



“Millie” eliminates food waste

By Barbara G. Stanbridge, IHM

Did you know that food waste is a major contributor to landfill overflow and greenhouse gas emissions?

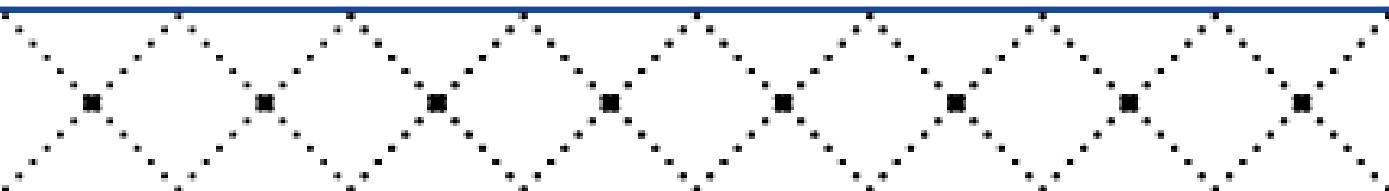
In 2024, I was introduced—via Facebook—to the Mill, an innovative food recycler that transforms ordinary food scraps into a dry, powdery substance resembling coffee grounds. Thanks to an anonymous donor, we began an experiment in the summer of 2024 on the second floor of the Motherhouse (SLC) to explore how we might reduce the food waste generated by 18 residents.

“Millie,” as we’ve affectionately named our machine, is a compact 16 x 10 x 26-inch white unit that sits next to the microwave. At first glance, it looks like a simple wastebasket with a

lid but inside is a powerful system of grinders that processes eggshells, fruit rinds and nearly any solid food scrap. On average, Millie processes about 63 pounds of waste each month.

The resulting grounds are repurposed as fertilizer or added to compost for the organic garden. As Millie approaches her third summer, she has already diverted more than 1,350 pounds of food waste from landfills.

The Mill represents a powerful example of innovative thinking in response to environmental challenges. It can be used in a variety of settings, and there are even processes being developed to convert the grounds into poultry feed.



Using Millie each day is a tangible reminder that small, consistent actions can help sustain our common home.

The success of the second-floor experiment inspired Saint Therese Facilities Manager Steve Grigsby to pursue a grant, resulting in the addition of three more Mills for use in the main kitchen on their floors.

What about us?

What small, intentional steps might you take to reduce food waste in your own daily life? Whether it's composting at home, being more mindful about what you buy and discard, or exploring new technologies like the Mill, each choice matters. Care for the Earth is not abstract; It is lived in our kitchens, our communities, and our commitments. What will be your next step?



Remembering



Mareda Babcock, IHM Associate
July 7, 1925 – March 9, 2026



Marie Rebecca Vonderhaar, IHM
May 6, 1941 – March 23, 2026



Claudia Ann Miller, IHM Associate
Sept. 23, 1938 – March 24, 2026



Patrice Marie Selby, IHM
Dec. 24, 1926 – April 5, 2026

Hall of leaders gets a timely update

By IHM Archives

For a decade, the corridor outside the IHM Archives has been adorned with portraits honoring IHM Sisters who served as Superior, President or as a part of a Leadership Council. When the congregation marked its 170th anniversary in November 2015, then Archivist Donna Westley and her team printed, matted, framed and labeled the photographs for a temporary exhibit in the Motherhouse Gallery. Then, as sisters celebrated the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the silver-framed portraits were relocated to their new, permanent home. More than just a visual timeline of leaders' faces, the display was complemented by a companion booklet featuring a photo and a brief description of each superior's tenure in office.

With the election of a new IHM President and Leadership Council in 2024, it was time to update the portrait gallery with a photo of President Maxine Kollasch and her team of Mission Councilors: Ann Oestreich, Kathy Onderbeke and Lisandra Pedraza Burgos.



Brigid Wade, IHM, admires a photo of past leaders.



Our dedicated Archives team also made several improvements to the existing gallery.

In addition to the two new portraits and an updated information booklet, the exhibit now includes full-color prints from the 1970s to today, some new frames, and conservation-quality acrylic sheets (instead of glass) to block UV rays and protect the images from sun fading and discoloration.

