



I bring you good news ...

By Maria Antonia Aranda Diaz, IHM, and Maureen Kelly, IHM

The mission of the IHM Sisters in Ciudad Juárez has been present since 1985, grounded in pastoral care and the formation of base communities at the Chapel of Mary, Mother of God, and since 1999 at the Chapel of Santa Elena de la Cruz. This ministry has consistently been marked by attentiveness to the lived realities of the people and to the signs of the times, rooted in the liberating mission of Jesus. In 2017, the Sisters responded to a new call through the Human Mobility Program as the first migrant caravans arrived at the border.

The recent visit of Sister Ellen Rinke, IHM, was joyfully anticipated with the arrival of six large boxes filled with winter clothing—gloves, scarves, socks,

underwear and other necessities. These gifts were generously donated by Sisters, Associates, and team members of Saint Therese IHM Senior Living Communities, along with IHM friends and family members. For us, this gesture echoed the angel's proclamation to the shepherds: *"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people"* (Luke 2:9-10).



Sister Ellen was grateful for the opportunity to be in Ciudad Juárez during the Advent season. She participated in Spanish in the Novena to Our Lady of Guadalupe, joining nine Rosaries leading up to the December 12 feast day, a cherished Mexican ritual of prayer and celebration. She also shared in the Eucharist

Continued....

with the community of the Chapel of Santa Elena de la Cruz on both Sundays and weekdays, expressing her gratitude and reflecting with the community on how they live their faith and share it with others.

On December 7, during the Holy Eucharist celebrated with the Santa Elena Chapel community, Sister Ellen joined Sisters Maureen and Antonia, Associates Valentín and Hilda, and members of the local community in the Renewal of Vows as IHM Sisters and Associates.

The IHM Sisters of Juárez are part of an intercongregational community that includes five women's religious congregations and is supported by a civil association, *Sowing Today, Reaping Tomorrow*. Together, they collaborate with Jesuit volunteers, lawyers, psychologists, physicians, academics and lay leaders to provide comprehensive care for people on the move. This accompaniment includes food, clothing, physical and mental health services, education, legal assistance, financial support, document processing and spiritual care. A central goal of the ministry is to foster an intercultural community among migrants of diverse backgrounds, including individuals and families from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Venezuela, Colombia and Mexico.

During her visit, Sister Ellen also experienced a traditional Mexican *posada*, reenacting Mary and



Joseph's search for shelter in Bethlehem. Migrant brothers and sisters requested hospitality through the traditional *posada* song, asking their sisters and brothers in Juárez to welcome them. One especially profound moment of the *posada* was the sharing of letters written by migrants, expressing gratitude to God and to all who had supported them along the journey. They received handmade hearts prepared by Sister Marge Fogarty, IHM, and her team—symbols of God's

abiding presence and of the care offered by Sisters and volunteers who walk with them.

The migrants shared food and music from their own cultures, a visible sign of the community they are building together. In these moments, the liberating mission of Jesus is made manifest

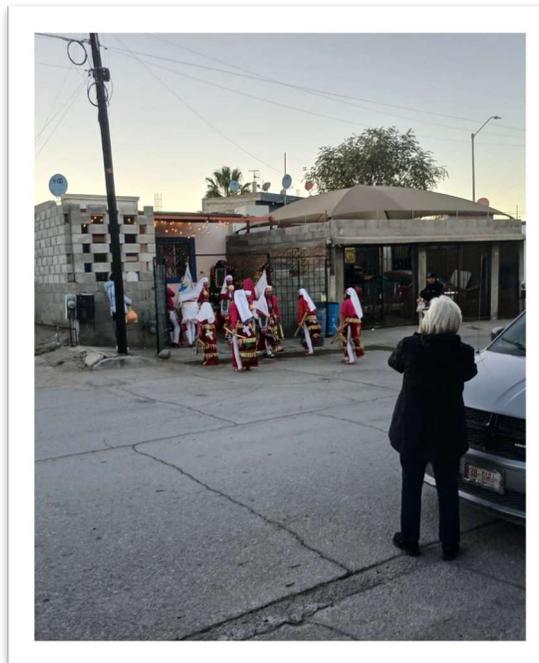
through the accompaniment of the intercongregational community.

