

SOCIETY OF HELPERS

# VOICES of Hope



Friendship that Brings Life

BRINGING HOPE TO THE HUMAN JOURNEY

Vol IX Issue II

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**JUNE 2018**



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## Letter from the Editorial Team



We had a very long winter in Chicago, with the cold and snow making routine appearances no matter what the calendar says. Today was another one of those cold, dreary, dark days. The last thing I wanted was to get outside for the daily walk I promised myself I would start doing again this spring. But I didn't call it off—I called a friend! Well, I texted a friend: "Meet me @ park for walk?" Thankfully, I got an immediate thumbs-up and smiley face reply. We ended up having a lovely chat, got some exercise, and didn't even realize how cold we were until we got back to our respective houses!

And so it goes with friends. They can literally and figuratively walk us through some of the darkest days and make life more bearable. They can also make seasons of joy even brighter. As the 17th century Spanish philosopher and Jesuit priest Baltasar Gracian said, "True friendship multiplies the good in life and divides its evils..."

This issue of *Voices of Hope* explores the topic of friendship, and our contributors have many stories to share. Lotte Marcus gives us an overview of friendships and how they can begin, grow, and evolve over the lifecycle. Kevin & Jess Mulligan describe God's gift of friendships, which enable us to share our earthly journey with others and nurture our faith. Mary Wilson describes her deep friendship with Jesus; a friendship that wraps her in joy and acceptance, and enables her to see Him in the daily routines of her life.

We also hear about some special long-term friendships. In their respective articles, Giselle Ampleman and Naomi Mayer each share how dramatically their lives were changed by close friendships. Kyrsten Hoffman and Rivka Polisky discuss how Facebook reunited them and has provided a platform to stay in touch across the miles and throughout the years. Jeanette McGlone and Christine Triay describe their unique friendship that inspired them to offer a place of hope and peace to other sisters. And I share a poem that I wrote for my dearest friend for Mother's Day—a day we honor together in memory of our mothers' treasured friendship.

Finally, Steven Dietz, author of *Lonely Planet*, granted us permission to reprint an excerpt that poignantly sums up the incalculable value of friendship. Like our other contributions, Mr. Dietz's piece reminds us that it is our interconnectedness with others—our friendships—that truly make a difference in life. In this frenzied world, it is not our accomplishments or our failures that define who we are, but it is our connections with others that give our life meaning and are a constant source of hope for the future.

We think you'll enjoy this edition of *Voices* and our contributors' beautiful reflections on the people who share and define our life's journey.

## Friendship | By Lotte Marcus

There is nothing like it - when friendship is in bloom - whether these be children in the classroom, two adolescents, young adults, or those advanced in years. Friendship implies that you are in synch with another person. At best, it implies that you know what the other person wants, sometimes before that person knows it. Friends support one another; listen to one another. Friends can sense when they are needed by the other. Friends are there for joy, for excitement, for experiencing events together, for finding a listening ear.

The quality of friendships differs at different ages and changes with maturity. The friends I had as a child I am not in touch with - in part, because I was a refugee and moved from country to country, from city to city. I often think of the 65,000,000 refugees who are now circling the globe and the friends they have left behind. Fate has thrown them a harsh curve: they left behind what was familiar, what was close. Separation from long friendships leaves people nostalgic, yearning for what is out of reach, and can be traumatic.

Recently, a man I was friends with as a child, 8 years old, contacted me after 70 years. He lives in England, but he found me through the internet and I am trying to stay in touch.

But I don't know whether my feelings for him are an illusion, since can't sit and talk in proximity. To see, to touch, strengthens, revives friendship. Recently, also, three women in their fifties asked to re-my studio. They were from northern and southern California and had "gotten back in touch." They spent a celebratory weekend here. I was happy to provide a venue for the revival of their friendship.

People who have shared difficult experiences also get back together such as soldiers who were together in war time; soldiers who survived. I understand that groups of soldiers who were in the invasion in Normandy in World War II have gone back to re-experience that moment where each of them was risking death. Survival deserves a celebration and celebrations are fodder for friendships.

We may become friends with persons of different beliefs or different lifestyles. My closest friendship f





over thirty years is with a Catholic nun, while I am a devout atheist. We share activism for social justice; we both have been teachers of English As A Second Language, and we are joined by a horror against President Trump's anti-immigration stance. Anger for a cause binds our friendship.

