Mary Christine Athans, BVM, Papers 1970-2006, undated

Preliminary Finding Aid

Creator: Mary Christine Athans, BVM (1932-2019)
Extent: 0.6 linear feet (2 boxes)
Language: English
Repository: Women and Leadership Archives, Loyola University Chicago. Please contact WLArchives@luc.edu regarding use.

Administration Information

Access Restrictions: None

Usage Restrictions: Copyright was transferred to the Women and Leadership Archives.

Preferred Citation: Identification of item, date, box #, folder #, Mary Christine Athans, BVM Papers, Women and Leadership Archives, Loyola University Chicago.

Provenance: The materials were donated to the Women and Leadership Archives by Sr. Mary Christine Athans, BVM in 2016 (WLA2016.28).

Processing Information: This collection is unprocessed. Information in this preliminary finding aid was gathered through an initial inventory. Preliminary finding aid created in February 2026.

Separations: None

Biographical History

Sister Mary Christine Athans, BVM, was born on April 7, 1932, in Joliet, Illinois. She received a Bachelor of Science in Humanities in 1954 from Loyola University Chicago. She entered the BVM congregation on September 8, 1955, from St. Thomas the Apostle Parish Phoenix, and professed her final vows on July 16, 1963.

Sister Mary Christine was a life-long educator. Her teaching mission started at St. Eugene Elementary School in Chicago, Our Lady of Peace High School in Saint Paul, and St. Francis Xavier High School in Phoenix. As part of her work in Phoenix, Sister Mary Christine acted as the executive director of the North Phoenix Corporate Ministry (NPCM) from 1970-1976. This organization was a group of Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant congregations who collaborated in areas of education, liturgy, social concerns, and communication. She would serve on more than twenty boards and committees throughout her career. She has received several recognitions, including the B'nai B'rith Humanitarian of the Year Award, the Samuel H. Scheiner Human Relations Award, and the National Conference of Christians and Jews Sisterhood Award.

She earned her master's degree in theology at the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley, California. After, she served as assistant dean and faculty member at the Claremont School of Theology and faculty

member at the University of San Francisco. After she completed her doctoral degree in historical theology at GTU in 1982, she served as assistant professor of religious studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She later served as an associate professor of church history at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, as an associate professor and professor at the St. Paul Seminary, and as an adjunct professor at Loyola University Institute of Pastoral Studies and the Catholic Theological Union. In 2016, she moved to Phoenix and worked as a guest lecturer and in alumnae relations at Xavier College Preparatory High School.

Sister Mary Christine authored and contributed to several chapters, articles, reviews and books on ecumenism, American Catholic history, seminary education, and Catholic-Jewish relationships. Some of her notable works include *In Quest of the Jewish Mary: The Mother of Jesus in History, Theology, and Spirituality* (2013), and *To Work for the Whole People: John Ireland's Seminary in St. Paul* (2002).

Sister Mary Christine died on December 7, 2019, at Caritas Center in Dubuque, Iowa, at the age of 87.

Scope and Content

The Mary Christine Athans, BVM, Papers consists of 0.6 linear feet and spans the years 1970-2006. The papers relate to Sister Mary Christine's work on Jewish-Christian relations, the North Phoenix Corporate Ministry, and her book *To Work for the Whole People: John Ireland's Seminary in St. Paul* (2002).

Materials include professional correspondence, photographs, newspapers, brochures, and conference materials, as well as one 3-D object. Loose items are grouped together by original order as materials are not processed or organized.

Subjects:
Catholic-Jewish Relationships
Interfaith Coalition
BVMs
Education
Loyola University
Seminary Education

Box	Folder	Title	Dates
1	1	[loose: Professional Correspondence, Brochures, Awards, Publicity]	
1	2	[loose: Mundelein College and North Phoenix Corporate Ministry brochures, pamphlets and news]	
1	3	[loose: "To Work for the Whole People" by Sr. Mary Christine Athans, BVM related news, publicity, and correspondence]	
1	4	[loose: North Phoenix Corporate Ministry NEWS]	
1	5	[loose: Center for Jewish-Christian Learning Lecture Series 1986, 1989-1993]	
1	6	[loose: Center for Jewish-Christian Learning Lecture Series 1995-1996]	
1	7	[loose: North Phoenix Corporate Ministry NEWS and GOOD NEWS booklets, Publications, Articles of Sr. Mary Christine]	
2	1	[gavel]	