As Pope Leo has noted, migrants are "privileged witnesses of hope and resilience" in a world marked by conflict, a message highlighted during the 111th World Day of Migrants and Refugees in 2025.

The IHM Sisters of Juárez are deeply grateful for Sister Ellen's visit and for all it has represented—a tangible sign of solidarity, support,

and accompaniment from the wider IHM community.

¡Muchas gracias, Elena!





Happy New Year

As we welcome the new year, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to you, our friends and benefactors. May you be blessed as you have so abundantly blessed the IHM Sisters through your generosity. We wish you peace, joy and God's continued blessings in the year ahead.

IHM Development Team

Marilyn S. Meadows, Hilda Jarvis, Debrah Parrish and Kitty Slight

Celebration of baptism

By Barbara O'Neill, IHM

Over these past months, we have been blessed to walk with Shawna Valeri as she approaches the waters of baptism. Shawna, who has served the IHM community for many years as our wellness coordinator, has grown steadily in her faith and deepened her relationship with God.

More than a year ago, she began her formal journey toward full initiation into the Catholic Church. Throughout this time, she has been accompanied by Sister Annette St. Amour, her catechist and mentor, with care and guidance.

We look forward with great joy to celebrating with Shawna as she receives the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist on Sunday, Jan. 11, 2026. Her journey invites all of us to pause and reflect on the meaning of our own baptism. We are claimed as children of God, forgiven, dignified, made a new creation, sharers in God's life, and consecrated to the Holy Trinity.

As the *Order of Christian Initiation of Adults* reminds us, "Baptism recalls and makes present the paschal mystery itself, because in baptism we pass from the death of sin into new life." (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults #6).

This is truly a time of joyful celebration for Shawna and for our entire community. May her witness renew in each of us the grace and promise of our own baptismal call.



Pictured left is Shawna's Godmother and to the right is Shawna Valeri.

Did you know?



IHM Sisters offers a variety of spirituality and religious resources for seekers of all faith traditions.

On our website, you can find spirituality programs, books recommended by IHM theologians, pastoral ministers and spiritual directors, homilies and reflections by IHM Sisters.

We welcome all who wish to join us in prayer. Please enter by the front door of the IHM Motherhouse. If you can't make it in person, you can stream our Liturgies on our YouTube Channel. We look forward to celebrating liturgies with you.

To learn more about our available resources, click below!

[Spirituality Resources](#)

[Homilies & Reflections](#)

[Liturgy Schedule](#)

[YouTube Livestream](#)

From the archives ... a look back

Meet Agnes and Olive, St. Mary Academy Class of 1907

Getting to know these two girls started with a random discovery of a student photo album in SMA Alumni Association Box 4, File 41. The photos are informal shots around campus, not all seniors, but all looking happy, modern, fresh and confident. The future seemed bright with possibilities. The class list includes all the names – among them Cassilda, Irma, Hazel, Nellie, two Gertrudes and two Mildreds, Gladys and Blanche.

The June 1907 Messenger tells us 21 young women graduated on June 20. Fifty-nine clergy from around Michigan, Ohio, Illinois and Ontario attended. Nearly all 1,000 seats in the auditorium were filled.

Bishop J.S. Foley addressed the graduates: "In this world that you about to enter, there are many temptations, many snares, but keep ever in mind the principles of honor and of right that you have learned at your Alma Mater and be true to them." He told them to be open to the duties awaiting them, those of home and family.

Miss Olive Muzzy followed that path. In 1908, she married Daniel Healy at St. Aloysius Church in Detroit. In 1909, she returned to SMA for a two-year reunion. That's when the photo with Bishop Foley and the members of the Class of 1907 was taken. Olive is the woman in the back row holding her tiny baby, Mary Jane.

Olive and her husband, a judge of probate in Wayne County, stayed in Michigan and raised four children, two girls and two boys. Clearly, education was important in their family as their daughter Mary became a psychologist and Anne was a social



worker. Olive lost her husband in 1951 but survived him by 13 years and is buried in Mount Olivet Cemetery in Detroit.