We often judge people by the quality and number of friends they have. The breaking up of a friendship—for whatever reason—is often hurtful and traumatizing. It shows who we are by the choices we make. When two friends break up, they often turn to a third for consolation. This triangulates friendship. I would hope that we can directly straighten out what has divided us, agitated us, by a careful examination of what went wrong, what bent us out of shape.

We change as we go through our life cycle, emotionally as well as geographically. This can alter a friendship, causing the friendship thread to loosen. As an elderly, I have seen friendships come and go. As we live in a very mobile age, we have left friends here and there, think about them, but may or may not have the time and energy to keep investing in them. Friendship...it takes time. As elderly, we tend to make new friends dependent on physical proximity, on health, or on our current living situation.

Friendship is like the icing on our human cake. It is profound and deep, and it is a symbol for the quality of care we have for another, the quality of maturity we have been able to gain and, as we widen the circle of connections, leads to the quality or compromises we have to make for the sake of others. We pray that the efforts we make at friendship may lead to the quality of peace among different groups of people. For, without friendships, the world would turn dark quickly.

*Lotte Marcus was born in Vienna and is a holocaust survivor who, after 8 1/2 war years in Shanghai, China, resettled in California. She received an MA in Latin American Literature from the University of Guanajuato, Mexico, and a doctorate in Psychology from UC San Diego. She worked as a cross cultural consultant at Natividad Medical Hospital in Salinas, California and, with her husband, piloted an ESL program, "English on Wheels" for migrants in the Salinas Valley. She has worked for the last 35 years as a clinical psychologist in Carmel, California.*



A deep friendship developed between Christiane and me over a period of forty three years, a friendship woven by a life shared in community and a partnership in our work for justice. We came from different backgrounds; I, a native Quebécoise, and Christiane, a Frenchwoman, who arrived in Quebec from France in 1949. Our temperaments were very different yet complementary, in that we shared the same values and believed in the same causes.

I look back over the years of our partnership in ministry. Already in 1974, we were defending the plight of the impoverished. I, as a community organizer, was devoting my time training poor people how to secure their rights, while Christiane offered her ongoing support signing petitions and participating in marches demanding better living conditions for the poor.

The two of us joined a few others in starting a Christian Base Community inspired by the theology of liberation. This group brought

*"Friendship is a flower that blooms year after year and that is nurtured by a thousand and one blessings."*

*Marcel Pagnol*

together people from the working class who desired to transmit the Christian faith to their children.

During the same period, we also participated in the Network for Politicized Christians whose purpose was to develop a political and theological reflection that would sustain those committed to the struggle for justice.

In 1976, Christiane and I formed a small collective to find and establish a vacation home for low income families so they would be able to enjoy a vacation according to their means. Besides being a very practical woman, Christiane had a great facility for making relationships





and living among people. Her good humor and availability were appreciated by everybody. During many years, she never hesitated biking for 40 or 50 kilometers to raise funds for the vacation house. Until the end of her life, she put all her talents at the service of this project by participating regularly in the upkeep of the house, as well as helping form a committee that sustained the project.

1980 saw the creation of the Socialist Movement in Quebec. Christiane and I were convinced that participation in partisan political action was necessary if change were to lead to a more just and equal society. Once the movement evolved into a political party, Christiane became an officer and assumed the role of treasurer. I worked on the committee for the formation of new members. The years went by. Christiane, all the while working full time as a pharmacist in a poor district in Montreal, continued her many endeavors, including making our Helper community a place of hospitality for other Helpers from near and far, and making room for families or individuals in need.

In 1995, the call came to participate in the March for Bread and Roses whose goal was to sensitize the people of Quebec to the poverty and violence

done to women. Every Helper in our community participated, according to her own possibilities. For ten days, Christiane marched 20 kilometers a day all the way from Montreal to Quebec. At 79, she was the oldest among 800 marchers. What beautiful memories I have of this mobilization and the gains we made to improve the living conditions of women!

1995 was also the year of the Referendum on the Sovereignty of Quebec. Christiane and I worked together on the Referendum, launching the "YES" campaign by women and men religious. Four hundred religious from different communities took a YES stand on the Referendum. Christiane was our spokesperson.

