



Remembering

Marilyn Binder, CSJ

December 6, 1942 - January 23, 2019

On Dec. 6, 1942, a baby girl was born to parents Alfons Binder and Josephine Mary Catherine Binder. The parents named their daughter MARILYN. Marilyn was the middle child of five, preceded by brother Carl and sister Jeanette, then followed by sister Jody and brother Richard. Her father was an immigrant from Gottelfingen, Germany. Her mother was born in Dubuque, Iowa, of Swiss and Luxembourg descent, her maiden name being Gutenkauf. German was her second language.

Marilyn's father was a skilled cabinet maker and her mother an accomplished seamstress, and like them Marilyn delighted in doing things with her hands—building and repairing things, gardening, photography, playing violin and guitar, crocheting, and (as many of you know) using and often fixing a variety of technological devices. Marilyn had a happy childhood living with her loving family in the Southwest area of Los Angeles. The five Binder siblings have remained

close friends during the following decades. They share faith, love and good humor, and Marilyn deeply treasured her family. Marilyn attended St. Brigid's School for one year, and then St. John the Evangelist from which she graduated in 1956. She continued her education at St. Mary's Academy and graduated as a blue tie in June of 1960.

After attending three schools staffed by CSJs, it would seem natural that her call to follow Jesus as a Sister would lead her to become a Sister of St. Joseph. Marilyn entered the CSJ community on September 15, 1960. She was seventeen years old, full of desire to be a disciple and to serve others—like the Sisters of St. Joseph she knew and admired. In the course of the next 58 years, that youthful desire would deepen and grow as Marilyn's vocation matured.

Marilyn received the habit and her religious name of Sister Marilyn Louise on March 20, 1961 in the House of

Studies chapel. She completed her novitiate and pronounced her first vows on March 19, 1963. Marilyn was awarded a Bachelor's degree from Mount St. Mary's in 1965 as a History major. The following year she received her Standard Elementary Credential and soon thereafter a Master's degree in Education.

Prepared and eager, Marilyn was sent to teach first grade at St. Lawrence Martyr School in Redondo Beach. After that year, Marilyn was assigned to St. Patrick's School in San Diego, also to teach the first grade. She assumed this responsibility with confidence and skill, staying for three years. Marilyn was then asked to move to Prescott, Arizona, not only to teach first grade, but also to serve as Vice-Principal of Sacred Heart School. This appointment indicates that early in her religious life the leaders of our community recognized Marilyn's innate and acquired competency. After three years in Prescott, Marilyn was named Principal at St. Anthony's School in Oxnard.

At the age of 33, Marilyn was asked to prepare for formation ministry by studying at a program in Rome which was dedicated to contemporary spirituality and personal renewal. This experience was transformative, leading to deepening spirituality, and long-lasting international friendships. Upon her completion of this program, Marilyn was appointed Vocation Director, and resided in the Novitiate community when the Novitiate was relocated to Assumption Convent in Pasadena, California. Marilyn generously and wholeheartedly served in this role for four years,

ending in 1980.

From 1980 until 1986 Marilyn was a creative and cheerful presence at Mount St. Mary's (then titled College), first in Campus Ministry, and then as Director of Residents. During this period, Marilyn demonstrated a love and dedication to young adult women which remained with her throughout her life. Later when she returned to the College and resided at Siena community, Marilyn assumed responsibility for the Busy Persons' Retreat on the Chalon campus. In spite of the organizational challenge of scheduling the retreat gatherings, Marilyn was faithful to this task because she recognized in it a calling to foster spirituality in young women.

Ministry to Community and to the "dear neighbor"—the people of God—continued to be interwoven in Marilyn's life as CSJ. She served as Assistant Provincial to Sister Catherine Marie Kreta from 1986 to 1992. It was a time of great flux and change in ministries and in community living, and Marilyn devoted her talents and steadfast love to the community supporting the Provincial through these challenges.

