



# IHM SISTERS E-NEWS

July 2024

## Sewing to serve

By Michele Farrell and Marge Fogarty, IHM

When Sister Marge Fogarty was ten years old, growing up in Savannah, Georgia, she awoke on Christmas morning to find a brand-new Singer sewing machine with her name on it. She knew how to hand sew yet had never touched a sewing machine, nor had her mother. They figured it out together. The thought was the sewing machine was something her daughter would be good at and it turns out she was. She began making clothes for her younger brothers, dresses for her mother and clothes for herself. She has taught others to sew and has made clothes and quilts for those who learn of her great skill.

Marge began a project called "Angel Gowns." She sews tiny dressing gowns for babies who pass away shortly after birth. These are made to comfort new parents and family. Made from vintage wedding and first communion dresses, the gowns for boys are white with a pale blue satin vest and the girls' gowns are white with reclaimed lace appliques sewn onto the breast of the gown. By gifting these gowns to mothers, Sister Marge wants to reach out to those who have experienced horrific loss to let them know someone is thinking of them and wishing them comfort in their hour of need.

A group of four women living in the IHM Senior Living apartments learned of Sister Marge's sewing skills and approached her to see if she would help them start a sewing circle. The group became *The Smiling Stitchers*. This circle chose a project for mothers and babies. *The Stitchers* make bibs and

burp pads for babies and have distributed over fifty sets to shelters and church parishes serving those in need in Monroe, Detroit, Chicago and at our Texas – Mexico border house. The Stitchers also make

an item they call praying hearts. These hearts are given to "visiting angels" and to immigrants in Texas. Praying hearts are gifts from one heart to another. They are created from baby flannel and carry personal messages of love, hope and support with a note or small gift placed in a smaller heart pocket. We hope those who receive the hearts will feel touched by those who created the hearts.

America is bountiful with folk art tradition and in our ever-busy world sometimes these traditions come close to being lost. The sewing circle is perpetuated through ministries such as Sister Marge Fogarty's and lives on in the hands that hold needle and thread.



July 2024

## News from the Development Office

by Marilyn S. Meadows



Despite the temperature, everyone had a great time at the 28<sup>th</sup> annual Royal Blue Classic. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our sponsors, participants and volunteers who made this year's event a success. We raised \$95,143 to support IHM ministries. Together, we are making a difference in the lives of those in need.

View photos and winners [here](#).

Mark your calendar! Next year's Royal Blue Classic will be on Monday, June 16, 2025.

The 2023-2024 raffle season has come to an end. We raised \$197,931 in support of retired IHM Sisters.

This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the IHM Sisters Raffle. This season promises to be more exciting than ever, with larger cash prizes and 144 opportunities to win. Drawings are held the third Wednesday of each month October 2024 through June 2025.

- First draw: 10 for \$50
- Second draw: 3 for \$100
- Third draw: 2 for \$250
- Last draw: 1 for \$500

Proceeds from the raffle directly benefit the congregation, helping provide quality and compassionate care to our retired sisters. Stay tuned, tickets will be mailed in mid-July. Questions? Call 734-240-9863.



## Theresa Maxis Award

Join us as we celebrate and recognize this year's Theresa Maxis Award recipient, Cathy Miller, for her commitment to the betterment of our community and beyond. The Theresa Maxis Award recognizes community leaders who embody the values and vision of Theresa Maxis and the IHM congregation. This year's celebration will be held on Thursday, Oct. 17, at Monroe Golf & Country Club. For tickets or sponsorship information, contact the Development office at [development@ihmsisters.org](mailto:development@ihmsisters.org) or 734-240-9861.



# Flint Faience Tiles

By Danielle Conroyd

The IHM Motherhouse is a stunning example of Art Deco style and architecture, featuring decorative details such as period pendant light fixtures and decorative tile. An example of this decorative tile is the Flint Faience (pronounced FAY-onse) tile, which is installed in the front lobby. Contrary to public opinion, Pewabic tile is not installed in this building.



Interest in art tile resurged in the United States during the 1920s and '30s. During this period, the Flint Faience Tile Company came into existence then vanished (1921-1933). Flint Faience Tile Company was organized as a subsidiary of the Champion Ignition Company, which later became the AC Spark Plug Company in Flint, Michigan.

