

# TODAY AND YESTERDAY

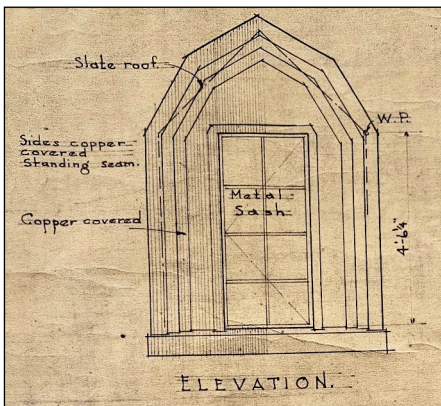
A COLLECTION OF RECENT DISCOVERIES AND  
ACTIVITIES IN THE IHM ARCHIVES

## Updates enhance display items in Heritage Room

By Jennifer Meacham, Archivist

When I became IHM Archivist in 2017, I was thrilled to inherit such a well-planned, informative, and visually attractive Heritage Room. And so, the only changes in the past seven years have been additions to existing displays or a better version of a photo or other image. Last year we were fortunate to have a beautiful and historic stained glass window (previously on display in the Memory Care Chapel) added to our cemeteries display. And several more recent updates have beautified the space even further:

- A wonderfully sharp photo of the Old Motherhouse (c.1895) shows the brick façade of the buildings' river side before everything was covered with ivy.
- An oversized, panoramic shot of the current Motherhouse was replaced with an equally large,



Detail of an upper floor dormer.

original blueprint of the building. It is a remarkable blend of art and architecture.

- And, finally, the most significant addition to this exhibit – perhaps ever – is the stately figure of Sister Therese. First exhibited for Founders' Day 2023 as the showcase of our “Habits Transformed” exhibit, this lovely (and oddly tall) mannequin wears the IHM blue habit, authentic from her veil to her brush braid hem.



“Sister Therese” models the full habit created by Sister Diann Cousino from original blue serge fabric.

We in the Archives encourage residents, employees, and guests to visit – or revisit – this wonderful space filled with photos, artifacts, and slices of the fascinating history of the IHM Sisters and the places they have called home.

### Did you know . . . ?

Representatives of two congregations of women religious – Adrian Dominicans and Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ (Illinois) – recently visited our Heritage Room, among others, as they prepare to redesign their own. It was an honor to share our history and creativity with them!



Sister Mary Cecil (Estella) Law.

## The broader impact of music lessons

Music lessons always were part of the IHM curriculum and the extra money brought in was significant. Very Reverend Dennis Hayes made it clear at a Marygrove fundraising luncheon on May 5, 1923. He told the crowd how the IHM donated this income to parishes.

“This revenue rightfully belonged to the Sisters and could have been kept by them... The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart were the first community in the United States to give their music tuition to the parish, and up to date they have had few imitators. It is largely due to this unparalleled generosity upon the part of the Monroe community that the Diocese of Detroit has been able to build, equip, and maintain the school system of which is it justly proud.”

—Quote from *No Greater Service*

## New in Archives: SMA years

Shortly before Sister Eva Schoell’s death on March 7, her high school scrapbook arrived in the Archives. What a snapshot in time: the minutia of a St. Mary Academy student in the mid-1940s.



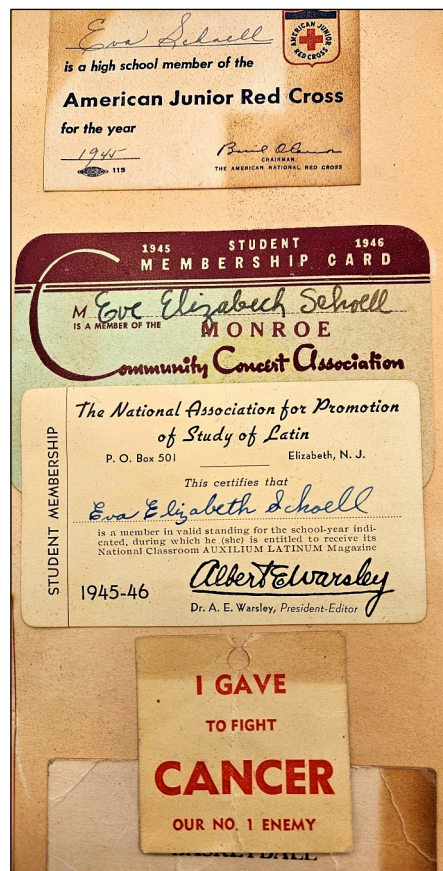
Eva in her gym uniform, 1945-46

Eva was vice president of her senior class, a member at the highest degree (4<sup>th</sup>) in the St. Mary Honor Society

and a staple in musical performances and talent shows. In fact, The Monroe Evening News reported in 1947, “Eva is noted throughout Monroe for her skill at the marimba.” The year before she had performed a marimba version of “Flight of the Bumblebee.”