When Marilyn completed her term as Assistant, she took a short time for personal renewal and then responded to a call to become Principal at Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Santa Barbara, California, a position she held for 7 years. During this period, Marilyn displayed creativity as well as affection for the students and parents. Her years at Mount Carmel became one of her most beloved missions.

Following Our Lady of

Mount Carmel, Marilyn was once again called to leadership as Regional Superior for the sisters in San Diego. As a regional, Marilyn ministered with remarkable care. She was both compassionate and present to any in her region especially at times of illness or uncertainty. She made efforts to foster connections among sisters and associates. Each year she published a beautiful calendar listing birthdays of all the sisters in her region.

At the end of her term as regional, Marilyn assumed an important role at her own alma mater, St. Mary's Academy. For 6 years Marilyn dedicated herself to building up alumnae interest and support, and identifying sources of funding to help keep St. Mary's viable and attractive. After leaving the Academy, her commitment to the ministry of education continued in the form of service on several school boards. At the time of her death, Marilyn was a member of the board at St. Joseph's High School, Carondelet High School, De La Salle High School, and St. Martin of Tours Elementary School. In addition, she was still an active board member of the Los Angeles House of Ruth, where she served for over twenty years.

More recently Marilyn accepted responsibilities for our CSJ community: overseeing cars, and coordinating our Carondelet Center chapel. Marilyn handled these responsibilities with her usual attention to detail. With respect to the Chapel at Carondelet Center, Marilyn kept our sacred space beautiful. She and a small group of volunteers worked together to organize themes and celebrations

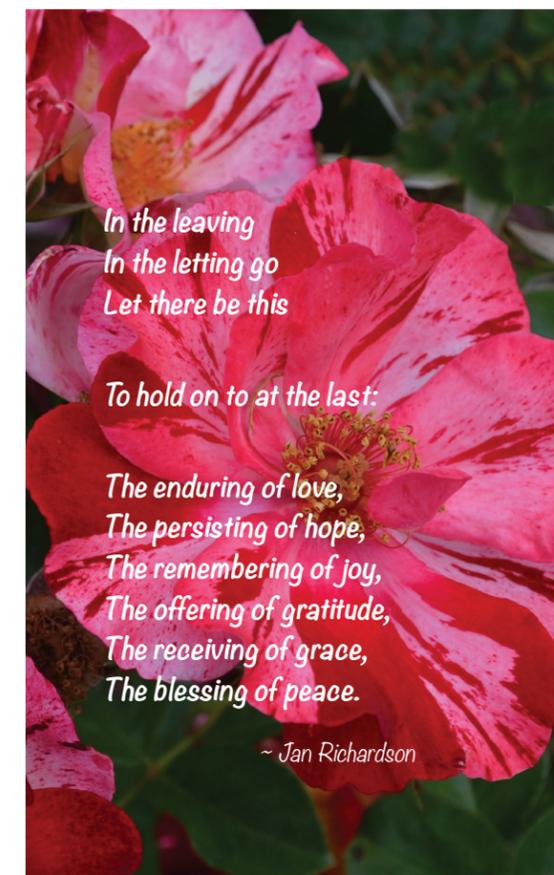
for the liturgical seasons, and she worked with our chaplain and several sisters in filling the various roles for daily liturgy.

Marilyn's tragically sudden death leaves all of us stunned, speechless and heartbroken. Perhaps we can be consoled

in knowing that Marilyn was first and foremost a Community woman, a true CSJ—called by God to follow Jesus and to love God's people.

A few years ago, Marilyn created the theme for their reception's Golden Jubilee—"Our lives rise like incense to God." Little did she know then that those words would prophetically describe her own death and rising. May she rest in Peace. ❖

~ Written by Sister Annette Debs, CSJ with contributions by Sister Margaret Mary Murray and Sister Mary McKay



*In the leaving
In the letting go
Let there be this*

To hold on to at the last:

*The enduring of love,
The persisting of hope,
The remembering of joy,
The offering of gratitude,
The receiving of grace,
The blessing of peace.*

~ Jan Richardson