As said by Flint residents and authorities on Flint Faience tiles, Ken Galvas and Albert Champion approached Carl Bergmans, a ceramic tile maker in Zanesville, Ohio. Bergman's tile-making experience included tunnel kilns where tiles rolled through on a conveyor belt system. Champion offered this production technique in Flint, and Bergmans saw this as an opportunity to utilize General Motors Corp.'s off-hour kilns. After arriving in Flint, Bergmans hired Mexican-born designer and artist Julio Haro, who was seeking to work with GM. In 1921, the Flint Faience Tile Company was born under GM ownership.



According to the April 1929 issue of AC Sparks, "AC, with its years of experience in making spark plugs, was in an ideal position to sponsor manufacture of Faience Tile. Its large staff of ceramic experts, research engineers and other technicians fit into the situation nicely, as did its modern machinery and tunnel kilns." The company's target sales audience were architects, general contractors and interior decorators. Flint Faience tiles could be found in GM executives' homes and other residences, hotels, apartments, government and commercial offices, hospitals, schools and universities, theaters, houses of worship and museums.

Janet Ryan, IHM, invited Ken Galvas and Margaret Carney to visit and photograph the Flint Faience tiles in the Motherhouse. The IHM Motherhouse is listed as an "Installation" in their book **Flint Faience Tiles, A to Z**. Among the many Michigan installations, the large parlor of the University of Detroit Mercy Faculty Building has a stunning Flint Faience tile floor. Other installations include the Fisher Building cafeteria, St. Paul's Church in Grosse Pointe, the University of Detroit High School, and Lorch Hall at the University of Michigan. Since the tile business was foreign to the automotive field, Harlow H. Curtice, AC's comptroller, decided it should be dropped. Other sources said the Flint Faience Tile Company closed because it needed more kiln space to fire more spark plugs.

## From the IHM Associate office

### Barbara Bacci Yugovich and Anne Crimmins, IHM Associate Co-Coordinators

On Sunday, April 7, 2024, three women made their Associate Commitments: Diana Lucaire, Jean Armbruster and Antonia Soave. Sisters, Associates and family members of the new associates celebrated at brunch following the Liturgy. Congratulations to our newest IHM Associates!



**The River Raisin Institute** invites you to register your children for our annual Budding Naturalists program, which will be held July 22<sup>nd</sup> through 25<sup>th</sup> from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the IHM Senior Living Community's campus. We welcome children ages 5-10; children outside that range can be accepted with special permission.

This year's theme is "Our Home" - Home in the water, Home in the garden, Home in the prairie, Home in the trees.

Participants can expect to learn about the natural world around them through games, activities, crafts, and lots of fun! We anticipate exploring the IHM Senior Living Community's garden, ponds, prairies and woods while learning about many of the plant and animal creatures that call this beautiful space home. There is a big world to explore right outside our doors, and we look forward to experiencing it.

We welcome volunteers who love to work with little ones and be outside; knowledge about the outdoors is not necessary. To volunteer, contact Julie Conley, RRI Program Coordinator, at [RRIPrograms@gmail.com](mailto:RRIPrograms@gmail.com) or 734-240-9682. To register, visit the RRI webpage at [rriearth.org](http://rriearth.org) or visit <https://forms.gle/Uyptx3oc1sNBHigv7>.

We are grateful to our volunteers and the Monroe County Environmental Fund for making this possible.



## From the archives... a look back

### Mother Theresa still looked to as inspiring hope

by Jennifer Meacham, Director of Archives

The Seton Hill district in Baltimore is home to St. Mary's Spirituality Center and Historical Site. Here, tourists and pilgrims alike can visit a chapel built as part of the first Roman Catholic Seminary in the United States, founded in 1791 and a house that once belonged to Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton, the first U.S.-born Catholic saint. This site, more commonly known as St. Mary's on Paca Street, is also the birthplace of the Oblate Sisters of Providence.

Their Visitor Center includes informational displays that tell the history of St. Mary's Seminary and College and the larger Catholic community of Baltimore. Among their permanent display cases are ones dedicated to Mother Seton and Mother Mary Elizabeth Lange, founders of the Oblate Sisters. Earlier this year, they decided to install a new permanent display to tell the story of Mother Theresa Maxis Duchemin, an original founding member of the Oblates.

