As a fourth-generation teacher, you might say that Joanne McCauley, OP, EdD, has been blessed with the teaching gene. Her mother, grandmother and great-grandmother each stood in a classroom, chalk in hand, and when it came time for Sister Joanne to follow in their footsteps, she eagerly accepted her assignment. Now, 48 years later, the lesson for this teacher-turned-principal is that she couldn’t have found a more fulfilling, or well-suited, ministry.

Sister Joanne began teaching in 1958 and spent 12 years as a classroom teacher in elementary schools in the Pacific Northwest. In 1969, she became principal of St. Luke School in Shoreline, Washington, a post she held for 22 years. She also has worked with dyslexic students since 1972 and has directed Slingerland Institute teacher-training workshops during the summer. Sister Joanne now serves as principal of St. Mary Magdalen School in Everett. Along the way, she acquired a master’s degree in English, a principal’s credential, and a doctorate in educational leadership with a superintendent’s credential. Sister Joanne also received the Distinguished Principal Award from the National

'Top Doc' Relies on Faith to Practice Medicine

– by Lori Golaszewski

There’s no such thing as a typical day for Melba Beine, OP, MD. How could there be? As a physician specializing in internal medicine, Sister Melba sees patients at a thriving practice in San Antonio, makes hospital rounds, and volunteers at hospice. With patients ranging in age from 14 to 103, Sister Melba finds that their ailments are as varied as their ages, and she wouldn’t have it any other way.

“The hours I work are long — I put in 11- to 12-hour days — but I get up every morning happy to go to work because I enjoy it,” Sister Melba said. “I’m enlivened by what I do.”

As a child, Sister Melba wanted to be a veterinarian, so great was her love for animals. In high school, she fell in love with science and decided that she wanted to become a doctor. After taking a college class in microbiology, Sister Melba was so taken with the subject that she went on to pursue degrees in microbiology at the undergraduate and master’s levels. Sister Melba worked as a clinical microbiologist for 10 years, during which time she entered the Congregation, and although she enjoyed the research, she couldn’t escape the pull toward medicine.

With encouragement from the chief of pathology at the hospital where she was...

(See “Top Doc” on page 2)

Empowering Students to Live a Life of Faith

– by Lori Golaszewski

As a fourth-generation teacher, you might say that Joanne McCauley, OP, EdD, has been blessed with the teaching gene. Her mother, grandmother and great-grandmother each stood in a classroom, chalk in hand, and when it came time for Sister Joanne to follow in their footsteps, she eagerly accepted her assignment. Now, 48 years later, the lesson for this teacher-turned-principal is that she couldn’t have found a more fulfilling, or well-suited, ministry.

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Sister Joanne McCauley, a born educator, is constantly energized by her students.
working in Arlington, Virginia, and with support from the Congregation, Sister Melba pursued her dream of becoming a physician.

She attended the University of Maryland School of Medicine and graduated with honors in 1986, then completed her training in internal medicine at Mercy Medical Center in Baltimore, which included a year as chief medical resident. After six years in private practice in Baltimore, she moved to San Antonio in 1995 and joined the physicians of the HealthTexas Medical Group.

Not everyone gets a chance to fulfill a dream,” Sister Melba said. “Being a microbiologist and a doctor — I’m fortunate to have had parallel ministries that I really love.”

She cites the mental challenge of figuring out what’s wrong with her patients and solving perplexing medical cases as highlights of her ministry. “Sometimes you see a patient and you’re not sure what’s going on, and it makes you think harder and learn new things. I’m interested in infectious diseases, and nothing gets my attention more than someone coming in with something weird!” Sister Melba laughed. Equally rewarding is helping her patients get better and having the opportunity to educate them about their health. Sister Melba’s philosophy is that the more her patients understand their bodies and disease processes, the more they’re able to make wise decisions for themselves. “I do believe I’m called to be a healer,” she said. “I have that inner sense in me that comes out when I work with people on their own health and disease.”