Throughout the years, the two of us offered each other solidarity in our different endeavors, shouldering one another in difficult times and savoring our small victories. Our social justice networks became one big solidarity family.

Christiane suffered a hearing loss. While this disability progressed over the years, she remained opened to

others, always "plugged into" what was going on in the world, continuing to sign petitions, although doing it now on the Internet.

I give thanks for all those beautiful years lived as Christiane's "accomplice." Her spiritual strength, her good judgment, her great freedom, her accompaniment, all these have made me the Helper I am today. "Thank, you, Christiane."

*Gisele is a social worker and community organizer who spent more than 30 years working throughout Quebec forming and training members of grassroots organizations in civil and human rights using the pedagogy of Paolo Freire. Less active now in her senior years, she can find more time for meditation and contemplation.*



Christiane Sibilotte, SH  
April 18, 1916 -- December 22, 2017



## Given a Treasure Beyond Price | By Naomi Mayer

We met over twenty years ago and committed to share our lives together.

Why take this vulnerable step into relationship?

Because we each recognized we shared the same values of listening, caring, and motivating others. We developed a deep understanding of one another and trusted the Spirit to guide us on life's journey. This provided great hope in fulfilling God's will in our lives.

Barbara did this in her profession of employee/employer relations at San Francisco State University for 30 years. Before retirement in 2004, she was responsible for over 200 employees in Facilities Management, not only providing critical services to the University on a daily basis, but equally as important, by assuring the well-being of her staff by providing opportunities for growth and support through difficult personal situations that could arise at home or at work, and an overall sense of respect and appreciation for the work well done. She and the staff became a family that listened deeply, inspired and supported one another.

God began preparing her for a different path in 1997 when she began reading the Bible each morning. Little did she know at that time what this would lead to.

I am a cradle Catholic and entered the Medical Mission Sisters after completing nursing school. I became a nurse midwife working in many states and spending four years in South America. Then came 1968 and the soul searching times of the Second Vatican Council. I was called to marriage and had two children. I lived in a faith-based community in New Jersey where we were all young families supporting and defining Christian life together. As former members of religious communities, we were deeply involved with Daniel Berrigan and the anti-war movement of Vietnam, and other social issues of the time.

I returned to California with my children in 1983 where I continued my nursing profession as a nurse and mid-wife at San Francisco General Hospital. I eventually left this work to be a Hospice Nurse, caring for AIDS patients during the crisis that was occurring at that time. I remained in Hospice work until my retirement.

After I met Barbara and we defined our life together, we searched for a welcoming faith community. We attended St. Agnes Church on Pentecost Sunday and felt welcome in that warm, inclusive community. Our positive experience at St. Agnes lead Barbara to discern her call to the Catholic faith. We joined RCIA and journeyed together to a glorious Easter in 2001.

We entered fully into the life of our parish and Barbara followed her call to make the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. After I also made the Exercises, we both attended a three-year training program to become directors of the Exercises. What a joy it is to share our mutual growth and experiences as we endeavor to live the gifts of the Spiritual Exercises.

Together we have created a home that is one of comfort and peace. It is where you can come for renewal and go away refreshed. A relationship based in Christ can only grow deeper in mercy, forgiveness, and loving kindness.

As we grow older, sharing the "glories of aging" as we say, there are many opportunities to let go of those testy attachments and surrender without fear.

Living in gratitude is a joy filled life.

*Barbara Nelson and Naomi Mayer live in San Francisco and minister at St. Agnes parish.*





## Friendship and Faith | By Kevin & Jessica Mulligan

God did not create us to live our lives alone. God created us to share our earthly journey with others. It is through the gift of friendship that God brings people into our lives to help us strive to be the best version of ourselves and bring us hope during times of hopelessness.

We all face challenging and dark days in our lives. It is at these times that true friends remind us that no matter how dark the day, we always have hope that tomorrow will bring renewed joy. We all need friends to help guide us and lead us out of the dark times.

It is the friends that each of us made during the years of uncertainty in our young-adult lives that transformed us and ultimately brought our own friendship together. It was through sharing our disappointments and fears with our friends that we learned how to be vulnerable and how to love ourselves for the people God created us to be. With self-love comes hope, and with hope comes freedom to live an inspired life. Having a strong group of friends who have the same core values and with whom we share our faith has taught us how to accept love in new ways. Accepting friends into our lives is a choice that can impact our character and our faith, and guide us closer to God.