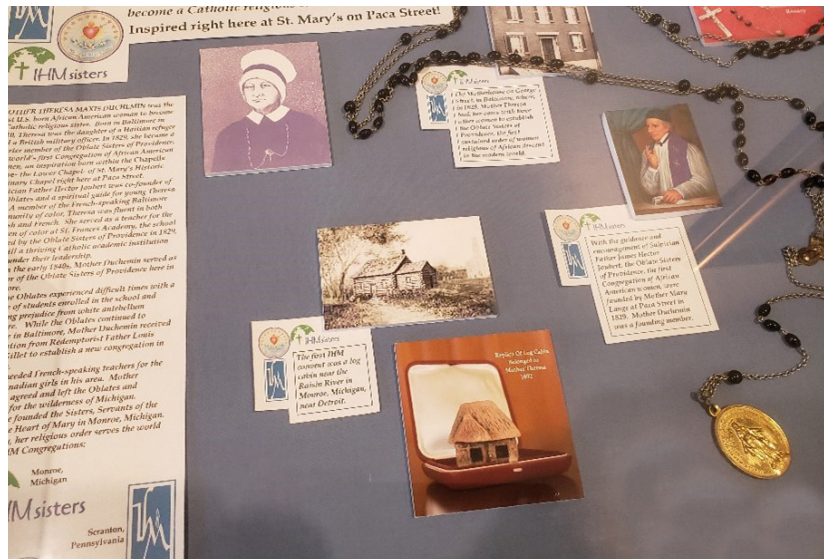
In February, the Director of St. Mary's on Paca Street, Deacon Vito Piazza, contacted the archivists for the three IHM congregations and asked us to contribute artifacts, photos and information relating to Theresa Maxis. This proved to be a wonderful opportunity to "meet" and collaborate with my colleagues from the East. First via email and later in a virtual meeting using webcams and a program called Zoom, I connected with the project coordinator, Sr. Beth Pearson of the Scranton Congregation, and Sr. Helene Thomas Connelly, recently appointed Archivist for the Immaculata IHMs.

It was agreed that anything that once belonged to Theresa Maxis was far too precious to be loaned, so good-quality photographs would have to suffice. The Monroe Archives provided images of the log cabin from the first days of the Congregation and one of her handwritten *Book of Prayers*. The Eastern Congregations made valuable contributions as well, including a photo of a tiny replica of the original IHM log cabin that was gifted to Theresa Maxis after her return to West Chester in 1885 — an artifact I did not know existed until now!

The Oblates' archivist was invited to contribute to this modest but important project at Sister Beth's suggestion and our enthusiastic support. While Theresa Maxis is not pictured in an Oblate habit, their Archives provided a photo of the Motherhouse on George Street in Baltimore, where the Oblate Sisters of Providence took their first vows in 1829.

Copies were made, a few artifacts were shipped and various items were arranged by the staff of the visitor center. The finished display case was then positioned under a portrait of Theresa Maxis and unveiled on May 15. Deacon Vito expressed his gratitude for the contributions of all four Congregational Archives and for the opportunity to present Mother Theresa to the visitors of St. Mary's on Paca Street. He kindly wrote: "In telling her story, bringing her to life here in the center, may she continue to give us strength, fortitude, hope and encouragement in our own lives. May her legacy continue to change lives and the world."

***\*This article originally appeared in the summer 2019 issue of the IHM Archives newsletter, Today and Yesterday. All issues of the newsletter can be accessed [here](#).***



## Then and now

### Sister Kate O'Brien

Sister Kathleen O'Brien was the middle child with two brothers and two sisters. Her parents had emigrated from Ireland in the 1920s and settled in Sacred Heart Parish in Dearborn, where she attended grade school. During high school at St Mary Academy, she realized she had a call



to live her life as an IHM Sister. She was an eager student studying theology and English and being trained as a teacher. Her first assignments were teaching primary children in IHM schools in Michigan. During summers, she began working at Catholic University on her MA in English and eventually began teaching English at IHM High School in Westchester, Illinois. She loved teaching both levels.

In 1968, when the Congregation created Provinces, Kathleen was appointed Northwest Province Secretary and Treasurer. It served as a real challenge for her and an excellent opportunity to get to know the members. Subsequently, she became part of the IHM Formation Team, ministering to sisters who had not yet made final vows. It was another graced time for her to come to know the Community.

