



CONNECTION

A publication for the families and friends of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Spring 2025

Volume 33, No. 1

Scranton, Pennsylvania

Join us this Jubilee Year as **PILGRIMS OF HOPE**



As we gathered with friends and family to celebrate the birth of our Lord, Pope Francis officially marked the beginning of the Church's Jubilee Year by opening the Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica. The open door invites pilgrims to cross the threshold and renew their faith. Holy Doors are symbolic and are typically only opened during a Holy Year. In Rome, Holy Doors have also been opened at St. John Lateran, St. Mary Major, and St. Paul's Outside the Wall. According to *Our Sunday Visitor News*, the opening of the Holy Doors represents, "the passage to salvation Jesus opened to humanity."

During this year-long celebration, which occurs once every 25 years, you will have opportunities to join the IHM Sisters in prayer and become, as the 2025 theme proclaims, "Pilgrims of Hope." Recently, the Sisters invited the public to participate in a service opening a Holy Door to the IHM Chapel. **Today, let's begin by sharing the official prayer of His Holiness Pope Francis for the Holy Year:**

Father in Heaven, may the faith you have given us in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Brother, and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for the coming of your Kingdom. May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel. May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth, when, with the powers of evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally. May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope, a yearning for the treasures of Heaven. May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth. To you our God, eternally blessed, be glory and praise forever. Amen

CELEBRATING THE 180TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONGREGATION'S FOUNDING

The Sisters of IHM invite you to join them in remembering the brave hearts of their founders, Sister Theresa Maxis Duchemin and Father Louis Florent Gillet, CSSR, as they mark the 180th Anniversary of the founding of the Congregation.

The IHM Sisters of Scranton have always sought to meet the needs of God's people. That mission continues today thanks to your help and support.

Look for more news regarding the 180th Anniversary Celebration in future issues and emails. A pictorial history is also on display in the main hall of the IHM Center.



IHM Sisters Giovanna Fuentes Bendivez, Mary Elaine Anderson, and Annmarie Sanders

Remain in Our Love

Page 2

*A Legacy of Friendship:
Barbara Keiser*

Page 3

*Why I Give
By Patricia Lawler*

Page 5

*IHM Feast Day
Celebration*

Page 6

*"Come Within"
Photo Journal
Published*

Page 7

*Digital Care System
at OLP*

Page 7

Sisters Travel to Peru

Page 8



CONNECTION

Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Development Office IHM Center
2300 Adams Avenue
Scranton PA 18509-1514

Spring 2025, Volume 33, No. 1

IHM Connection is published three times a year and is mailed free of charge.

Suggestions and contributions are welcome.

Sister Kathryn Clauss, IHM
President

Sister Ann Monica Bubser, IHM
Director of Development

If you would prefer to receive *IHM Connection* and other communications from the IHM Sisters via email, please send an email to armbrustl@sistersofihm.org with your preferred email address.

Change of Address?

Contact the Development Office at 570 346-5431 or armbrustl@sistersofihm.org.

www.sistersofihm.org



Please Recycle

IHM Connection is published by the Development Office of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, IHM Center, 2300 Adams Avenue Scranton PA 18509-1514. The purpose of this newsletter is to communicate the works and needs of the IHM Congregation.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK



This year, we are receiving numerous invitations to celebrate as we walk together toward God, marking the Church's Jubilee year, the 180th anniversary of our Congregation's founding, and our Sisters Celebration in August. Each gives us opportunities to make a positive impact together.

The Jubilee emphasizes hope for a better world, inviting us to focus on prayer, mercy, compassion, and unity. The 180th Anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of IHM reminds us of the importance of faithfully living our mission as witnesses to the presence of God in the world. The Sister's Celebration reminds us of how important it is to recognize the IHM spirit alive in the goodness of others and celebrate our IHM Sisters whose spirit inspires us all.

Your support enables the IHM Sisters to take action and care for those who are struggling. This year, more than ever, we need that support and invite you to join us by praying, acting, and celebrating the goodness in our world. There will be many opportunities to help, including participating in prayer services, attending IHM events or donating to support the Sisters and our mission. Together, we will continue to make a positive difference in the world, which is what these celebrations are all about.