Deep and meaningful friendships have brought encouragement into our lives. It is through the encouragement of our friends that we have experienced the greatest blessings God has bestowed upon us. Authentic friendship brings people into our lives with whom we can openly share our values, beliefs, faith, and fears. Having a confidant with whom you have a mutual bond and who can pick you up when you are down is truly a gift.

Friendship also makes us more appreciative of life. Sharing experiences with our closest friends puts life into perspective because it shows us how blessed we are and reveals the beautiful power of the Holy Spirit who works around us at all times. The authentic friends that we surround ourselves with bring us great joy and hope for the future.

During Lent, one of the reflections we did challenged us to form a small group of friends who could help us grow in faith and become stronger Christians. Thinking about who is truly a part of this small inner circle of friends sheds insight into our truest friends. These are the friends who challenge us to constantly live Christian values and who are there to walk alongside us during the joyful times and the trying times.

We have found the biggest challenge to maintaining all these meaningful friendships is time. We can get very busy in life between our jobs, school, kids, and so many other things that crop up. To nourish these friendships, in among so many demands, we must intentionally make time for them; sometimes that means going out of our way or rearranging our busy schedules to meet them. We've found that it is always

worth the effort in the end, and we are very blessed to surround ourselves with meaningful friendships.

*Kevin & Jessica Mulligan live in Pewaukee, WI with their daughter, Cassidy. Kevin is an engineer with GE Healthcare and Jessica is the Executive Director of the Community Memorial Foundation in Menomonee Falls, WI. They enjoy running, biking, being outdoors, and family time.*

*"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers,  
for thereby some have entertained angels"  
Hebrews 13:2*





## Digitally Disconnected or Computationally Close?

Kyrsten Hoffman & Rivka Polisky



### Kyrsten-

Many individuals in this day and age believe that technology has been the bane to

human interaction, particularly when it comes to fostering and maintaining friendships. Whenever I hear this view expressed I can only shake my head because without technology, especially social media applications such as Facebook and Instagram, one of my closest and longest lasting friendships wouldn't exist today.

Rivka Polisky and I found each other when we were both just 11-years-old. We met at a summer camp for gifted children, designed to foster our love of writing, drawing, robotics, history, and other subjects. I was taking forensics and military tactics that year, but I was forced to choose an afternoon class as well, since my parents were unable to pick me up until later in the evenings. I decided, grudgingly, that I would take graphic design. I was terrible at drawing and being artistic in any form was not my strong suit, so I was not looking forward to the first class.

It turns out that this class would be the best one I would ever take throughout my summers there because it was through graphic design that I met one of my best friends. As I walked into the class, I noticed a girl with short wavy hair and a quiet smile all the way to the side of the classroom. I smiled and shuffled over to her table, nervous that within the next few minutes she would find out that I was terrible at drawing. Lucky for me I had met someone who was kind, funny, and understanding of my flaws. She was more than happy to show me the ropes. It was with Rivka that I learned how to draw a comic and we made a terribly funny one together that was presented to our parents at the end of the summer. As the program neared the end, I was proud of my work but equally sad. Neither of us had cell phones and I feared that I wouldn't see my friend again.

A couple of years passed and I had almost forgotten about my friend when one morning I decided to go on Facebook and sleuth around for her. I remembered all the fun we had had and

hoped that she might still want to be my friend. After an hour of searching, I found her! She looked nearly the same, just a little taller and with longer hair. A quick browse of her page gave me a brief description of what she had been up to. She had graduated 8th grade, like me, and would be attending high school soon. She still loved drawing, still loved photography, and I just hoped that she would remember me. I messaged her with a short hello and an explanation of who I was. She messaged me back almost immediately and sent a flurry of faces (emojis) describing how elated she was that I found her. We were able to become pen pals through Facebook, every week writing the other a letter about how our day went and what interesting things were happening in our lives. She was at school in the suburbs, and I was at school in the city. Both of our parents were strict about letting us hang out on school days and we had activities on weekends, so it was extremely difficult to connect in person, even though we wanted to. It got even more difficult when she went to Tel

Aviv, Israel, for college, and even more so now that she is in New York for graduate school! I am thankful for social media because without it I would have lost touch with her long ago, and thus lost a very good friend. Our friendship is now closer than ever, with Rivka even serving as one of my bridesmaids for my upcoming wedding. I am so glad to have her by my side for this journey we call life.



