mystery of nature, the unfolding mystery of life and love revealed through my family and friends and all those who have been a part of the many experiences of my life journey."

Sister Pat joined the IHMs after graduating from high school. Her first ministry was teaching high school in Detroit for two years, followed by three years in Puerto Rico, after which she went to Brazil as a member of the Detroit-Recife team for 12 years.

During these years in Brazil, Sister Pat shared life with the poor, engaged in pastoral ministry and the formation of the Christian community, taught at the theological institute and assisted in the formation of religious and lay leaders committed to the poor. Her experiences significantly impacted her as she shared in the life of the poor and their liberation struggle. She recalls how the people of Brazil gifted her in so many ways as she experienced their hospitality, simplicity, friendship, ability to celebrate, faith in God, and trust that "tomorrow will be better." They helped her answer the question with which she had grappled when faced with so much poverty. "I saw the suffering and wondered how people could suffer so much and yet not become bitter." Sister Pat elucidates with an image. Behind the squatters' area where she lived was a swamp people used for bodily needs. "These lovely flowers were growing out of the swamp – a powerful image, the seeds of resurrection amid the death and dying. It became the basis of hope." Sister Pat returned from Brazil when her father suffered a heart attack and her mother was in the initial stages of Alzheimer's.

[continued](#)



MARYGROVE MINUTE

Happy New Year, blessings and greetings to all Marygrove alums and friends. May grace and peace fill your hearts and souls as we forge ahead, filled with gratitude for our many blessings, including a Marygrove education. This month, we happily share the Sept. reunion remarks of President Emerita, Dr. Beth Burns.



Welcome to this celebration in the life of any Marygrove College graduate. Our lives converge again at reunions such as this one and I hope you have a wonderful day and a joyful gathering. I want to sincerely thank Liz Loria '70, my Big Sister Class, Marygrove College Alumni Association Immediate Past President, Lou Koss Moss '73 and Jeanne Currier Vagnetti '73 for the details and planning and for believing that continuing annual alum reunions was even possible after the close of our beloved Marygrove. A few comments before we begin the toast:

- We are done with the U.S. Department of Education and IRS documents and requirements. We are now transferring all remaining assets to SSIHM and completing the required transcript review. All college transcripts are available through the State of MI; the IHMs now manage a link on the MG legacy website.
- The Marygrove Conservancy, now responsible has assisted the Alumni Association and has the class photos (all but two; missing 2012 and 1987) on their website.

Through all this, I've had great assistance from the IHM Sisters (who helped clean hundreds of file cabinets, looked for missing files, and housed me at Hartman Hall) and alums. It takes a village.

As a Marygrove Conservancy Board member, I was privileged to attend the first graduation of TSM High School. The class assembled a quilt demonstrating the legacy of the IHMs and the college. They also heard the phrase, repeatedly: "Marygrove made" as their commencement speaker, Justice Kyra Bolden spoke. It was inspiring to hear. They have joined our tradition and legacy. It also reminds me of the quote we used at some of the last MG graduations when we gathered graduates with the College President. This is from a Marygrove graduate, Elizabeth Clinton Keenan, from the class of 1929, "Someday, without knowing it, I will cause positive and lasting change somewhere on this earth. It doesn't matter where or when it happens; all that matters is that it happened and that . . . (I) caused it. Just like a pebble thrown into a still body of water, I will witness the water change and know, without a doubt that I have created that change by not remaining stagnant but by taking action."

I suspect that these words apply to you all. Thank you all for being here and for forever being "Marygrove." Today, the class of 1973 has the distinction of being inducted into the 50-Year Club. There may not be a Marygrove College operating on these grounds anymore, but she lives in our hearts and how we've imbued the values of Marygrove into our families and our world. Please join me in raising a glass to the Class of '73: May Our Lady of Marygrove, who still watches over this beautiful campus at the corner of West McNichols and Wyoming, watch over us and guide us the rest of our days. Welcome to the 50-year Club. Congratulations!

Marygrove cont.

Remember to stay in touch: marygroveconservancy.org/stay-engaged/alumni-association/

Also, visit the Facebook page: Marygrove Alumni & Friends.

Class rings update

- If the ring was purchased in or before 1998, the manufacturer was Josten's. The name should be inside the ring. For service, mail the ring to Warranty Services, Josten's, 3500 I-35 East, Denton, TX 76210 (use insured mail, track and require a signature). www.jostens.com
- The manufacturer of class rings purchased in or after 1999 was Herff Jones. The name should be inside the ring. For service, mail the ring to Warranty Services, Herff Jones, 150 Herff Jones Way, Warwick, FL 02888 (use insured mail, track and require a signature). www.herffjones.com

In the News

IHM was featured on **Hidden Gems of Monroe**, a new series aired on a YouTube channel called **Living in Monroe County**. This mini-documentary highlights the Motherhouse Chapel, the campus, and IHM ecological sustainability plans. The host, realtor Kristen Davis, uses video to highlight the city she loves while bringing attention to the community of Monroe and what it offers. She



shares, "I have always been fascinated by the IHM, what a remarkable landmark it is for Monroe." Filming took place this spring over several weeks, coinciding with the transfer of ownership. See the YouTube video [here](#).



IHM sisters

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On the IHM website

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