

TODAY AND YESTERDAY

A COLLECTION OF RECENT DISCOVERIES AND
ACTIVITIES IN THE IHM ARCHIVES

Chance meeting, lifelong friendship still echoes

1914. Anna Look was an adolescent girl on an eight-day Atlantic crossing with her family; they had been visiting her mother’s relatives in Holland. Also on board was a priest, Father Arthur Jerome Drossaerts, from the same city in Holland, who was returning to his pastorate in New Orleans. The ship’s name was the Lapland.

Their talks during those eight days led to a 20-year correspondence between the two. Anna would go on to graduate from St. Mary Academy and enter the IHM community in 1920. She was given the name Sister Margaret Mary. The priest would become Archbishop Arthur Drossaerts, the first archbishop of San Antonio. He called her The Little Flower of the Lapland.



“1-14-1920

My dear little Flower,

So glad to hear of your carrying out the great intentions you had and answering the call on the 6th of January!! The Star called you and you followed it and it will guide you to happiness & the consecrated life here below & to the magnificent crown hereafter.”

They exchanged long letters about what was happening in their lives. Sister Margaret Mary wrote about the

community, her first teaching missions and her first out-of-state mission to Lorain, Ohio. He wrote about his extensive travel, money problems, building schools and churches, teaching and training.



Archdiocese of San Antonio photo of Arthur Drossaerts.

He knew her final vows were to be on Aug. 15, 1925.

“August 12, 1925

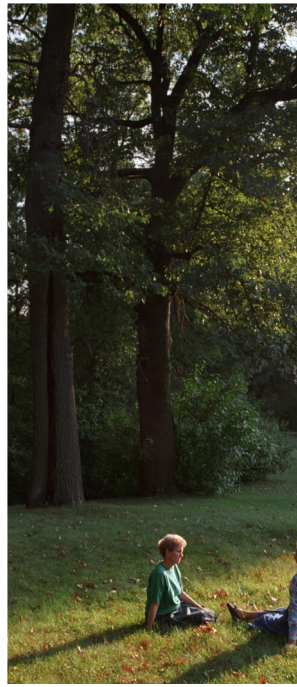
My dear Sister Mary Margaret, [sic]

Accept my heartiest congratulations on this Solemn day of your perpetual Espousals with your heavenly Bridegroom. I congratulate you with all my heart, on having chosen the better part. May your life be a happy one and may it be given you to work for many long years in intimate union with the Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

One of his greatest worries was not assigned, but thrust upon him: offering shelter and hospitality to refugees from religious persecution in Mexico.

A look back at a cherished memory

It has been 55 years since the IHM's House of Prayer — the Visitation Barn — opened for worship, retreats, special programs, hospitality, prayer, study, reflection and so much more. Many people still remember their time spent there and the beauty of the surroundings. This photo package recalls the setting and the life at Visitation.



Revisiting Sisters' poetry

Sonnet for Creation

If Life's missed loves surround
me at its close,
Then let not one of them be
Wisdom's boon
That brings to light the wonder of
the moon
And interplay of galaxies God
chose
To grace the deep blue of a
summer night;
Or rainbow's hues to savor
after pain
And gentle winds in tune with
healing rain,
Or trees in flower when spring
is at its height,
O let not hues of autumn's red
or gold
And aura of its fire go by unseen,
Nor usage blind me to a snowfall's
sheen
That graces field and tree in
winter's cold.
Let reverence be mine while time
shall last;
I kneel in awe where Beauty
holds me fast.

— Judine King, IHM, 1993



Chance meeting (continued)

"7/25/1926

My dear Sister M-M;

The Mexican problem is getting acute here. Every day now some poor Sisters come to ask for a place of refuge. ... As things look now we may have a couple of thousand Religious on our hands soon. They are all compelled to leave unless they give up their religious vows."

That same year she wrote to congratulate him on his elevation to archbishop and she had a question. His answer was reassuring.

"9/11/1926

Yes, and please continue to call me always as 'Father Drossaerts' and nothing else. No friends like the old ones; and among these comes the Little Flower of the Lapland holding a first place."

Also in 1926, he visited Michigan. Sister Margaret Mary wrote later that, "His one visit to Monroe, I can truly say, was one of the high points of my sixty-eight years in the convent."

Their correspondence continued through the 1930s. Then she received a handwritten note from a Mrs. M.E. Buckley.

"Sept. 8, 1940

Dear Sister,

It is with regret that I have to convey to you the sad news that your friend, as well as ours, dear Archbishop Drossaerts passed to his eternal resting place at six o'clock this morning."

And now the rest of the story....

1920 — Novice Mistress Sister Mary Hubert Manion told Sister to keep his letters.

1988 — At the suggestion of Sister Marie André Walsh she donated them to San Antonio Archdiocese.

2025 — Archivist Selena Aleman contacts IHM for more information as she prepares for exhibit in 2027.

Among Ourselves

To know one another since Day 1 in the novitiate brings a measure of comfort and understanding unique to each class. Seen here celebrating their 60th Jubilee in 2011 are Sisters Nora Marie Duggan, Laetitia Lariviere, Margaret Babcock, Jean Burbo, Marcella Regan and Jean McInerney.



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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