Sister Ann Monica Bubser, IHM
Director of Development



For more information, please visit our website at:
<http://www.sistersofihm.org/about/history/past-places-served/we-remember/>

Special liturgies for ministry locations where IHM Sisters have served but are no longer present will be offered at the IHM Center Chapel at 8 a.m. on the dates below. We invite you to share any special intentions that you may have for these Masses with Sister Ann Monica Bubser, IHM, at bubsera@sistersofihm.org or 570-346-5431.

DATES	MINISTRY LOCATIONS IN THE FOLLOWING DIOCESES
March 26, 2025	Diocese of Scranton, PA
April 23, 2025	Dioceses of Altoona-Johnston, Allentown, and Pittsburgh, PA; Diocese of Cleveland, OH; Dioceses of Grand Rapids and Detroit, MI
May 28, 2025	Diocese of Baltimore, MD; Diocese of Washington, D.C.; and Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, IN
June 25, 2025	Dioceses of: Wilmington, DE; Wheeling/Charlestown, WV; Arlington, VA; and Lexington, KY
July 23, 2025	Diocese of Providence, RI; Archdiocese of Boston and Dioceses of Springfield and Worcester, MA; and Dioceses of Bridgeport, Norwich, and Hartford, CT

Legacy of Friendship

BARBARA KEISER

To Barbara Keiser, the Sisters of IHM at St. Agnes Parish in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania, were a part of the family when she was growing up. According to Barbara's sister, now Sister Mary Rita Smith, "There were five of us. Our mother would take the Sisters grocery shopping, and I cooked for them starting from when I was in 9th grade. Dad helped around the Parish. Barb and her good friend since grade school — Sandy Grieco — were also close with the IHM Sisters."

When Barb's sister and her best friend, Sandy, both joined the IHM Congregation, Barbara remained close to the Sisters who taught her the value and love of family and the importance of keeping commitments to carry out what we promise to do. She would describe them as loving and supportive.

Sister Mary Rita continues, "People described Barbara as funny, caring, and very loving. She kept a room at her home at the ready in case Sandy or I would come for a visit. Barb loved to have fun and to be with people. When she married Carson, they would host the Keiser family at their home in the summer for what they called 'Camp Keiser' — they even had t-shirts made up! They would think up all kinds of fun activities for the children and the adults. She loved to swim, and they had an above-ground pool in the backyard that she really enjoyed."

Barb attended the Methodist Church with Carson where she was supportive of his music ministry. She participated in events at St. Agnes and other community churches. Barb and Carson were frugal, saving money as they could. Barb worked as a payroll clerk for Wedmann and Teah Drug Stores, at a local dental office, and later, as a payroll clerk with the health system in Williamsport. According to Sister Mary Rita, "She always knew he wanted to leave money to the Sisters she loved so that they would be taken care of and they could continue their mission. She planned for it, so it was in place when she passed. Yes, our family had a longstanding commitment to support the IHM Sisters. This was also a very personal commitment for her."

Thank you to Barb and Carson Keiser and their family for this legacy gift to the Sisters of IHM.

Thank you to Sister Mary Rita Smith for sharing stories of her family.



Carson and Barbara Keiser

LEGACY GIFTS TO THE SISTERS OF IHM

Gifts to the IHM Congregation make a significant impact on the care of our elderly Sisters and our ability to minister to others.

Legacy Giving, often referred to as Planned Giving, is a simple, yet powerful way to perpetuate the missions of the IHM Congregation for future generations. It is a form of charitable giving (philanthropy) that involves contributing one's assets through wills and estate plans. A planned gift is a future gift to the IHM Congregation to enhance its mission and work. Please also consider one of the following planned giving options:

- **Bequests**
- **Charitable Gift Annuities**
- **Charitable Remainder Trusts**
- **Charitable Lead Trusts**

For more information, please visit our website at <https://www.sistersofihm.org/donate/planned-giving/>

Questions may also be directed to Sister Ann Monica Bubser, IHM, at (570) 346-5431 or bubsera@sistersofihm.org. The legal title and address is: Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, IHM Center, 2300 Adams Avenue, Scranton PA 18509-1514.