### Rivka-

The most beautiful element of my friendship with Kyrsten is its time-

lessness. Our bond began at age eleven and continues to evolve as we grow older. Physical distance has never been an obstacle for us, even in the early stages when we weren't able to communicate via social media. Somehow we knew our connection wouldn't end along with the conclusion of summer camp. When Kyrsten found me on Facebook years later, I was excited by the possibility of picking up where we le

## My Friendship with Jesus | By Mary Wilson

off. This is something that has always come naturally to us. No matter where we are in the world, or how long it's been since we have spoken, we are able to casually pick right back up as if nothing has changed. It's such a beautiful thing to be able to do that with someone.

I feel very lucky to know Kyrsten and watch how our lives have blossomed since our awkward, middle school days. We both have had our fair share of hardships, but knowing that we have each other's backs makes life feel a little more manageable. Facebook and other social media platforms have helped us stay as connected as we are. I am immensely grateful to be living in a time when communication is so instant and accessible. I know that no matter where I live post-graduate school, and no matter where Kyrsten settles down after marriage, our close and beautiful friendship will continue to grow.



*Kyrsten is a 23-year-old college graduate who was born and raised in Chicago. She is currently working in Chicago and will be starting Law School at Loyola University in the fall. She lives with her family in the Portage Park area. She hopes through her law education to create a safer, more humane and empathetic environment for immigrants in the United States as well as educate individuals on the process of immigration to America and what this means in this day and age.*

*Rivka is 23-years-old as well. She is currently living in Brooklyn, New York, and is working on her master's in psychology at NYU. She is originally from Skokie, Illinois and received her bachelor's degree in graphic design at Tel Aviv University in Israel. Rivka's goals include opening a therapeutic art studio which mixes contemporary artistic expression such as photography and graphic design with proven clinical methods to improve mental illness.*



I am writing this today not really knowing what it will look like on completion, as I am continually relying on my friend, my guide, my love in all I do—Jesus. After many years of looking to the world outside for happiness, comfort and success, I now know that it is in knowing Jesus that I find joy and contentment. He is my true best friend who makes the joys of my life truly joyful, and the sorrows entirely bearable.

I was raised in a strong Catholic family and very devout in my Catholic faith since the earliest memories of my life. I am a wife (married at age 39) and blessed by God to be the mother of two children. I have a dog, a home, and belong to a wonderful community of faith that are all gifts from God and show me continually how present Jesus is in the world around me. I have worked hard most of my life and like a lot of people, I did my best to “live.” My hope and my joy seemed to be attached to all the people and circumstances in my life. I always tried to do “the right thing” in most or every area of my life like I was supposed to do.

As a child, I attended a Catholic grade school and a public high school because my parents, who had four children, could not afford a Catholic

high school. In looking back, that when my life started to take a severe turn. I was not reading daily Scripture, or even going to mass regularly at this point in my life, and I started connecting more to the people around me than to the God that I loved from my first memory. As time years of my life went on, there are many details I could share of things that hurt a lot or made me extremely happy, but in truth the details do not matter because whatever my experiences were, my happiness was fleeting. I did not recognize it in my youth because I was always on to the next event, the next job, the next detail of my day. Everything inside me depended on everything outside of me.

As I grew up and matured, as well as in this life, I found it was in my times of sadness or longing that I looked



for Jesus. There was a time when I dreaded the down times and it was hard to relax because I had to fill my head and my heart with noise. I had no time to think or feel, nor did I want to. But, even in my youth, my sadness would come...this friend did not invite me to her party, I did not have the right outfit or something or other, no money, no time, no love. And of course there were the serious issues. Someone I loved had gotten hurt or become ill, or had even passed away. There are always serious issues looming around us. My father used to say, "Be careful with your joy. As you are celebrating, someone's heart is breaking." It was in the breaking of heart times that I looked for Him, always looking, pleading, begging for his attention in my sadness. Poor me. And then came the shift.

