



Sharing of Memories of Marcelia Maglinte, BVM
Mary Frances Clarke Chapel, July 9, 2024

Deacon Stephen, Nephew

We were educated by the BVM nuns at St. Catherine's School on the island of Kauai. We, Aunty Sopeng and all of us siblings walked to school from Halaula Camp, a plantation sugar camp, four miles from school. We did not have any means of transportation back then.

On the way to school, Aunty picked Hawaiian common mango, sprinkled salt on it and ate it for breakfast. Her other favorite way of eating mango was to cut it in bite sizes and mix it in a bowl with shoyu, vinegar, and Hawaiian chili pepper. That was the family's secret sauce. Nah, just kidding. Local families enjoyed eating mangoes like this.

Aunty was encouraged by the BVM nuns to explore the possibility of becoming a nun. She was fascinated by their commitment in serving our Lord. She also loved to become a teacher. She was able to be educated, was taught foreign languages, and loved places that she was able to travel to. She loved going to the Philippines to teach.

It was a proud day for me to see her leave the comfort of her home and begin her new life by going to the convent, to become a nun, and to serve our Lord. It was what she always wanted to do. However, it was also a sad day for me to see her leave because I would not be seeing her again for a very long time. Two years ago, she shared with me that Papa (her father) did not want her to go to the convent and move far away. She paused for a while and tears welled up in her eyes as she shared this. Papa did not get to see her take her final vows. But she knew this is what God called her to do. I was able to assist at Mass when she, and other nuns, celebrated 60 years of serving our Lord.

Two years ago, while having dinner with family and preparing to move to the Motherhouse in Iowa, she expressed to us that she would love to have fish soup with pa-pio, a silvery fish that locals love to eat. One of her nephews, Micah who was 13 years old, said to her, "Aunty, when you come home next time, I'll catch one pa-pio for you." On July 4th at 12:30 a.m., while fishing in the early morning, Micah hooked up with a five-pound pa-pio! What a blessing!

Aunty Sopeng loved family. She loved her nieces and nephews. She went to Las Vegas to see them one last time. When she left Maui for the last time, I said to her, "Aunty, I'll see you at home."

Gloria Aqui, Niece

I remember seeing Marcelia years back at Lydgate Park at a family gathering. She looked very well in her bathing suit after swimming. It took me by surprise and back to my memories of the nuns dressed in black and white garb and the contrast of the "modern" BVM. She contributed so much in life to service, education, and ministry and was a role model for Filipinos in the community in her role as a BVM.

Melanie Madrid Aki, Niece

My Aunty Marcie (Aunty Sopeng as we called her) was always there for me and my adult children and grandchildren here on Maui. I was sad that she was moving to Iowa, but she would surely be taken care of. She liked traveling to different states and countries. She enjoyed her life. She was full of life.

I know as a substitute teacher here, she was strict but good. That's the Maglinte in her. I missed her when she was away, but we did call from time to time. She would request for some local food and snacks from Hawaii, and I would send them. I will miss you Aunty very much, but I know you are in a better place with our Heavenly Father. Aunty, I love you and miss you. You will forever be in my heart.

Mandy Madrid-Meyers, Grandniece, Daughter of Melanie Madrid Aki

I have such fond memories with my Aunty Sopeng always taking us on lunch and movie dates or going for short walks at the park. Her admiration for quality family time on various occasions was extremely contagious. She was the Aunty that took the time to get to know us and our interests in life and not judge but was prayerful and mindful of our needs.

Being a woman of a different religion, she was always super supportive and loving of my faith. As a young teenager she taught me the value of modesty and the way I present myself in church. She expressed joy when I told her I wanted to serve a 1½-year mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints as a young adult.

She was full of life as her love for traveling inspired me to explore new things and adventure out. Aunty Sopeng was a very compassionate and service-oriented woman who showed her love and devotion to God by making those she would encounter feel special and important.

Aunty Sopeng was not afraid to be forward or speak her mind on things, which I would say is a quality I've seen in all of her sisters. It made it quite intimidating at times to ask or approach her on things, but she always had open and loving arms.

Aunty Sopeng was faithful in every way possible as I have seen her endure many pains and afflictions. Yet, she still lived life with a smile and wholeheartedly trusted in God's will and His timing in all things. She was not only a covenant keeper but a law-abiding citizen. I remember I couldn't sit in the passenger seat until I was at age according to the car manual.