Agnes Daily took another route. She entered the IHM community in 1908 and received the religious name Marie Therese. She wanted to be a nurse but detoured into music. She taught voice and piano at St. Mary's Academy from 1909 through 1966. Despite having several photos of her from her time as a student at SMA, this later portrait is the only picture we have of her as a Sister. Her sober expression belies the reality of her life and ministry. Her Remembering mentions her "sparkling personality" and her own clear, resonant singing voice.



Posing with a camera for a camera are Gladys (Ladie), Agnes Daily (center) and Marie

She graduated from Michigan State Normal College in Ypsilanti and studied music at Manhattanville College outside New York City. She taught hundreds, if not thousands, of young singers and musicians and led all manner of choirs — novices, postulants, senior Sisters, students and so on. She introduced Gregorian Chant to the IHM community and worked years to perfect its style for the Motherhouse services.

She died at 5 minutes to 2 on the morning of Nov. 7, 1969, at the age of 81. All of Monroe was welcome to attend her funeral and many alumni and her former music students came. Thanks to IHM Archivists of the past, we have these stories to share.



Members of the class of 1907 with Bishop Foley in 1909. Olive is in the back row holding her daughter.

**This article originally appeared in the Spring 2023 issue of the IHM Archives newsletter, Today and Yesterday. All issues of the newsletter can be accessed [here](#).*

Then & now

Sister Carolina Diez de Andino

I discovered my IHM vocation as a little girl when our sisters taught me at Academia Santa Teresita in Puerto Rico, where I was born. My parents opposed my call because I was their only child. So, I took matters into my own hands. In 1964, while studying at the University of Puerto Rico, I left home secretly and joined the IHMs. Over time, my parents came to love the congregation and to understand my mission.

One of my most memorable experiences of participating in the liberating mission of Jesus was serving at the Catholic Worker in New York City with Dorothy Day. This ministry to the homeless was highly transformative and renewing. My connections with the Divine are also transforming, particularly through the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist.

A memory that exemplifies my growth within the IHM community is serving as a nurse's aide in the IHM Infirmary. I fell deeply in love with nursing and requested permission to complete the necessary studies to become one. My beloved superior, Mother Robertine, explained that my real calling was to teach. So, teaching became my main ministry and I earned a bachelor's degree from Marygrove College in 1967.

My teaching ministry began at Holy Redeemer School in Detroit and at the Monroe Public School System. Later, I taught at La Merced School in Cayley, Puerto Rico. After earning a master's degree in religious studies from the University of Detroit in 1971, I taught at the Universidad Central de Bayamon and Casa Cristo Redeemer, where I conducted spiritual retreats.

Sister Mary Jo Majer asked me to form a community with our Puerto Rican Sister Carmen Rosado to give Lisandra Pedraza, our new candidate, an early start in IHM life. After Lisandra entered the novitiate, I returned to Interamerican University in Rio Piedras.

I received a doctoral scholarship sponsored by the

U.S. Department of Education. This is my 31st year on faculty at the Polytechnic University. In teaching English as a second language, I combine the study of the Earth Charter and theological reflection with the critical analysis of world news.

My understanding of the IHM mission has deepened as I see God's mercies being showered on our poor, minority learners through community donations of water, food, other needed resources, federal funding and volunteer assistance. I see God in transformative action daily through all these miracles of love and the IHM mission continues to call me.

I am deeply grateful for my life as an IHM Sister. Since joining, the greatest joys I have experienced have been our congregation's fidelity to the Holy Spirit and my ministry with young adults in higher education.

I hope for the future that we continue to follow the Spirit of God as it leads us, for we still have much to give. I thank God daily for my vocation and all those IHMs who have supported my journey and commitment to the mission of Jesus.



Then & now

Sister Susan Mahalik

I was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and grew up appreciating the significance of living in the cradle of democracy in America. I was educated by the Philadelphia IHM Sisters in grade and high school and felt the joy in their congregation. During high school, I also encountered women religious from other teaching congregations. These relationships broadened my understanding of religious life. When I graduated—a few years after Vatican II had begun reshaping the Church—I chose to enter the congregation. The IHMs I knew were energetic, grounded, and fully engaged with the young women they taught. Their spirit drew me in. I wanted to be part of something that mattered.