I needed the times of sadness to remind me that Jesus was always there, always, forever and ever. In the Gospel of Matthew 28:20 He says "...teaching them to observe all that I commanded you, and behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age." Although I was taught this as a child, it was easier as I got older to do more of what I wanted to do, of what the world said I could do, than what I was taught by my friend, the greatest teacher of all, Jesus. As I called out, he answered

with what I already knew: I am here, come to me, be with me, keep my commands.

The more I looked for Him, the more I saw Him in the world around me: in the beautiful sky, the wind, the tree bark (every single tree bark is unique), my children's eyes; in the touch of my husband's hand on mine, over coffee with a loving woman friend. He is everywhere! It was then that the change took me over. I wanted real, pure joy, every second of every minute—and if it was sadness, that needed to be real too. I knew then as I know now and with certainty, that I did not need outside things or accomplishments to bring me joy because I can find His pure joy and happiness all around me—in everyday things, no matter where I am or what I'm doing. With Jesus, I can deal with any blow life can throw at me, no matter how devastating, because He is by my side. He is my guide, my protector, my best friend who will never leave me.

He is my first thought in the morning as I am opening my eyes and He is my last thought in the evening. In every second that I am grateful, and in the moments my burden is too heavy or my sadness is overwhelming, it is Him I go to first, and always. I have taken to saying the rosary daily, sometimes more than

one. I do bible studies now and I am a second grade catechist. I am also a full-time realtor in a competitive area, a part-time hairdresser, a loving mother, wife, and enjoy the company of many wonderful women friends. Yes, I am busy, but I love to walk outside with my dog and I look forward to solitude any second I can grab it. Sometimes it is in the car between pick-ups or at a house showing while waiting for a client, and even when I am folding laundry or doing dishes. That is my time with Jesus. In Him I find my rest, my peace, my deepest joy. In Him, I find my heart's desire and the courage to take one more step when

my heart feels like it is going to break into a million pieces. All that I have become rests on Him alone. Jesus walks with me, every second in my heart, my mind and soul. I will never be alone again. This I am certain of and not a whole lot more.

*Mary lives in a Chicago suburb with her husband, two teenage children, and a family dog Zeus. When she is not working and spending time with her family you will find her taking long walks in nature, reading a good book, or watching a great movie. She loves sharing in the activities of her busy parish and cherishes spending time in community with female friends as they grow in their faith together.*





## Nurturing Friendship | By Jeannette McGlone, SH Christine Triay, RSCJ

A good friend is a gift who comes into your life in an unexpected way. In this case, Christine and I met at a diocesan Justice and Peace meeting, evidence that a friendship can arise from a shared interest. As time went on, we discovered more shared interests and a way of relating and being with each other that created a trust and openness that enabled us to be honest in relating with each other as well as with other people. As our friendship grew through a commitment to walk together in good times and challenging times, we felt drawn to share our lives in ministry and community as we saw a need to provide a space for people who wanted this. This resulted in our request to our respective religious Institutes to live together in community and to provide a "place and a space" for others to share. This initial endeavour has developed into a broader ministry of offering hospitality to sisters who come from different countries to stay with us. We have enjoyed sharing our friendship with them and discovering the uniqueness of each one.

This kind of community living is challenging. When we disagree or become conflictive, we feel the pain and stop to examine the situation. This deepens our faith and hope, and witnesses our love as we continue the journey without regrets or resentments. This teaches us about God's love for us and God's forgiveness and presence in the other. We learn to laugh at ourselves and also face our little demons that pop up from time to time. We realize that friendships need to be nurtured, and to this end we allow ourselves the space we need and respect each other's choices. This allows the other to be. It's important to have quality time together, with others, and apart.

We are good at encouraging the gifts of each one and respecting our limitations. We see that, over the years, the Spirit calls us and we want to respond. We are from different Institutes but share the responsibilities for each other's sisters and grow in commitment to them. This is lived out in practical ways of service. We attend others assemblies and help each other's sisters when

the need arises as well as sharing and reflecting together. We also join in times of relaxation and leisure. This friendship has enabled us to grow, have greater self-confidence, and provide the kind of service we could not have given otherwise. The people in our parishes rejoice in the way we relate to each other and to them, a sign that we are witnessing to God's presence and fidelity in our lives and in theirs. There is a joy in this which keeps us on the journey with them. We have found that our friendship has enabled us to complement

each other as we offer support to individuals now, after eight years as counsellors of the Chaplaincy team in a local high school. Little did we know 18 years ago at the Justice and Peace meeting that God would have given us so many and used us in these ways. Praise the Lord.