When Aunty told me her cancer came back approximately a month ago, she yearned to be close to family before her time was up here on earth. Not knowing when that was, the tender mercies of the Lord gave Aunty the strength and opportunity to go to Las Vegas from June 20-25, 2024, to see family and attend a Mendoza wedding. She was eager and determined and everything just aligned perfectly to what she imagined her time there would be like. She wanted to see as much as family members as possible, even if it was for a short moment. It really brightened her life and each of ours in every way.

As I was privileged to assist and accompany her on this trip, I observed Aunty being surrounded by immense love and support of our family members. She was so touched and happy to be in Las Vegas and couldn't stop thanking everyone enough for the time spent with her. She was prayerful of those who weren't able to see her and filled with excitement and joy for those who spent some time with her. Never had I seen Aunty Sopeng so emotional or teary-eyed, but she was always happy, strong, and invincible. She carried a red binder capturing precious photos and highlights of her life - family and friends she absolutely adored and admired and inspiring and uplifting stories she freely shared.

Aunty Sopeng, I will forever treasure and remember the selfless acts and caring kindness you rendered towards others. I thank the Lord for the opportunity to spend these very last joyful earthly days with you.

Mayve J. T. Reed, Niece

Whether it was as a great aunt or as a Sister, I am not sure, but she took my sister and me on many outings: to catechism, to trips to the beach, and to opportunities to volunteer and help out. One fond memory I have was one such trip to the beach. She picked up my sister and me as well as my cousin and headed to Lydgate Beach, a popular and family friendly beach. On the trip, she gave us a package of Oreo cookies to enjoy on the drive there. Being in my early teens, I very much was not as mature as I should have been. I shoved an entire cookie in my mouth and chewed it so I could smear it across my upper teeth. I giggled as I looked in the rearview mirror. I looked like I was toothless. I kept grinning as I tried to get my cousin and sister to look and laugh, but I was met with Aunty's disapproving gaze in the rear-view mirror. "Mayveen, I don't like your attitude right now." Needless to say, we quietly ate the cookies until we reached the beach.

She took us on many more trips after that and told us stories of her travels and adventures, but I always remembered that admonition. She didn't yell, she didn't scold me, and she could've said a myriad of other things, but instead she made a statement and allowed me to reflect on what I was doing at the time. And now here I am, decades later, and that gentle correction still has an impression on me. Thank you, Aunty Sopeng, Sister Marcie, for making us a part of your life. I miss you but I know you will be united with family and loved ones beyond this world.

Angeli Domingo, Grandniece-in-law

Sister Marcelia is the sister of my husband's late paternal grandmother [Jovita Domingo], so a grandaunt of his. We were very close to her. She always was so cheerful and joyful. Had I not known she was ill, I would have been fooled as she never displayed her discomfort or that she was in pain.

She would email, text, or mostly call to catch up and check on us about our children. She always asked for photos. She kept the spirit of my husband's grandmother alive and felt like she was our extended grandma herself being she served our Lord. She will be so greatly missed and is so loved.

Sister Dolores "Dee" Myers, BVM

Marcie was always a bright light in our set of 100. She had a fresh approach to living, a sparkle in her eyes, and always a smile on her face. - one that looked like she was thinking of something "fun" to engage the rest of us. When we were novices, she talked to us about the hula and that she could dance the hula. Of course, we wanted to see her dance! Sister Mary (Leo) Hogan, our novice mistress, wasn't quite sure because there was too much emphasis on the hips. God help us! That was not proper. Marcie explained that the hula was not a dance where you focused on hips, which is the common perception of an 18-year-old person and so many others in the states. The story of the Hawaiian people is told in the movement of the hands. Marcie was allowed to explain what each movement meant and then she demonstrated. It became the favorite request at our talent shows.

Through the years, I have had off and on contact with Marcie. She spent years teaching in Hawaii which she loved. She was always very close to her family. She was independent and determined to seek what she wanted. She traveled to other countries and frequently came to our set reunions which we held every five years. She always brought Hawaiian candies, cookies, and other snacks to share.

During these past years when she was besieged by cancer, I saw such a strong determination to beat it. She tried a variety of protocols to be cured. She was cured. . . and then she wasn't, but she never gave up and did not lose her positive attitude. Once I took her for treatment at the Mercy Cancer Center. Everyone knew her because she had been there so often.

Mostly Marcie loved her family. This last trip to be with them was a huge gamble. She wanted to be with them. She went to Las Vegas where they were gathered. She came back and joyfully shared her delight with us. Now she is *really* going home.