I participated in a diocesan new-teacher program and worked as a lay teacher. Then, I taught at a new school staffed by the Philadelphia IHMs and was mentored in the teaching profession. We staffed many schools in the diocese of Philadelphia and most of my time there was spent teaching first and second grade in the inner city. I loved teaching those precious children. They taught me how to understand the difficulty of coping with racism in our culture.

My early years in the congregation were filled with teaching across several parish schools, first in the suburbs and then in the inner city. My ministry included preparing students for the reception of the sacraments and encouraging parental participation in Church life and their children's education.

Much of my parish ministry unfolded in the hopeful years after Vatican II. Alongside other IHM Sisters, I worked to bring the Council's dream to life in parish settings. Liturgical renewal, music ministry and active lay participation were central to our efforts. We were living the Spirit's call to renewal.

I came to the Monroe IHM congregation after



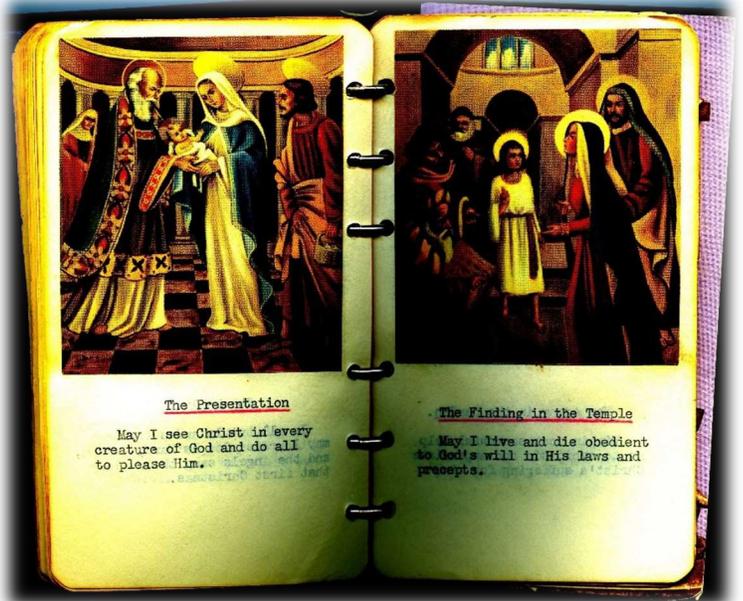
reflecting on my time with the Philadelphia IHMs. I traded loss for a new life and found great joy in my life with the Monroe Sisters. I was always inspired by their prayerful energy and focus as they continued their journey following Christ. Since joining Monroe IHMs, I've taught school, worked as a pastoral associate and now am a clinical therapist. Pope Francis seems to have opened a new window of hope for the people of the Church. I hope to continue ministry for the people of God in the congregation's name. I love congregational gatherings and feel nurtured by my wonderful IHM Sisters.

I don't know where the time has gone, but it has been filled with many transforming experiences for me and those who have been part of my life's journey. Now, we see the world and the church changing again. So, I ask, "What next does God have in store for me (and us)? I understand that we can always count on God to lead the way.



A tradition of inspiration for the new year

In this season of New Year's resolutions, we consider an IHM tradition that dates back to the community's very beginning and its co-founder, Mother Theresa Maxis. Despite the emphasis on strict and uniform religious observance, Mother Theresa encouraged individual sisters to preserve prayers, quotations, art, holy cards, poetry and other bits of inspiration that had personal meaning to them. Called "poverty books," these small notebooks encouraged devotion to a life of faith and an intimate relationship with God. Sisters have also written beautiful notes during retreats, creative prompts of what they want to remember and how they want to live. Even in the digital age, a profound and personal collection of inspiring thoughts and images could be a gift to oneself throughout the new year.