*Jeannette McGlone, SH and Christine Triay RSCJ first met 18 years ago at the Justice and Peace meeting. Jeannette is a member of the Society of Helpers of the Sacred Heart. Christine is a member of the Religious of the Sacred Heart. Both sisters live and minister in Scotland.*



## To My Big "Sister"

### Two Generations of Friendship

*A Poem by Mindy Walch*

When I was small  
You were my idol.  
So pretty and put together  
Always laughing and having fun.  
I loved your long beautiful hair,  
Your twinkling eyes,  
Your contagious smile.  
And then as I got older,  
I really got to know you  
And loved you even more.  
For you were not just pretty and fun,  
But generous and kind-hearted,  
Smart,  
Faith-filled,  
Mindful of all that's truly important in life,  
And full of wisdom and good advice.  
As the years have passed and we've matured,  
Our friendship has truly bloomed  
For now we are more like peers,  
Than one big and one little "sister."  
I think God had a plan when he made our mothers best friends  
Because He created two generations of best friends  
To depend on each other through the best and worst of times.  
There can be no doubt  
That we have needed each other over the years!  
Just as our mothers stood by one another  
Through their most joyful blessings and most painful sorrows,  
So too have we.  
Without you, I could not have survived the bad  
Or been able to recognize and enjoy the good.  
At least not in the same way as you do with someone who truly shares  
Your joys and hopes,  
Your fears and failures.  
I know you feel the same.  
God didn't make us sisters,  
But he made us friends  
And for that I am forever grateful!

*Mindy lives in suburban Chicago with her husband and three teenage children. She has a Master's degree in Social Service Administration from the University of Chicago, works part-time for Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago, serves as Co-VP of Philanthropy for the local chapter of the National Charity League, and is a member of the Voices editorial team.*

## LEAVING SOME TRACES | By Steven John Dietz

*When I learned that the theme for this current newsletter was 'friendship', I was reminded of the following passage that was sent to me over 22 years ago when a very close friend died. I had kept it because it had touched my spirit. I thought that if we could include it in this edition, the appreciation of friendship in our lives would be deepened and enriched. I pleased to get permission from the author to reprint it here.*

*--Mary Ellen Moor*

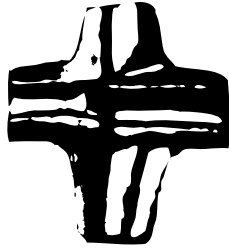
In the midst of a world that is too big and too fast, a world where information rules like a dictator and news travels like a virus, it is easy to be overcome by the hopelessness of the world and the helplessness of we, its keepers. What impact can we hope to have? What traces will we leave behind?

History, I believe, is not the story of grand acts and masterpieces. History instead, is the inexorable accumulation of tiny events - footsteps and glances, hands in soil, broken promises, bursts of laughter, weapons and wounds, hands touching hair, the art of conversation, the rage of loss. Historians may focus on the famous, familiar names - but history itself is made, day after day, by all those whose names are never known, all those who never made a proclamation or held an office, all those who were handed a place on earth and quietly made a life out of it.

So what do we affect during our lifetime? What ultimately is our legacy? I believe, in most cases, our legacy is our friends. We write our history onto them, and they walk with us through our days like time capsules, filled with our mutual past, the fragments of our hearts and minds. Our friends get our uncensored questions and our yet-to-be-reasoned opinions. Our friends grant us the chance to make our grand, embarrassing, contradictory pronouncements about the world. They get the very best, and are stuck with the absolute worst, we have to offer. Our friends get our rough drafts. Over time, they both open our eyes and break our hearts.

Emerson wrote: "Make yourself necessary to someone." In a chaotic world, friendship is the most elegant, the most lasting way to be useful. We are each of us, a testament to our friends' compassion and tolerance, humor and wisdom, patience and grit. Friendship, not technology, is the only thing capable of showing us the enormity of the world.

*\*\*\*Originally published as the author's note for his play, "Lonely Planet" Copyright 1992 by Steven John Dietz. All rights reserved.\*\*\**



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