



Sharing of Memories of Ann M. (St. Remi) Harrington, BVM
Mary Frances Clarke Chapel, Jan. 7, 2025

Sister Janet Desmond, BVM

Ann and I were in high school together at Holy Angels Academy in Milwaukee. Someone asked me, "Was Ann smart in high school?" I had to answer, "I don't know." We did a lot of things together, especially sports – basketball (half court), volleyball, skiing. She was always just great fun. That's how I remember Ann – just great fun! However, I think there were other qualities there that I never saw. Sister Carol Frances Jegen was the freshman teacher and head of the Sodality. Ann was part of the Sodality for four years. She was made head of the Sodality as a senior, so she was able to crown the Blessed Mother on May Day. I did not know her as a scholar. I just knew her as a friend and a wonderful person.

Marianne Littau, Former BVM

In the early 1970s, Ann and I were part of a small BVM community living in apartments near Mundelein College. Ann's younger sister Katie, a person with Down's Syndrome, loved her trips to Chicago to stay with Sister Ann. It was fun to watch them tease each other with silly nicknames. San [Japanese honorific suffix meaning "dear" or "honorable Mr./Ms."] was always patient and loving with Katie whether playing a game of Old Maid with that dogged-ear Old Maid card that Katie worked so hard to avoid or helping Katie figure out her clothes. Through all these interactions with Katie over many years, San taught me valuable life lessons: to take each person as they are, to appreciate and love the person with their abilities and disabilities. Ann, may you rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen

Kateri O'Shea, Former BVM

I am grateful for so many years of friendship with Ann San. I met San in 1960 when, as a BVM, I was sent to Xavier HS in St. Louis and Ann was one of the BVMs who greeted me there. Fortunately, we have been friends ever since. I also had the opportunity to live with her in small apartments near Mundelein College. Every time I think of her, I think mostly of her sense of joy and enthusiasm being brought to life. I am grateful for that. Those memories will stay with me and fill my heart.

Judy Haley Giesen, Mount Carmel Bluff Resident

My life rather circulated around the BVMs. When I was in high school in Des Moines, Iowa, I was taught by BVMs for four years. Marvelous education. So, the BVMs had been in my life, even though I did visit and were taught by other congregations. It's kind of a competition. I just remember the BVMs because when my sister, BVM Mary Pat Haley died, we were here for her funeral about nine years ago.

When Ann came to Dubuque, maybe they meant to have her stay at Mount Carmel. However, the Chicago group of three, sometimes four, came way across Dubuque. (Chicago people laugh about "way across Dubuque," which is 25 minutes.) They were here for numerous various meetings and visits and many times stayed at our Dubuque home. When I say "our," that means my husband and me. We welcomed the group to our home, not only for overnight, but for parties. That's how I got to know them very well. Ann, today, is close to my heart.

The good hospitality of the Arthur Street apartment stretched into my family. My daughter, Julie, who grew up in Des Moines, Waterloo, and Moline, didn't know the big city. She stayed with Ann, Mary Alma [Sullivan], and Mary Pat [Haley] on Arthur Street for about two months. She was told everything she should know about Chicago as a good daughter. She is still in Chicago and still works in Chicago.

My family called Ann "San," as many of you also do. That group also gave my husband and me lodging when we visited. We experienced overnights and dinners and BVM gatherings and parties, and sometimes meetings for me. [I came when there was a good meeting by somebody like Sister Carolyn Farrell, BVM.]

I will never forget Ann as a professor. So smart! I remember her doing culture and languages at Mundelein [College] and Loyola [University]. These things I especially remember. Her smile was radiant, her dark brown curly hair that finally did turn gray (Oh, boy, did I love her hair.). Her spirituality was very inspiring. Her personality was warm and fun. Our 50 years of friendship I will cherish and remember it forever.