Sister Karen Conover, BVM

I met Marcie only when she moved here from Hawaii in 2021. I worked in Support Services. I often assisted sisters as they when to get an Iowa license or identification. I went with Marcie. She had all the appropriate documents - social security card, Hawaiian driver's license, birth certificate, and the notarized letter from the Office of the Secretary that indicated that the person who was born Josephine Maglinte was the same as Marcelia Maglinte, which was the name on her social security card and her Hawaiian license. The person at the DOT was not impressed. So we left. I realized that though Marcie had misplaced/loss her passport in the move, fortunately she had a copy of it and it was in the name of Marcelia. I assisted Marcie as she first reported a lost passport and then got another one. How happy she was when, about six months later, she had all the documents in hand as we went out to the DOT. It was a slam dunk. We got her Iowa ID. When we drove back to Mount Carmel Bluffs, the Vesperman ice cream truck was in Vista parking lot. I said, Oh, Marcie, they're celebrating your victory. We laughed a lot about all the hoops she had to jump through to get her ID, and how good she had it for this last wonderful family reunion in Las Vegas. I want to thank you, Marcie, for your positive attitude through that crazy process and for your fortitude these last months. Also, for allowing me to pray with you as you went out for treatment so filled with faith and trust in God. I bless you. Thank you very much, Marcie.

Catherine "Kitty" Ornellas

First of all, I would like to say that Marcie was a good friend. I have to say that because what I'm going to say is kind of negative. She was very bossy. I often had to remind Marcie that I was the first from Hawaii and she's not supposed to tell me what to do. Instead of asking you, she would tell you. Often, I would say, "Marcie, you don't tell me. You ask me. You're so bossy." Marcie has a sister Cres [Cressencia] who is the secretary at the St Catherine Parish in Kapa'a. Marcie and Cres have the same personality. There is always a little tiff going between them, so we have to soften them up a little bit. Marcie was a party person and a lot of fun, but it always had to be her way, always her way. So, Marcie, when you get to heaven, I hope you let God take over a little bit. Thank you, Marcie. Aloha.

Sister Judith Callahan, BVM

I want to share a story about when Mary Rita Kaiser Miller called me and told me about this event. When she lived in California, either Stockton or Sacramento, in 1966 when Cesar Chavez was doing a march. She wanted to go to this march. The superior viewed everything as black or white, so she didn't like the idea of Marcie going out to this march. Marcie was insistent and relentless and got Mary Rita to go with her. They did go in the march, but not very far, just until dusk. I think they had a "come-to-Jesus" moment when she got home that evening. The word to describe my personal relationship with Marcie is joyful. She was the kind of person that when you met her, you knew that you were liked. She was so hospitable when Janet Desmond and I were sent to Hawaii twice. She was instrumental in making our experience amazing. Let's celebrate the joyful spirit of Marcie, event though she was bossy, she still was fun.

Sister LaDonna Manternach, BVM

I had the great joy of meeting Marcie in Hawaii in 2016 when I was going to sing with a chorale group from Rochester, N.Y. Marcie showed up that first evening after we got there with a beautiful box with a lei she had made. It was so beautiful. We had made arrangements, so I had time to go to Mass with her that Sunday. She took me around to see where she lived. On the last day, she arrived one more time with a box with a beautiful lei that I could take home with me. Marcelia, your joy, hospitality and your beautiful smile will always remain in our hearts. Ahola!

Donna Tobin Westemeyer, Friend, Former BVM Madonna Mary, Set of 1957

My dearest friend Marcelia, know that you have always been special in my heart. We go way back to the novitiate days when my mother connected with your mother about meeting you. I love you and always will. May Peace be with you at this time. You have been a wonderful BVM sister for the community and a dear friend to me. I will always remember you. I send a beautiful lei to a beautiful sister.

Mary Ann McGinley, Former BVM, Set of 1957

As a member of our Set, Marcelia taught us many things. One thing she taught us was to appreciate the seasons of the year. In the fall as a postulant, she was skeptical that the trees would completely recover from the massive amount of leaves they had lost, and was delighted when the new leaves appeared in the spring. In the winter, while many of us sped along the Pine Walk on snowy mornings hoping to get our compulsory morning walk over with, she dawdled along poking her feet and making patterns in the snow.

But Marcelia never left Hawaii behind. She brought its culture to us by teaching us how to do the dance called the Hukilau. She criticized us Mainlanders who emphasized swaying our hips when the real story was told by our hands. We learned the song and gestures - with minimum hip movements - but could never match her graceful hand movements. God speed, Marcelia.