As a result of Assembly 72, the Congregation was led to an expanding awareness of social injustice and a call to minister to people at the margins. While volunteering as a member of a prison support group, Kathleen discerned a call to become a prison chaplain. After preparation and training, she ministered in the federal prison in Lexington, Kentucky and later at the Texas state prison in Gatesville, Texas. Those 15 years of ministry expanded her consciousness.

*continued...*

### Sister Mary Downey . . . in her own words

I was born to my parents, Thomas and Maxine, in Lansing, Michigan. My family also included two older siblings: my sister, Terry and my brother, Tom. When I turned six, my father was transferred to the east side of Detroit, where my journey with the IHM congregation began. I started first grade at St. Martin School and continued my education with the IHMs through 12th grade. It was there during those high school years that I realized how much I desired to follow in my teachers' footsteps- to become a teacher myself!

During my sophomore year, one of my IHM teachers invited me to consider entering the community upon graduation. I was intrigued by this invitation and promised her that I would think and pray about it. I shared this with my parents and they were very supportive.

It was during my junior year that my family life was drastically affected by the unexpected death of my dad. I became angry with God and gave up any idea of entering religious life. However, over the next year, with the help of a special IHM teacher and the great encouragement from my mom, I decided to join the IHM community.

I did my student teaching in the third and fourth grades at Holy Redeemer. After graduation, I taught second grade at Holy Trinity for several years and took classes in speech and communication in the master's program at Wayne State University. I went on to teach junior high ministered as the elementary religious education director at St. Blase.



*continued...*

## Marygrove minute

### **Happy summer to all alums and friends of Marygrove College!**

We are pleased to announce that this year, the Alumni Association has presented Marygrove Alumni Legacy Awards of \$500 to two deserving graduates of The School at Marygrove. Amara Small was a Senior Class Salutatorian known as the dynamic “Mayor of Marygrove.” She will attend Columbia or U of M. Kameron Roberson, who participated in the Midnight Golf Leadership program and used his outgoing personality as the school’s resident announcer. Kameron will attend the University of Michigan. The Marygrove Alumni Board is excited to give these monetary gifts to deserving students who have demonstrated Competence, Compassion and Commitment during four years of education on our beloved campus. They have endured and been class leaders during these years of construction, renovation and a year of remote learning due to COVID-19. We wish them all the best as they continue the Marygrove legacy. Also, a \$500 donation has been made to the COTS Program located next to campus on Wyoming at Peggy’s Place. They provide emergency shelter and fulfill daily needs for at-risk families in the neighborhood.



Many thanks to those of you who have already donated almost \$3,000 in response to our annual Appeal letter (via IHM Communications email). I hope many more of you will again consider supporting your Alumni Association so that we can continue to create meaningful connections with the School at Marygrove and the community going forward. Your donations also allow us to sponsor annual Reunions on campus so you can see firsthand the wonderful legacy of education continuing via the P-20 Education program. We can't do it without you, so please consider giving any amount to fund our volunteer efforts! You can always donate online via the [donation form](#).

Finally, please keep an eye out for your invitation to the 2024 All-Alumni Reunion, which should arrive (via IHM Communications email) any day now. All Alums and friends are invited, with a special shoutout to classes ending in 4 or 9. You will be pleasantly surprised if you haven't been on campus lately! Mark your calendars for Saturday, Sept. 14, for a delightful day of reconnecting in Madame Cadillac Hall. There will be several Marygrove Conservancy, IHM and U of M speakers, as well as a lovely luncheon and tours, including the exciting School at Marygrove Elementary in the former Immaculata High Building. We can



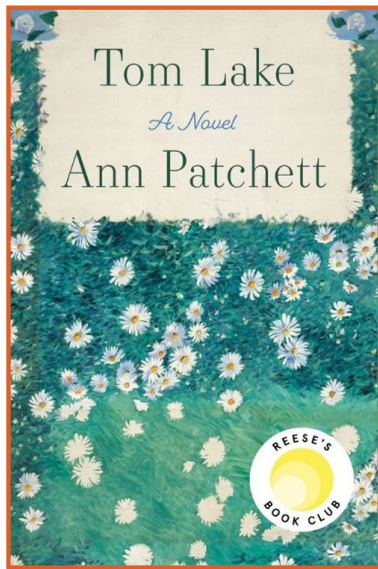
*Board members Frances L. Simmons and Liz Poliuto Loria after the graduation, a jubilant event held at the Music Hall in Detroit.*

use Class Representatives for the years ending in 4 or 9, so please reach out if you can volunteer. Lula Gallman Mbek ([lgmbek@yahoo.com](mailto:lgmbek@yahoo.com)) has been working hard to shore up the email list of her 50 Year Classmates of the Class of 1974. The registration deadline is Aug. 31, so don't delay making your plans! Please email [alumni@marygroveconservancy.org](mailto:alumni@marygroveconservancy.org) or Liz Poliuto Loria at [lorializ@gmail.com](mailto:lorializ@gmail.com) with any questions or offers to volunteer. You can also follow our Facebook page at Marygrove Alumni & Friends.