Remembering

Read more about the lives and ministries of our Sisters and Associates



George Ellen Brannick, IHM:
July 3, 1926 – Dec. 5, 2025



**Mary Margaret
(Mary Gregory) Davis, IHM**
May 21, 1935 – Nov. 20, 2025



Jean McInerney, IHM
Aug. 9, 1932 – Nov. 15, 2025



**Marie Theresa
(Cecilia Mary) Magrie, IHM**
June 15, 1937 – Nov. 13, 2025



**Marcella (Ann Lawrence)
Regan, IHM**
Sept. 23, 1932 – Nov. 10, 2025

Now is the time! We are the space for the Holy to rise in our midst

By Barbara Bacci-Yugovich, IHM Associate Coordinator

As members of Midwest Kindred Spirits (MKS), Associate Coordinators gathered Sept. 22-23, 2025, for a two-day business and retreat day at the Redemptorist Retreat Center in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. Those of us on the Leadership Planning Team developed the theme, "MKS Come Together, United in Futuring."



After joyfully welcoming Associate Coordinators from many religious communities in the Midwest, we opened our first day with a prayer titled *"In the Stillness... We Find Our Hope in the Holy One,"* recognizing that in the stillness of prayer is where God awaits us—in the conversations, learnings, and presence we offer to one another. Each of us placed a stone in the center of our prayer space as a sign of our openness to one another and to all in our world.

"Uniting for the future" was the invitation to gather. We came with hope, questions and trust, recognizing the urgent need to unite for the future of our communities. As Associate Coordinators, we shared many excellent ideas for developing more leaders within our associate communities. Our time included rich conversations, individual reflection and communal prayer. The evening offered space to socialize, play cards, and walk outdoors, enjoying the first colors of autumn. On the second day, we gathered for retreat, guided by Sr. Marian Brown, OP, and sang *"Dreamers of a New Day,"* written by Sara Thompson.

For many of us "Charism Carriers," Sister Marian reminded us that "we are the midwives at the birth of something new ... wisdom seeking more." Our reflections revealed that we are being called to "love large." Suzie Coulthard, Associate Coordinator for the BVM Sisters in Dubuque, Iowa, shared, "Being a part of MKS is a blessing; it allows for collaborative conversations, as we explore the future of relationships within and between communities." As we enter the Holy Seasons of Advent and Christmas, the words of Jan Novotka's song, *"Consciousness Waking,"* come to mind: *"Now is the time, we are the space for the Holy to rise in our midst."*

Want to know more about becoming an IHM Associate? Contact Barbara Bacci-Yugovich, IHM Associate, at (734) 240-9672 or byugovich@ihmsisters.org to learn more.

Congratulations Sister Anne Crimmins



Sister Anne Crimmins formally retired on Oct. 31, 2025, concluding 64 years of faithful and generous service to the many communities she has called home throughout her religious life. Since 2015, Anne has served with distinction as Associate Co-Coordinator for the IHM Sisters, bringing wisdom, dedication and wholehearted commitment to the Associate Office. In this role, Anne consistently went above and beyond, ensuring that each Associate candidate was thoughtfully supported and well-prepared for their journey. Her deep belief in the Associates' mission was evident in every aspect of her ministry. Anne strengthened relationships, nurtured community, and helped shape a vibrant and engaged Associate program. With heartfelt appreciation and affection, we wish Anne joy, good health and fulfillment in this new chapter.

Detroit Cristo Rey High School Board of Directors announces appointment of new president

The Detroit Cristo Rey High School Board of Directors is pleased to announce that William R. McGrail has been appointed as President of Detroit Cristo Rey High School, effective January 5, 2026.

McGrail was selected following an extensive national search. Board President, Joaquin Nuno-Whelan, shared, “McGrail brings a strong background in strategic leadership, operational management, fundraising, and people development. Equally compelling is his deep passion as a champion for youth and commitment to educational opportunity.”

The President role will be externally focused, with responsibility for community engagement, strategic planning, organizational development, fundraising, and long-term financial sustainability.

“I am honored and humbled at the opportunity to lead the remarkable mission of Detroit Cristo Rey and to build upon the strong foundation that has been laid down since its founding in 2008 to help our students realize their full potential and achieve their dreams.” said Bill McGrail, “I look forward to working with all of our dedicated stakeholders to ensure that Detroit Cristo Rey continues to be a beacon of opportunity for the young women, men and families that we serve.”