Joanne Richter Yerkes, BVM Associate & Former BVM Christellen, Set of 1957

In the summer between our days at Clarke and Mundelein [Colleges], Marcelia came with me to Antioch, Ill. When my Grandmother died, Marcelia came with my dad and me to her funeral. In 1976, she came to St. Joseph's in Round Lake, Ill. We both had third grade classrooms, so we did many interesting things together. One Columbus Day weekend, six of us stayed at a cabin in Door County, Wis., and had a wonderful time. When I went to Hampton, Iowa, Marcelia and I exchanged many letters. Our set reunions brought much joy to both of us. May she rest in peace. Amen

Geri Greco Steenveld, Former BVM Novice, Set of 1957

Marcelia came from Hawaii and stayed with my family in 1957. She and I entered Mount Carmel together. We have remained friends and she came to visit my family after I left Mount Carmel. I so enjoyed seeing her at all our set reunions. I will miss you, dear friend. Rest in peace.

Kathleen Norris Komar, BVM Associate & Former BVM Daniel Mary, Set of 1957

Marcelia and I first met each other on Aug. 2, 1957, when we entered the BVM congregation. What we didn't know was that we shared the same birthday. It wasn't until we went to register to vote as junior novices that we found this out. As I approached the voting station, I had to give my date of birth. I said March 2, 1939. Marcelia, who was behind me, had to do the same thing, and when she was asked her birthdate, she said the same thing, March 2, 1939. The gentleman who took our birthdates looked up with surprise. Marcelia, in her fun-loving way, looked at him and simply stated, "We're twins!" From that day on, we referred to one another as "twin."

During these last few days, my prayer for Marcelia has been, "May angels lead you into paradise and may all the saints, especially Mary Frances Clarke, along with the martyrs, go out to greet you and may God hold you in the palm of his hand." Thank you for being my twin!

Sister Lynn Winsor, BVM

On a trip to the Hawaiian Islands years ago, Marcie invited me to a family luau. Ukulele music, dancing, singing, a barbeque and the true spirit of Hawaii filled the evening and night. At the luau I learned the expression "Aloha Nui" which in the native Hawaiian language means "much love." I last saw her Sunday, June 30th and she shared with me stories of the wonderful reunion she recently experienced in Las Vegas. As we concluded our visit, we said to each other the words "Aloha Nui." I will miss Marcie and the "Aloha Nui" spirit she brought to the BVM Community and to all those she met.

Nancy McCarthy, BVM

I never got to know Marcie until we both ended up living here at Mount Carmel Bluffs, but always enjoyed her life-giving presence at assemblies and senates. Marcie brought something special every time she entered a room, to say nothing of when she moved onto my wing in Gables and brightened our lives with her personality and door decorations, which is not nearly a good enough description of her environmental touches. We also benefited from the edible gifts she received from her family. We all experienced Hawaii in our hall, and it changed with every holiday and season.

Marcie even shared some of her plants that outgrew her room placing them in our common space at the end of the hall overlooking the river. I shared in watering them, so she wouldn't need to walk so far since she lived at the opposite end of the hall. I got extra enjoyment out of basil and other herbs. The cultural beauty that Marcie shared with us in her teaching and entertaining was always highlighted by proper dress. Thank you, Marcie, for giving us all some truly unique memories to share.

Sister Bernadette McManigal, BVM

She was a lovely person and so brave during this illness.

Jackie Powers Doud

Marcelia was a model of equanimity, acceptance, and deep joy – an inspiration to us in health and in illness. May God bless her beautiful life.

Rosamond Kelly Lytle

Sister Marcelia always lifted my spirits. Her ability to be with a person and help heal their brokenness was so obvious when you needed a gentle push or encouraging word. Her presence will be missed.

Beatrice (Bee) Lemke Newman

I loved Sister Marcie who was a Kauai Island girl from my hometown of Kapa'a. Her extended family are dear friends of my family as well. Her death was so unexpected! She had just returned from a wedding and family reunion in Las Vegas! We spoke last week. She will be sorely missed! Aloha ke Akua.

Michael Ching

I met Sister Marcy about ten years ago at the urging of Sister Mary (Bertille) O' Connor. Sister Marcy was living on Maui but visited Kauai several times. She and I attended the St. Catherine all-school reunion. Sister was a kind soul and easy to talk to. As we say in the island, "We love to talk story of the past. Rest in peace sister, and we'll all miss you.

Linda McBride

So glad I had a chance to chat with Sister when I was there in May. Sister taught at my grammar school. May she Rest in Peace.

Terence and Mele Tactay, Nephew

Aunty Sopeng, your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure. Love you Aunty Sopeng!