We look forward to connecting soon!

## Worthy of Note from the Alphonsus Liguori Library ... *Tom Lake*

By Ann Patchett reviewed by library staff



Drawing inspiration from Thornton Wilder's play *Our Town*, Ann Patchett's ninth novel, *Tom Lake*, deftly layers a portrait of a woman during her formative years onstage and her present life as a wife and mother. *Tom Lake* is a quiet story of small moments that make up a life, yet Patchett recognizes that often behind such moments

lie more complicated truths, truths that carry larger questions that shape the paths one follows.

It's the spring of 2020, time to harvest the cherries from their Traverse City, Michigan orchard, but with the start of the Covid-19 lockdown, Joe Nelson; his wife, Lara, now 57; and their twenty-something year old daughters, Emily, Maisie and Nell, must pick and process all the fruit themselves. To ease the intensity of their workdays and prompted by the recent death of world-famous actor Peter Duke, Lara's daughters implore their mother to tell

them about her romance with Duke at *Tom Lake*, a summer stock company in Michigan, and her decision to give up her brief career as an actor.

Lara cedes to their coaxing, beginning her tale with how the 16-year-old Laura Kenison (she dropped a "u" after reading *Doctor Zhivago*) impulsively auditioned for the role of Emily Gibbs in *Our Town*. The heart of Lara's story, as she responds to her daughters' primary focus in their pestering, is the summer at *Tom Lake* and Duke. Looking back at this formative period, Lara shares some—but only some—of it with her daughters, for Lara is telling the story, and Patchett captures the nuanced acceptance in Lara's storytelling – a mellowing of time that arrives at something deeper, wiser, more inclusive.

*Please note* - Meryl Streep is the reader of the audiobook of this novel, and her rendering adds tremendously to the experience of the book. Also, if you have never seen Thornton Wilder's play *Our Town* or it has been years since you have seen it, you might enjoy watching the 1989 Great Performances presentation of the play on YouTube - [Our Town 1989 Great Performances](#).

## **RETROSPECTIVE into the PRESENT:** Entanglement and the Domestication of Color

**July 22 -Sept. 10, 2024**

Join us for the opening reception  
Wednesday, July 24, 5 pm -7:30 pm

The IHM Gallery

**Color sculptures and drawings by Rose E. DeSloover**



# Marian High School

## Mix and Mingle

The Marian Alumnae Association hosted the second Mix & Mingle gathering of the semester at Marian on Wednesday, March 13, for alumnae, moms of alumnae and current moms. Sheila Geary, a long-time Theology teacher, shared insights from the 2024 Marian Mission Trip to Tegucigalpa, Honduras. With over 30 years of teaching theology at Marian, Sheila has been a vital part of Marian's mission trips, dating back to the school's inaugural mission trip to Guatemala. She has since dedicated her mid-winter breaks to accompany Marian juniors and seniors on their annual journeys. During these trips,



students engage in community service in Central America, supporting local families, aiding schools, and contributing to essential community initiatives.

Through these experiences, students cultivate compassion, service, sacrifice, and advocacy, fostering leadership skills that endure long after they return home. Each day of the trip is marked by impactful moments, ranging from heartwarming interactions with families to immersive participation in local customs and traditions. Margaret Desmond '83 shared her experiences with the International Samaritan organization and the mission trips she and

her family have participated independently and with Marian. Amy Kennedy Carroll '90 also shared her experiences as a chaperone on the 2024 trip.



Deep Faith. Courageous Spirit. Action for Justice.

### On the IHM website

- ◆ Pass it on ...  
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- ◆ *ihmpact* is published quarterly, highlighting news and events of the IHM Sisters as well as offering articles for reflection and contemplation. It is available by subscription or online.



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