The display is a tribute to 180 years of visionary leadership fueled by the unwavering faith and invincible spirit of the IHM Sisters. We recognize those who led the congregation in times of triumph and tragedy and guided generations of devoted Sisters through myriad changes in education, religion, and society. The IHM Archives is proud to maintain a visual acknowledgment of these women, the architects of IHM's ongoing legacy.

Then and now

Mary Frances Uicker, IHM

My childhood was spent within a sheltering family in Detroit during the school years, while the summers and many weekends were spent at our cottage on Lake Huron, just south of Harbor Beach in the Michigan thumb.

At 17, having just graduated from Immaculata High School, I entered the IHM community. It was the next step in my spiritual life that drew me, and no other social connections held me back from this ongoing inner journey.

Once in Monroe, I was nourished by deepening studies of the Christian scriptures, as well as the newly published documents from Vatican II, which became our college textbooks.

The liberating mission of Jesus, although not alive in me before my entrance, began to grow within me through my years of formation. I was sent to Akron, Ohio, to begin my years of ministry, where I met both the world of high school teaching and the world of guitar-led liturgical ministry, accompanied by follow-up home conversations with a group of Cursillo-fed adults from a neighboring parish.

To read her full bio, click [here](#).



Maryfrances Barber, IHM

I was born on April 28, 1953, to Mary Jane Lake and James Barber. A few years later, our family grew: my brother Dan, sister Theresa, and twins Greg and Peg. For a brief time, I was an only child—the apple of my parents’ eye. Then I became the oldest sibling, a role I still hold with all its rights and responsibilities.

School was the anchor of my life. I began at Guardian Angels in Clawson, taught by the Adrian Dominicans. Later, at Mother of Our Savior in Detroit, I met the IHMs and fell in love with their spirit. I attended Immaculata High School and Marygrove College, where I earned a B.S. in chemistry with minors in physics, math and secondary education. I entered the IHM Congregation on Aug. 18, 1974. My teaching career began at St. Martin de Porres in Detroit. After one year of teaching and a canonical novitiate year, I returned and pursued an M.S. in chemistry at Wayne State University, where I also discovered a love for higher education. That led me back to Marygrove and then back to Wayne State for a Ph.D., which I completed in 1990.

To read her full bio, click [here](#).

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

By Octavia Butler and reviewed by library staff

"I lost an arm on my last trip home. My left arm."

From the opening line of her 1979 novel, *Kindred*, Octavia Butler weaves a narrative as relentless as it is profound. Her innovative blending of historical fiction and speculative time travel does not just tell a story, but invites her readers to witness one.

Butler's novel begins in 1976 when a young Black woman, Dana, turns 26 and moves into a new home in Los Angeles with her white husband, Kevin Franklin. While they are unpacking, she suddenly feels disoriented and, without warning, is transported to the antebellum South of 1815. She quickly realizes she has been summoned to save a drowning white boy. She saves him and learns his name is Rufus moments before his father points a gun at her, sending her back to the present.

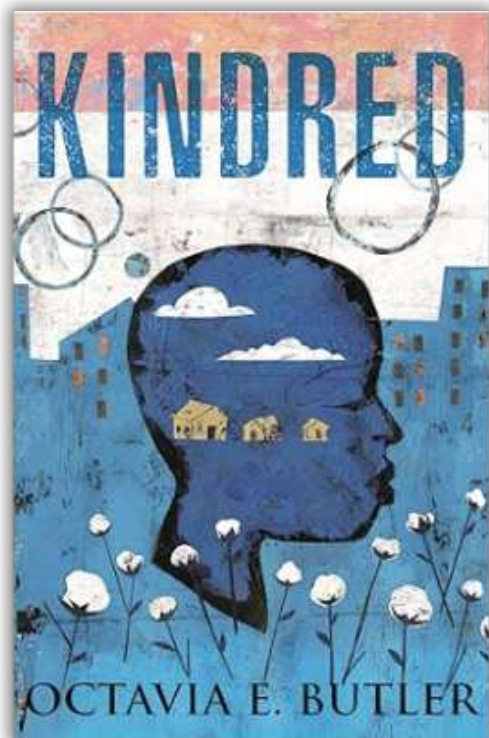
As the novel progresses, Dana's "trips" to the past become longer and more frequent. Rufus is the son of a Maryland plantation owner and, more importantly, he is her direct ancestor. He subconsciously calls her whenever he is in danger, sending her traveling through time to save him. When Rufus falls out of a tree, Dana arrives, this time with Kevin, who had been holding her hand at that moment, as her companion.