Mary Ann Harrington, Niece

I went to Mundelein [College] and graduated from there. I owe so much to my dear sweet aunt and to all the BVM community and to her closest friends who took me in in the middle of the school year. I also stayed at the Arthur Street apartment and enrolled in Mundelein sort of through the back door. Sister Jean Dolores [Schmidt] met me in her apartment in her pajamas because she had a cold. There's where I registered for my first semester. Little did I know that I was in for a real, lifechanging experience.

The love and support that was shown to me was like nothing I had ever experienced before or since. I just blossomed from a lost girl to a well-educated, serious scholar. I now teach at the college level. I want you all to know that all of my friends from Mundelein constantly comment about the great education we received from the nuns. It was just so unexpected for me at that time in my life. Those four years completely transformed me to the point where I decided to become an educator. I worked with the underserved population for years.

I still teach at the college level. I am just so happy to know that she was in such a wonderful community of strong, powerful women who taught me how much a woman can do at a time, even then, when there were a lot of closed doors and a lot of assumptions. I gained so much confidence during my time at Mundelein. I want to thank the BVM community – those who are still in it and those who hover around it and stay close to it. I appreciate all of you and my dear sweet aunt, who I did not know as a teacher. The only time she came close to teaching me was when she was going to substitute in a French class and saw me on the list of students, and said, "No." We probably would have been a little uncomfortable. Basically, I want to thank the BVM community for taking such good care of my aunt and her friends.

Beth Resch Muehlhausen, Niece

I also was a student at Mundelein [College] and in the last graduating class from Mundelein. Hearing you talk about the power of the great women and true pioneers that showed other women that we can do anything. There was no ceiling on anything. The love I have in my heart for all the BVMs and how they showed me to be a strong woman, a great mom and a great community leader, businessperson and entrepreneur and to lead with a servant heart.

I knew Sister Ann as my aunt, and she was the fun aunt. When I was in high school, I didn't want to go to Mundelein College. I wanted to do something different. But I realized that it was a great opportunity. One of my favorite memories was when we would go down to Water Tower Place and go shopping. I thought that she was the coolest aunt because she liked to shop at The Gap and buy her jeans at The Gap. I thought she was super cool and fun.

Coming from Milwaukee, 90 minutes away, I was a stranger in Chicago. It felt like such a big city. Mary Pat [Haley], Mary Alma [Sullivan] and Ann would invite me over for dinner in their dining room. For those who have had dinner in their dining room, it was such a special place where they shared stories. We had Katie's 40th

birthday party there. It was "Lordy, lordy, Katie's 40!" She got 40 pairs of socks. I remember the shag rug in the family room. It was the most amazing shag rug. I'm sure there were so many things lost in that rug because it was like 12 inches high! I know that she is with us now. Looking at her picture, I really feel her energy and her spirit and Mary Alma and Mary Pat with us. It is amazing to see the community of her sisters here that we were able to say hello to and share with. Thank you for making us feel so welcome.

Chris Harrington, Nephew, Brother of Mary Ann Harrington

My sister just reminded me that I "kinda" went to Mundelein too. This is a little bit irreverent, but you'll love it. When I was in my early twenties, my sister was at Mundelein. I worked for an airline, so I could fly all over the place for free, but I never had money. They would sneak me into the dorms to sleep. My sister is mad at me for telling, but it was rather funny. I remember, because I have the Harrington memory curse, I remember when Sister Ann, Sister Mary Pat [Haley] and Sister Mary Alma [Sullivan] came to Hawaii. We took them to the beach on Maui. I'm pretty sure that it was Sister Mary Pat who got stuck in the waves. A bunch of locals had to go and help save her. That's when I realized that body surfing and nuns don't go together so well.

I came out with some of my cousins to help her move here from Chicago. I remember pulling up to this place and thinking, "This is the Hogwarts for nuns! It's a castle!" It's been renovated since, but it's still beautiful. Those of you who live here, you've got a pretty good life. It makes me want to become a nun, just so that I can retire here.