Indeed, Sister Melba’s reverence for life is especially evident as she ministers to hospice patients, something she first began in 1990 when she was still in Baltimore. Now, she serves as a team physician with Vitas Hospice in her spare time. “I’m really passionate about times when we have to quit doing what we’re doing aggressively, and focus on quality of care and keeping people comfortable,” Sister Melba said. “I talk about living and dying comfortably everyday, and part of it is that, with my background as a sister, I can talk about it from a faith stance.”

While not all of Sister Melba’s patients are aware that she is a sister, the patients who do know say there is a presence about Sister Melba that sets her apart from others. One of her patients, a rabbi, even chose her because she is a woman religious. Not only do patients respond to Sister Melba, but also colleagues, who nominated her as one of the best doctors in San Antonio. Last fall, Sister Melba made the annual list of top docs which is compiled by Best Doctors Inc., an independent group that has kept a database of best physicians for more than 12 years. Sister Melba became aware of the honor after meeting with a new patient, who indicated that he had discovered her name after doing an online search of area physicians.

“I was astounded and delighted,” Sister Melba said. “I went home that night and looked on my computer, and sure enough, there I was! I called Best Doctors and asked how I got on the list, and the woman said I was nominated by another physician. I don’t have a clue as to who did it. It was a nice recognition and a wonderful surprise.”

Equally supportive of Sister Melba are her fellow members in the Association of Sister, Brother, and Priest Physicians, a support network of over 100 members whose focus is to balance religious commitment and medicine. Sister Melba just completed the first year of a two-year term as president.

Support is also extended to Sister Melba through her friendships with the members of her Mission Group and with Sarah Sharkey, OP, with whom she shares community. All of them aid Sister Melba in her healing ministry.
Catholic Educational Association’s Western Region and the Slingerland Award for her work with dyslexic students. “I loved my years of classroom teaching because I could relate to each student in a special way,” Sister Joanne recalled. “We had fun together and we learned together. When I was asked to be a principal it was for one of our finest schools. I wondered how I could ever fulfill the responsibilities required in this position. Actually, it was an outstanding year. Parents, teachers, and students were wonderful. We all managed to make it somehow, and I discovered that while as a teacher I could influence the climate in my own classroom, as a principal I could influence the climate in the entire school.”

Less than 20 percent of the population in the Pacific Northwest is Catholic. St. Mary Magdalen is one of the largest Catholic schools in the area, and boasts an enrollment of 450 students. With a shortage of priests, coupled with Washington not being a Christian state, Sister Joanne said it’s important for her students to have the presence of a sister in their school.

“In this ministry I feel that I can really touch people’s lives; not just the students, but the teachers and the parents as well,” Sister Joanne said. “I do my best to empower all of us to live a life of faith, energized by the fullness of life our Catholic faith offers. The families I now work with range from the very affluent to the very poor. This gives me an opportunity to help the more affluent recognize their obligation to those less fortunate, and I have the privilege of assisting all students to learn their faith as well as their academics so they can become religious leaders as well as world leaders.”

The privilege of instilling Catholic values in youngsters doesn’t come without challenges. “Religious values are best taught in the home and then reaffirmed in the school,” Sister Joanne said. “Sometimes, however, the school finds itself needing to fulfill the more basic role.” Another challenge is integrating the students and their families more fully into the faith life of the parish. Currently, students plan and participate in school liturgies and take part in parish outreach services. Perhaps the biggest struggle, and one faced by other Catholic schools throughout the country, is making Catholic education affordable, especially when teacher salaries and other school expenses require a budget of over $2,000,000. At this time, the school relies on fundraisers to make ends meet.

None of these challenges, however, detract from what’s most fulfilling about Sister Joanne’s ministry — her students. “Daily I am restored and revitalized by them,” she said. “They are so refreshing and so filled with hope and joy, and they always forgive my mistakes. They are so innocent, loving and open to the values and goals we suggest to them.”

Just as one would suspect, Sister Joanne has more than her fair share of amusing anecdotes after spending four decades educating youngsters. One of her favorite remembrances is from her time at St. Luke. “I tested the son of a prominent person for a learning disability,” she recalled. “Neither the child nor I had seen each other before. The child, who was about seven years old, walked confidently into my office and seated himself at a table. He looked me up and down and said, ‘So, you’re a nun? Like it?’ I’m sure he had no idea what a nun was,” she laughed.