Thrust into the brutal reality of the period, Dana must pose as an enslaved person and is forced to navigate the brutal social hierarchies of a Maryland plantation. She isn't just a visitor; she is subject to the same violence, labor and psychological warfare as the enslaved people around her. She must rely on her modern education to survive a society that views her as property.

She wants to ensure her own family lineage while attempting to impart basic morality to the boy who summons her.

Kevin becomes a witness to the brutality of slavery in a way he never could have imagined. He enters this world with the privileges of being white and male. He notices how quickly it is assumed he must be Dana's owner, how easily he can move through spaces that are dangerous and deadly for her and the difficulty of resisting oppression from a position of advantage. Kevin's struggle is not just survival – it's moral navigation.

Butler's *Kindred* speaks of humanity, making the past feel immediate and the stakes feel personal. The novel asks questions that resonate as strongly today as when it was first published – questions about power, ancestry, survival and the stories we inherit.





Marygrove Minute

Thanks to the Marygrove Conservancy, the high educational ideals of Marygrove College will continue to be upheld for students of all ages on campus during the summer months. Opportunities such as Summer Discovery remedial camp, Detroit City Lions Grit Academy, Boldly Moving Education Ahead, a free full-day program focused on academics and leadership, 3D Dance Academy Summer Camp, and a United Way program will keep our campus bustling with excitement and learning. Kudos to all those who sponsor and present these amazing programs to Detroit students!

We sadly note the passing of Marygrove Alumna and longtime Alumni Association member, Frances L. Brown Simmons. Frances was a proud 1985 graduate who also received her master's from Marygrove while raising four children. She joined the volunteer Alumni Association in 2007 and ably and enthusiastically served in many capacities, including Program Director and Secretary. Valerie Deering, MG 1972, wrote the following poem in her honor and remembrance:

Frances Simmons

In Memory

A daughter of Marygrove
Steeped in its values
Competence, commitment, compassion
The gift of a Marygrove legacy
Frances poured out without any hesitancy
Volunteering her time in countless ways
Counted on to always be near
Encouraging, representing
Lending a hand
Diplomatic yet blunt
Intellectual, laser effectual
Frances was a quiet, kind of sassy!
A daughter of Marygrove!
Beloved sister through thick and thin
Ongoing example...
Light...Love...Marygrove...Frances Simmons



We're proud to again present The Alumni Legacy Awards to The School at Marygrove Seniors at their graduation next month. Watch for the next Marygrove Minute for our report.

Finally, there will not be an annual All-School Reunion this fall. Please connect with classmates and friends to plan the September 2027 Reunion, which is open to all and will honor the milestone-year classes ending in 1 and 6, as well as those ending in 2 and 7. It is never too early to start planning, and whatever you do will help the Alumni Board reach more of our classmates next year.

We welcome your interest, comments, and questions. Please visit our website [here](#), click on "Stay Engaged: and "Alumni Association" in the dropdown menu, or find us on Facebook at Marygrove Alumni & Friends.



ROYAL BLUE
Classic
— 30th —
Anniversary

On Monday, June 15, the IHM Sisters will host the 30th annual Royal Blue Classic (RBC) at Fox Hills Golf and Banquet Center in Plymouth, Michigan.

This signature event isn't just a fun day on the greens—it is also a major fundraiser for IHM ministries. Your support allows the sisters to continue their service, rooted in education, grounded in faith and ever responsive to the needs of God's people.

Thanks to the many friends, sponsors, volunteers, golfers and dinner guests, last year's event raised:

\$92,632

We hope you will join us and help make this milestone year the best outing yet. Guests can conveniently register or become a sponsor online. Click below for details:

[Register here](#)

[Sponsor here](#)

For questions or more information, please contact the IHM Development Office at (734) 240-9860 or development@ihmsisters.org.

We thank you for your generosity, continued support and prayers. Your contributions make the RBC truly shine!