SISTERS, ASSOCIATES, BOARD MEMBERS, AND FRIENDS JOINED IN THE CELEBRATION OF THE IHM FEAST DAY

The Sisters of IHM gathered in December to celebrate their community patronal feast day (December 8th), which is the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, a Catholic Holy Day celebrating Mary's conception in the womb of her mother, St. Anne, free from original sin. The word "feast" comes from the Latin word which means "joy." Patronal refers to a heavenly protector and advocate for the community.

On their Feast Day, the Sisters gather to honor Mary, the first disciple and her answer "Yes" to God. There is a Mass, a renewal of vows for the Sisters, a re-commitment ceremony for the IHM Associates*, and a luncheon for those in attendance. On December 8th, we also celebrate Mary as the Patroness of the Catholic Church in the United States.



Pictured above:

- Row 1, left**, are Sr. Sarah Ann Holmes, Ann Rink—IHM Associate and IHM Foundation Board member, Kay Barrett and Sr. Marilyn Muro
- Row 1, middle**, are William and Bean Lynett - IHM Foundation Board member, Sister Ellen Maroney, IHM, and Sister Mary Reap, IHM.
- Row 1, right**, are Sr. Rita Ann Naughton and IHM Associate Frank Walsh.
- Row 2, left**, are Sr. Kathleen Hassett and Attorney Matt Barrett
- Row 2, middle**, are IHM Associate Kieran Williams and her daughter, Sr. Kieran Williams
- Row 2, right**, IHM Associates renewing their commitment at the service at Pascucci Family-Our Lady of Peace Chapel. Back row, from left, Becky Delprato, Ann Rink and Frank Walsh. Front row, from left, Sister Ruth Anne Harkins, Pat Sheehan, Mary Kay McHale, Tina Freda, Carolyn Brazil, Kieran Williams, Jean Shields, and Sheryl Lynn Sochoka.
- Row 3, right**, IHM President Sister Katie Clauss addresses the gathering.



** IHM Associates are women and men from all states of life and various creeds who are seeking a deeper experience of God for their own transformation and for the transformation of the world. Attracted by the charisma of the IHM Sisters, Associates join with the Sisters in living out of the IHM charism within the context of their lives. This relationship between Sisters and Associates creates a mutual bond that widens the circle of Jesus's unconditional love for all. For further information on becoming an Associate, go to <https://www.sistersofihm.org/join/associates/>*

WHY I GIVE *by Patricia Lawler*

Throughout my life, I have had many different leadership roles and some even say that I was born a leader. I would instead point back to the mentoring I received from the wonderful Sisters of IHM.

During my senior year of high school, my Dad guided me to apply to Marywood.

Though he died of a heart attack before the year ended, his guidance would change my life forever.

On campus, I felt an overwhelming sense of acceptance, beauty, and warmth. There was an old, prestigious building where the IHM Sisters lived. They spilled out of it each morning — dashing to class, talking with students, visiting the library, and coming back to Mass. The Sisters were the secret charm that made all the difference to many of us. We knew the Sisters were top-notch professors who held numerous degrees. They were passionate about their subject matter and were never too busy to redirect or explain. They were refined, educated, and confident women who warmed our souls and challenged our minds. Day in and day out for four years, we sat in front of the Sisters and their “spirit” rubbed off on us.

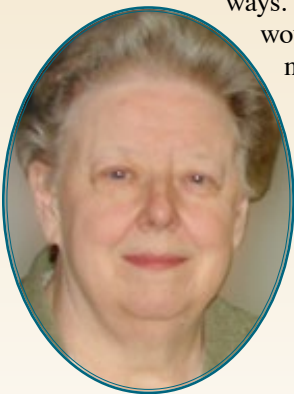
Senior year at Marywood, I was president of my class. My moderator was Sister Patricia Ann Matthews, IHM. She gave me Roberts Rules of Order and said, “Read it.” Without even realizing it, I was being tutored in what I would call, “Leadership 101.” She wanted me to be my best self. The tips she gave me included:

1. Be prepared. Have an Agenda.
2. Be direct. The class will take their cue from you.
3. Explain. Open it up for discussion. Things may get tense. If so, suggest a private discussion after the meeting.
4. Delegate. Ask for volunteers and Chairpersons. Create Committees. Remember that everyone should be welcome. It is your duty to work right along with them. Let them see and feel that you care just as much as they do.
5. Start and stop each meeting with a prayer

I grew to appreciate Sister Patricia Ann and all of the IHM Sisters that touched my life. In our discussions, I would disagree. Sister could be formidable. However, through this, I learned to have a voice. She taught me how important it is to talk and listen to each other. She taught me diplomacy. You must be willing to compromise.