Just last year, Sister Joanne was in the hallway at St. Mary Magdalen when she heard noises coming from second graders in the library. She asked one particularly loud boy to quiet down, but he ignored her. She asked him again to speak more softly, but he again ignored her, opened his library book and began reading it. “The third time I emphatically said that I was speaking to him and he was to look at me and listen to what I was saying,” Sister Joanne said. “He then looked up at me, and with the tone from Star Wars, said, ‘I understand. You are the Top One. I will obey you.’”

As another school year gets underway, there are bound to be more stories-in-the-making, more interactions with students, and continued opportunities to impart the Catholic faith. Throughout the next year and those to come, Sister Joanne emphasized that her “biggest hope for her students is that they find God.”
During ceremonies in July and August, five women followed God’s call to continue discerning vowed life as Adrian Dominican Sisters. Two other women reaffirmed their commitment to share faith and life with the Dominican Sisters of the Congregation of St. Catherine in Mosul, Iraq.

**Suzanne Schreiber, OP**, celebrated her Rite of Perpetual Profession as an Adrian Dominican Sister on July 9 in Holy Rosary Chapel on the Adrian Dominican Sisters campus. She was given a ring symbolizing her permanent commitment as a vowed member.

In the company of friends, family and numerous Adrian Dominican Sisters, Sister Sue offered her statement of intent: “My intent, my desire, is to go more deeply into the mystery of God, through Jesus Christ, in Dominican prayer, study, community and ministry. I will continue to bring my gifts into harmony with the mission and vision of the Adrian Dominican Congregation which serves on the prophetic edge of our church and world. I promise to give, receive and listen, to be and bring peace, to continue to weave threads of relationship, and to travel an authentic Dominican spiritual path as did our sisters who have gone before us. My desire is to walk lightly on the earth, to live fully our common life as an Adrian Dominican Sister, and to take my place in the worldwide Dominican family.”

Sister Sue ministers as the communications coordinator at Regina Dominican High School in Wilmette, Illinois.

**Janice Brown, OP**, celebrated her first profession of vows as an Adrian Dominican Sister on the feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, August 6, in Holy Rosary Chapel. **Mary Louise Putrow, OP**, preached, and **Prioress Donna Markham, OP**, received Sister Janice’s vows.

In the company of family, friends and numerous Adrian Dominican Sisters, Sister Janice made her statement of intent: “My intent is to continually seek truth, and that which is the deepest desire of God. All that is Dominican — prayer, study, community life, and preaching, whether it is a preaching ministry or preaching in ministry — are nourishment for the quest. It is my hope that as a member of the Adrian Dominican Congregation and of the larger Dominican family, I...”
might more fully be God’s instrument who seeks truth, reverences life, and brings about peace.”

Sister Janice is the Director of the Dominican Literacy Center in Detroit.

On the feast of St. Dominic, August 8, three Adrian Dominican Sisters and two sisters from the Dominican Sisters of the Congregation of St. Catherine in Mosul, Iraq, renewed their vows during the 10:30 a.m. Mass in St. Catherine Chapel. In the presence of Prioress Donna Markham, OP, numerous Adrian Dominicans, family and friends, Kyung-Ae Raphaela Lee, OP, Heather Stiverson, OP, Basilia de la Cruz, OP, Aman Miriam Mansoor, OP, and Diana Momeka, OP, each renewed her vows for one year.

After preaching about the day’s readings and the significance of the feast day, Sister Donna invited all present to invoke God’s grace on the four women and called them forward to receive their vows. Sister Basilia, a native of the Dominican Republic, made her vow renewal in Spanish, while Sisters Aman and Diana recited their vows in Arabic. In addition, Sisters Aman and Diana renewed their vows in the Iraqi tradition of kneeling while holding a copy of the Rule of St. Augustine. Sisters Raphaela, Heather and Basilia each made her vow renewal as she held Sister Donna’s hand above a copy of the Adrian Dominican Constitution.

The two Iraqi Sisters have been visitors of the Adrian Dominican Congregation for the past year. Their prioress, Maria Hanna, OP, designated Sister Donna to receive their vows in her absence. The vow renewal was especially joyful for Sisters Aman and Diana because their relatives from Detroit were in attendance, as well as sisters from their Iraqi congregation, Sisters Luma and Rehab, who are living with the Dominican Sisters of Springfield.