The IHM Development Team



Lake Erie Water Festival

On Wednesday, May 13, from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., our campus will host the twelfth annual Lake Erie Water Festival. Nearly 250 sixth- and seventh-grade students from across Monroe County will be on campus for a day of hands-on environmental learning.

Focused on the importance of clean, fresh water, the festival introduces students to key topics, including ecosystems, the geosphere and the hydrologic cycle. Students will also learn about the vital role of the River Raisin and Lake Erie in the region—and how they can help protect these resources.



Activities will take place across the Motherhouse grounds and include sessions on watershed animals, organic farming, habitat restoration, Great Lakes fish, birds, beekeeping, invasive species, and more. The program is supported by the Monroe County Environmental Fund and presented in partnership with the River Raisin Institute, the Monroe County Intermediate School District, and several local environmental organizations.

Upcoming pilgrimage to the resting place of Mother Theresa Maxis

By IHM Associate Co-Coordinators: Barbara Bacci-Yugovich and Cindy Prusaitis, SOSF Associate

We are happy to share that we will both be participating in a pilgrimage to Immaculata, Pennsylvania, this May. Departing from Monroe, Michigan, we will travel to Scranton, Pennsylvania, to join the Scranton IHM Sisters before continuing together to Immaculata, the resting place of Mother Theresa Maxis. The invitation was made possible through a recent conversation with Sister Ruth Harkins, IHM, Coordinator of Scranton IHM Associates. Both the Associate offices of Monroe and Scranton have been in regular conversations as we look to the current and future evolution of our associate programs.



Theresa Maxis

Mary Ellen Hochkins, IHM Associate, will be accompanying us. Our pilgrimage will include a tour of the IHM Motherhouse, heritage room, vocation display and Camilla Hall. We will also attend a prayer service at Mother Theresa Maxis' resting place.

Mother Theresa Maxis, along with Redemptorist priest Louis Florent Gillet, co-founded the IHM Community in 1845. Mother Theresa Maxis was the first American-born African American Catholic nun in the nation and charter member of the Oblate Sisters of Providence, the first congregation of religious women of color in the world.

On our return, we look forward to sharing photos and reflections of this pilgrimage!



From the archives... a look back

Treasured window moves to Heritage Room

One of the IHM congregation's oldest artifacts is also its newest addition to the Heritage Room.

The 19th-century piece is the only remaining window from the Msgr. Edward Joos Memorial Chapel. The leaded glass features the Immaculate Heart of Mary alongside other decorative colored-glass pieces. It is floor-to-ceiling tall and just shy of three feet wide.

Around 1864, Father Joos, then director of the IHM congregation, had the chapel built to stand in St. Joseph Cemetery on N. Monroe St. By then, several Sisters had been buried in the St. Mary's Parish knoll cemetery immediately south of St. Joseph. Father Joos wanted the Sisters to be together and he had the remains of nine moved on Nov. 7, 1865, and reinterred in a circle around the chapel. Eventually, 64 Sisters were laid to rest there.



When Father Joos died in 1901, he was laid to rest under the chapel floor.

The chapel suffered a lightning strike in 1943 that set the roof on fire. Then, in 1985, vandals damaged the building and stole all the windows, save one.

That lone surviving window has hung in the second-floor chapel in the Motherhouse, the Heritage Room, and the Memory Care chapel. Now it will be at home in the Archives.

Thanks go to the guys in the maintenance department who moved the window to Archives at the end of August. David Sulkowski, Saint Therese Facilities Manager, said the window weighs between 150 and 200 pounds. It was wrapped in blankets and quilts and placed on a cart made for moving glass. "The move was flawless," David said, emphasizing his crew handled the assignment with extra caution.

It is now part of the Heritage Room's cemetery exhibit. Please visit the Heritage Room outside the Maxis Community Room to see this 160-year-old piece of IHM history.

This article was first published in the Fall 2023 issue of the IHM Archives newsletter, Today and Yesterday. All issues of the newsletter can be accessed here.

The Heritage Room is open to visitors Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For questions or to schedule a guided tour, contact the IHM Archives at archives@ihmsisters.org or 734-240-9695.



— ” —
“That is one good thing about
this world — there are always
sure to be more springs.”

— L. M. Montgomery



Image rendition by:
Mary Ann O’Kane, IHM



Deep faith. Courageous spirit. Action for justice.

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