Most recently, Bill led fundraising, community partnership efforts and securing new work experience partnerships for Loyola High School in Detroit. He also spearheaded the successful visioning, development and execution of the \$9M Empower Loyola capital campaign.

“Bill is exceptionally well-suited to lead Detroit Cristo Rey into its next chapter,” said Mary Messana, who chaired the Search Committee. Bill’s experience, faith-driven leadership, and dedication to student success will strengthen our mission and expand opportunities for young people across Detroit.”



Celebrating Marian's newly renovated science and art wings

On October 28, Marian High School celebrated a significant milestone with the official ribbon cutting for two major renovation projects: the Fisher Family Science Wing, made possible through the generosity of the Fisher Family, and the Wanink Art Wing, funded by a legacy gift from alumna Billie Jo Wanink '63.



As part of the celebration, Marian also dedicated the Ray and Sue Ebbing Family Classroom within the Fisher Family Science Wing—an inspiring space created through the generosity of Ray and Sue Ebbing '77, whose longstanding support continues to strengthen Marian's mission.

Before the ribbon cutting, Sister Lynne Moldenhauer offered a prayer of blessing and gratitude, grounding the celebration in Marian's IHM heritage and marking the moment with a spirit of faith and thanksgiving.



Marian extends heartfelt gratitude to the donors, alumnae, and community members who joined us for this milestone occasion, marking the completion of Phase 1 of the Marian for the Generations Capital Campaign. Special thanks to C.E. Gleeson Constructors for leading the renovation project and to the Class of 1970, whose generosity has enhanced science education for current and future Mustangs.

These newly renovated spaces will empower our students to learn, explore, and lead with confidence, creativity, and purpose. View the recap of the evening: <https://ow.ly/mWrG50XjVh1>

Prayer offered by Sister Lynne Moldenhauer, IHM:

Gracious and loving God,

When Marian was opened so many years ago, the IHM Sisters designated this as a "place set apart." In that statement lives an intention – an intention that encourages academic excellence and also expects a deep commitment to leadership and service rooted in Gospel values. In this season of harvest, we are grateful for the many blessings given to and through Marian High School. In a world torn apart in so many places with so much destruction and ruin, we acknowledge the gift of the rejuvenating creation of spaces to enhance learning and creative expression. We ask your blessings on all who have made this possible and pray for the grace that, through these renovations, the Marian Community will continue as a beneficial presence in bearing witness to the Gospel, guided by the spirit of Mary's heart, whose faithfulness to God guides us all.

With gratitude and praise for all your good gifts, we say: Amen.

Worthy of Note from the Alphonsus Liguori Library ... *Absolution*

By Alice McDermott and reviewed by library staff

In *Absolution*, Alice McDermott transports readers to Saigon in 1963, the fraught time preceding the United States' full involvement in the Vietnam War. Focusing on the wives stationed overseas with their American husbands, McDermott draws on her deep understanding of human nature, her artistry in creating characters, and her precise attention to detail, to explore the contradictions and moral ambiguities of the human heart.

Patricia Kelly (Tricia) is a shy newlywed who went to Vietnam with her husband, Peter, an engineer and rising attorney, on loan to Navy Intelligence. Charlene is a practiced corporate spouse of an oil executive and mother of three, a force of nature, decisive in orchestrating charitable projects and asserting herself within the expatriate community.