The 2-inch scrapbook doubled in size because it bulges with keepsakes. She saved First Communion cards, birthday party invitations, report cards, ribbons, programs, and a lock of her hair.

She graduated in 1947 with 82 other girls. She was awarded the Richard Cahalan Medal for Christian Doctrine, recognition of her “all-around excellence in citizenship.”



Although her class prediction was that in 10 years she would be the star reporter at The Monroe Evening News, Eva entered the IHM convent three weeks later.

## Revisiting Sisters' springtime verse

### Surprise

On my way to teach  
One day,  
In a side street  
In Japan,  
I suddenly was  
Dancing at my prom.  
Startled, I thought,  
What triggered this?  
When looking up I saw  
Gardenia trees in bloom.  
Oh! The corsage I was wearing  
Those many years ago.  
So what is the power  
Of the smell of a flower  
To transform reality?

— Letitia O'Connell, IHM

### Untitled

I was lonely  
So I went up to Tabor  
But He had just left.  
I'll go up to Calvary —  
He's always there.

— Rose Carmel  
Burgess, IHM

## A sentinel for the IHM Sisters loses her footing after 154 years

A statue of the Blessed Mother that crashed to the ground and shattered March 10 had served the community since 1869.

The hammered zinc statue was a gift to Msgr. Edward Joos from Rev. Desiderius Callaert, pastor at St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Carleton. Both of them were from Belgium and the statue originated there.

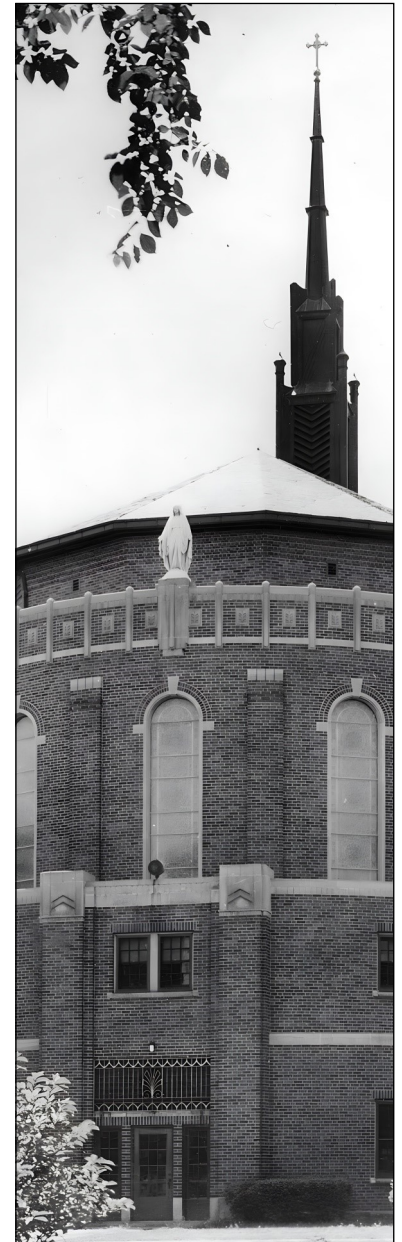
At first it was attached to the cupola of the old Motherhouse. It was moved when the Sisters moved in 1932 and was placed on the north veranda. When the Chapel was built in 1938, it moved again. It seemed to look down protectively at anyone coming in or out of that door.

Zinc statuary became popular in the United States around the time of the Civil War. One of the characteristics of the brittle metal is its tendency to fall and shatter.

It might be said that 154 years is an exceptionally long tenure for a statue always standing outside in the elements.



The face intact.



The Blessed Mother statue as it stood – until March 10 – at the rear door to the chapel.

# Among Ourselves

It was 30 years ago this spring – March, 1994 – when this group met in Picture Rocks, Ariz., to conduct a little business. They are (left to right) Sisters Kathleen O'Brien, Janet Provost, Eileen Fitzpatrick, Catherine Mary Zacharias, Jean Laubacher, Margaret Farrell, Eileen Semonin and Celeste Schoppy. The back of the photo says, "Last S/W Bd. Mtg." Eileen Semonin was South/West Provincial in 1994 and Sister Margaret was living in Arizona.



*The IHM Archives seeks to preserve any and all materials that document the history of the IHM Sisters. Please contact the Archivist if you have items to donate or have questions about the types of items appropriate for the collection.*

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