In all of the leadership roles I have had, I always think back to Sister Patricia Ann. She influenced my life in the best of ways. She molded me to become a good leader. I pray for the Sisters every day, because I know that I wouldn't be where I am today without the IHM Sisters. My memories of them are so strong. I will never stop supporting them. I am so very grateful for all that they did for all “Marywoodians.”

Note: Sister Patricia Ann Matthews, IHM, passed away in 2008. Her fellow IHM Sisters noted that “Her belief that each person can make a difference formed her pedagogy as a teacher. Her passion for justice, her wisdom and faith, and her practice of effective problem-solving played an integral role in the transformation of Marywood from a liberal arts women's college to a comprehensive coeducational university and a premier Catholic institution of higher learning. She was a widely respected educator, scholar, consultant, and lecturer on higher education, including teaching, academic administration, professional development, gender issues, outcome assessment, and strategic planning.”



Sister Patricia Ann Matthews, IHM

SHARE YOUR STORY ABOUT HOW THE IHM SISTERS INSPIRED YOU!

Call us at 570-346-5431, email Sister Ann Monica Bubser, IHM, at bubsera@sistersofihm.org or mail your thoughts to:

Sisters of IHM
Attn: Development Office
IHM Center
2300 Adams Avenue
Scranton PA 18509



Sister Delphina, Sister Janice and Sister Norma



JOIN THE IHM SILVER CIRCLE!

Silver Circle membership drawings are held monthly from October to June with 324 prizes ranging from \$50 to \$1,000.

Each membership ticket purchased has 36 chances to win at each drawing.

To become a Silver Circle member, please send your contact information and donation (\$25 per membership) in the form of a check to:

IHM Development Office
IHM Center
2300 Adams Avenue
Scranton PA 18509-1514

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

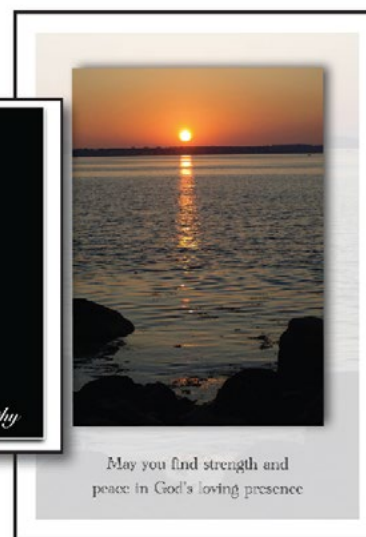
You can help by participating or encouraging others to participate in:

- **NEPA GIVES** - a 24-hour online giving event that runs from **7 pm on Thursday, June 5 to 7 pm on Friday, June 6**. You can help by making a donation and/or volunteering to be an IHM Ambassador for the event, helping the Sisters spread the word! Find out more by emailing sedord@sistersofihm.org
- **2025 IHM Sisters Celebration - Saturday, August 2** in person at Nazareth Hall at 6 p.m. Details to follow.
- **Giving Tuesday 2025** - an online giving event on **Tuesday, December 2**. You can help by making a donation and/or volunteering to be an IHM Ambassador for the event, helping the Sisters spread the word! For further details, email sedord@sistersofihm.org

IHM REMEMBRANCE CARDS ARE AVAILABLE TO YOU

You and your loved one will be remembered in the daily prayers of the Sisters of IHM. Special Occasion, Birthday, Sympathy, Thinking of You, Healing, Appreciation, and Christmas cards are available.