Sisters Heather and Aman are ministering at Regina Dominican High School, while Sister Raphaela’s ministry is at the Korean American Cultural Center in Southfield, Michigan. Sister Diana is ministering at the Siena Literacy Center in Detroit, and Sister Basilia teaches religion at the Fe y Alegria Espiritu Santo school in Baní, DR.

An especially moving moment during the ceremony on the feast of St. Dominic occurred when the Iraqi Sisters sang the “Our Father” in Aramaic.
Adrian Dominicans Form an Intentional Community in Mission at Regina Dominican High School

The Adrian Dominican Sisters’ presence at Regina Dominican High School in Wilmette, Illinois, has been evident since the school’s groundbreaking in 1956. Since then, countless Adrian Dominicans have graduated from and even ministered at the school.

Now, 50 years later, the Adrian Dominican presence is stronger than ever at Regina Dominican, thanks to a renewed commitment by the Congregation to serve the young women who enter Regina’s doors. In August, five newer members of the Adrian Dominican Sisters joined the Adrian Dominicans already ministering at Regina, forming an intentional community in mission near the school. They will live together in the convent adjacent to the school and minister at Regina, working toward the common goal of preparing young women for life in a global world and instilling in them Dominican values. The number of sisters now ministering at Regina totals 17.

“Our hope as a General Council is to assist the high school by providing additional sisters to serve in the school,” said Priorress Donna Markham, OP. “It is also our hope that this partnership with Regina will assist our younger sisters in developing skills in teaching and campus ministry. They are a lovely witness to religious life and are also wonderful role models for the students.”

The members who will reside in this intentional community are Sister Mary Jones, novice; Suzanne Schreiber, OP; Heather Stiverson, OP; and Aman Miriam Mansoor, OP, a member of the Dominican Sisters of the Congregation of St. Catherine in Mosul, Iraq. Joining them will be Cora Marie Campbell, OP, who will serve as a mentor and advisor, and Cindy Broderick, OP, who has been ministering at Regina since 2004.

Sister Sue is serving as Regina’s communications coordinator, Sister Heather is working in pre-admissions and recruiting, and Sister Mary, a musician, is involved with campus ministry and the Siena Scholars program. Sisters Aman and Cora are math tutors. In addition, Mary Hrovat, OP, has joined the group as the new director of alumnae relations.

“The tradition of seeking truth through study began 800 years ago in Europe with St. Dominic who founded the Dominican Order of Preachers,” said Adrienne Piennette, OP, President of Regina Dominican. “What a wonderful way to celebrate this anniversary year by welcoming six new Dominican sisters to the school!”

Welcome Associate Kathleen Unti

Kathleen Unti of Sonoma, California, was welcomed as an Adrian Dominican Associate on July 16 in St. Catherine Chapel. Kathy was fortunate to have two mentors who journeyed with her in her quest for spiritual growth and knowledge: her own sister, Pat McCarty, OP, and Maria Romero, OP.

During the Rite of Acceptance, Sister Pat spoke of how Kathy has always been a part of her religious life by sharing her presence and emotional support. She said that Kathy’s acceptance into the Associate program is the culmination of all the sharing they have experienced over the years. Sister Maria spoke of the months of study and preparation she spent with Kathy. She has been impressed with Kathy’s openness to prayer and study, and knows that she will be an asset to their Mission Chapter in California.

Sisters and Associates alike welcome Kathy to relationship in the community and to membership in the Dominican family.
Summer Events Brought International Members of the Dominican Family to Adrian

Over the span of several days, Adrian Dominicans had the pleasure of welcoming to Adrian both the current and former Masters of the Dominican Order. Timothy Radcliffe, OP, former Master, visited Siena Heights University the week of June 25 as part of the Dominican High Schools Preaching Conference. Father Timothy spoke to nearly 100 high school juniors and seniors on the topic of preaching and the signs of the times. He shared the path he took in becoming a Dominican, then spoke about the biggest challenge for Dominicans today: how to transmit hope in a chaotic world.