Rob Harrington, Nephew

I remember as a kid in sixth or seventh grade, Dad made a big deal about Ann coming to town. It was always a big deal when Ann came into town. Everyone was always excited because she was so kind and pleasant and easy to be around. Dad said, "Rob, I'm going to take her to the basketball game today." I said, "Oh, yeah, that's great. I can't wait to have my aunt see me play basketball." Obviously, from looking at me, you can tell I am very gifted. It was about 10 minutes into the game, and I lost my temper and was thrown out. My dad was so disappointed. The interesting thing is that he just kept looking at me out of the corner of his eyes with a look that said, "What is wrong with you?" Aunt Ann couldn't have been better. She acted like nothing happened. She was so nice about it. For years I was massively embarrassed that I got kicked out of a basketball game in front of my aunt, this really kind person.

When my dad died, my mom took our family on a trip to Ireland. She paid for Ann to come and others. There were about seven or eight of us who went on the trip. In the morning, we would go for walks. We took turns walking with Ann. I feel like that trip was when we really got to know more about her and who she was. What really struck me was that she was so curious about everything. She was curious about our lives. She was curious about what we were doing.

I think the most magical thing about her, and all our parents, was that nothing was ever about them. Ann really embodied that. She never talked about herself. It was never about Ann, but always about you, the people around her, and what you were doing. When we got her stuff and brought her here from Chicago. I kept goading her, "Ann, you are a celebrity with the BVMs. You wrote the books. They're going to have a big parade for you when you go in there." She kept going, "Stop it, Rob, stop it." We had so much fun talking about it. It's wonderful being here. It's wonderful knowing about the life that she had that we didn't get to experience. We were just lucky to have her in our lives.

Jeff Harrington, Nephew, Son of Michael Harrington

Ann was always this wonderful presence in my life. But as I got older, I came to appreciate how special she was. She just radiated love and acceptance, maybe more than anyone I ever met. It was like she had removed so many of the barriers between her and God. When I came here, I really felt that as well. About fifteen years ago, as Rob mentioned, we went to Ireland for about two weeks. I knew that this was my chance to spend a lot of time with her. I was just so grateful for that trip and still am. She was very inspiring to me.

Virginia Mueller, Former Student

It was with great sadness that I learned of Sister St. Remi's (as I knew her) passing. She taught at Xavier High School in St. Louis when I was a student there. She began the Japanese language program at Xavier, so I took two years of Japanese from her (along with three years of Spanish from Sister Kateri and four years of Latin). I don't think it is any accident that I became a linguist, with graduate degrees in Linguistics. In the Japanese class, we had to "pick" a Japanese-sounding name. The closest I could come to my real name was "Chini Miru." To this day, I use "Miru" as a pseudonym for social media and for a recently completed children's book. I owe Sister St. Remi, and all the nuns at Xavier, a huge debt of gratitude for all they gave me, and all of us there. Their dedication and excellent teaching prepared us well for what laid ahead of us. Thank you, Sister St. Remi. May you rest in peace.

Mary Weller, Classmate

All her classmates from the Holy Angels Academy, class of 1957, Milwaukee, are saddened by her passing. She was a girl/woman of joy who opened her heart with kindness to all. She was humble about her many accomplishments. In our senior year I carpooled with Ann and some others and got to know her well. We kept in touch for many years. May the angels welcome one of their own into paradise.

Mary Ann Kehl McGinley, Former BVM, Set of 1957

Although the great set of 1957 was a noisy group (responsible for the acoustic ceiling in the postulate), we did share our heritage. Marcelia [Maglinte, BVM] taught all of us how to do the Hukilau, and Ann introduced us to the world of Michael McGilligan, the Irishman, "who one fine day got a lot of money from the U.S.A."

Even after we went our separate ways, Ann, Sheila O'Brien, Nancy Feldman, Mary Alma Sullivan, Pat O'Brien, and I got together each month for breakfast at McDonald's. The other customers don't know how close they came to hearing us sing about Michael McGilligan.

Geri Greco Steenveld, Former BVM, Set of 1957

Dear Ann, the brightest star in our set. She was always so sweet to me. Ann will be missed by us all.