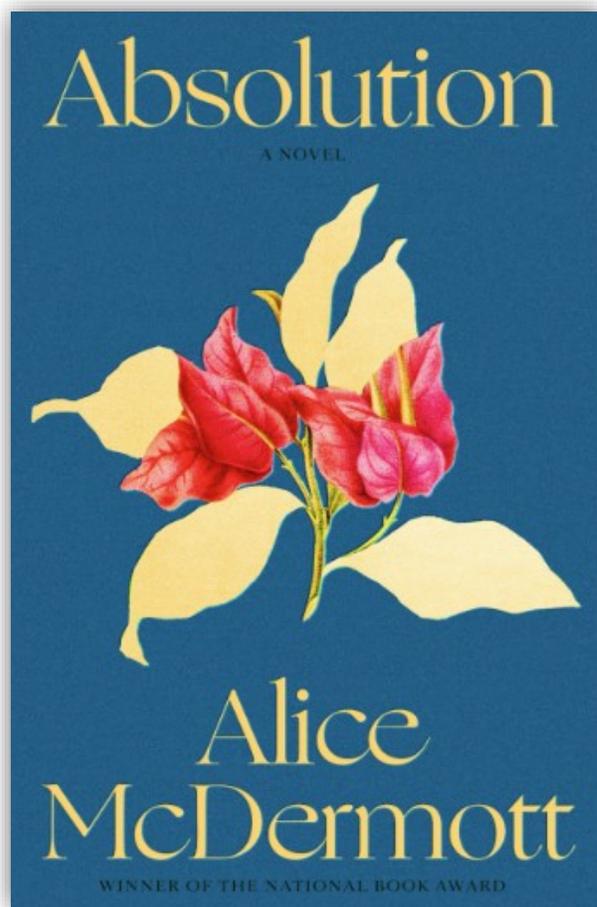
The two women meet at one of the innumerable cocktail parties that are the center of the social lives of the American expatriates. It isn't long before Charlene enlists Tricia to join her group of women in their charitable works.

The navigation of the insulated world of expatriates while engaging in charitable projects - like Charlene's 'Saigon Barbie' project - reveal the tension between altruism and cultural blindness. Their efforts to 'do good' often lead to unintended consequences, exposing the limits of generosity and the compromises demanded by privilege and circumstance.

Tricia's passivity, even when some schemes engage her at least tangentially with the Vietnamese black market or involve materials obtained in some questionably legal fashion, raises the fragile balance between silence and complicity.

McDermott's *Absolution* takes the form of memories shared in a series of letters between an older Patricia and Charlene's daughter, Rainey, who reaches out to her 60 years after they've left Vietnam.

This narrative structure allows McDermott to reflect on Tricia's grappling with the contradictions inherent in human attempts to "do good," and to highlight the difference between what she saw then and what she now understands. Tricia's letters to Rainey are not simply recollections but reinterpretations, shaped by hindsight and the need to make sense of past choices.



Going Home for New Year

I want to read the whole book of this year from cover to cover at one sitting

I want to feel the words of the days weave into weeks.

I want to hear the story unfolding from the months.

I want to read in steady slowness with one burning question: What does it matter?

A little voice curls out of the middle page: "Absorb light, every bit of light there is: sun, moon, star, wisdom; what we know so far."

I read and read with the curled voice running through each family of words and know that I can't look back.

Home is no longer where I am from, but where I am going.

- Patricia Rourke, IHM



JAN. 15, 2026 - MAR. 12, 2026



LOVE THROUGH THE SEASONS

Opening Reception

Join us for a vibrant exhibition showcasing artwork created by children at the Monroe YMCA.

Jan. 15, 2026 | 5:30 p.m. – 7 p.m. | Motherhouse Art Gallery, 610 W. Elm Ave, Monroe, MI

Light refreshments will be served. All are welcome!



From the Justice, Peace and Sustainability office

In support of NETWORK's zine (produced to explain the budget reconciliation bill and its potential impacts) IHM Sisters Susan Mahalik, Kate O'Brien, Camille Brouillard, Mary Ann Bredice and Pat McCluskey, along with IHM Leadership and JPSO Administrator Bee Butcher, helped fold and prepare the zines for public distribution.



Thank you for your continued support of and engagement with the IHM Sisters. Your presence, encouragement and partnership sustain our shared mission and strengthen our community.

As we face the pressing needs of our time, we invite you to join us in responding with courage and care by pursuing justice, peace and a sustainable way of life. Each of us has a role to play, and even small, thoughtful actions can contribute to meaningful change.

Ways you can take action

- **Read** about issues that affect our communities and the common good.
- **Pray** for the needs of the world, our leaders and one another in prayer.
- **Write** to elected officials and community leaders.
- **Call** decision-makers to advocate for policies supporting human dignity and creation.

We are grateful to walk this path with you.



Deep faith. Courageous spirit. Action for justice.

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