During the same week, from June 29 to July 8, Carlos Azpiroz Costa, OP, current Master, led a special Jubilee Retreat at Weber Center for more than 80 nuns from 15 North American monasteries. “Never before has there been such a large number of cloistered Dominican nuns from North America who have come together to praise God and deepen our solidarity,” said Mary Rose, OP, former Prioress of the Monastery of the Blessed Sacrament in Farmington Hills, Michigan. “We are making history by having the Master of the Order — Father Carlos — with us, who is Dominic in our midst. Father Carlos is the first Master of the Order to preach retreats to the nuns.” At the conclusion of the retreat, Adrian Dominican Sisters and Associates attended a Solemn Mass of Thanksgiving celebrated by Father Carlos in St. Catherine Chapel.

On the heels of the preached retreat, Weber Center hosted nearly 40 justice and peace promoters from Dominican congregations and provinces across North America, including Durstyn Farnan, OP. They gathered July 22-26 to discuss immigration, human trafficking and globalization, and to establish a Dominican “call to action” to address these and other issues. The North American Dominican Promoters for Justice, Peace and Care of Creation meet every three years. During their five days together, the justice promoters focused on the international perspective of the Order as it relates to the critical issues of our day. They also began to formulate the Dominican Call to Justice, a document describing the priority issues of justice and peace for Dominicans in the U.S. and Canada. Over the next three years, justice promoters in each congregation and province will advocate on a number of issues in collaboration with other groups through political, economic and civic processes. 

The Congregation hosted international members of the Order, including Father Carlos Azpiroz Costa (left), justice and peace promoters (above right) and Father Timothy Radcliffe (above).
Women In Our History

Sister Hyacinth Pfluge
1884 - 1905
– by Catherine Podvin, OP

Mary Amanda Pfluge, the future Sister Hyacinth, was remembered by her contemporaries as one who was enthusiastic and who enjoyed the years of life that God allowed her. She was the first young woman to come to the Adrian Dominican Sisters from St. Joseph Parish in Maybee, Michigan.

The daughter of Magdalena (Wohlgemuth) and Victor Pfluge, Mary was born on February 9, 1884. Both parents were natives of Germany, had emigrated to the United States, and settled on the fertile farmland near Maybee.

It is possible that Mary began her education in a public school, but records do not show this. She was eight-and-a-half years old when, in September 1892, St. Joseph School opened its doors in Maybee with a faculty of Adrian Dominicans. Mary’s parents, dedicated Catholics, immediately registered their daughter. In addition to her classwork, Mary soon became a member of Sister Crescentia Schrembs’ choir. Records do not show her graduation date, or whether she attended high school.

Mary revered her teachers, and wanted to be like them. In 1900, at age 16 and with her parents’ permission, she entered the postulate in Adrian, and on December 10 received the habit and her religious name.

Sister Hyacinth was a fragile young woman, and considered too young to take her first vows. She was not allowed to make profession with Sisters Loretta Waldecker, Anthony Marx, and Jarlath Doherty, the three others who had been received with her. She was asked to wait three years. Some of that time was spent as a teacher at St. Joseph School in Mishawaka, Indiana, where the Adrian Dominicans ministered for only a short time, but most of it was spent in Adrian.

On May 19, 1903, she professed her first vows with Sisters Mary John Stein, Immaculata Ebbitt, and Annunciata Redumski. She was assigned to St. Joseph School in Wyandotte. One day she became very ill in the classroom, and was taken to the convent in Maybee, where she was also near her family. At the convent she received the best care, especially from her very good friend, Sister Annunciata, who tended to her with great compassion. Some of the sisters questioned the cause of her illness. Tuberculosis was suspected, since that was the dreaded sickness of those years. Tubercular sisters, however, were usually cared for in Adrian or in their own homes if their parents wished. Since she was not taken to either place, but cared for in the convent at Maybee, the nature of her illness seems uncertain. Her death certificate, however, lists “consumption” as the cause of death, which is what tuberculosis was called at that time. Sister Hyacinth died on June 19, 1905, at age 21, and was buried in the parish cemetery at Maybee.

– by Catherine Podvin, OP