Donations are graciously accepted. To request cards, call 570-346-5431 or email armbrustl@sistersofihm.com



RECENTLY PUBLISHED PHOTO JOURNAL INVITES US TO CONNECT WITH GOD THROUGH HIS CREATION



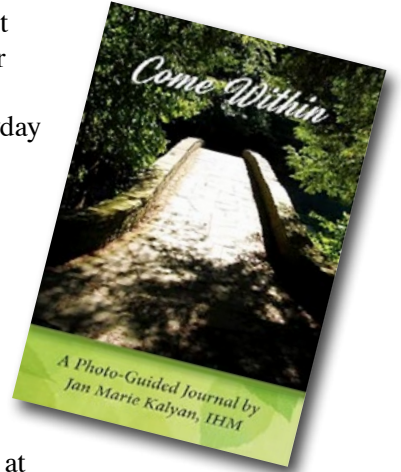
Sister Jan Marie Kalyan

There is beauty in so many ordinary things that many of us don't pay particular attention to as we go through our day. IHM Sister Jan Marie Kalyan, however, was a meticulous observer of God's creation. Her life was dedicated to capturing the Divine in everyday situations. Her recently published photo-guided journal, *Come Within*, was her invitation to all of us to deepen our love for life and our relationship with God.

Sister Jan Marie was multi-talented – an artist, musician, photographer, teacher, mentor, and liturgist. Her photographs grace the IHM Sisters' Remembrance Cards and were also made into individual cards and framed art. IHM Sister Kathleen Burns worked with Sister Jan Marie to finish this photo journal. Although Sister Jan Marie passed before the book was completed, she was at peace knowing that Sister Kathleen understood and shared her goal for the journal -- that every image was inspiring, that it encouraged reflection, and that it would help viewers develop a deeper connection with the Divine.

"She was someone who noticed the beauty in everything," explains Sister Kathleen. "Her curiosity caused her to stop and look at things others would pass by. Sister Jan was always positive and continuously showcased her gratitude for all that she witnessed. She was an amazing person and I believe this photo journal is something that viewers will come back to for reflection again and again. The photos are simply beautiful. It was truly an honor to help her finish this journal."

Sister Jan Marie passed away on May 31, 2024 and left behind a beautiful legacy for all to enjoy. Her book, *Come Within* is available for purchase at the IHM Heartworks Gift Shop at the Pascucci Family – Our Lady of Peace Residence in Scranton or on Amazon.com



RETIRED IHM SISTERS BENEFIT FROM NEW CARE SOFTWARE



Katie Carpenter, LPN, administers medications to Sister Mary Martha Gardiner, IHM.

The addition of digital care software and equipment at the Pascucci Family—Our Lady of Peace Residence has been a transformative step in providing exceptional care to the retired IHM Sisters. The new system improved the organization's ability to recruit new caregivers, most of whom are used to working with this type of software system. Medication distribution is much more efficient, allowing staff to spend more time with the Sisters. Immediate access to patient histories ensures that staff can provide timely and effective urgent care when necessary and improve overall patient outcomes.

For the retired Sisters, this better, more efficient care allows them to more fully participate in their prayer ministry and assist with projects in the Congregation.

This project was funded through a grant from SOAR! — Support Our Aging Religious. SOAR! raises funds and provides grants to help Catholic religious congregations in the United States care for their aging members. Thank you, SOAR!



SISTERS TRAVEL TO PERU FOR VOCATION AND PARISH RETREATS AND SUMMER PROGRAMS

IHM Sisters Mary Elaine Anderson, Director of Candidates and Novices, and Kieran Williams, Director of Vocations, recently visited Sicuani and Lima, Peru to meet with the IHM Sisters there and the people they are serving. Sicuani is a small town in the Andes mountains, approximately eleven thousand feet above sea level. While there, the Sisters assisted with a retreat for women discerning their vocations as well as a retreat for the women of the parish. They also helped conduct several lessons for over 100 children at summer camp. Their hosts in Sicuani were IHM Sisters Eileen Egan, Ancilla Maloney and Norma Poma Arpi. They were also glad to visit mission sites in Lima coordinated by Sister Dora Vizcarra, IHM, and Sister Denise Montagne, IHM. Pictured below, IHM Sisters with residents of Peru.



SAVE THE DATE! SATURDAY, AUGUST 2nd, 2025!

Sisters CELEBRATION

STAY TUNED

“IN PERSON” EVENT

For more information on the event, the award recipients, or sponsorship, call the IHM Development Department at 570-346-5431