Sonya Rendón, BVM Associate

Our sister and friend, Ann Harrington. We will always be grateful for her friendship, wisdom and support for our project here in Ecuador: Nuevo Mundo. We pray for her.

Jackie Powers Doud, President Emerita, Mount Saint Mary's University, Los Angeles

Ann and I shared a long history of deep friendship living close by and living apart. Ann was a treasure. I grieve her loss but rejoice in her life here and hereafter.

Prudence Moylan, Former BVM

I had the great blessing of being a member of the congregation from 1959 to 1980. I haven't come back very often, but I am thrilled to be in this environment once again. My experience with Ann was at Mundelein College and Loyola University where we taught together for many years. She was a member of the history department. As faculty members in that department, we developed a real interest and success in how to engage our students at Mundelein in doing research and recognizing their authority to speak about what they knew with confidence.

When we moved to Loyola, we were told, "Aren't you lucky to be at a real university?" It was a little painful to make that transition. Although we were welcomed, we were also put in place. We spent many years there demonstrating contributions that women can make to a field they know well. It was a pleasure to have Ann's support, and I think she had mine in carrying that confidence into the history department at Loyola. I have had comments from many about what a difference we made when we came from Mundelein to Loyola. It was a new world. Everything I remember well about Ann goes with the comments we have had about her insight into cultures and her sense of their wisdom.

After a number of years at Loyola, we were not hearing much about Mundelein anymore. There was a building there, but there was no conversation about the tradition. We decided to figure out some way to make the story known. We got together and invited many people who had experienced Mundelein to write an essay. We edited a book that we call *Mundelein Voices* which records some of those stories for posterity. It was wonderful to be part of her joy in doing it, her sense of understanding, and her connections with our Mundelein community. I am delighted to be here to celebrate her. May she rest in peace.

Sister Ann DeNicolo, BVM

I was in the set after Ann. I remember every St. Patrick's Day we looked forward to Ann's singing. I thought it would be appropriate to end with "And all the girls and all the boys made a devil of a noise, when Ann arrived in the heavenly gates."

Sister Joellen McCarthy

The first phrase that comes to mind when I reflect on Ann, is *extremely* humble. She seemed to be totally unaware of her many gifts. She delighted in recalling the visits of her sister "Katie" who was disabled.

I recall that when Ann was writing her book on Mary Frances Clarke and she was living with Mary Alma Sullivan, BVM. Mary Alma mentioned what a delight it was to join Ann for meals (the rare time she withdrew from her research and writing) and hear Ann's excitement in what she was finding out about Mary Frances.

Anita Holmes Mahood

Ann was the first person who welcomed me the day I entered the eighth-grade class at St. Sebastian Catholic School in the middle of the year. Our family had just moved to Milwaukee, and I was petrified. We immediately hit it off and became lifelong friends. She brought me into the Milwaukee Braves groupies that summer. We would start walking in the morning to pick each other up, then continue all the way to the Milwaukee Stadium where we would spend the day until the last bus left with the players, then we would walk back home. Of course, we didn't have \$1 to get in the stadium so we would have to talk the ushers into letting us in. That was our entertainment. Ann even had a large collection of baseball cards.

When I got rheumatic fever in our freshman year at Holy Angels and had to stay home from school for three months. She called me every night to check up on me and help me keep up with my classes. That's a true friend. Our friendship continued through all these years. Even though we didn't get to see each other very often, whenever we did, we would just pick right up like there had been no gap. Miss you, Ann. Rest in peace.

Kathy Olen, Holy Angels Academy, Class of 1957

Anne has always been an incredible woman. Her life choices have served her and all she knew well. Since high school I have always admired her intelligence and her caring and respect for others. I admired her as she shared her professional talents. She has been a wonderful woman of God. I rejoice for her and her arrival into Eternity with the Lord. Much love,

Kathy Littau Bell

May Sister Ann Harrington rest in peace and rise in glory. She was a beautiful person.